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“No one can draw more out of things, books included, than he already knows. A man has no ears for that to which experience has given him no access.”

— Friedrich Nietzsche
Perhaps you chose a career path years ago. Or maybe you are still feeling your way toward the future and hope that co-op will help you discover what you like and dislike, as well as where your talents lie. Maybe your parents have encouraged you to co-op to help finance your education. Whatever has brought you to this point, you can be certain that your participation in co-op will benefit you in a number of significant ways — if you do your part.

Co-op students receive a truly complete education from Georgia Tech because they have ample opportunity to make important connections between theory and application. If you’ve seen a concept in action on the job, it will make more sense when you study it in the classroom. Conversely, co-oping will give you an opportunity to put into practice what you’re studying.

Co-oping will also help you confirm your career choice. Students occasionally change their majors because of what they experience on the job. Co-oping is the best way to discover what professionals with various degrees and levels of responsibility do on a daily basis.

During your work semesters, you’ll also gain soft skills that aren’t covered in the classroom. You’ll improve your ability to work on teams and learn the types of skills and behavior expected from a professional employee. Your ability to network with other professionals will be invaluable as you further your career.

Another benefit to co-oping is that you’ll be much less likely to burn out since you’ll be getting breaks from regular courses. Georgia Tech is a highly challenging educational institution. Students who co-op come back to school refreshed and ready to hit the books again. In fact, Tech co-ops consistently have a higher grade point average than students who choose not to co-op.

Finally, co-ops who complete program requirements receive a seal of distinction on their diplomas upon graduation and are recognized for this honor during the commencement ceremony. More importantly, co-ops build remarkable resumes that bring in higher starting salaries and a larger number of job offers after completing their programs of study.

What is Co-op?

Cooperative education is a creative partnership between the student, the institute, and the employer — a partnership in which the employer agrees to help educate you through practical experience related to your major. Participation involves a commitment on the part of the student and employer. As a Georgia Tech co-op, you will alternate school and work semesters with the same employer until you have completed at least three work terms.

The co-op program at Georgia Tech has been around since 1912 and is the largest totally optional program of its kind in the United States. It has a long tradition of success. It’s quite common for former co-ops to return to Tech to interview future co-op students for the companies they work for — or for companies they have started. We welcome your participation in co-op, a Tech tradition that pays.

Why Co-op?

• Explore and confirm career options early.
• Enhance your coursework through real-world work experience.
• Develop job search and interviewing skills.
• Develop a network of professional contacts.
• Earn a competitive salary.
• Build a great resume for the future.
• Improve your after-graduation job prospects.
• Graduate with co-op designation on your diploma.
Entering freshmen and transfer students are accepted into the co-op program without restriction. In-school applicants must be in good academic standing and have a minimum GPA of 2.0. In addition, students must have at least three school semesters remaining after the first work term in order to complete the co-op program. Students who do not have sufficient time remaining in order to complete co-op requirements may wish to consider the internship program.

Before going to work, co-ops must have:
- completed at least one term of full-time course work at Georgia Tech.
- completed a co-op application and gained acceptance into the program.
- attended the mandatory co-op orientation.
- taken a full course load during the school term that immediately precedes the first work term (summer is an exception).

Between work terms, students must take at least twelve hours of classes during a fall or spring semester and at least nine hours during a summer semester. After completing all work terms, students may attend Georgia Tech full time or part time. However, by studying full time or co-oping each semester, students can earn their degrees and gain a year’s worth of work experience in only four years!

GPA Requirements
Although the co-op program will accept students with a minimum GPA of 2.0, most employers require a higher minimum GPA in order to interview a candidate. Employers may also require students to maintain a certain minimum GPA in order to begin or maintain employment. The bottom line is that a student with a higher GPA is eligible for more jobs than a student with a lower GPA. Students who want to compete for the best jobs should earn the highest grades possible each semester.

How Many Work Terms?
To qualify for the co-op designation upon graduation, students must complete at least three alternating work terms, two of which must be longer semesters (fall or spring). Except in special circumstances, e.g., a major change or a work abroad assignment, co-ops must complete at least three work terms with the same employer. Regents’ Engineering Transfer Program (RETP) and Georgia Tech-Savannah students who provide appropriate documentation may complete one of their required co-op terms prior to entering Georgia Tech.

Students earn credit toward the co-op diploma by registering for the co-op course, working the required number of weeks, and submitting the required
Create Your Own Signature Experience at Georgia Tech

The co-op program allows plenty of flexibility for other endeavors. Here are a few examples of how you can maximize your education at Georgia Tech:

- Complete three co-op terms early and intern or work abroad in the summer prior to your senior year.
- Participate in undergraduate research or study abroad before, during, or after your co-op rotations.
- Co-op later, after completing significant course work in your major.
- Work four or five semesters and make work experience the central focus of a powerful resume.

The choice is yours.

“Information is pretty thin stuff unless mixed with experience.”

– Clarence Day
Before you can begin the co-op job search, you must apply to and be accepted into the co-op program. You must also attend a mandatory co-op orientation.

The job search itself involves a number of the following steps:

- Writing an effective resume
- Meeting with your advisor for resume approval and job information
- Reviewing job postings
- Researching potential employers
- Applying for positions and scheduling interviews
- Preparing for and participating in successful interviews
- Following up after interviews
- Participating in site visits and/or second interviews
- Accepting (or declining) offers
- Passing a drug test
- Completing pre-employment co-op documents

You must thoroughly understand each of these steps as you search for and accept a co-op position. The following chart will help you visualize the job search process.

**PART II: Finding Your Co-op Job**

**Sequencing of Activities: The Job Search**

1. Apply to co-op program at www.coop.gatech.edu
2. Attend co-op orientation
3. Read Co-op Student Handbook
4. Prepare co-op resume
5. Meet with co-op advisor for resume approval and job access; upload resume to P2D2
6. Review data on available co-op positions; apply for on-campus interviews and resume referrals on P2D2
7. Schedule on-campus interviews through co-op advisor
8. Research employers
9. Prepare for person-to-person or phone interviews
10. Review interviewing tips
11. Interview
12. Write thank you letter or e-mail
13. Decline offer
14. Consider any offers received
15. Accept offer
16. If required, take drug test
17. See co-op advisor to complete required procedures
Chapter 3
Writing an Effective Resume

The most important step in your job search is preparing an effective resume. A resume is an essential part of virtually any job search. It is something that you will modify throughout your college career and beyond. Your resume often forms the first impression — and if poorly written, the last impression — on an employer. It should be a compelling summary of your education, work experiences, leadership activities, and job competencies. Think of your resume as an advertisement or marketing tool that can assist you in capturing the employer’s interest and in securing a job interview. The purpose of a resume is to get an interview, not a job.

A helpful way to get started is by listing the key components of a resume: education, skills, work experience, honors and achievements, volunteer work, and activities. Then arrange all of the skills, accomplishments, and experiences that fall under each category. After you have brainstormed this information, arrange the items in reverse chronological order (from most recent to least recent) in each section of your resume.

“Overlooked all areas to ensure an overwhelming success.”

“Exposure to German for two years, but many words are not appropriate for business.”

“I am a perfectionist and rarely if ever forget details.”

“I can adapt to just about any environment from cubicles to fancy IKEA desks.”

“Wholly responsible for two (2) failed financial institutions.”

“Reason for leaving last job: They insisted that all employees get to work by 8:45 every morning. Couldn’t work under those conditions.”

If you don’t know where you are going, you might wind up someplace else.”  
– Yogi Berra
Heading and Contact Information
This section should include your name, address (campus and permanent), phone numbers (home, school, and/or cell), Georgia Tech e-mail address, and personal home page address, if it’s appropriate in content and represents you positively and professionally. (Make sure that your voice mail greeting is professional and short—appropriate for an employer to hear.)

Objective
Having a well-stated goal or objective gives an employer clarity and some indication of what you are trying to accomplish. An objective is a concise statement of your career goals and/or interests. It describes the kind of job opportunity that you want.

Examples
- To enhance my knowledge of the mechanical engineering field through a fall 2011 co-op position.
- A cooperative education position in the field of computer science dealing with networking and Internet technologies.
- Desire a spring 2011 cooperative education opportunity that will enable me to gain valuable skills and work experience in industrial engineering.

Education
Include name of school, city, state, major, degree expected, anticipated graduation date, enrollment dates, minor (if applicable), and GPA. If you attended more than one school, list the most recent school first. Spell out “Bachelor of Science” on your resume as well as your major, e.g., “Computer Engineering.” Avoid abbreviations and acronyms. You can also include any honors received (e.g., valedictorian, top 5 percent of 500-member class, Faculty Honors), and any relevant coursework.

It is appropriate to include your high school information on your co-op resume. Remove high school information once you begin searching for a full-time position.

Experience
Include paid (full-time or part-time), volunteer, previous co-op/internship, temporary positions, and relevant experiences or projects in a classroom setting.

In writing this section, list the name of the company/organization, job title, location (city and state), and dates of experience. Describe your job responsibilities using action verbs such as trained, planned, increased, etc. Examples of additional action verbs are listed on the next page. Provide the reader with a scope of your responsibilities or what you accomplished. Highlight any problems you solved, special projects, recommendations, awards and honors—anything that makes you special compared to your peers. When listing examples, state the problem that existed, describe what you did about it, and list the results. When applicable quantify with amounts, percentages, and dollar values to enhance your descriptions.

Examples of Job Statements
- Improved an obsolete filing system by developing a simple computerized database that allowed for tracking and retrieving files more efficiently.
- Selected as only co-op from fifteen to travel to Boston with senior software developer for client meeting and demonstration of product.
- Hired, trained, and supervised a waitstaff of seven.
Skills

Categories might include computer skills (programs, languages, networking, HW/ SW, Web site development, etc.), technical skills (circuitry, soldering, welding, working on engines, etc.), foreign languages, laboratory techniques, etc. (You can quantify in terms of years/months or in level of proficiency, skill, or fluency.) Feature your soft skills (organization, leadership, communication, time-management, team-building, etc.) only if you have relevant examples to present during an interview.

Honors or Achievements

List honors, awards, and scholarships that make you stand out as an individual, e.g., National Merit Scholarship Recipient, 2010; Placed second in Aerospace Design Competition, spring 2010; Recipient of the Georgia Tech Wohlford Scholarship, fall 2009.

Activities or Service

Include dates and any leadership/responsibility you may have had. Spell out names of professional and student organizations. Do not use acronyms. List any offices held and dates. Include clubs, sports, intramurals, volunteer work, mission trips, music lessons, etc., from both high school and college.

Additional Information (optional)

Hobbies or Interests: Identify those related to the job objective, e.g., traveling, building computers, and water sports (if job requires you to work outside or be in water). Identify hobbies/interests that clearly reveal a characteristic that supports your job objective.

List certifications, security clearances, patents, special awards, publications. (You can either categorize your information into separate sections or highlight under one header.)

You may state that you are a U.S. citizen.

References

Do not list your references on your resume. Have a separate printed list of references available upon request including title, phone, e-mail, and street address. References should be individuals familiar with your skills and experience such as professors, coaches, mentors, advisors, supervisors, etc.; they should not be personal acquaintances or relatives. Make sure that you inform your references before giving their names to employers.

Writing Tips and Guidelines

Keep your resume concise, neat, well organized, and clear. Limit the resume to one page unless you have extensive, relevant professional and academic experience and accomplishments. In this case, two pages are acceptable. If you have a two-page resume, include your name at the top of the second page. Following are resume writing tips and guidelines:

• Write in a consistent style (keep date formats and tenses consistent throughout the resume).

• Use a bullet or list format rather than complete sentences or paragraphs.

• Use reverse chronological order from most recent to least recent.

• Avoid semicolons and colons, which clutter the resume. Use periods and commas where needed. In a bulleted list, end punctuation is not required unless you’ve used complete sentences.

• Start with action verbs and avoid using “I.”

• Use a 10 pt., 11 pt., or 12 pt. font.

• Edit and proofread for typographical, spelling, and grammatical errors. Have someone else review and proofread your resume.

• Do not use abbreviations or acronyms; spell out names of organizations.

• Make sure resume is visually appealing and spaced evenly on page. Avoid excess white space in any of the margins.

• Present only positive and relevant information. DO NOT include your social security number, birth date, gender, health, height, weight, or other unnecessary personal information.

• Upload your resume to the Professional Practice Division job database, P2D2, as described in the following chapter.

• Update your resume each semester with your latest GPA and other relevant information (additional skills, coursework, activities, experience).

WARNING: Do not misrepresent yourself on your resume. This is a sure way to be eliminated from job consideration.

See Appendix A to view three sample resumes.
There are several methods available for finding a co-op job. All methods require working closely with your co-op advisor. The most common method is to apply for jobs on the Professional Practice Division Job Database, P2D2. This site lists job opportunities from companies specifically seeking to hire Georgia Tech co-ops. The system allows students to research employers and search for jobs twenty-four hours a day. However, you are not limited to jobs on P2D2. Any job that is related to your major, paid, supervised, full-time, and with increasing responsibility for the duration of at least three alternating semesters can be a co-op!

We encourage you to attend career fairs; search the Internet; attend information sessions; network with your professors, family, and friends who may have job leads; and research opportunities on your own by contacting companies directly. Remember to keep your co-op advisor informed of your job search progress and have any new company approved as an official Georgia Tech co-op employer. Your co-op advisor can also help you to follow up on potential leads that you find. The more proactive you are, the more successful your job search will be!

Meeting with Your Co-op Advisor

Your co-op advisor will review your resume, give you an overview of P2D2, provide you with interviewing tips, and offer you general guidance throughout the job search process. Once you begin working, your advisor will track your progress on the job and at school until you graduate. We strongly recommend that you visit with your advisor on a regular basis in order to take full advantage of the services offered by the co-op program.

Advisors typically see students each afternoon by appointment. Instructions on scheduling a meeting with your advisor are located in Appendix B. You must meet with your advisor and have your resume approved prior to gaining full access to P2D2. Our office is located on the first floor of the Savant Building, 631 Cherry Street, located on the corner of Cherry Street and Ferst Drive near Tech Tower. A list of co-op advisors by major is available at www.coop.gatech.edu.

Warning: Do not wait until the end of the semester to decide to go to work the following semester. Starting early is the key to successfully landing a great co-op job.

“We’re all pilgrims on the same journey — but some pilgrims have better road maps.”

— Nelson Demille
Reviewing the Job Postings

After your advisor has approved your resume, you will be given the ability to apply for jobs on P2D2. You must meet the job's GPA, major, and citizenship requirements to be eligible to apply. Job postings are either on-campus interviews or resume referrals.

On-Campus Interviews: If you apply for a job that is an on-campus interview, you must meet with your co-op advisor to schedule the actual interview time. Employers typically come to campus to interview for a period of several weeks during fall and spring semesters. Occasionally, interviews take place during the summer semester. Interviews are usually thirty minutes long and are held in the skyboxes on the first floor of the Bill Moore Student Success Center. For interviews in Skyboxes 1-7, sit in the waiting area down a hallway to the right from the main entrance. For interviews in Skyboxes 8-15, sit in the waiting area in front of Skybox 8, down a hallway to the left from the main entrance.

Note: A limited number of interview times are available for each company. Act early to improve your chances of obtaining an interview time.

Resume Referrals: If you apply for a job that is a resume referral, the employer will receive an electronic copy of your resume and will contact you only if you’re selected for an interview. If you’re selected as a result of a resume referral, the interview will likely take place by phone or at the job site.

You should review P2D2 frequently throughout the semester to catch new listings as they are posted. Also, we recommend starting your job search early in the semester, as job postings are removed from the system after the closing date.

After you’ve applied for jobs, you can use P2D2 to track when resumes have been sent to employers for resume referral jobs, and the dates, times, and locations of your on-campus interviews.

See Appendix B for instructions on using P2D2 to upload your resume and apply for jobs.

Cover Letter: When and How?

A cover letter is used to introduce yourself to a potential employer and to explain why you are interested in a particular position. Cover letters are needed when you are mailing or e-mailing your resume directly to an employer. However, you do not need to provide cover letters for P2D2 jobs. Cover letters must be carefully written because a letter that includes mistakes or awkward language will work against you. Appendix C includes useful guidance for writing a cover letter.

Researching Potential Employers

Use P2D2 Employer Profiles, the Web, your co-op advisor, professors, family, and friends to learn all you can about potential co-op employers. First, make sure the employer is one that truly interests you. Second, be able to demonstrate during an interview why you are a good match for the position. In some cases, you may go into an interview with less information than you desire. The interview itself will provide an opportunity for you to ask questions about the employer and the types of assignments you may be given if hired.

In some cases, co-op candidates are invited for a site visit with the employer. Site visits are a valuable opportunity for gathering information and getting a general feel for the work environment.

Some employers schedule information sessions a day or so prior to the interviews. These sessions are invaluable for learning more about an employer and what a co-op assignment may involve. Details about information sessions are located on the Professional Practice Web site.

“As a first-term co-op, I managed projects, including designing layouts and foundations for machines and coordinating bids for contracted work. In fact, I scheduled an entire modernization project (a $30 million, two-year project).”

– Mechanical Engineering Co-op
Chapter 5
Preparing for and Participating in Successful Interviews

Would you consider taking an exam without preparing in advance? Of course not. At times, students approach interviews without preparation and find that the students who did prepare end up landing the best jobs. Become thoroughly familiar with the information in this section. It contains important information on the following:

• what to take to the interview
• where the interview will be held
• what to expect during the interview
• how to follow up after the interview

Take advantage of the one-hour Interview Tips Workshops offered by the Division of Professional Practice! Visit our Web site (www.coop.gatech.edu) for a list of times and locations. You can also visit Career Services for interview tips.

Interview Day
Most on-campus interviews take place in the skyboxes in the Student Success Center. If you do not know the location of the skyboxes, visit the Student Success Center ahead of time to become familiar with the layout of the building. Each wing of skyboxes has its own waiting area where you should sit until the interviewer calls your name. The skybox numbers can be found on P2D2 and are posted in the Student Success Center lobby daily. Always check your e-mail for possible room changes or cancellations.

Some important points to remember for interview day include the following:

• Arrive ten to fifteen minutes before your scheduled interview.
• Dress in appropriate business attire and look professionally groomed.
• Bring copies of your resume, transcripts, and a typed reference list. You may also wish to bring documentation from projects that you’ve worked on, copies of awards, or letters of recommendation.
• Bring company notes, job description, and a list of questions you would like to ask during the interview (sample questions are listed on page 12).
• Place the items you are bringing in a nice notebook or portfolio to enhance your professional appearance.

What to Expect During the Interview
The recruiter begins to evaluate you the minute you are identified. You are expected to shake the recruiter’s hand upon being introduced. Don’t be afraid to extend your hand first. Doing so shows assertiveness.

Many recruiters will begin the interview with some small talk. Topics may range from the weather to sports and will rarely focus on anything that brings out your skills. Nonetheless, you are still being evaluated. First impressions often are the most important, so don’t underestimate the significance of this phase of the interview. Even though the small talk seems informal and relaxed, it has a definite purpose. Recruiters are trained to evaluate candidates on many different points. They may be judging how well you communicate on an informal basis. This means you must do more than smile and nod.

The main part of the interview starts when the recruiter begins discussing the organization. He or she may spend a great deal of time talking about the position and the organization while discussing your background. On the other hand, discussion about the organization may be quite limited. Be prepared for either scenario.

If the recruiter discusses vague generalities about the position and you want more specific information, ask questions.
Don’t be afraid to ask questions during this part of the interview. Don’t interrupt the recruiter mid-sentence, but ask your questions at the first opportunity.

When the recruiter begins talking about your resume or asking questions about your qualifications, it’s time to emphasize your positive traits. You should indicate through thoughtful answers why you are an excellent candidate for the position.

Your skills are your strongest selling points. It is not as effective to state that you are skilled at something as it is to give an example of how you are skilled at something. Use descriptive action verbs and include the outcome. Use the STAR Technique below to develop your skills examples:

S  Situation (Explain the situation)  OR
T  Task (What task were you assigned?)
A  Action (How it was handled)
R  Result (The outcome)

Examples
• Developed computer program to estimate power losses in plated waveguides.
• Coordinated fraternity activities resulting in a 50 percent increase in membership.
• Managed more than 400 community volunteers responsible for raising more than $2 million for local United Way.

You may have points in your background that could be construed as negative, e.g., a low grade point average. It’s up to you to point out the positive benefits that may arise from a negative situation and to follow any admission of weakness with a powerful statement about your strengths.

Many times recruiters will ask why you chose the major you did or what your career goals are. These questions are designed to determine your goal direction. Employers seek people who have direction and motivation.

You may also be given a hypothetical scenario and asked how you would respond in such a situation. These behavior-based questions give the interviewer insight into your priorities and your problem-solving ability.

Throughout the interview, maintain frequent eye contact with the interviewer, project a positive attitude, show enthusiasm, and express your points clearly and thoroughly. Exude confidence without appearing arrogant.

Questions Interviewers Commonly Ask

Plan how you would answer each of the following:
• Why did you choose to interview with our company/agency?
• Describe your ideal job.
• What can you offer us?
• Where do you want to be in five years? Ten years?
• Do you plan to return to school for further education?
• What skills have you developed?
• Did you work while going to school? In what positions?
• What did you enjoy most about your last employment?
• What did you enjoy least about your last employment?
• What did you learn from your past work experiences?
• Have you ever quit a job? Why?
• Why should we hire you rather than another candidate?
• Why did you choose your major?
• What do you consider to be your greatest strengths?
• Can you name some weaknesses?
• Do you prefer to work under supervision or on your own?
• Would you be successful working on a team?
• Of which three accomplishments are you most proud?
• In which campus activities have you participated?
• Have you ever dropped a class? Why?
• What do you know about our company/agency?
• Which college classes have you enjoyed the most? Why?
• Which college classes have you enjoyed the least? Why?
• Who are your role models?
• Do your grades accurately reflect your ability?
• Have you worked under deadline pressure? Give an example.
• Are you able to work on several assignments at once?
• Do you prefer large or small companies? Why?
• How do you feel about working in a structured environment?
• How do you feel about working overtime?
• What do you do in your spare time?
• What problems have you solved in your previous positions?
• Have you ever done volunteer work? What?
• Define “success.” Define “failure.”
• How do your college education and personal career goals relate to this job?
• How did you get along with former professors/ supervisors/co-workers?
• How many classes do you typically miss because of illness or personal business?
• Tell me about yourself. How would a friend describe you?
• What computer experience do you have?
• Have you ever given a presentation to a group of people?
• Would you be willing to take a drug test?
• What supervisory or leadership roles have you held?
• Tell me about one setback or difficult challenge you have experienced and explain how you handled it.

Tips on Answering Tricky Questions

What is your biggest weakness?
Mention a weakness that can also be considered a strength (e.g., “I’m a perfectionist” or “Because I expect so much of myself, I sometimes expect too much from other people.”). Include ways in which you are trying to overcome your weakness, e.g., if you are unorganized, you could say you’ve recently taken a time-management course and are implementing the techniques you learned.

What other companies are you applying to?
Be vague and say that you’re pursuing several opportunities that potentially match your career goals.

What do you want to be doing ten years from now?
Avoid stating a goal that the employer may not be able to help you reach. Answer such a question in general terms: “I want to be part of an organization that allows me to grow personally and professionally. I’d like the opportunity
It’s Your Turn to Ask Questions

When the recruiter asks, “Now, do you have any questions?” you never want to say, “No, you’ve stated everything I need to know.” There is little chance the two of you have covered everything. Failing to ask questions may be interpreted as lack of interest on your part. By asking intelligent, thoughtful questions, you show the employer you are serious about the organization. It also indicates you’ve done your homework.

You may not have time for all the questions you wish to ask. However, ask the ones that interest you the most, and be sure to include specific questions that indicate your knowledge of the organization. Use the list below as a starting point.

• Can you tell me what a normal day is like for a co-op at your company?
• Will this co-op position be assisting one of your professional staff or working on a specially designed project?
• (If it is a project) Will the project be completed in the work term or carried on by another co-op student in a subsequent term?
• Will I be trained by a co-op who has this position already or by the professional staff?
• Who would be my supervisor?
• How does this co-op position fit in with the professional staff positions?
• Will I move around during my work terms to various projects or departments?
• Can you tell me what types of positions or projects I might have during subsequent co-op periods?
• Do you have other co-op students working for you?
• How long have you had co-ops working for you?
• Do co-ops progress at their own pace or is the pace structured?
• How much supervision does a co-op receive?
• Do co-ops have the opportunity to participate in training experiences?
• What percentage of your co-ops receive full-time offers after graduation?
• When should I expect to hear back from you?

It is important to remain enthusiastic and courteous. Often the conclusion of the interview is indicated when the recruiter stands up. However, if you feel the interview has reached its conclusion, feel free to stand up first.

Ask the recruiter for a business card if you have not already been offered one. Reaffirm your interest in the position and thank the interviewer for considering you. Offer a firm handshake.

The Close Counts, Too

The interview isn’t over until you walk out the door. The conclusion of the interview usually lasts five minutes and is very important. During this time, the recruiter may be assessing your overall performance as well as how you handle yourself during the last few minutes.

It is important to remain enthusiastic and courteous. Often the conclusion of the interview is indicated when the recruiter stands up. However, if you feel the interview has reached its conclusion, feel free to stand up first.

Ask the recruiter for a business card if you have not already been offered one. Reaffirm your interest in the position and thank the interviewer for considering you. Offer a firm handshake.

Following Up After the Interview

Within twenty-four hours of your interview, you should send the interviewer a thank you e-mail, handwritten note, or a typed letter using the contact information on his or her business card. This step is very important as it serves to keep you fresh in the interviewer’s mind and allows you to re-emphasize your interest in the position. Appendix D illustrates a sample thank you e-mail. (You may send your letter via e-mail or traditional mail.)

After the interview, mentally review what questions you were asked. Were there any questions you could have answered more completely or more appropriately? Make mental or written notes that may help you to more successfully negotiate future interviews.

