Experiential Learning

Experiential learning at University of Kentucky is most often referred to as an “internship” or a “co-op” (cooperative education). The difference is that an internship can be a part-time or full-time work experience for a student, while a co-op is most exclusively a full-time work experience. The distinction between an internship and co-op is most important when considering a student’s plans for enrollment. An internship that is part-time would allow a student the chance to continue making progress toward degree via coursework in addition to the intern experience. Some colleges at UK do not allow students to enroll concurrently in a co-op or internship that is full-time and additional academic coursework without approval via an exception. This exception is at the discretion of the college, please see the college’s student services office for more information.

Due to federal labor regulations*, an employee must be compensated in some way. In the case of an internship or co-op, a student can be compensated with money paid or by way of earning academic credit. If academic credit is necessary or desired, a student has many options depending on the college in which s/he is enrolled.

*(See: [http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.htm#.UNCEh6yz4xw])

At the university level, there are two types of enrollment related to internships and co-ops: EXP 396 and 397. Both EXP enrollments are managed through the Stuckert Career Center (located at the corner of Rose St. and Euclid Ave.) EXP 396 is enrolled at the tuition rate 1-3 credit hours depending on the minimum number of work hours the student will accumulate. EXP 397 is enrolled at the tuition rate of one credit hour and a student is considered full-time status; EXP 397 is only an option if a student will be working as an FTE (full-time equivalent) employee for an employer. Student status (i.e., part-time versus full-time) is important for many reasons, including but not limited to: eligibility for student athletic tickets, financial aid eligibility, eligibility for campus housing, and student insurance rates.

In the case of either EXP 396 or 397, a student is required to complete a learning contract in consultation with the employer and a faculty sponsor selected by the student.

The complete details, policies, and procedures related to EXP 396 and 397 can be reviewed at: [http://www.uky.edu/careercenter/students/internships]

**Note:** Each college at University of Kentucky also has respective means for students enrolling in internship and co-op experiences (e.g., ACC 399 for students working full-time with an employer directly related to the professional field of accounting). Those departmental specific internship/co-op enrollments are managed by the department and
college. For more information related to enrollment for department or college specific internship/co-op courses, contact that department or the Stuckert Career Center.