Co-operative Education & Career Services

Located in the William M. Tatham Centre for Co-operative Education & Career Services.
(519) 888-4026
www.cecs.uwaterloo.ca

Introduction

Co-operative Education & Career Services (CECS) is responsible for, and committed to, providing high-quality service to students and faculties in the development, identification, and recruitment of job/career opportunities for both co-operative education (Co-op) and non-Co-op students. CECS administers Co-op programs and career development programs for all students at the University of Waterloo. It also oversees the work experience of Co-op students to ensure wherever possible that their employment will complement their academic studies and provide them with the practical knowledge required to earn a Co-op degree in their field of study.

Much of this section describes the policies, practices, obligations, and expectations of behaviour that govern the Co-op program at the University of Waterloo. The University expects all participants in the Co-op process to conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner at all times.

The document outlines the primary components of the Co-op process—the identification of jobs, recruitment, job offers, work experience, and performance evaluation. Reference should also be made to the academic program section for each faculty in this Calendar for specific requirements of each Co-op program.

The Co-operative Education System

Co-operative education is based on the principle that an academic program combined with work experience in alternating terms is relevant to, and desirable for, effective professional preparation. Work term employment, which varies from sector to sector and location to location (opportunities exist around the world), allows students to acquire experiences in their areas of career interest, while academic terms are devoted primarily to fundamental and theoretical studies. These practical experiences and academic studies complement one another.

The motivation, responsibility, and opportunity for insight gained through Co-operative Education can be of significant value to the student’s future. The Co-operative concept enables those with a career orientation to become full-time students of their subject, both during the academic terms and during the related work terms, within a structure of organized purpose and serious study.

Co-operative Education & Career Services

The Co-operative Education System

The Co-operative system requires students to alternate periods of study with periods of employment. The period of employment is called a work term and is normally four months in length.

In the first year, some programs split the class into two groups: one, known as Stream 4, has its first work term after 4 months of study; the other, known as Stream 8, has its first work term after 8 months of study. Both groups receive the same total time on campus and at work. Stream 4 has a double academic term at the end of its sequence; Stream 8 has a double academic term at the beginning of its sequence.

Co-op programs that begin in Year 2 are not defined by “stream” and their study and work sequences vary by program (see Study and Work Sequence Chart in this chapter).

Change of Study and Work Sequence

A request to change the study and work sequence for a student’s program will be considered by CECS and the faculty in which the student is enrolled. An application from the student (supported by an employer and/or field co-ordinator) must be made to the appropriate faculty and CECS program administrator.

Normally, requests will only be considered if they are received no later than one month prior to the beginning of the term in which the switch will occur. In addition, the student’s academic and Co-op performance must be “in good standing”. A student’s academic sequence may be restricted due to a lack of choice of core or elective subjects during particular terms, and this circumstance does not constitute grounds for a sequence change.

Study and Work Term Dates

The dates for the beginning and end of academic terms are shown in the Undergraduate Calendar. The precise dates on which to start and finish individual work terms are established through consultation between students and their Co-operative employers.

Employment

The employment process is highly competitive, and factors such as academic performance, skills, motivation, maturity, attitude, professional conduct, flexibility, and performance potential determine whether or not a student is offered employment.

Although every effort is made by CECS to find a sufficient number of work term positions for students enrolled in all Co-operative programs, the openly competitive nature of the process means that no guarantee of employment can be made.

Work term employment agreements are between the student and the employer. The University of Waterloo is not a party to these agreements and assumes no financial or legal responsibility with regard to events or actions by either party that affect the employment situation for any Co-op student (e.g., layoffs, intellectual property issues, confidentiality agreements, strikes, etc.). Should the need arise, students are encouraged to seek whatever advice and/or guidance about their agreements they feel is necessary.
## Study/Work Sequence

**Note**: The letters A and B denote academic terms; • denotes work term.

### Plan (By Faculty)

#### Applied Health Sciences
- **Health Studies**: 1A 1B off term 2A - 2B - 3A - 3B - • - 4A 4B
- **Kinesiology, Recreation and Leisure Studies**: 1A 1B off term 2A - 2B - 3A - 3B - • - 4A 4B

#### Arts

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<td>Arts and Business with Cultural Management Specialization</td>
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<td>Arts and Business with International Trade Specialization</td>
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<td>Accounting and Financial Management – Public Accounting</td>
<td>1A</td>
<td>1B</td>
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<td>Economics (Applied)</td>
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<td>English – Rhetoric and Professional Writing</td>
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<td>off term</td>
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<td>4A 4B</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anthropology, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology</td>
<td>Regular</td>
<td>off term</td>
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#### Engineering
- Chemical, Civil, Computer, Mechanical Stream 8
- Chemical, Environmental, Geological, Mechanical, Mechatronics, Systems Design Stream 4
- Computer, Electrical Stream 4S
- Nanotechnology Stream 8S
- Software Engineering Stream 8