Finally, stay in close contact with your advisor concerning offers and the proper procedure for accepting or rejecting co-op offers.

Interview Preparation Tips

• Attend an interviewing tips session offered by the Division of Professional Practice to learn more about the interview process.
• Participate in interview skills training conducted by Career Services.
• Ask a friend or relative to interview you using the questions in this handbook.
• Read the company’s Web site so you’ll have basic knowledge of the company’s structure, products, and history.
• Re-read the job description.
• Make notes on key points you want to get across during your interviews.

Cancellation/No-Show Policy

If you are scheduled for an on-campus interview or site visit, you are expected to keep your scheduled interview appointment. However, sometimes events arise that may cause you to cancel.

To cancel an interview, you MUST notify your co-op advisor as soon as possible. Failure to keep a scheduled interview or to cancel an interview properly will constitute a “no-show.” The Division of Professional Practice takes missed interviews very seriously because they are a poor representation of Georgia Tech.
Students who miss an interview may jeopardize their standing in the co-op program, and interviewing privileges will be suspended. To be reinstated, you will need to write a letter of apology to the recruiter and forward a copy to your co-op advisor. You will neither be allowed to sign up for additional interviews nor have your resume forwarded through our resume referral process until you have spoken with your co-op advisor and have been reinstated. This cancellation policy applies to students who miss a scheduled on-campus interview or an off-campus site visit/interview.

Preparing for an On-Site Visit or Second Interview

Being invited for an on-site interview after an on-campus interview means that you have passed the initial screening and the company is interested in moving you along to the next phase in the selection process. More often than not, you can anticipate this interview to be considerably longer and more in-depth than the initial interview. You should expect to meet with people from varying levels within the organization.

The interview format will vary according to the interviewer. You can be interviewed in the traditional format of a one-on-one encounter at the job site, or you may be placed in a group and questioned along with other candidates. You may face a panel of interviewers all alone, or you may be asked to share a meal with company representatives or meet in an unconventional place. The interview can last a few hours or an entire business day (even into an evening social function). Wherever and however you are interviewed, you need to be prepared.

The on-site interview provides you and the employer with the opportunity to explore further whether or not you are a good fit for the position and organization. In addition, it provides you with the opportunity to evaluate the organization's culture and your potential co-workers, supervisors, and executive managers. Do not accept a second or on-site interview if you are not seriously interested in the position or company. If you are no longer interested in a position, decline in a professional manner and leave a good impression. You may meet this employer again in the future as you advance in your career.

If you have been invited for a second interview by phone, it is a good idea to ask the company to follow up by e-mail so that all-important details are confirmed and understood.

You will need to know the following:

- name, address, e-mail, and phone numbers of the individual coordinating the visit
- position for which you are being considered
- travel arrangements—including both transportation and hotel/motel accommodations
- name of the person responsible for making these arrangements. (If you are expected to make your own arrangements, clarify up front the means of transportation recommended by the employer.)
- directions to the site and estimated travel time, if driving
- organization's reimbursement policies and procedures. (Be sure to clarify whether you can anticipate an “advance,” immediate payment upon arrival, or reimbursement after submitting appropriate paperwork and receipts.)
- agenda for the day, if available

Tips for a Second Interview

- Expect to dress in business attire, unless stated otherwise by the employer. Wear comfortable business shoes as the day may include extensive walking if you are scheduled for a tour of the employer's site.
- Bring a completely new set of questions to pose to the employer. Avoid asking questions that have already been answered by the employer.
- Review notes from the first interview.
- Re-read the company literature, company Web site, and job description.
- If possible, brush up on current events related to the organization. Such information is often available at the employer’s Web site.
- Ask for clarity on the procedures of reimbursements. Keep receipts for all expenses incurred.

As with all interviews, it is appropriate for you to send a thank you letter to each individual who interviewed you during the on-site visit.

Evaluations Made by Recruiters

During the interview, the recruiter will be seeking to evaluate the following:

- How mentally alert and responsive is the candidate?
- Is the applicant able to draw proper inferences and conclusions?
- Does the candidate demonstrate a degree of intellectual depth when communicating? Or is his/her thinking shallow and lacking depth?
- Has the candidate used good judgment and common sense regarding life planning up to this point?
- What is the candidate's capacity for problem solving?
- How well does the candidate respond to stress and pressure?
- How does this candidate compare with other candidates?
- Is this candidate a good match for the job and our organization?
Chapter 6
Accepting (or Declining) Offers

You’ve done the hard work of preparing a killer resume, researching employers, and participating in successful interviews. Now you’re beginning to receive offers. What are the next steps?

Getting the Offer

How do you decide if the organization is right for you? The decision should not be made lightly as you will be working for the same company for at least three work terms. If you are unsure of whether you should accept or decline a position, don’t hesitate to talk to your co-op advisor, parents, professors, and other people you trust. Your co-op advisor can provide you with a list of students currently co-oping at the company so you can contact them about their experience. If you haven’t had a chance to visit the company in the course of interviewing, ask your human resources contact person if this is possible.

Remember that once you accept an offer in any way — verbally or in writing — you are locked into that offer. It is unprofessional to change your mind because a better offer comes along. For this reason, you may wish to ask if it’s possible to have more time to make a decision while you’re waiting to hear back from other employers.

Here are some questions you can ask yourself that may help you in your decision-making process. You may want to make a list of pros and cons with regards to each offer you’ve received.

Assess the Organization

• How did the interviewer treat you?
• Did you like the people you met, and did you feel comfortable during the interview process?
• Is the organization growing or downsizing?
• Would you be working in a strong division or with a strong team?
• What is the organization’s culture (formal vs. informal, availability of outside functions and activities, etc.)?
• How does the employer treat and train its co-ops?
• What has been the employer’s co-op retention rate and after-graduation hiring rate?
• Can you see yourself working in this organization?

Assess the Position
• What are your specific job responsibilities, or how will you fit into the department needs?
• Does the job sound interesting, exciting, and challenging to you?
• Will you be given varied projects and exposed to different departments through the course of your work terms?
• How does the position fit with your long- and short-term career goals?
• What skills and experience will you gain from this job?
• How can the position prepare you for future opportunities?
• What is the growth potential in this position?
• What career track do employees in this position usually follow?
• How much overtime, if any, do the people in this position usually work?
• Will there be travel? If so, how much and how often?

Accepting Offers
After deciding on which offer to accept and which offer(s) to decline, congratulate yourself on a successful job search! Then, follow the next steps to finalize your co-op position:
• Notify your co-op advisor immediately of all co-op job offers.
• Have the employer follow up all verbal offers of employment to you in writing, and let them know when you have received them.
• Be prompt and adhere to deadlines for responding to job offers (one to two weeks is typically a reasonable amount of time).
• After accepting an offer, notify those organizations from which you are holding offers or interviews in which you are no longer interested. It is never ethical to accept a job offer and continue actively seeking employment until a better offer comes along. This behavior will damage your professional reputation and reflect negatively on Georgia Tech.
• Once an offer is accepted verbally, you must confirm acceptance of the position in writing. See Appendix E for a sample acceptance letter.

Declining Offers
If you feel an offer is not a good match with your interests and skills or if you’ve already accepted another offer, decline an existing offer in a prompt manner so that the employer can move on to another candidate. See Appendix E for a sample e-mail for declining an offer.

Passing a Drug Test
Many employers will make their offer contingent upon you passing a drug test. Here are some useful tips for passing the test:
1. Never use illegal drugs.
2. Avoid breathing second-hand marijuana smoke.
3. Avoid eating anything with poppy seeds during the forty-eight hours preceding the tests.

If you fail a drug test and believe the result is inaccurate, request that another test be performed. “False positives” occasionally occur.

Assess the Salary and Benefits
Although you may consider salary and benefits when making your decision, be aware that co-ops are not in a position to negotiate terms of employment. The quality of experience a job will provide is the most important consideration at this point in your career.
PART III: Additional Co-op Requirements and Information

“The only place success comes before work is in the dictionary.”

– Vince Lombardi
Chapter 7
Completing Co-op Requirements

Once you’ve obtained a co-op job, you must complete five requirements to gain credit for each work term:

1. **Register for the co-op course.** This tuition-free, audit-credit course will allow you to remain enrolled as a full-time student while co-oping. Students who do not register for the co-op course receive no credit for the work term.

2. **Work full-time for the required number of weeks.** During fall or spring, work sixteen to eighteen weeks. During summer, work twelve to fourteen weeks. A calendar of work and school dates is available at [www.coop.gatech.edu](http://www.coop.gatech.edu).

3. **Complete an Assignment Record on P2D2 at the beginning of each work term, after consulting with your supervisor.** This report captures your goals, objectives, and training for the work term.

4. **Complete a Work Report on P2D2 during the last week of each work term.** This form provides an opportunity for you to summarize your accomplishments and to rate your experience based on various criteria.

