



## **Cooperative Education Program**

Mr. Donald K. Parks, Director  
218 Georgia Avenue

Cooperative Education (Co-op) is an academic program that allows students to combine classroom instruction with degree-related work experience. Co-op students are able to confirm their choice of major, to apply classroom instruction to professional employment settings, and to strengthen their marketability upon graduation. Students also develop professional work skills and habits, earn competitive salaries, and make valuable career contacts. Co-op program employers encompass a vast network of local, state, and national employers.

### **MISSION**

The mission of the Valdosta State University Office of Cooperative Education is to support the academic, career, personal, and work-skills development of VSU students through structured work-based learning experiences.

### **GOALS**

The following strategic goals are integral to the mission of the Co-op Program: (1) maximize student development, (2) enhance the employer network, (3) achieve superior unit planning and administration, (4) nurture dynamic partnerships.

### **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

Valdosta State University subscribes to the “Attributes of Cooperative Education Programs (<http://www.co-op.uc.edu/home>),” a national standard for Co-op Program administration and policies. Program models that meet the ACEP guidelines are available to VSU students:

#### **Co-op Programs**

##### **Alternating**

Students work full-time for a minimum of two semesters, one of which is not a summer term, separated by at least one semester of full-time enrollment at VSU.

##### **Parallel**

Students work 15 to 25 hours per week for a minimum of four semesters while being concurrently enrolled in at least six hours of academic coursework. The four work semesters may be completed with two different employers.

##### **Combination**

Students have a combination of full-time and part-time work experiences for the equivalent of two full-time work semesters.

## **School-to-Career**

Valdosta State University is one of a select group of colleges and universities to offer a School-to-Career (STC) Program. The School-to-Career Program consists of partnerships with area high schools to provide work-based learning opportunities.

## **Kappa Theta Epsilon**

The VSU Kappa Theta Epsilon Eta Chapter serves a dual purpose: to promote the Cooperative Education program at VSU by enhancing contact between students, faculty, industry, and other Co-op programs, and to honor those VSU Co-op participants who demonstrate distinguished industrial and academic performance.

## **Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE)**

The Office of Cooperative Education works closely with the VSU SIFE team to provide additional opportunities for students to gain business-related experience, to improve public speaking skills, and to compete on an international level. More information can be found at <http://www.valdosta.edu/sife/>

## **ELIGIBILITY**

Students from a wide range of majors are eligible to participate in the Cooperative Education Program. The following majors have significant numbers of Co-op placement opportunities: Accounting, Art, Biology, Chemistry, Communication Arts, Computer Science, Computer Information Systems, Early Childhood Education, Economics, Finance, Management, Marketing, Pre-Engineering, and Psychology. In addition, individual students from other majors are placed in Co-op positions on a limited basis. Students may be accepted into the cooperative education program via the following options:

### **Regular Admission**

Students must earn a minimum 2.0 cumulative grade point average and must have completed 30 semester hours of coursework at Valdosta State University.

### **Accelerated Co-op Entry (ACE)**

Students must provide acceptable documentation of completion of an approved high school work-based learning program or complete 12 or more semester hours at VSU with a minimum cumulative grade-point average of 3.0.

### **Transfer Admission**

Students must provide documentation of completion of at least 30 semesters hours with a minimum 2.0 cumulative grade point average for all transfer credits.

After placement in a co-op position, students must

1. Maintain a minimum cumulative 2.0 grade point average each work semester;
2. Return to good academic standing within one semester if placed on academic probation.

**Co-op Probation**

1. Students will be allowed to continue work for one semester while on academic probation.
2. If placed on probation for a second semester after placement, students will be removed from the cooperative education program until they return to good academic standing with the institution.

Co-ops and trainees are considered as being enrolled full-time for insurance purposes and enrollment certification (loan deferment) for federal student loan programs during their work semesters if they are enrolled in the proper COOP course. Eligibility for financial aid programs is based on the number of hours enrolled, just as for other students.

**COOP COURSES**

Co-op is an academic program and, as such, includes the completion of specific coursework. Each placed student must enroll in the appropriate COOP course each work semester. Credit and non-credit program options are available. Students completing the credit option are eligible to earn the Diploma Seal of Advanced Cooperative Education. Students completing the non-credit option are eligible to earn the Certificate of Cooperative Education. Students’ initial work term will not precede their first academic term, nor will any work terms follow students’ final academic term.