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<td>Nanotechnology Stream 8S</td>
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#### Environmental Studies
- Architecture
- Environment and Business
- Environment and Resource Studies
- Geography
- Planning

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<td>Environment and Business</td>
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<td>4A 4B</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environment and Resource Studies</td>
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**Footnotes**

- \( \star \) Faculty of Education component
- \( \dagger \) Teaching work term
- \( \ast \) Co-op begins in 2A. However, admission may be made either at the time of initial application or at the end of Year One.
- \( \nu \) Subject to minimum enrolment targets and availability of suitable Co-op employment, students select a Co-op stream to follow beyond 3B in consultation with their Co-op employer and Faculty Advisor.
- \( \omega \) Students seeking admission must normally have satisfactorily completed two work terms in another Co-op Math program.
- \( \chi \) Admission occurs by January for the 2B term.
- \( \psi \) Although Co-op begins in 2A, admission is made at the time of the initial application to the University.
- \( \theta \) Admission is based on Year One academic results (marks) and occurs in late May or early June.

(continued on next page)
**CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION & CAREER SERVICES**

**Study/Work Sequence (continued)**

### Study/Work Sequence

**Note**

- The letters A and B denote academic terms.
- * denotes work term.

#### Plan (By Faculty)

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<th>Chartered Accountancy</th>
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<td>1A 1B off term 2A - 2B - 3A - 3B 4A - 4B ** ‡ 4</td>
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<td>Stream 4</td>
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<th>Science</th>
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<tr>
<td>Atmospheric and Planetary Science, Biochemistry, Biology, Biotechnology/Economics, Chemistry, Computational Science, Earth Sciences, Environmental Sciences, Science and Business</td>
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<tr>
<th>Science Teaching Option (Physics)</th>
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<th>Science Teaching Option (Biology, Biochemistry, Chemistry)</th>
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<tr>
<th>Psychology</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular off term Reg 2B - 3A - 3B - 4A - 4B</td>
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**Footnotes**

- The letters A and B denote academic terms.
- * denotes work term.
- ** denotes special work term.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan</th>
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<tr>
<td>Co-op begins in 2A. However, admission may be made either at the time of initial application or at the end of Year One.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subject to minimum enrolment targets and availability of suitable Co-op employment, students select a Co-op stream to follow beyond 3B in consultation with their Co-op employer and Faculty Advisor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students seeking admission must normally have satisfactorily completed two work terms in another Co-op Math program.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Admission occurs by January for the 2B term.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Although Co-op begins in 2A, admission is made at the time of the initial application to the University.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Admission is based on Year One academic results (marks) and occurs in late May or early June.</td>
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<td>Specialization work term</td>
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<td>Point of admission to specialization</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minimum number of credited work terms required for graduation (4 credited work reports are also required for graduation for all Co-op students). An employer evaluation is required for each work term students undertake.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students admitted to Arts and Business Program 2 will not have a Co-op work term following 1B.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anticipated continuation beyond the Bachelor degree into the one-term Diploma in Accounting or the first term of the two-term Master of Accounting (MAcc) portion of the five-year integrated Accounting plan.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second term of the two-term Master of Accounting (MAcc) portion of the five-year integrated Accounting plan.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching work term under the auspices of a Faculty of Education.</td>
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If a student fails to secure employment through any interview process administered by CECS, every effort will be made to help that student find a suitable work experience.

**Responsibilities of CECS**

CECS will:
- develop Co-operative Education employment opportunities with public and private sector employers that fulfill the Co-operative Education degree requirements
- maintain and enhance relationships with existing employers
- provide career training, personal and professional development seminars and resources to enhance students’ on-going employability
- provide and manage administrative support for the recruitment process to employers and students including job postings, interview scheduling, interview facilities, computer matching, etc.
- present offers of employment on behalf of employers to students
- maintain contact (site visits, e-mail or telephone) with students and employers during the work term through the field co-ordinator
- provide advice and support to students and employers if difficulties arise during a work term
- ensure that any relevant and required documentation is provided to the student, the employer and the appropriate University department and/or Faculty
- establish and maintain a file for each Co-op student with documents that reflect the student’s Co-operative Education activities. Access to student files will be in accordance with UW Policy 19

