Department of Civil Engineering, UMD

What is the Cooperative Education program (courses CE4096 Cooperative Education I, 1 credit, and CE4596 Cooperative II, 2 credits)?

• The 'coop' education program is a way by which a student can get a maximum of 3 credits for working full time in a civil engineering related job with an employer for a maximum 2 semesters, one of these semesters being a Summer semester. One important requirement for registering in the cooperation education program is that while working full time with the employer, the student is not registered and does not take any courses that require her/him to physically attend classes in campus (although registering and taking on-line courses while doing the 'coop' program is acceptable).

• By enrolling in the cooperative education program (CE4096, 1 credit, in the Summer; CE4595, 2 credits, in the Fall, or, alternatively, CE4096, 1 credit, in the Spring and CE4595, 2 credits, in the Summer), the student retains full time student status (even when being registered for less than 12 credits) while working a full time job. Retaining full time student status during college may be important for a student who has a student loan or a student who is claimed as a (student) dependent by their parents in family tax forms.

• The requisites to register in CE4096 and/or CE4596 are as follows:

- The student must be admitted already in CE upper division to enroll in CE4096 or CE4596.

- The student must have a job offer from an employer who will be employing the student for at least one full semester. A summer internship not followed or preceded by a full semester disqualifies the student for registration in the coop program.

- The student has not started the job with the employer yet (retroactive registration in the coop programs is not allowed).

- The job must be a civil engineering related job and must involve a minimum of 30 hours per week of work.

- The student must not register in any other course while registered in either CE4096 or CE4596 (being registered in courses that are offered on-line at UMD is acceptable, but being registered in courses that require the student to attend classes in campus is not allowed).

- A maximum of 3 credits can be obtained through CE4096 (1 credit) and CE4596 (2 credits) and these credits count as CE Technical Elective credits.

- The semester following the coop experience (e.g., the Spring semester following the Summer and Fall semesters in which the student did the coop) the student is required to fill in and turn in additional forms with more details about employer and job done and write a

single report (if the student registered in CE4096 only) or two reports (if the student registered in both CE4096 and CE4596) describing the technical work done during the coop. [IMPORTANT: If the student has registered in both CE 4096 Cooperative Education I and CE 4596 Cooperative Education II, two independent reports must be written, describing the specific work done during each of the coop periods (e.g., during the Summer and Fall semesters). Although some minor overlapping can be expected (e.g., when describing the type of work the employer company does), the two reports must be 'stand-alone' reports (i.e., reports that can be read independently of each other) without significant overlapping or repetition.] The additional forms and instructions on how to write the report(s) can be obtained from the faculty coordinator after the coop experience.

- Submittal of the additional forms are due in the middle of the semester following the coop experience, while the technical report(s) are due at the end of the semester following the coop experience. In addition to writing the technical report(s), the student may be asked to give a 15 minutes presentation to faculty and students in the department about the work done during the coop.

- Copies of the forms and technical report(s) the student completes are sent to all faculty within the civil engineering department for evaluation.

- Copies of the forms and technical report(s) are also sent to the employer. The faculty coordinator contacts the employer and asks to verify the information written in forms and reports. The employer is also asked for feedback about the student's performance while working for the employer.

- Coops are graded on an A-F basis, and the final grade is assigned on the basis of the reports written and the feedback received from employer and faculty.

- Since the evaluation (and grading) is done one semester after the student finishes the coop program (e.g., in the Spring if the last semester of the coop was the Fall), at the end of the last semester of the coop, the faculty coordinator posts an 'I' (for incomplete) as the score for the coop program. This 'I' eventually changes to an actual grade A-F grade once the student submits all forms and reports are evaluated by faculty and employer.

• Possible ways to register in the coop programs are as follows:

a- The employer offers the student a semester full time job for Spring. Then the student registers in CE4096 (1 credit) for the Spring (the student registers during the preceding Fall semester, as normally done when registering for any other course).

b- The employer offers the student a semester full time job for Spring and Summer (2 semesters). Then the student registers in CE4096 (1 credit) for the Spring and for CE4596 (2 credits) for the Summer.

c- The employer offers the student a semester full time job for Fall semester. Then the student registers in CE4096 (1 credit) for the Fall.

d- The employer offers the student a job for the Summer and for the Fall. Then the student registers in CE4096 (1 credit) for the Summer and in CE4596 (2 credits) for Fall.

Note: Option 'd' above is the most popular way of registering for the coop program.

• A student who registers in two consecutive semesters in advance (e.g., as in option 'd' above) is expected to complete the coop during the semesters he/she is registered for. If for any reason the student desists of continuing the coop for the second semester and unregisters from CE4596 (2 credits) to come back to school to take courses, the first part of the coop CE4096 (1 credit) will not be graded and will be get the score 'I' (for incomplete). This 'I' score will be changed to an actual score (A-F grade) only after the student completes the second part of the coop in a future semester and forms and reports for both coops are submitted and evaluated.

• To get a permission number to register in either CE4096/CE4596, the student must first talk to the student advisor (who is aware of the rules stated in this document) and thereafter get in contact with the faculty coordinator (Dr. Carranza-Torres, carranza@d.umn.edu) and ask for a 'coop agreement form' that the student must read, fill in and sign to be granted a permission number to register. The form includes also a 'code of conduct' that the department expects students to follow during the coop. In this form, the student also provides basic information about the job and the employer.

• More information can be obtained by contacting Dr. Carlos Carranza-Torres (carranza@d.umn.edu), current coordinator of the coop program in the Department of Civil Engineering at UMD.