5. **Ask your supervisor to complete a Co-op Student Performance Evaluation at the end of the work term.** Your employer will be e-mailed a link to the performance evaluation near the end of each work term. Be sure to discuss your evaluation with your supervisor. You will be able to review the completed evaluation on your P2D2 profile.

**What Happens If I Choose Not to Co-op?**

If at any point you choose not to participate in the co-op program, please let your advisor know. He or she will ask you to either transfer out of the program or into the internship program. Since co-op is an official academic program, the Division of Professional Practice must track which students choose not to complete requirements for the co-op designation.

“My first co-op assignment was to research Mars and its environment. Since then I’ve been part of a team that supervises the availability of information to a mission design team. I had the opportunity to build a physical model of a project we worked on and to complete calculations for a transfer vehicle. It’s been very useful to see the ‘big picture’ and how everything in mission design comes together.”

– Aerospace Engineering Co-op
Ozzie was a computer science co-op working for an Atlanta firm.

One day he decided that things were going a little slowly at work and to combat boredom he would make a video of company projects and employees, even though the company’s employee manual stated that taking photos of any kind at the firm was not permitted.

What happened to Ozzie after the video episode? He was (a) asked to video the next company picnic, (b) offered a new programming project to relieve his boredom, or (c) fired. You guessed it. Not only was he fired, but he also did not get the letter of recommendation he had been hoping for.

When you think of the illustrious students Georgia Tech attracts, it may come as a surprise to you that nearly every semester co-ops are fired—not due to employer downsizing (although that occasionally happens as well) but for inappropriate behavior.

Being fired may very well negatively impact your future career. Your work history follows you into future job interviews and situations. Tech students have been fired for:

- sleeping on the job;
- coming to work late or leaving early (not working required hours);
- taking a sick day without calling in;
- using the company phone to make personal, long-distance calls;
- using a corporate credit card to make personal purchases;
- surfing the Internet or working on other personal projects during work time;
- having a lousy attitude; and
- failing to follow directions of the supervisor.

Now that you’ve considered some behaviors to avoid, let’s consider what the employer will expect from you:

- Report to work regularly and punctually; notify your supervisor immediately if an emergency causes you to be late or absent.
- Be enthusiastic, positive, and productive—no matter what task you are assigned.
- Abide by work regulations as defined by the employer.
- Dress appropriately for the work environment and according to employer expectations; ask about the dress code before your first day.
- Communicate professionally (e.g., don’t use smiley faces in e-mails, answer phones professionally, etc.)
- Break out of your cubicle, and meet people from other departments.
- Seek feedback concerning your job performance.
- Ask questions if unsure about procedures or expectations.

- Contribute fresh ideas and participate in team meetings and projects.
- If you encounter a “slow” time, ask your supervisor if you can take on a new project or if there are manuals you should be studying.

Conducting yourself appropriately and making a sincere effort to produce high-quality work will contribute significantly to your success as a co-op employee!

Work Ethics

A command of ethics involves knowing what’s right and wrong and doing what’s right. While most ethics concepts are easy to understand (don’t harm others as a result of your actions or decisions, don’t steal from your employer, etc.), other situations are harder to navigate. As a co-op, rely on your mentor and supervisor for guidance if you’re unsure of the best approach in a given situation. Begin with a Web search to locate the code of ethics for your chosen profession. For example, engineering students can view the international code of ethics available at www.nspe.org/ethics. Sections include fundamental canons, rules of practice, and professional obligations.
Adjusting to work involves not only learning about the tasks expected of you, but also getting a feel for the corporate environment, studying organizational charts, learning who has the information you need for completing projects, and knowing the proper person to speak with concerning pay/human resources issues.

First work terms occasionally do not meet students’ expectations. Keep in mind that you may not be given a major project until you’ve completed appropriate coursework and proven yourself through the successful completion of less important tasks.

If you have problems or concerns during your work term, speak with your supervisor, mentor, and/or co-op advisor. Don’t talk negatively about co-workers or work situations as a way to vent your frustrations. Tackle problems in a positive manner, get them resolved, and move on. Remember, there is no perfect job or situation. View the flaws in your job as opportunities for growth and improvement.

Don’t neglect the social aspects of your new work situation. Many co-op employers offer the opportunity for activities such as softball, lunches, parties, picnics, etc. Take advantage of these opportunities to have fun and get to know your fellow employees. If the employer has no structured activities for co-ops, offer to coordinate them yourself.

Lunch-and-learn sessions allow co-ops to socialize while hearing informative presentations from engineers, managers, or guest speakers. For large employers, tours of various departments are helpful.

If you are in a new city, read the local newspaper, pick up tourist information, and enjoy whatever the location has to offer. Students who have co-oped in the North Georgia mountains have enjoyed mountain biking and river rafting. Co-ops in Boston have gone to Fenway Park for Red Sox games. California-based co-ops have gone surfing in the Pacific. Take advantage of your after-work hours to experience new people and places.

Enjoying a balanced lifestyle and having a positive outlook will allow you to thrive both at work and in your personal life.

“Never would I have imagined that a simple co-op job would teach me so many things. I’ve gained knowledge that will last a lifetime.”

– Electrical Engineering Co-op
In today's growing world market, college students need practical experiences that enable them to expand their skills and flexibility, and companies need employees who bring broad personal and professional perspectives to their work. The experience of working abroad increases students' understanding of global relations and knowledge in their field of study and thus establishes strong employment credentials. Georgia Tech provides these productive global work experiences through the Work Abroad Program. The Work Abroad Program includes co-op, internship, graduate, and undergraduate work experiences. These international work assignments are designed to immerse students in practical training, cross-cultural exposure and learning, and acquisition of the soft skills that set students apart from others. Accepted students also attend a mandatory pre-departure, cross-cultural, and safety orientation assisting in their preparation for living and working abroad. Opportunities are available during summer, fall, or spring semesters. Students may work abroad in order to satisfy a portion of regular co-op requirements and/or to satisfy requirements of the International Plan.

The benefits of working abroad include:

- Cross-cultural exposure through living and working in a foreign location
- Improved foreign language ability
- Access to jobs not available in the home country
- Enhanced employability upon graduation
- Social and personal development
- Improved interpersonal skills
- Opportunities to network with current professionals

Co-op students may pursue the International Plan designation in coordination with the co-op degree designation. The basic requirements for the International Plan designation include:

1. Foreign language skills
2. Globally focused course requirements
3. Minimum of six months of international experience
4. Capstone course

For more information, please visit: www.internationalplan.gatech.edu.
Study Abroad Combined with Work Abroad

The Division of Professional Practice strongly encourages co-ops to take advantage of the many study abroad opportunities available. Students on a co-op rotation may sign up for a study abroad program to coincide with any of their planned school terms. Some study abroad programs make an ideal lead-in to an international work term. For example, students may attend the summer undergraduate program at Georgia Tech-Lorraine. The Georgia Tech campus in Metz, France, offers a convenient transition to a fall international co-op work term with an employer in France or Germany.

Students should inquire at the Office of International Education, www.oie.gatech.edu, as well as the Work Abroad Program office for more details on various study and work abroad options.

Obtaining an International Work Assignment

Remember, the “total experience” of living and working abroad is what really matters when considering your efforts to become a globally competent graduate. You should start the process as early as possible or at least nine months before your desired departure. Remember that a placement abroad takes longer to secure than a local placement. Ideally, choose your language track in your first year, then start interviewing with domestic employers that have facilities or partnerships abroad that may lead to an international assignment.

Schedule regular meetings with the work abroad advisor and your co-op advisor.

Advisors will:
• review your resume and advise changes for curriculum vitae format;
• advise you throughout the international job search process;
• provide guidance through the work visa process;
• complete paperwork needed to confirm and authorize the employer;
• confirm minimum international insurance needs are met;
• confirm registration in appropriate international co-op/internship course; and
• monitor your work performance and academic progress throughout your international work experience.

Students seeking an international assignment must have the following:
• A minimum 2.0 GPA
• A minimum of 12 hours the semester before they begin their co-op/internship and an established academic record at Georgia Tech
• Good communication and social skills
• Enthusiasm for and a commitment to the goals of international education

Additionally, candidates must be:
• a close match to the job requirements;
• a good ambassador, open to new cultures;
• flexible, adaptable, self-reliant, and motivated;
• willing to ask questions; and
• mature, reliable, and independent.

If you feel that you’re a strong candidate for such a position, visit the Work Abroad Program Office in the Division of Professional Practice to discuss your goals. Working abroad can significantly impact your life, both professionally and personally!

For More Information

Students interested in working abroad should discuss this option with their co-op advisor and a work abroad advisor in the earliest stages of planning their job search.

Work abroad assignments can count toward your co-op requirements. Remember that any changes to your planned alternation schedule must be coordinated through your co-op advisor.