**Responsibilities of Students**

**Eligibility**

Once accepted into the Co-op program according to the requirements of the respective Faculty, students will:
- maintain registration as full-time Co-operative Education students in their program in all terms from point of entry through to the final academic term and follow the study and work term sequence that corresponds to their program
- maintain acceptable academic standing according to the regulations of their program
- attend the sessions on career development pertaining to their Co-op employment in order to have a clear understanding of the process and to acquire job searching skills
- keep CECS informed of their employment status (e.g., actively seeking employment through CECS, returning to previous Co-op employer, or other situations) at all times
- ensure that their student file is updated and accurate
- complete all work terms and work reports, according to the requirements of their specific program, before their final academic term (4B) as defined by the “Study and Work Sequence” chart located in this chapter

**Seeking Employment**

Students will:
- seek employment using the interview processes arranged by CECS or consult with their CECS assistant director/Co-op advisor prior to pursuing their own job opportunities
- adhere to the policies and procedures of the interview processes as documented in the Important Co-op Dates and Procedures publication provided each term
- obtain prior assessment from their CECS assistant director/Co-op advisor before securing their own employment to ensure that the position is a potentially viable Co-op job that fulfills degree requirements and is suitable for work term credit. The final decision regarding credit will be made by the appropriate field co-ordinator.

**Job Applications**

Students will:
- inform themselves, as much as possible, about the specifics of the jobs for which they are applying through a complete review of the job descriptions, personal research and discussions with field co-ordinators
- apply for jobs for which they meet the stated requirements (skills, citizenship, academic status, etc.) and/or stated conditions (access to transportation, location, etc.)
- attend every interview for which they are selected not accept job offers from employers during the interview process

**Offer Process (Ranking)**

At the end of an interview period, students will:
- review online in JobMine CECS, a list of employers by whom they were interviewed and those employers’ corresponding rankings
- indicate their preferences (rank) in JobMine
- complete this task within a specified time frame with rankings corresponding to each of the listed employers
- accept the job for which they are matched through the ranking process

**Job Offers**

Because it is important to provide equal access and opportunity to all employers and students, students will:
- accept offers of employment made only through CECS, or with the full awareness of CECS
- refrain from exerting improper influence in an attempt to affect employers’ offers or preferences
- accept or decline offers of employment directly from the employer for the next scheduled work term prior to the end of the current work term
- honour any commitment for employment (reneging on a previously agreed upon offer of employment, failing to accept an employment match, failing to report to work for an agreed upon employment commitment etc. will result in disciplinary action)
Work Terms
As ambassadors of the University of Waterloo and its Co-operative Education program, students will:

- abide by the policies and procedures of their employer as well as the policies and procedures of the University and CECS
- fulfill the entire time commitment required for each Co-operative Education work term (normally four consecutive months)
- attempt to resolve any difficulties which arise during the work term with the employer
- contact their field co-ordinator prior to making any decision affecting their employer and/or employment
- ensure that their employer completes a “Co-operative Student Performance Evaluation” form prior to the end of the work term in order to receive credit for the work term (a work term evaluation is required for every work term undertaken by the student)
- inform CECS of their intentions for the next scheduled work term (returning to previous employer, participating in Co-op interview process, arranging own position, graduating, etc.) by the end of the first week of lectures

Work Reports
Work report requirements vary by Faculty and department. Students must submit work reports according to the requirements of their department and/or Faculty. Work report guidelines are available in a variety of formats (e.g., booklet, Web site, CECS Student Reference Manual).

Graduation
In order to complete successfully the requirements for graduation with a “Co-operative Education” designation on their degree, students will complete the minimum number of credited work terms and credited work reports required by their program (see Study and Work Sequence chart).

Accountability
The University reserves the right to take appropriate action in the event that a student does not adhere to the above policies and responsibilities. In some instances this may include a “Failed Work Term” decision for the relevant term, a delay in graduation and/or removal from the Co-op program.

Strikes
In any instance where a strike or labour disruption is anticipated, students should discuss the situation first with their employer, then with their Co-op field co-ordinator (who is the University’s contact with the employing firm). Students should also discuss with their employer what the expectations are with respect to crossing a picket line. In many cases alternate arrangements for work can be made between the student and the employer.

The length and timing of the disruption will determine whether or not credit for the work term can be granted. While the requirement for a work term credit is normally four months of full-time approved employment, allowances may be made on a case by case basis, at the discretion of CECS, for special circumstances such as strikes.

If it is clear that a work term will be jeopardized by a prolonged strike and the student chooses to leave the job, then CECS will make every effort to find another position. There is no guarantee, however, of substitute employment.

