

ARCH 4161: COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM (CEP) STUDENT INTERNSHIP/ PRECEPTORSHIP MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (MOA)

1.0 Purpose of Cooperative Education Program

The purpose of the Cooperative Education Program is to provide 4th year students with office practice experience prior to graduation. The student is ideally exposed to a broad range of areas, such as construction documents, marketing, office practice, business management, client reviews, construction administration and a host of other daily activities that may be possible while working in Host Firms. The premise is that students tend to mature and comprehend the nature of actual practice much better through this experience than through academic course work.

2.0 Program Definition

The Cooperative Education Program is a curriculum requirement for graduation in the current Bachelor of Architecture program. While the cooperative education experience is a requirement, it is a non-credit hour activity so that students may earn Architectural Experience Program (AXP) credit. The Division of Architecture (DivA) is committed to assisting students in gaining this important student learning experience through fostering a three-way partnership between the DivA, the Host Firms, and the Students. For that purpose, this Cooperative Education Program MOA document identifies the roles and responsibilities for each party along with a statement of the curriculum requirements.

3.0 Curriculum Requirement

It is intended that the student will complete the program with a minimum of 320 hours of experience over the spring semester. As stated above, the student should be exposed to a wide range of experiences, though the Host Firm will determine the actual experiences. Students who have already completed the minimum required hours through employment prior to the spring semester of the 4th year are encouraged to participate in the program. If they are not participating, they must submit a copy of their approved AXP report to the DivA AXP and Preceptorship Coordinator as documentation. Exceptions may be requested for an alternative method of completing the requirements and will be reviewed by the AXP and Preceptorship Coordinator or Director on a case-by-case basis.

4.0 Process and Timetable of Student Placement

- September – December: internship workshops take place by no later than December 15 of each year and will be hosted and organized by the DivA AXP and Preceptorship Coordinator, with necessary support from practicing Architects and professionals. Representatives from Host Firms in particular are encouraged to participate in these workshops to make initial contact with the students;
- November – December: students research job opportunities and send letters, resumes, and portfolios to potential Host Firms; students begin interviewing.
- Students reach employment agreements with firms as soon as a mutually agreeable arrangement is reached. In some cases, this may be before the end of the Fall semester. Placement should occur by February 1.

5.0 Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Division of Architecture (DivA) Leadership Shall:

Monitor the Cooperative Education Program and its curriculum requirement;

- Assign an AXP and Preceptorship Coordinator who will oversee the student cooperative education, provide information to students regarding the program and requirements, track the student's progress in achieving the curriculum requirement, and provide student paperwork to the Curriculum Committee for review;
- Develop workshop curricula and host workshops through coordination with practicing Architects and professionals and the AXP and Preceptorship Coordinator;
- Help identify non-traditional internship opportunities in the case students are not placed with Host Firms (reference AXP Setting O for alternate experience).

5.2 DivA AXP and Preceptorship Coordinator (the Coordinator) Shall:

- Organize and lead a series of workshops to prepare students for the interview process, AXP requirements, and work experience. These typically include an AXP workshop, as well as workshops dedicated to resumes, cover letters, portfolios and interviews;
- Communicate with firms interested in hiring OU student interns;
- Maintain a list of firms that are interested in hiring and sharing this regularly with students so that students may take the initiative to reach out to firms. Note the Coordinator is not expected to do individual outreach on behalf of students. The Coordinator provides the list of firms and can advise students on the type of work, atmosphere, skill level, etc. but it is always the student's responsibility to contact firms, send resumes, set up interviews and complete all scheduled interviews. When references are needed students should ask faculty or previous employers;
- Maintain a list of students in positions with firms;
- Enter grades for students once their internship paperwork has been submitted and completed.

5.3 Professional Host Firm (Host Firm) Shall:

- Host an architectural student for the purpose of allowing the student to meet their Cooperative Education Program curriculum requirements and provide a professional environment for their experience;
- Compensate the student based on their hourly participation at the firm. Hourly compensation shall be, at minimum, equal to the widely accepted minimum wage;
- Provide, to the greatest extent possible, opportunities for the student's participation in the aspects of professional Architectural practice that may include but are not limited to:
 - Outlining the Host Firm Structure and Policies with the Student;
 - Working on projects and collaborating as a team member through various project phases;
 - Attending team and client meetings as appropriate;
 - Exposure to Marketing, Business Development and Business Operation activities; and
 - Construction Administration activities at the job site.
- Provide the student with an AXP Supervisor (meeting the NCARB AXP Program requirements) within the firm who will be responsible for the student's orientation, schedule of activities, mentor the student in the architectural practice experience, be available as a resource to the student and oversee the student's completion of curriculum requirements; and

- The Host Firm's AXP Supervisor shall sign the student's AXP forms following verification of the submitted worksheet or similar form.
- Support, whenever possible, annual workshops, outlined in 4.0 above, hosted by the Gibbs College of Architecture (GCA) and DivA through the participation of the Host Firm's practicing Architects and professionals, among others, to help prepare students for entry into the professional work place;
- Note that the student is only considered a student at the University of Oklahoma for the first 320 hours of work.

5.4 Student Intern Shall:

- Successfully complete a resume, cover letter and professional portfolio during their fall semester, prior to the relevant workshops, make revisions based on feedback given at workshops, posting their portfolios online no later than December 1;
- Actively seek out positions by reaching out to firms, sending cover letters, resumes and portfolios to Host Firms;
- Participate in an interview that includes the presentation of the student's portfolio as a part of being placed within a Host Firm;
- Attend workshops, outlined in 4.0 above, as a part of the required Cooperative Education Program;
- Complete a minimum of 320 hours of work experience either through a traditional internship under the direction of a qualifying NCARB AXP Supervisor, or through a non-traditional opportunity that meets AXP guidelines;
- Become a participant in the AXP by establishing a NCARB record online. The Coordinator is available to facilitate if needed;
- Prepare AXP work experience worksheets or similar forms by the close of the internship experience in an accurate, fair and timely manner, and then submit the worksheets to their Host Firm's AXP Supervisor for verification and signature;
- At the end of the program, e-mail a .pdf copy or screen image of their AXP record, documenting the completed minimum hours, to the Coordinator. These should be submitted by May 1. The student shall notify the Coordinator if additional time is necessary to complete all the required hours.
- Shall, in the case that a traditional internship is unavailable, consider fulfilling the course credit requirement of the Student Intern Experience through a non-traditional opportunity that includes appropriate AXP categories (reference AXP Setting O for this alternate experience in 3.0 above).

6.0 Forms

- Cooperative Education Curriculum Requirement Form;
- AXP Experience Worksheet Form (from NCARB AXP); and
- Memorandum of Agreement between Parties of the Cooperative Education Program.

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT Signatures

STUDENT _____ DATE _____

HOST FIRM _____ DATE _____