



**Laurentian**University  
Université**Laurentienne**

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**McEWEN** SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE  
ÉCOLE D'ARCHITECTURE

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# CO-OP HANDBOOK

McEwen School of Architecture

Co-operative Education is an educational model rather than a job placement strategy. Co-op Education promotes continuous learning through the integration of classroom and applied work-based learning.

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### ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS:

1. 4 Steps to a Successful Co-op
2. Job Preparedness Training
3. Co-op Schedule
4. Co-op Student Information
5. Letter of Agreement

# Introduction

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**Welcome** to the McEwen School of Architecture Co-op Education Program.

Co-operative Education is a program that formally integrates a student's academic studies with work experience through experiential education opportunities and the integration of workplace and academic learning. This approach to education relies upon a collaborative partnership between the students, the University, and workplace employers who share a commitment to the learning objectives and outcomes of the co-operative education program. Success depends upon the co-operative efforts of each party.

The Architecture Co-op Program enhances your education with paid, relevant, technical work experience and launches your architecture career.

This handbook is your guide to a rewarding co-op experience and contains information that will prepare you for both your co-op work term and your professional career.

The purpose of this document is to ensure procedural fairness for McEwen Architecture students in the co-op program by stipulating the policies and regulations governing the co-op program. These are established to bring maximum benefit to both students and employers and to expedite the co-op process in an efficient way.

Before participating in the co-op program, all co-op students are required to accept these terms and conditions by signing the *Letter of Agreement*.

*The Co-op Program reserves the right to update, modify or revise these terms and conditions as necessary and without notice. Questions about policies may be directed to the Co-op Coordinator.*

## Contact Information

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Co-op Coordinator

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McEwen School of Architecture

# Architecture Co-op Education Program Requirements

## Co-op Program Requirements

- Completion of two work-terms at the undergraduate level (BAS), taking place in the Spring Semester, ARCH 0100 in Industry after 1<sup>st</sup> year followed by ARCH 0300 in Architecture or Design after 3<sup>rd</sup> year.
- Mandatory completion of modules listed on D2L, as provided by the Co-op Office prior to the work-term.
- All jobs must be approved by the Co-op Coordinator before being accepted to ensure it offers a suitable learning situation. Retroactive work will not be accepted.
- Submission of a co-op contract, work-term assignment and employer evaluation for each work-term.
- Students must ensure the co-op registration process is complete on WebAdvisor and tuition fees are paid prior to the work-term, according to LU Fee Schedule.
- Co-op work terms are academic terms, and as such, students are responsible for ensuring they meet all program requirements and adhere to faculty and co-op regulations, policies, procedures and schedules.

## Co-op Work-Term Requirements

To qualify, a work-term must meet the following conditions:

- Completion of 14 weeks of full-time employment during each approved co-op work term
- Work full-time hours of at least 35 hours per week
- Co-op must be a paid position
- Students must be supervised by an employer/mentor in-person
- Work cannot be conducted from the student's personal residence/home, all must be at the employer's place of business
- Students cannot be self-employed
- Students cannot work for family

*These guidelines are established according to the minimum requirements of the Canadian association CEWIL Canada (Co-op Education Work Integrated Learning, Canada).*

## The Co-Op Office

The Co-op Coordinator is here to assist and coach you during your co-op career and to facilitate your development of skills that will help you secure co-op employment. The services provided include:

- Pre-employment training, including
  - Résumé and cover letter writing
  - Interview preparation
  - Workplace principles
  - Co-op obligations
- Continued training, as needed, during your entire co-op career
- Personal coaching in preparing for interviews and presenting yourself professionally
- Coordination of the job application and interview and ranking processes on behalf of students and employers
- Evaluation of co-op work terms by arranging site visits or telephone visits with the students and their supervisors
- Ongoing support during your co-op work terms, including assistance in resolving workplace issues

## The Student

By taking advantage of the services and support offered by the Co-op Office you will benefit greatly from the cooperative education experience. You have opportunities to:

- Develop a well-rounded educational experience by integrating your classroom learning to relevant construction, architecture and design work environments
- Acquire up to 16 months of work experience with diverse employers in a variety of locations, at the undergraduate and graduate level
- Develop a network of professional contacts
- Refine existing strengths and develop new professional skills
- Experience professional development and personal growth
- Opportunities to test and gain broader understanding of career options
- Financial remuneration to help defray educational costs

# Terms and Conditions

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*Students are required to read and accept the terms and conditions by signing the Letter of Agreement.*

## Conditions of Participation in Co-Operative Education

### A. ELIGIBILITY

1. I am legally eligible to work in Canada.
2. I agree to participate in the job posting and interview process, work term visits, and other activities as required and that these will contribute to my final grade in the Co-op Program.
3. I will honour my commitment to the employer upon accepting any approved position.

### B. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS & LIABILITY

1. I acknowledge that all requirements of my job are my financial responsibility including any costs incurred if I need to relocate for a co-op position.
2. I understand the Co-operative Education Program cannot guarantee the salary rate for prospective jobs.
3. I agree to use discretion and maintain confidentiality when discussing my Co-op employers, their organizations and their customers or clients with anyone other than Laurentian University Co-op staff.
4. I agree that Laurentian University will not be held liable for any expense, personal injury, loss or damage of personal property, or agreements established or breached with my employer, arising while seeking employment or from my employment during a work term.

### C. CO-OP PLACEMENT AND THE JOB SEARCH PROCESS

1. I understand that the ultimate responsibility of finding a co-op job term is my own and that the Co-op office will provide assistance and support to me as needed. The Co-op Office does not guarantee employment during a co-op work term.
2. I understand that I must apply actively to job postings each term until I have secured employment.
3. I acknowledge that my Co-op Coordinator must approve any job I find on my own prior to the beginning of the work term. If the job description changes in anyway, without approval from the Co-op Coordinator, the new position may not necessarily be accepted as a co-op.
4. I understand that I must receive remuneration for the work performed; all work term opportunities without traditional remuneration must be pre-approved by the Co-op Coordinator.
5. Once a job offer is accepted, I will stop my co-op job search, cancel all scheduled interviews and will not renege on an offer.

### D. INFORMATION RELEASE

1. I give permission to the Co-op Coordinator to release my résumé, cover letter and other relevant information to prospective employers for placement. This information will only be released to the employers that I have applied to.
2. I will keep all Co-op job posting information, employer lists, contacts, etc. confidential.

## **E. COMMUNICATION**

3. I agree to check my Laurentian email account regularly for important notices from the Co-op Office and to respond to all co-op email within 24 hours, and also, to check the designated co-op bulletin board for information, announcements, job opportunities, etc.
4. I will maintain contact with the Co-op Coordinator while on a Co-op Work Term as my Coordinator must maintain an up-to-date status of the work-term. I will bring any issues arising at the workplace to the immediate attention of the Co-op Coordinator.

## **F. WORKPLACE RULES AND REGULATIONS**

1. I agree to abide by rules, regulations, and policies set by the Co-operative Education Program and by my employers.
2. I agree to abide by ethical and legal guidelines, including but not limited to confidentiality, privacy and those concerning use of computers.
3. I understand that I am responsible to act in accordance with the Ontario Health and Safety Act (OHSA) and agree to obtain the proper safety training including Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS), Working at Heights training, etc.
4. I agree to bring any issues arising at the workplace to the immediate attention of the Co-op Coordinator, who can assist with a wide variety of individual concerns, including, but not limited worker rights, work conditions, or other challenges.
5. I understand that I am responsible for conducting myself in a professional manner while on a Co-op Work Term and I will represent Laurentian University and the McEwen School of Architecture with integrity and professionalism.
6. I understand that it is my responsibility to inform my employers of any accommodations I need as a result of my disability.
7. I understand that a Performance Evaluation must be filled out by my employer and it is my responsibility to ensure that the document is submitted as per the co-op assignment.

## **G. CONDITIONS OF WORK**

1. I understand that I am required to work the hours that will allow for the greatest level of learning and productivity with my employer. To meet the co-op requirements, I will work a minimum of 35 hours per week for a minimum of 14 weeks.
2. I will not ask employers for vacations during work terms.
3. I will inform my Co-op Coordinator as soon as possible of any situation, including illness, which necessitates my absence from work for more than three consecutive days.
4. I understand that while on a co-op work term, I will be supervised by the employer and not Laurentian University.

## **H. ACCEPTANCE OF CO-OP PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT**

**Please sign the Letter of Agreement, attached, and submit to the Co-op Coordinator.**

If you do not understand all the terms of participation, please ask your Co-op Coordinator to clarify before signing this form.

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## Policies & Regulations Co-op Courses

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The following policies and regulations apply to all McEwen School of Architecture Co-op Courses, ARCH 0100 EL / FL, ARCH 0300 EL / FL, ARCH 5915 EL / FL, ARCH 5925 EL / FL, unless otherwise indicated.

### **STUDENT OBLIGATIONS**

To be eligible for Co-operative Education Placements, students must continue to be enrolled full-time, and in good standing, in the Laurentian University McEwen School of Architecture program.

Co-op students must adhere to the terms, conditions and policies set out in the *Co-op Handbook*.

### **COMPLETION OF THE CO-OP PROGRAM**

Co-op courses are mandatory and are required to complete the undergraduate (BAS) and graduate (M.Arch) programs; students must complete all Co-op courses in order to graduate.

#### **BAS Co-op 1: ARCH 0100 EL / FL (Industry):**

- Students must complete Co-op 1, at the end of either 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> year.
- ARCH 0100 is a prerequisite for third year ARCH 3505 Design Studio course.
- WORK PLACEMENT: this is a materials and methods co-op and must be hands-on, labour work experience (not office work); must be fieldwork in construction, landscaping, materials or trades related to architecture or design.

#### **BAS Co-op 2: ARCH 0300 EL / FL (Architecture or Design):**

- Students must complete Co-op 2, at the end of either 2<sup>nd</sup> year or 3<sup>rd</sup> year.
- Co-op ARCH 0100 is a prerequisite for Co-op ARCH 0300.
- ARCH 0300 is a prerequisite for fourth year ARCH 4505 Design Studio course.
- WORK PLACEMENT: must be office work; must be in an office related to architecture or design; this can include national or international firms, corporate organizations or government agencies.

#### **M.ARCH Co-op 3: ARCH 5915 EL / FL (Architecture):**

- Students must complete Co-op 3 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of the 1<sup>st</sup> year, January to April.
- ARCH 5915 is a prerequisite for ARCH 5925.
- WORK PLACEMENT: must be completed under the direct supervision of a registered architect; this can include national or international firms, corporate organizations or government agencies that have a registered architect on staff.

#### **M.ARCH Co-op 4: ARCH 5915 EL / FL (Architecture):**

- Students must complete Co-op 4 immediately following Co-op 3, May to August.
- Co-op ARCH 5925 is a prerequisite for ARCH 5555 Thesis Studio 1.
- WORK PLACEMENT: must be completed under the direct supervision of a registered architect; this can include national or international firms, corporate organizations or government agencies that have a registered architect on staff; students have the option to work with the same employer as Co-op 3, for a longer 8 month placement.

**Continued on Page 2**

**ACCOMMODATIONS / ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES**

If a health issue is preventing a student from completing a co-op work term, the student must first register with the Laurentian University Accessibility Services to be eligible for accommodations. All the necessary medical documentation must be submitted to Accessibility Services only and not to the school.

**EXEMPTION FROM CO-OP****ARCH 0100 EL / FL**

Students with previous related work experience and education can apply for an exemption to Co-op 1. Refer to the policy and procedures outlined in the *Request for Exemption Policy Co-op ARCH 0100*.

**ARCH 0300, ARCH 5915, ARCH 5925**

Students cannot apply for an exemption to Co-op ARCH 0300, ARCH 5915, or ARCH 5925.

**WORK TERM FAILURE**

Upon review by the Co-op Coordinator and the Course Professor, students may be assigned a “Fail” grade on a co-op course for any of the following reasons:

- Not competing for and/or accepting a job offer during the job search process;
- Failure to report for work at the location specified by the employer;
- Failure to start and end the work term on the dates specified on the Co-op Contract without permission from the Co-op Coordinator and the Employer;
- Removal by the Employer for cause;
- Receiving an unsatisfactory grade from the Employer on the Student Performance Evaluation;
- Failure to submit the required documents to the Co-op Office.

**STUDENT APPEAL PROCEDURE**

Students may request a meeting with the Co-op Coordinator and Co-op Course Professor to discuss concerns over a decision made pertaining to their academic standing in the Co-op Program.

If unable to reach an agreement with the Co-op Coordinator and Co-op Course Professor, students may then request a meeting with the Director of the McEwen School of Architecture before seeking a review under formal procedures.

If unable to reach an agreement with the Director of the McEwen School of Architecture, students may then formally appeal the decision as per *Laurentian University Grade Appeal Policy*.

# CO-OP PROCEDURES

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## Job Application Guideline

- It is ultimately the students' responsibility to secure co-op employment and the co-op program does not guarantee employment during a co-op work term.
- Students are required to fill-out the Co-op Information Form, and submit to the Co-op Coordinator. *See form attached.*
- Any requests to deviate from the co-op schedule/guidelines must be approved by the Co-op Office.
- Job Interviews are to be scheduled around your architecture classes.
- Once students have been offered a co-op work term, they are expected to accept the position and immediately stop the job search.
- All available jobs will be posted on D2L. It is the student's responsibility to check and apply for the jobs. Students will need to verify D2L daily to see if any new postings have been added.  
REMINDER: As indicated in the Co-op Policies & Regulations, "Not competing for and/or accepting a job offer during the job search process" is cause for failing the course.

**ARCH 0100 Co-op:** 1st and 2nd year Co-op students' job search will take place either by:

- 1) Using the job board process for co-op employment in Greater Sudbury, or
- 2) Students who prefer to do their co-op work term in their hometown or in a different part of the province or the country will be doing an Independent Job Search. You will still receive instructions and guidance from the Co-op Coordinator and you are expected to work closely with the Co-op Office. *Refer to the Independent Job Search section below for details.*

**ARCH 0300, ARCH 5915, ARCH 5925:** Students will be doing an Independent Job Search and are encouraged to apply to firms in a wider geographic location – provincially, nationally and internationally. You will still receive instructions and guidance from the Co-op Coordinator and you are expected to work closely with the Co-op Office. *Refer to the Independent Job Search section below for details.*

## Confirmation of Job Offers

Once you have been offered a position, you are expected to accept the offer; you will sign a Letter of Offer, if required, and then return it to your employer.

If your Letter of Offer contains a confidentiality agreement, please see the Co-op Coordinator if you have any questions or require a witness to your signature.

You must also fulfill all other employment requirements, such as: completion of medical exam, background check, criminal records check, purchase of protective clothing, etc. as required.

## **Independent Job Search**

Students doing an independent job search will still receive instructions, support and guidance from the Co-op Coordinator and are expected to work closely with the Co-op Office.

A database of potential employers will be available to students, although students are strongly encouraged to look beyond what is listed in the database, and instead apply to firms according to their interests, experience and preferred geographical location.

Employers will also be contacted by the Co-op Office, and any job postings received will be posted on D2L. Students will be responsible for applying and setting up their own interviews, unless otherwise indicated.

## **Job Board Guidelines**

### **ARCH 0100 ONLY**

This is a 2-Round process using a Rank & Match system. The system uses ranking input from both students and employers following an interview and is designed to maximize the number of student-job matches. This is done so employers compete for students equally and to ensure fairness for both employers and other students. All job offers and matches are made through the Co-op Office.

All available jobs will be posted on D2L. It is the student's responsibility to check and apply for the jobs. Students will need to verify D2L daily to see if any new postings have been added.

Round 1 – this is the first five-week period at the beginning of the job search term.

Round 2 - students who have not secured co-op employment offers by the end of Round 1 will apply to jobs on a continuous basis in Round 2. Students are also expected to do an Independent Job Search in this application period.