For more information on the work abroad program, visit www.workabroad.gatech.edu.

“As an international co-op, I was located in Beijing and worked on two major projects. The more exciting of the two involved the building of a gymnasium that was used for the Olympic Games. The most rewarding project, however, was building a small mud-and-concrete bridge in a country village. This single bridge allowed more than 50,000 people living in the mountains to use trucks to transport their goods. Without the bridge, the villagers had to carry all their goods by hand more than thirty miles to the nearest road. The entire project cost less than $10,000 and was donated to the people. Because an average salary per month for someone in this area is only $30, without outside help these people have little hope of a better life.

The co-op program has been a tremendous blessing to me. If you would like to travel, see the world, and help other people, then consider the international co-op program.”

– Civil Engineering Co-op
International co-ops are eligible to work under Curricular Practical Training (CPT) during alternating work terms. International students who co-op only three alternating terms will earn the co-op designation and preserve all their Optional Practical Training (OPT) for after graduation. In order to maintain OPT, international co-ops should not exceed three work terms. Students who choose to co-op more than three terms should discuss special requirements and considerations with the Office of International Education (OIE) and with their co-op advisor.

In order to use CPT, you must take very specific steps in a timely manner:

1. Upon getting a job offer that you plan to accept, take a copy of the written offer letter to your co-op advisor.
2. Your co-op advisor will prepare a letter for OIE stating that the job is a required component of the co-op program. This letter will also include the name and address of your employer and the exact dates you will work.
3. Take the letter to OIE and have your I-20 updated with the approved work dates. OIE will need approximately five working days to update your I-20.
4. If you don’t have a Social Security number, use your work authorization documents to apply for one. It may take several weeks to get your Social Security number; some employers will not let you begin working without one.
5. Take a copy of your updated I-20 to your co-op advisor, and ask him or her to issue you a permit for the co-op course.
6. Register for the co-op course.
7. Make arrangements to begin work on the starting date listed on your I-20.

Job Search Tips

- Ensure that writing skills conform to American Standard English by taking classes that include writing.
- Enhance communication skills by talking or speaking in class, making presentations, taking a speech communication class for credit, watching television, attending workshops on resume writing and interviewing, participating in interview skills training with Career Services, and reading the newspaper and academic/career publications.
- Make sure your resume is free of grammatical and spelling errors as well as awkward use of language.
- Study commonly asked interview questions. Note answers to those questions and practice your response in front of a mirror as well as with friends.
- Self-disclosure of strengths, weaknesses, personality, leadership style, problem-solving abilities, etc., may be appropriate during interviews.
• It is acceptable to ask an employer at the close of the interview when you can expect to learn about the outcome of the interview. Avoid asking about salary or benefits until you receive an offer — unless the interviewer brings it up first.

• Inquiring about the status of an application after the interview is acceptable and demonstrates interest in the position. However, it is important that you respect the interviewer’s stated timelines and work with your co-op advisor if you have a conflict and need answers regarding your interview status.

Helpful Links

Office of International Education
www.oie.gatech.edu

Career Services
www.career.gatech.edu

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
www.uscis.gov

U.S. Social Security Information
www.ssa.gov/pubs/10181.pdf

International Student and Study Abroad Resource Center
www.internationalstudent.com
Chapter 12

Frequently Asked Questions

Will my co-op advisor find a job for me?
The co-op advisor will offer guidance during your job search and make sure you know how to research job opportunities. However, it is your responsibility to apply and interview for available co-op positions. There are no guarantees that you will secure a co-op job. Barriers to locating a job include being inflexible regarding the geographic location in which you are willing to work and/or the term in which you wish to begin working. Another possible barrier is having a GPA that is lower than what employers typically desire.

May I apply for co-op opportunities that I locate on my own?
Yes! However, the Division of Professional Practice must approve the company and co-op opportunity in which you are interested. You must work out such arrangements with your advisor. Remember that the job must be related to your major, paid, full-time, supervised, and with increasing responsibility for at least three alternating semesters.

May I begin the co-op program if I am not committed to completing it?
No. You will be allowed to begin co-op employment only if you intend to meet all requirements of the program, including working a minimum of three work terms — two of which must be during a fall or spring semester. If you do not have time to complete the required number of work terms, you may wish to consider the internship program.

If I cannot find a job or change my mind about pursuing a co-op position, will the Division of Professional Practice automatically drop me from its rolls?
No. You must withdraw from the Co-op Program through your co-op advisor.

If I don’t intend to begin the job search for two or three terms, do I still need to see my co-op advisor?
Yes. Students in the Co-op Program should see their advisor at least once each term.

If I decide to accept an offer, may I do so by telephone?
In certain situations, you may be made a verbal offer over the telephone. You may accept the offer over the phone; however, you must follow up with a written
acceptance letter to the individual who has extended the offer. If you are made the offer during a plant visit or second interview, you still must follow up in writing. Give a copy of the acceptance letter to your co-op advisor. See Appendix E for a sample acceptance letter.

After accepting a job — even if the acceptance has been only verbal — you may not consider other offers. Once you accept a job offer, inform other employers with whom you have pending offers, and notify your co-op advisor. Cancel any other scheduled interviews or on-site visits.

How long are the work terms?
Refer to your co-op calendar (available at www.coop.gatech.edu) and information from your co-op advisor and employer to determine the exact length of the work term. Co-op students must work sixteen to eighteen weeks during a fall or spring semester and twelve to fourteen weeks during summer session. Many employers need to keep you on the job until your alternate is ready to begin work during the following term. The employer may even request that your work dates overlap with those of your replacement.

Once my Georgia Tech co-op advisor has worked out an alternation schedule for me, may I modify it?
No! Your alternation pattern cannot be changed without approval from both your co-op advisor and employer.

How many work terms must I complete to earn the co-op designation on my diploma?
You must work at least three alternating work terms, at least two of which must be during fall or spring.

If I’m not pleased with my co-op experience, may I change employers?
Students typically complete at least three work terms with the same employer. Students who must change employers due to a change of academic major or to being downsized by an employer should work with their co-op advisor concerning the possibility of completing the co-op program. Most students will find they have the flexibility to intern with one or two additional employers before or after completing the three co-op rotations.

During work terms, will I be considered a full-time student at Georgia Tech?
Yes. If your health insurance company requires proof of your full-time status, you may obtain the necessary documentation, Verification of Enrollment, via www.coop.gatech.edu/work_forms.php.

Is tuition charged for the co-op course?
No tuition is required for this course.

Is a grade given for the co-op course?
The course is an audited course, and a letter grade is not given. A successful audit results in a designation of V on the transcript, and an unsuccessful audit results in a designation of W on the transcript. To earn a successful audit, be sure to complete the five requirements discussed in Chapter 7.
What happens if I forget to register for the co-op course?
If you do not register for the co-op course, your work term will not count toward your completion of the co-op program, and you will not be enrolled at Georgia Tech for that term. Failure to register for the co-op course may jeopardize your ability to earn the co-op designation on your diploma and your ability to obtain health insurance.

How will co-oping impact my scholarships?
Scholarships are typically not impacted by co-oping. For example, HOPE scholarships are disbursed only during regular school terms. Co-ops should contact the Office of Financial Planning at www.finaid.gatech.edu/contacts for more information about individual scholarship situations or to find out how co-oping may impact other types of financial aid packages.

What salary can I expect?
Salaries are set by employers and can vary widely from one company to another. Your primary goal as a co-op student should be to obtain the best work and educational experience possible. At this point in your career, salary should not be a major factor in deciding which co-op offer to accept.

If I am working in metro Atlanta, can I continue living in campus housing?
Yes, if it is available and if you’ve met deadlines required by the Housing Office.

If I work outside Atlanta, will my employer locate housing for me?
You are ultimately responsible for making your own living arrangements. Employers often give students lists of local apartment complexes to assist them in their housing search. You may also be able to get advice from other co-ops who have worked, or are currently working, for your employer. Occasionally, employers provide subsidized housing at a pre-arranged location.

Am I expected to maintain the GPA listed in the job posting throughout my studies at Georgia Tech?
Employers may expect you to maintain the GPA listed in the job posting throughout your studies at Georgia Tech, but they often simply use this GPA requirement to screen students during the job application process.

How will my work performance be evaluated?
Your supervisor will use the Student Performance Evaluation Form (or substitute one preferred by the company or agency) to evaluate various aspects of your performance. Your supervisor should discuss your performance rating with you at the end of each work term.

You will provide your perceptions of the co-op assignment as you complete your work report on P2D2. As previously noted, submitting a work report at the end of each term is a requirement of the co-op program.

What types of information will I provide on the work report?
Work reports provide an opportunity for you to summarize your responsibilities and accomplishments and to provide feedback about your co-op job based on various criteria. Work reports are used to help verify that you have met requirements for graduating with the co-op designation, so plan to complete them accurately and in a timely manner. After removing the confidential information, the Division of Professional Practice may make your reports available to assist other students as they research particular employers.

