

Tech Snacks: The MSUN Career Center

MSU-Northern's motto is "Education that Works." Career perspectives and skill development are central to our institutional mission. Faculty can do a lot to open up students' exposure to career options and opportunities, but they can't do it all. This is where the MSUN Career Center comes in. From providing resume-building support, to organizing career fairs, to managing the co-op internship process, the Career Center does a lot to make sure that students can pursue their career goals.

The Career Center

The MSUN Career Center provides a comprehensive network of employment services for students, graduates, alumni, and employers.

How does the Career Center support students?

- Providing resume-building support
- Providing interview preparation opportunities
- Providing students access to the CareerExpress platform, which allows them to search for professional positions, co-op internships, and on- and off-campus jobs
- Coordinating college to career programming (industry presentations, etc.)
- Organizing on-campus job recruiting events (career fairs, employer info sessions)
- Coordinating on-campus job opportunities for students
- Communicating off-campus job opportunities for students
- Serving as a resource for campus clubs that want to pursue industry partnerships
- Managing the co-op internship process

How does the Career Center support faculty and staff?

- Offering classroom presentations to students about the Career Center and its services
- Serving as an industry liaison to help bring industry representatives onto campus and into classrooms
- Facilitating co-op conversations between students and their faculty advisor/s
- Administering the MSUN Graduate Survey and communicating results to campus

Co-op Internships

What is a co-op internship?

A co-op internship is an experiential, on-the-job learning opportunity that allows students to apply their skills within a professional setting and gain experience and insight in a given field. Learning outcomes include professional skills development, maturity, and increased motivation. A successful co-op experience can increase employment opportunities upon graduation.

Why should students pursue a co-op internship?

- They help students get insight and experience in a given field. Sometimes students realize that they want to pursue a certain focus within that field or that they need to take a different direction than they had planned.
- They can help students "try out" a specific employer and can help employers "try out" students. Co-op employers who had a great experience are more likely to hire that student when they graduate, or hire MSUN graduates in general.

- Co-op credits can count as upper division electives, and most students need extra credits in this area.

What is the process when a student wants to pursue a co-op internship?

Students interested in pursuing a co-op internship (and their advisors) should visit the [MSUN Co-op Internships](#) page for more information on how the program works.

Generally, the process is as follows:

- The student communicates with the Career Center (CC) and their academic advisor/s that they are interested in pursuing a co-op.
- The student may have an idea of what employer or what kind of position they would like to pursue, or they may want to consult with the CC and their advisor/s for suggestions about a position that would fulfill the appropriate academic outcomes (and also be feasible for the student in terms of pay, location, duration, nature of the work, career goals, etc.).
- In conversation with the employer and the student's academic advisor, the CC outlines the learning objectives and tasks that must be met by the student during the co-op.
- The CC coordinates co-op hiring paperwork that fulfills the requirements of the co-op program.
- The CC ensures that the student gets registered for the co-op in Career Express and for academic credit through the Registrar's Office.
- The CC monitors student progress throughout the term by collecting timesheets and administering a midterm and final assessment (reflection-oriented).
- At the end of the co-op duration, the CC administers an employer survey and collects feedback from the employer about the experience.

Things to remember about co-ops:

- They are taken on a pass/fail basis.
- A co-op can count for 1 to 12 credits (50 hours of work = 1 credit).
- The student must receive compensation (wage or stipend) unless the placement is with a governmental or nonprofit organization.
- Students pay for credits just as they pay for other course credits.
- The CC routinely connects co-op students with the Financial Aid office, especially for summer term. Sometimes students have more funding than they realize.
- Co-op employers (and recruiters) are explicitly forbidden from recruiting students away from their studies before they've graduated.

Career Express

The Career Center uses a platform called Career Express to connect students and alumni with employers and manage the MSUN co-op program. This tool also allows students to search for professional positions, co-op internships, and on- and off-campus job opportunities. Students (and alumni) can create a profile, upload a resume, and make it visible to employers. Employers can also create a profile and post open positions.