Payment of wages, or not (directly by the company or under a contract arrangement with the University of Waterloo), during a labour disruption remains the sole discretion of the employer.

There must be regular communication between the student and the field co-ordinator during a labour disruption. CECS will make every effort to monitor the situation both at the individual student level and, in general, with the industry or the employer.

Harassment/Discrimination/Safety
Government Human Rights Codes and Labour Codes govern the workplaces in which Co-op students find employment. The University has a commitment to its students that they, while engaged in University-related activities on and off campus, shall be free from harassment or discrimination. If either situation occurs in a Co-op workplace, students should contact their field co-ordinator, a harassment advisor in CECS, the Ethical Behaviour and Human Rights Co-ordinator at UW and/or UW Counselling Services. Similarly, issues of safety or expectations to engage in any behaviour that may pose a risk to the student’s well-being should be brought to the attention of the student’s field co-ordinator immediately.

Appeal Procedures
This chapter does not list all of the disciplinary actions that may be applied when the policies or regulations of CECS are not followed. Disciplinary action is left to the discretion of CECS and/or the Faculty in which the student is enrolled. An appeal process for students (UW Policies 70 & 71) will ensure that disciplinary decisions made by CECS (alone or in consultation with the student’s appropriate Examinations, Standings and Promotions Committee) may be reviewed or appealed at the request of the student.

Student Status
In order to administer the Co-operative Education process and to account for the activities of each co-op student, CECS has established status designations to document these activities. Status designations govern the participation, or not, of a Co-op student in some, or all, aspects of the Co-op process. Status designations and their privileges are as follows:

Employed: Interview Process – a student has secured employment through the Co-op interview process. A student who secures employment this way and completes the work term successfully will receive credit for that work experience.

Employed: Jointly-Arranged – the student has secured employment external to the Co-op interview process by the student with the assistance of CECS. A student who secures employment with such an employer and completes the work term successfully, will receive credit for that work experience.
**Employed: Student-Arranged** – the student has secured employment external to the Co-op interview process. A student who secures employment, has the employment approved for credit by CECS and completes the work term successfully will receive credit for that work experience.

**Employed: Returning** – the student’s next scheduled work term will be with a previous employer (as identified by the student) and prohibits access to the Co-op interview process.

**Unemployed: Interview Process** – permits a student access to the Co-op interview process in order to seek employment. A student who secures employment through this process and completes the work term successfully will receive credit for that work experience.

**Unemployed: Awaiting Decision** – the student sought and secured employment external to the Co-op interview process. The job is being reviewed for official work term credit.

**Unemployed: Interview Process** – the student sought and secured employment external to the Co-op interview process. The job is being reviewed for official work term credit.

**Unemployed: On Own Self-Imposed** – assigned by CECS to grant a student a leave of absence for personal reasons (e.g., health, travel or additional academic study). The student is not eligible for credit for the work term.

**Unemployed: Student-Arranged** – the student is seeking employment external to the Co-op process. CECS will also assign this status to students who have not applied to any jobs by the first day of the official final exam period (the assumption is made that the student is not taking part in the interview process). Access to the Co-op interview process is terminated.

**Unemployed: On Own University-Imposed** – assigned by CECS to designate a student who has not complied with a program regulation or procedure. Reasons for this notation include, but are not restricted to, missing interviews without just cause, failing to obtain approval to decline (sign-off) an employment opportunity or failing to properly register for employment. The student is not eligible for credit for the work term.

**Failed Work Term** – assigned by the appropriate Faculty and/or CECS to a student who has not met the requirements of the interview process or the work term. This notation may be assigned for reasons including, but not limited to: reneging on a previously agreed upon offer of employment, failing to honour a commitment to work for an employer or to return to an employer for a second work term, terminating employment without prior approval from the employer and CECS or dismissal with cause from employment. In all cases, students with this notation will not be granted credit for the work term in question and withdrawal from the Co-op program may also be required.

**Out to Clear** – the student is “sitting out” an additional four months following their scheduled work term before returning to repeat the previously failed academic term. This applies to students in programs in which promotion occurs on a term-by-term basis.

**Co-operative Degree Designation**

Graduates completing the Co-operative system requirements will receive a “Co-operative” degree designation.

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**Performance Grades** – employers may choose from the following grades to evaluate the student’s performance on the work term: Outstanding, Excellent, Very Good, Good, Satisfactory, Marginal and Unsatisfactory. The student receives credit for the work term when one of these grades (except Unsatisfactory) is recorded on the Co-op student record. A work term evaluation is required for every work term undertaken by the student. A work term graded “Unsatisfactory” by an employer is ineligible for credit, and the student’s performance appraisal will be investigated by the student’s field co-ordinator. A student deemed unlikely to benefit from future work terms may be required to withdraw from the Co-op program.