**Requirements: Certificate of Cooperative Education. .... 0 hours**

The certificate is awarded to students who complete the equivalent of two full-time semesters of cooperative education work experience. During these work experiences, students will enroll each semester in COOP 2300 or COOP 2310 ..... 0 hour

**Requirements: Diploma Seal of Advanced Cooperative Education. .... 6 hours**

COOP 1101, COOP 1102, and COOP 1103 (1 hour each)  
or COOP 2500 ..... 3 hours  
COOP 4990. .... 3 hours

### **Selected Educational Outcomes**

- 1 Students will write and present a career vision statement that includes goals and objectives.
- 2 Students will demonstrate appropriate work-skills related to their major and/or career goals on a co-op job site.
- 3 Students will identify their strengths and weaknesses related to career employment by completing a self-assessment.
- 4 Students will create a career development plan based on the self-assessment.

### **Examples of Outcome Assessments**

- 1 Using a criterion-based program checklist, the co-op faculty coordinator, the Director of Cooperative Education, and the work place supervisor will assess the career vision statement.
- 2 The students' work-site supervisor will assess the student's work skills using the employer evaluation form.
- 3 The Director of Cooperative Education and the Cooperative Education Coordinators will review students' responses to the self-assessment.
- 4 Students will implement their career development plan and document progress in a written semester report to be presented to faculty, other students, and employers, who will rate the presentation using a criterion-based checklist.

More comprehensive information about the Co-op Program including a current listing of Cooperative Education employers and job listings is housed on the Co-op Office web site at < <http://coop.valdosta.edu> >. The Co-op Office is located at 218 Georgia Avenue. The office telephone number is 229-333-7172.



## **Office of Academic Student Instructional Support (OASIS)**

Dr. Patrick Burns, Director  
1119 University Center

### **LEARNING SUPPORT PROGRAM**

The Learning Support Program is intended to serve non-traditional students who are not prepared for Core Curriculum courses and need additional preparation in reading, mathematics, and/or English. These students are required to take Learning Support courses because they did not achieve the System minimum scores on the COMPASS Exam for Learning Support Exemption.

Until Learning Support requirements have been satisfied, students shall not be permitted to take credit courses which require the content or the skills of the prerequisite courses. Students who are required to participate in Learning Support must:

1. exit or exempt Learning Support Reading as a prerequisite for social science, natural science, and physical science courses;
2. exit or exempt Learning Support English and Reading as prerequisites for college-level English;
3. exit or exempt Learning Support mathematics as a prerequisite for mathematics, physics, and chemistry.

During each semester of enrollment, a student must first register for all required Learning Support courses before being allowed to register for other courses. This policy also applies to part-time students. Two exceptions are possible:

1. When two or three Learning Support areas are required and a student is enrolled in at least one Learning Support course, the freshman seminar course or physical education or other activity or performance courses may be taken that semester instead of one of the required Learning Support courses.
2. In the event that a required Learning Support course is not available, a student may enroll in a course for degree credit if the student has met the course prerequisites, subject to the written approval of the Director, Office of Academic Student Instructional Support.

Students with Learning Support requirements who are enrolled in both Learning Support courses and credit courses may not withdraw from the required Learning Support courses with a “W” unless they also withdraw from credit courses.

To exit a Learning Support area, students must successfully complete the exit level Learning Support course in that area, meet any established institutional standards, and attain at least the University System minimum COMPASS scores of 30 in Math, 60 in English, and 74 in Reading.

Students required to enroll in Learning Support are allowed three semesters in which to satisfy all exit requirements, although they may exit at the end of any semester. Students in the third semester of Learning Support courses are limited to a total of 12 hours, including Learning Support courses. Students who have accumulated 20 semester hours of college-level credit and have not successfully completed required Learning Support courses may enroll only in Learning Support courses until requirements are successfully completed. Students who have **not** exited a Learning Support course at the end of the third semester of eligibility will be suspended by the University System and the institution for three years.



### **Athletic Department**

Mr. Herb Reinhard, Athletics Director  
105 Physical Education Complex

The mission of the Athletic Department is to develop student-athletes as complete individuals and educated citizens fully prepared to make a positive contribution to their community. This development must be accomplished within the academic framework of the University and in concert with the institution's overall mission. With respect to spectators and supporters, the athletic program seeks to serve the region and enhance the development of the institution by fostering a sense of loyalty and community among students, faculty, staff, alumni, and supporters.