

## Graduate Co-op Handbook 2020

**Summary:** Graduate students may combine academic studies with paid work experience through the Department’s graduate co-op programs. For MA students, co-op placements normally occur in the third and fourth (Spring and Fall) semesters of full-time enrolment. In the PhD program placements normally occur after comprehensive exams. While the Department will make every effort to assist students in finding suitable co-op placements, we cannot guarantee co-op employment. Only Canadian citizens and holders of Permanent Resident status may enroll in graduate co-op programs.

**Our programs:** The department has co-op programs at the MA and PhD level. At least one work term placement is required for the MA program. Two placements are normally required for the PhD program. All co-op students must return to academic studies following work placement(s) to complete remaining program requirements. Enrolling in co-op does not change the number of academic semesters required or permitted for a graduate degree, though they will be completed over a longer period of time corresponding with the number of work terms that a student completes.

**MA sequencing:** The default course sequence for the MA co-op program is two semesters of academic study followed by one semester on placement and returning to academic study for the remainder of the program. The sequence for MA students completing one work term is as follows:

1 WT	Fall	Winter	Spring	Fall	Winter	Spring	Fall	
CW	A1	A2	WT1	A3				
MRP	A1	A2	WT1	A3	A4			
Thesis	A1	A2	WT1	A3	A4	A5	A6	

Students wishing to complete a second work term must inform Graduate Studies by filing a [Request for Academic/Work Term Sequence Change](#) form before beginning the second work term. The sequence for two placements at the MA level is as follows:

2 WT	Fall	Winter	Spring	Fall	Winter	Spring	Fall	Winter
CW	A1	A2	WT1	WT2	A3			
MRP	A1	A2	WT1	WT2	A3	A4		
Thesis	A1	A2	WT1	WT2	A3	A4	A5	A6

CW = MA coursework stream; 3 academic semesters  
 MRP = MA major research paper stream; 4 academic semesters  
 Thesis = MA thesis stream; 6 academic semesters  
 A = Academic semester    WT = Work term

**PhD sequencing:** Placements for PhD co-op graduate students will normally occur after comprehensive exams, and in some cases may occur after the dissertation proposal has been approved. The number of placements completed will extend program completion time by the corresponding number of calendar months.



**Getting a Placement:** MA co-op students may apply for placements through WaterlooWorks. Co-operative and Experiential Education (CEE) coordinates two hiring cycles in the semester prior to placement through WaterlooWorks. For Spring placement this means that jobs are advertised in January and March. For Fall placement, jobs are advertised in MaCo-operative and Experiential Education and June. All MA graduate students are highly encouraged to enroll in PD 601 (listed as COOP 601 in Quest) in the semester prior to placement. The course is delivered through LEARN and is intended to orient students to WaterlooWorks and the services offered by CEE.

PhD co-op students do not have access to WaterlooWorks at this time. Greater student effort in applying for suitable co-op positions advertised by government agencies and/or non-profit organizations, for example, is therefore necessary. The Graduate Co-op Advisor will support these efforts by curating a list of available jobs on the graduate co-op Learn site with input from department faculty members. Because the PhD co-op program is run 'in house' (i.e., is independent of CEE), there is greater flexibility in what may constitute a work term placement, however the existing guidelines for co-op placements should be taken as the default expectation (see Student-Found Jobs below). For example, a typical RA position consisting of 15 hours of work per week funded through a faculty research grant will not qualify as a work term placement, but 12 weeks of full-time research funded through the same grant may qualify. The Graduate Co-op Advisor is responsible for bringing prospective PhD-level placements to the Graduate Committee for approval.

**Enrollment Status During Placement:** All graduate students must request a change of enrollment status from Full-Time to Co-op when a placement has been secured in order to ensure that graduate funding is placed on hold for future academic semesters. Students should complete and submit a [Change of Enrolment Status](#) form to Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs to make the request.

**CEE Advisor:** MA students are assigned to a CEE advisor upon enrolling in a co-op program. The name and contact information of the advisor is listed in a student's WaterlooWorks dashboard upon sign-in. CEE advisors should be the students first point of contact for all logistical questions related to obtaining jobs through WaterlooWorks.

**Student-found Jobs:** MA students can have jobs found independent of WaterlooWorks approved for co-op credit if they meet CEE requirements. Placements are evaluated on a case-by-case basis but usually consist of 12-16 weeks of paid full-time work at the provincial minimum wage. