

Electrical and Computer Engineering Department
Graduate Cooperative Education, August 2014

ALL ECE Graduate Students are required to have a minimum GPA of 3.4 to interview and be placed on a co-op or internship assignment.

Students are required to complete EECE6000 - Introduction to Co-op

MS (Thesis) and PhD students are eligible for either co-op or internship, but that must be approved by their research advisor

Co-op Work Experience requires enrollment in EECE6964 Coop Work Experience.

Co-op Work Experience must match a standard Northeastern term—Full summer, fall or spring or a combination approved by the co-op advisor. Student must be enrolled in at least one academic semester each year.

Internship requires registration in a minimal number of credits to meet full-time student status. Normally this is either EECE 9990 Dissertation if internship is taken immediately after passing the qualifying examination OR EECE9996 Dissertation Continuation if internship is taken after that. Internship can be taken during nonstandard terms, for example March-May. In general, **the goal of an internship** is to provide a work experience that is related to the student's research

In general, **the goal of each co-op experience** is education in both the student's subject matter area and in the student's professional practice. Generally a graduate student is more apt to benefit from applying academic learning to practice and would benefit less from a job in which the experience is principally non-technical. The emphasis in graduate cooperative education, therefore, is on technically challenging assignments in the student's subject matter area.

Graduate students can be broadly classified into three groups: terminal Master's degree with no research; Master's candidate with research or intent to pursue a PhD; and PhD candidates. Accordingly, co-op assignments must recognize these differences.

Administration of USCIS and university requirements and procedures, regarding employment of F-1 Visa students, is the responsibility of the International Student and Scholar Institute (ISSI). ISSI offers many Information Sessions each semester and ALL new ECE students are strongly encouraged to attend one of these sessions.

International students on an F-1 visa may participate in work experiences with the appropriate ECE, Engineering Graduate School and ISSI approvals. The work experience is typically practical experience or research in either of the following categories:

- Curricular Practical Training (CPT) - Co-op or Internship
- Optional Practical Training (OPT) after graduation
- Pre-completion Optional Practical Training (OPT) – only for PhD students nearing completion

For graduate students in the ECE department, CPT may be applied for after successful completion of the first semester of academic work. Typically this means that co-op assignments would begin following completion of two semesters of academic work.

We recognize that graduate school tuition and living costs pose a significant financial burden for students. Cooperative education assignments traditionally have offered a way to earn some portion of the costs of attending Northeastern. A variety of legal requirements only allow co-op assignments that are a required part of the curriculum in order to classify the student on the assignment as full-time. For students who are in the USA on student visas, a job that does not provide a definite educational component in their field of study jeopardizes their status. Therefore, financial necessity alone does not justify a job that does not meet the criterion of relevance to the student's field of study or research area.

Coop must be complementary to the academic program and not just a financial resource.

Academic Eligibility Requirements

1. Students must be enrolled as a full-time student in the Graduate Program of the College of Engineering.
2. Students must have completed two full-time semesters before the start of their co-op work term.
3. MS Students must have at least one semester remaining in their degree program after the proposed co-op term. Students will not be eligible for co-op once they have completed the minimum academic requirements for their degree
4. Students are eligible for co-op only with approval from their ECE research or academic advisor.
5. Students may not hold a Graduate Stipend Assistantship at the University during the semester/s planned for co-op.
6. Students must resolve any previous disciplinary or academic probation issues, or have their co-op faculty coordinator approve a plan to resolve these issues, prior to being referred to or applying for any co-op positions.
7. Non-US citizens with student visas must have valid I-20s.
8. Procedural and grading policies for co-op will be described in detail during EECE 6000.
9. If a student does not meet the above requirements or if their co-op faculty coordinator has determined he or she is not eligible to go on Co-op for a desired session, the student may appeal, in writing, to the ECE Graduate Studies Committee. This committee will evaluate the appeal and discuss it with the Director of Cooperative Education for the College of Engineering.