**Academic Credit for Work Term Experience**

Academic credit, in the form of a 0.5 unit credit, is awarded to each student who successfully completes an official work term. These credits are awarded in addition to the course credits required by the various faculties.

CECS, officially representing the University of Waterloo in Co-operative Education matters, is responsible for the awarding of academic credit for the work term experience according to the requirements of the various faculties and their Co-op programs.

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**On Exchange** – a student is on an exchange term at an educational institution outside of Canada. The student will not take part in the Co-op interview process.

**Scheduled Off Term** – indicates a student whose academic plan stream does not have an academic term or a work term scheduled to occur. The student will not take part in the Co-op interview process.

**Work History**

A student’s work history is recorded each term on an Official Co-operative Student Record. This record becomes the lead document in job application packages for students (who have the status “Unemployed: Interview Process” (see above)). The following notations may appear on this document:

**Employer Name/Job Title/Evaluation** – when a student is matched successfully with an employer, that employer’s name, location and the job title of the position is listed. The overall work term performance grade assigned by the employer is also recorded along with this notation.

**Employed: Returning** – the student has secured employment, has the employment approved for credit by CECS and completes the work term successfully will receive credit for that work experience.

**Employed: Student-Arranged** – the student has secured employment external to the Co-op interview process. A student who secures employment, has the employment approved for credit by CECS and completes the work term successfully will receive credit for that work experience.

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**Co-operative Degree Designation**

Graduates completing the Co-operative system requirements will receive a “Co-operative” degree designation.
**CAFCE Accreditation**

The University of Waterloo is a member of the Canadian Association for Co-operative Education (CAFCE). In 1979 CAFCE established the Accreditation Council to regulate post-secondary Co-operative Education programs in Canada and to accredit those programs which meet specific criteria. The purpose of the accreditation process is to ensure the quality of the Co-operative Education program. Accredited programs must meet the following criteria:

**Guidelines**
- each work situation is developed and/or approved by the Co-operative Educational institution as a suitable learning situation;
- the Co-operative student is engaged in productive work rather than merely observing;
- the Co-operative student receives remuneration for the work performed;
- the Co-operative student's progress on the job is monitored by the Co-operative Educational institution;
- the Co-operative student's performance on the job is supervised and evaluated by the student's Co-operative employer;
- the total Co-operative work experience is normally fifty percent of the time spent in academic study, and in no circumstances less than thirty percent.

**Waterloo Advisory Council**

The Waterloo Advisory Council was established in 1958 to bring guidance from business, government, and industry to the University. The Council meets twice a year to discuss and make recommendations on items related to all aspects of the University.

**Co-op Students' Council (CSC)**

The Co-op Students’ Council of the Federation of Students, is made up of UW Co-op student representatives from each faculty whose primary purpose is to provide student input into policies and procedures of CECS and to report student concerns to the Department. The Council meetings are chaired by the Federation of Students Vice-President, Education. CECS is represented by the Associate Director, Student Services.

**Career Services**

Located in TC 1214
(519) 888-4047
Career Services websites:
Main page: www.careerservices.uwaterloo.ca
Award-winning Career Development eManual:
www.cdm.uwaterloo.ca
Career Services has an array of career development programs and services to meet the needs of all UW students and alumni.

**Resources**

Print, video, and computer-based resources are available in the areas of:
- **Career Planning** – occupational descriptions and trends, job search materials, volunteer and entrepreneurial information
- **Education** – Canadian university and college calendars, subject and geographic-specific directories, professional test applications
- **Employer** – information files, CDs, videos and directories
- **Work/Study Abroad** – programs and guides

**Workshops**

- Workshops are provided on topics such as: self assessment, researching occupations, decision-making, résumé and letter writing, work search/networking, interviewing skills, and negotiating job offers
- Students may register for workshops through the website

**Appointments**

- Students may book an appointment through the website for the following: CV or résumé/letter critique, career planning, job search, mock interview or graduate/professional school applications

**Events**

- Job and Career Fairs
- Professional and Post-Degree Day
- Faculty of Education Talks
- Volunteer Fairs
- On campus Part-time Job Fairs
- Employer Information Sessions

**Jobs**

Part-time, Summer, Volunteer, Permanent, and Contract Jobs
- Daily job postings on JobMine enable all students and alumni to access a wide array of job opportunities received by Career Services
- A small number of volunteer positions may be found in JobMine. Hundreds more are available in print form in Career Services, TC 1214.