

## High-Impact Educational Practices Internships and Cooperative (Co-op) Education

**Definition of Internship:** “Typically one-time work or service experiences related to the student’s major or career goal. The internship plan generally involves students working in professional settings under the supervision and monitoring of practicing professionals. Internships can be paid or unpaid and the student may or may not receive academic credit for performing the internship.” [NACE 2016 Intern/Co-op Survey](#). “If the internship is taken for course credit, students complete a project or paper that is approved by a faculty member.” [AAC&U HIPS](#)

**Definition of Cooperative Education (Co-op):** “Provide students with multiple periods of work in which the work is related to the student’s major or career goal. The typical program plan is for students to alternate terms of full-time classroom study with terms of full-time, discipline related employment. Since program participation involves multiple work terms, the typical participant will work three or four work terms, thus gaining a year or more of career related work experience before graduation. Virtually all co-op positions are paid and the vast majority involve some form of academic credit.” [NACE 2016 Intern/Co-op Survey](#).

- **KSU Parallel vs. Alternating Co-op:** A student who completes a parallel co-op works for at least *two consecutive semesters* with employers in positions that provide directly related experience to their academic majors. Students may take classes while working in a parallel co-op. A student who completes an alternating co-op works in a position directly related to their academic major for *three semesters over a five-semester period*, alternating between full-time work and full-time academic coursework.
- **Credit vs. Audit:** Parallel co-ops may receive academic credit for participation. Alternating co-op participants are eligible for a 12-credit audit course which keeps the student at a full-time enrollment status and serves as a placeholder on their transcript during their three working rotations. Additionally, alternating co-op participants may receive up to one semester of their working experience counted for academic credit, depending on departmental requirements.

**Definition of Clinical/Field Experiences:** “Field experiences are designed to provide opportunities for KSU teacher preparation candidates to learn to become effective teachers through observations and practice in the public school setting. These experiences should augment the knowledge, skills, and dispositions gained in the university classroom.” [BCOE Field Experience Handbook](#) Field & clinical experiences can be applicable for any students participating in program-led field-based work.

### **Characteristics of a HIP Internship & Co-op Experience:**

In alignment with NACE, "to be considered a legitimate internship [or co-op] by the NACE definition, all the following criteria must be met:

1. The experience must be an extension of the classroom: a learning experience that provides for applying the knowledge gained in the classroom. It must not be simply to advance the operations of the employer or be the work that a regular employee would routinely perform.
2. The skills or knowledge learned must be transferable to other employment settings.
3. The experience has a defined beginning and end, and a job description with desired qualifications.
4. There are clearly defined learning objectives/goals related to the professional goals of the student’s academic coursework.
5. There is an assignment in which students reflect on their experience.
6. There is supervision by a professional with expertise and educational and/or professional background in the field of the experience.
7. There is routine feedback by the experienced supervisor.
8. There are resources, equipment, and facilities provided by the host employer that support learning

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Requirements for academic credit and application process is determined by individual academic departments/colleges at the University. More information on internships and cooperative education at KSU can be found at <http://careers.kennesaw.edu/>.