May I take a course during my work term?
Co-op students working in Atlanta are occasionally able to take a class on campus during a work term. Such an arrangement depends on the willingness and ability of your employer to offer you a flextime schedule of forty hours per week. Taking a distance learning course or a course at another university is also sometimes possible.
First, ask if your supervisor approves of you taking a class during a work term. If you plan to take a Georgia Tech course during a work term, contact your co-op advisor to obtain the correct registration permit. If you wish to take a course at another institution during your work term, check with your academic advisor in advance to make sure the credits will transfer. See www.coop.gatech.edu/taking_coop_course.php for additional information.

What student organizations are specifically related to the co-op program?
The Briaerean Society was founded in 1922 for the recognition of those Cooperative Plan students who have attained a high scholastic average. The objective of the society is to promote the scholarship of all students. Juniors and seniors who have earned at least a 3.0/4.0 cumulative GPA and completed at least two work terms are eligible for membership. Each year at the Student Honors Day luncheon, the society acknowledges the graduating senior with the highest grade point average. In addition to promoting scholastic achievement, the society also organizes an annual honors banquet for graduating co-ops, selects a “Co-op Employer of the Year,” and performs service projects for the Georgia Tech community.

Additional opportunities for co-op student involvement exist in various organizations. For example, selected student government positions are designated for co-op students to provide co-op representation for the student body.

As a co-op, will I be able to study abroad?
You may study abroad during any of your regularly scheduled school semesters. Study abroad semesters should be planned well in advance with the assistance of the Office of International Education. See Chapter 10, which includes information on combining study abroad with work abroad opportunities.

As a co-op, can I work abroad?
Yes! One or more of your work terms can be international. If you are interested in working abroad, you will need to work with both your co-op advisor and the work abroad advisor. In most cases, you should also be studying the language of the country in which you would like to work.

What is the difference between a co-op job and an internship?
The Division of Professional Practice administers both the co-op and the internship programs. Both allow students to register for a course to maintain full-time student status during work terms. The major difference is that the co-op program involves multiple work terms spanning a significant portion of a student’s undergraduate studies and leads to the co-op designation, whereas an internship involves only a one-term commitment on the part of the student and employer. Co-oping allows students to gain a greater depth of experience, perform better in their coursework, and get a larger number of job offers upon graduation. See www.dopp.gatech.edu for additional information on the two programs.

Can an internship count toward my co-op requirements?
In some cases, an internship can count as a co-op term. If a co-op student has completed three work terms with a co-op employer and decides to add an internship with a different employer sometime prior to graduation, the student will be carried as a co-op during the internship. If a co-op student’s first work assignment is an internship and the student is willing to consider working future alternating semesters with the same employer, then the internship can count as a co-op assignment. Also, a work abroad assignment can be counted as a co-op term. Speak with your co-op advisor for more information about your specific situation.

Deciding to co-op may be one of the best decisions you make during your college career! Nearly all Georgia Tech co-ops who are surveyed prior to graduation agree that the program was well worth the time they invested in it and that they would recommend the program to other students. Virtually all co-op alumni attest to the value co-op provides them in their careers. Working in a professional position related to your major results in a truly complete education.

This handbook has covered the benefits of co-oping, the process of finding a job, and the requirements and procedures of the co-op program. Now that you’ve read it, keep it and refer to specific chapters and appendices relevant to your needs. Although the handbook contains a great deal of useful information, it is no substitute for the guidance of your co-op advisor, with whom you should meet frequently.

The Co-op Program can help you create a meaningful start to your career, but you must do your part. Treat your job search process with the same attention you would give to a major project or final exam. Once you’ve secured a position, give your employer your best effort while learning as much as possible. The rewards you receive—both tangible and intangible—may surprise you.

Best wishes for success!
Claire A. Chan  
89 Skapura Way • Long Branch, NJ 28366 • cchan6@gatech.edu • 404-111-2222

OBJECTIVE
To obtain an electrical engineering co-op position beginning summer 2010

EDUCATION
Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, GA .......................... Aug 2008 – May 2012
• Candidate for Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering
• Certificate in Information Technology Management
• Overall GPA: 2.91/4.0, Major GPA: 3.13/4.0

Oxford Study Abroad, Oxford, England ......................................................... Summer 2009
• Completed 9 credits of humanities electives and traveled to 7 countries

EXPERIENCE
Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, GA ............................ Jan 2009 - Present
Teaching Assistant, School of Mathematics
• Tutored freshmen and sophomores in Calculus I and II,
  graded homework assignments and quizzes

MIT Web Technologies, Holmdel, NJ .................................................. Summer 2008
Programmer
• Met with clients to provide customer support for existing Web sites
  and develop specs for new Web sites
• Created custom Web sites for small business owners using PHP, HTML and Java

Target Store, Red Bank, NJ ............................................................. Summer 2007
Team Member
• Manned customer service desk, answered phones, processed returns
  and exchanges, processed money orders, and activated gift cards
• Named employee of the month for July 2007

SKILLS
Software: MATLAB, VMware, MySQL, Dreamweaver, Microsoft Office Suite
Programming: C, SWL, Python, Java, HTML
Platforms: Microsoft Windows XP/Vista/7, Mac OS X, Linux Ubuntu
Communication: Presentations to management, peers, clients and students; technical lab reports
Networks: Programming TCP/IP sockets
Instrumentation: Oscilloscope, multimeter, function generator, logic analyzer

LEADERSHIP
Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), Georgia Tech Chapter .......... Jan 2009 – Present
• Manage all financial transactions for $10,000 budget as Treasurer of
  the organization Engineering Students Without Borders, Georgia Tech
  Chapter, Member ................................................................. Aug 2009 – Present

• Worked on a team to design and implement a new water pump system
  in Honduras GT1000 Freshmen Seminar, Team Leader............................... Fall 2009

• Led a small group, assisted instructor with curriculum,
  and gave presentations on various topics
Paula Peach

Campus Address
885529 Georgia Tech Station
Atlanta, GA 30332
912-888-8888 (cell)

Permanent Address
Old Mill Road
Savannah, GA 31410
912-888-8888

OBJECTIVE
To obtain a spring 2011 co-op position related to mechanical engineering

EDUCATION
Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, GA 8/2010-present
• Candidate for Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering
• GPA: 3.78/4.0
• Faculty Honors

Armstrong Atlantic State University, Savannah, GA 8/2008-5/2010
• General studies, Regents’ Engineering Transfer Program
• GPA: 4.0/4.0

EXPERIENCE
Senior Work Project
Performed tests on trailer sheets. Organized data using Microsoft Excel.
Photographed various samples using digital camera.

Landscaping Services
Started and operated business. Cut grass. Planted trees and shrubs.
Designed flower beds.

SKILLS
• Proficient in Microsoft Office and AutoCAD
• Experience with MATLAB
• Experience with HTML, Microsoft FrontPage, and Web design

HONORS AND ACTIVITIES
• Member of National Society of Collegiate Scholars (2010-present)
• Member of Georgia Tech Chess Club (2010-present)
• Recipient of Governor’s Scholarship (2008)
• Member of High School Honor Council (2006-2007)
• Recipient of Bausch & Lomb Science Award (2007)
• Co-founder of high school’s Musicology Club (2007)
• Member of High School Quiz Bowl Team (2006-2008), Captain (2007-2008)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Enjoy building model airplanes and working on cars
U.S. citizen
Objective: To obtain a summer or fall 2011 co-op position related to computer science.

Education: Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, GA 8/2010-Present
- Candidate for Bachelor of Science in Computer Science
- Overall GPA 3.5/4.0
- President’s Scholar: Georgia Tech’s foremost merit-based scholarship, awarded to approximately 3% of entering freshmen each year

Significant Courses Taken:
- Calculus for Computer Science
- Computer Organization and Programming
- Software Practicum

Southern High School, Atlanta, GA 9/2006-5/2010
- Class Valedictorian 4.0/4.0
- Accelerated Learning Program

Skills: Hardware: Ability to design, build, and troubleshoot workstations
Software: Knowledge of most Microsoft Products, Adobe Photoshop
Programming: Advanced HTML, JAVA, C/C++
Foreign Languages: Spanish (fluent), French (conversational)

Experience: Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, GA 8/2010-Present
College of Computing Tutor
Tutor in JAVA and HTML
Conduct weekly group study sessions

Kroger, Atlanta, GA 5/2007-8/2010
Clerk
Stocked shelves
Operated cash register
Provided customer service

Honors & Activities: Peer Leader: Supervised and assisted 18 college freshmen (2010)
Volunteer: Techwood Tutorial Project (2010)
Scholarship Recipient: IBM Thomas J. Watson Scholarship (2009)
Eagle Scout: Boys Scouts of America (2008)
Appendix B – P2D2 Job Database Instructions

1) Log in to P2D2 at [www.p2d2.gatech.edu](http://www.p2d2.gatech.edu)
   Username = first portion of e-mail address
   Password = username + last two digits of birth year + birth month

   Example: If your e-mail is gtg111x and your birthday is March 1991, your password is gtg111x9103.