\*\*\* If you confirmed you are doing an Independent Job Search, you cannot apply for jobs on the Job Board in Round 1, unless approved by the Co-op Coordinator; and upon approval, you may apply in the 2nd Round of the process.

# Guidelines for the WORK TERM

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## Co-op Program Contract

During the first week of the work-term, the Contract must be filled-out and signed by both the student and the employer. It is your responsibility to see that the contract is submitted to the Co-op Coordinator by the end of the 1st week of your work-term.

## Work Site Visit

While you are on a Co-op work term, you will remain in close contact with your Co-op Coordinator. As part of our commitment to your success in the program, we will be conducting either an in-person site visit, or by telephone, to check in with you and your supervisor.

The purpose of the site visits is to:

1. Assess how the work term is progressing from the perspective of both the student and the supervisor, and to ensure it is mutually beneficial
2. Review your learning objectives and discuss work performance and progress
3. Ensure your supervisor is satisfied with your performance and progress, and address any issues that may arise
4. Review your work term requirements that are necessary to successfully pass the work term, including: your work term report; the employer and student evaluation form.

## Work Term Report

A Co-op Report is required for each Work Term in which the student is registered. The written requirements vary depending on the level of Co-op. The assignment outline will be posted on D2L, and must be submitted to the Co-op Coordinator as per the deadline established for each assignment. Reports are graded by the Course Professor and Co-op Coordinator.

The purpose of the report is to demonstrate what you have learned and how you integrate your education and your work experience. Read the outline carefully, and follow all instructions and requirements. Remember, as you are training to become an architect, treat this report as you would any client proposal, with accuracy and professionalism.

No exceptions or extensions will be given for late reports. Incomplete or late submission will be reduced 1 full letter grade per week or portion of one week after the deadline.

If you do not successfully complete your report, you will receive a grade of "F" for the course, meaning that you have failed the course and will not receive credit for your co-op. You are expected to be able to manage your time and respect the deadline. This is when your acquired time management and project management skills will be useful. A student who receives an unsatisfactory report will be given an opportunity to make revisions and resubmit the report. If, upon resubmission, the report is still unsatisfactory, the student will receive a failing grade for the work term and will be required to meet with the Course Professor and Co-op Coordinator. A failing grade may hinder the student's overall architecture grade.

Students will be contacted within the first three weeks of the fall academic term with information about your participation in a debriefing session or Pecha Kucha presentation.

\*\* Students who signed a Confidentiality Clause with their employer may not be allowed to show or discuss certain aspects of the projects worked on. In such cases, special consideration can be made to the content of the report. Contact the Co-op Coordinator to discuss this further.

### **Performance Evaluation**

A Performance Evaluation is required for each Work Term, to be completed by the student's supervisor. The supervisor is encouraged to complete it with the student as a debrief near the end of the work term.

To pass, students require a satisfactory rating, otherwise, will be required to meet with the Co-op Coordinator and the Course Professor. A failing Performance Evaluation may hinder the student's overall architecture grade.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the Performance Evaluation is completed and submitted by the deadline, as per co-op assignment.

### **Medical Coverage for Students Working Outside Ontario**

You must ensure you have adequate medical coverage for the period of time you are away from Ontario. This is your responsibility. Most students are covered under a provincial health plan, but you must contact your health insurance agency before commencing work in the province/country of your co-op work term. If you do not, any claims you make may be invalid. Arrangements should be made to maintain your provincial insurance while you are away, and be sure to reactivate it when you return, if necessary.

### **Problems & Issues in the Workplace**

The Co-op Coordinator acts as a resource and is your representative throughout your co-op career whether you are in school or on a work term. If you face challenges during your work term (e.g. unsafe working conditions, difficult co-workers or managers, excessive overtime, non-technical work, personal issues, etc.), contact your Co-op Coordinator immediately for help with determining productive ways to address your challenges.

### **Communicating with the Co-op Office**

Students should maintain contact with the Co-op Coordinator as much as possible, and as required. The Co-op Coordinator can provide guidance, direction and feedback during your participation in the Co-op Program. Whenever your contact information changes, please update the co-op office immediately.

\*\*\* Co-op related email messages will only be sent to your Laurentian University account. \*\*\*