



Thinking about a Co-op or Internship?

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It is October now, and fall 2009 co-op and internship season is in full swing! IIT students are working as co-ops and part-time interns throughout Chicagoland and the U.S. Finding an internship or co-op can take a lot of time and students who begin their search early are more likely to obtain a co-op or internship that complies with the guidelines of IIT's co-op and internship programs and meets registration deadlines.

Co-op and internship deadlines are set by the CMC after taking into account many different factors including the university calendar and registration dates. The CMC works with multiple departments on-campus to ensure that the needs and deadlines of those departments are being met, while giving students as much flexibility as possible in their co-op and internship start dates.

The co-op and internship programs are academic programs and therefore closely follow the academic calendar. The start and end dates may not always match employer preferences because they operate on different schedules. Below are some helpful tips in discussing start and end dates with employers if their dates do not coincide with those of IIT:

1. Start by doing your homework. Students who are planning to apply for co-ops and internships must attend the required Introduction to the Co-op & Internship Program workshop before starting the application process. This workshop covers information about the rules and requirements of the program and will help you develop a better understanding of how the program works.
2. When you are looking and applying for a co-op or internship you should know the program deadlines so you can provide employers with accurate information. The deadlines can be found on the CMC website (www.cmc.iit.edu) each semester. Bringing the deadlines to an employer's attention will help you and the employer work out how this potential opportunity can become reality.
3. It is essential that you are completely honest with the employer about when you can begin working. If you tell an employer you are eligible to work for them when you are not, they will likely find out you were not being honest with them. This may lead them to develop a negative impression of you, and ruin your chances of getting a future position with the company. Employers value ethics in the workplace and they will appreciate it if you demonstrate good work ethics throughout the hiring process. Also, you must register with IIT for a co-op or internship on time. Students will not be permitted to register past the add/drop date each semester. International students are legally required to adhere to the deadlines in order to maintain their status as students in the U.S. and avoid major difficulties with immigration laws.

4. Know the earliest start date for the following semester. The start date for the following semester is usually the Monday after the last day of classes for the current semester. You can confirm the date by checking with the CMC. Employers may be willing to hire you to start work on the next term's start date if they are aware of when it begins.
5. Remember that most schools have co-op and internship deadlines. While many employers may not be aware of IIT's specific deadlines, they should not be surprised that IIT has deadlines. Co-op and internship deadlines are very common in higher education.
6. Let the employer know that your CMC advisor can speak with them to help answer any questions and alleviate any concerns. Sometimes the employer would like further clarification on how our program works. Your CMC advisor will be happy to assist with educating the employer about our co-op and internship programs and deadlines—just ask.
7. Communicate with your CMC advisor early in the process if you have any questions or concerns about the deadlines or related matters. The CMC staff is here to assist students and we are better able to help you if we are aware of your situation as it unfolds.

The Spring 2010 Co-op and Internship Timeline will be posted on the CMC website by October 16—check it out! We look forward to working with you to support your efforts to find the experience you are seeking, through IIT's Co-op and Internship program.