   **Note:** If you have changed your assigned e-mail address through BuzzPort or if you have several e-mail aliases, please try all versions.

2) To schedule a meeting with your co-op advisor (on Home tab):
   • Click Schedule/View Advisor-Student Meetings
   • Choose your advisor, and select a date and time
   • Click Schedule Meeting
   • Select entry from the “Reason for Meeting” menu and click “Update”

   **Note:** You must schedule or cancel a meeting at least four hours in advance.

3) To upload your resume (on Resumes and Docs tab):
   • Click Upload Document link and browse for the document.
   • Select the document type.
   • You can designate which of your resumes is the default for submission to employers if you choose to upload more than one.
   • Click Add to upload your resume.

   **Note:** Cover letters are not necessary for P2D2 jobs.

4) To search for jobs (on Find Jobs tab):
   • Click on the Find jobs matching my profile link at the top of the screen to find all jobs that match your major, GPA, and citizenship.
   • To save jobs, click the check box next to the jobs that you wish to save. Then click Save Selected Jobs at the bottom of the page.

5) To apply for jobs (on Find Jobs tab):
   • Click on the Job Number/Title.
   • On the Job Detail screen, click blue Apply button in top left corner.
   • On the Submit Documents screen, select your resume and/or cover letter.
   • Click the Submit button.
   • If the job is an on-campus interview, click on the interview date link on the Job Search Results page to see which time slots are available. Then contact your advisor so that he/she can schedule your interview time. Provide the company name, job number, interview date, and your first and second time preferences. Don’t delay scheduling your interviews; some interview schedules fill quickly.

   **Note:** If the job is a resume referral, your resume will automatically be sent to the employer after applying. Employers will contact you directly if they would like to schedule a phone or on-site interview.
Cover Letter Guide

Your Present Address
City, State    ZIP
Date of Letter

Individual's Name
Title
Employer/Company Name
Street Address
City, State    ZIP

Dear______________:

[Always try to address your letter to a specific person rather than “To whom it may concern” or “Dear Sir or Madam.” If it is impossible to learn a name, use the person’s functional title such as “Dear Human Resources Manager” or “Dear Selection Committee.”]

Opening Paragraph: [Indicate the reason for writing, the specific position or type of work for which you are applying, and how you learned of the position (friend, co-op office, newspaper). If no specific position is available, indicate how your interest was initiated. Briefly illustrate your knowledge of the organization.]

Middle Paragraph: [Explain why you are interested in working for this employer. Discuss or highlight any related experience and point out your particular achievements, including your academic background, that make you a qualified candidate for the position. Refer the employer to your enclosed resume and, if included, your transcript.]

Closing Paragraph: [Express your desire for an interview or appointment, giving your phone number and e-mail address, and offering any suggestions to facilitate an interview. For example, say you will be in the city where the organization is located on a certain date and would like to set up an interview. Offer a suggestion to encourage further contact through a statement such as, “If you have questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me at 404-555-0000. I look forward to hearing from you.”]

Sincerely,

(signature)
Typed Name
Sample Cover Letter

[Heading]

[Inside Address]

Dear Ms. Smith:

I am writing to inquire about co-op opportunities within [name of company]. I was very impressed with your company after hearing a presentation by your CEO Janet Wylie, who serves on the Georgia Tech President’s Advisory Board. I am a sophomore at Georgia Tech majoring in computer science with a 3.25 GPA. I am interested in gaining valuable work experience while contributing to the profitability of your company.

As you can see from my attached resume and transcript, I have a solid academic background and developed leadership skills through high school football and by serving as president of [name an organization]. I enjoy a challenge and work hard to attain my goals. Based on my strong academics and work experiences, I believe I can make a significant contribution to your company. I am willing to learn any new skills or software applications that will assist me in doing my job.

If you feel that my credentials and experience fit your needs, please contact me at 444-555-5555. I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

(Signature)

Your Name

Another option for the last paragraph:

I will be in the Cary, North Carolina, area December 11-28 and would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss employment opportunities. I can be reached at the address and telephone number listed on my resume. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Note: Make sure the letter follows a business format. One page with three to five paragraphs in length is recommended.
Appendix D - Sample Thank You E-mail

Dear Ms. Jones:

I appreciate the time you spent with me during our interview at Georgia Tech yesterday and would like to reaffirm my interest in the mechanical engineering co-op position at XYZ Corporation. The types of projects that co-op students are offered at your plant fit well with my interests and career goals. I believe I have the qualifications you are seeking and can successfully complete the challenging assignments you described.

Please let me know if any further information is needed or would be helpful. I look forward to hearing from you and to the possibility of contributing to XYZ Corporation.

Best regards,

John Doe
Appendix E - Sample Acceptance and Decline Letters

**Accepting an offer**

Dear Ms. Jones:

I am pleased to inform you that I accept your offer of $________ per (month/week/hour) to work as a mechanical engineering co-op employee at XYZ Corporation. I will be available to report to work on Monday, August XX, 20XX. I understand that this employment is contingent upon my passing a drug screening and completing the necessary paperwork.

I appreciate having the opportunity to join your team of student employees and look forward to a successful fall co-op assignment.

Sincerely,

(Signature)

John Doe

---

**Declining an offer**

Dear Mr./Ms. [Recruiter Name]:

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to interview with [company name]. I appreciated the chance to meet with you and to learn more about your company.

Now that I have gone through the interview process, I have been able to clarify my career goals. Based on what I have learned about the various employers, I believe that [company name] is not the best match for my skills and interests. Please remove me from consideration for your current co-op opportunity.

I appreciate your time and the information you’ve shared. Best wishes as you seek the best co-op candidate for your needs.

Sincerely,

Your Name
Your Major
Georgia Institute of Technology
### Appendix F – Important Campus Phone Numbers and Web Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
<th>Website</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Athletic Association</td>
<td>404.894.5400</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ramblinwreck.com">www.ramblinwreck.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletic Ticket Office</td>
<td>404.894.5447</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ramblinwreck.com">www.ramblinwreck.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookstore</td>
<td>404.894.2515</td>
<td><a href="http://www.shopgatech.com">www.shopgatech.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bursar’s Office</td>
<td>404.894.4618</td>
<td><a href="http://www.bursar.gatech.edu">www.bursar.gatech.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BuzzCard Center</td>
<td>404.894.2899</td>
<td><a href="http://www.buzzcard.gatech.edu">www.buzzcard.gatech.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Recreation Center</td>
<td>404.385.7529</td>
<td><a href="http://www.crc.gatech.edu">www.crc.gatech.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Services</td>
<td>404.894.2550</td>
<td><a href="http://www.career.gatech.edu">www.career.gatech.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling Center</td>
<td>404.894.2575</td>
<td><a href="http://www.counseling.gatech.edu">www.counseling.gatech.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division of Professional Practice</td>
<td>404.894.3320</td>
<td><a href="http://www.dopp.gatech.edu">www.dopp.gatech.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek Affairs</td>
<td>404.894.2002</td>
<td><a href="http://www.greek.gatech.edu">www.greek.gatech.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia Tech Main Campus</td>
<td>404.894.2000</td>
<td><a href="http://www.gatech.edu">www.gatech.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Office</td>
<td>404.894.2470</td>
<td><a href="http://www.housing.gatech.edu">www.housing.gatech.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>404.894.4529</td>
<td><a href="http://www.library.gatech.edu">www.library.gatech.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of International Education</td>
<td>404.894.7475</td>
<td><a href="http://www.oie.gatech.edu">www.oie.gatech.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking Office</td>
<td>404.894.9645</td>
<td><a href="http://www.parking.gatech.edu">www.parking.gatech.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>404.894.2500</td>
<td><a href="http://www.police.gatech.edu">www.police.gatech.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registrar’s Office</td>
<td>404.894.4150</td>
<td><a href="http://www.registrar.gatech.edu">www.registrar.gatech.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarships and Financial Aid</td>
<td>404.894.4160</td>
<td><a href="http://www.finaid.gatech.edu">www.finaid.gatech.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Center</td>
<td>404.894.2788</td>
<td><a href="http://www.studentcenter.gatech.edu">www.studentcenter.gatech.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Health Services</td>
<td>404.894.1420</td>
<td><a href="http://www.health.gatech.edu">www.health.gatech.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Resource Center</td>
<td>404.385.0230</td>
<td><a href="http://www.womenscenter.gatech.edu">www.womenscenter.gatech.edu</a></td>
</tr>
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</table>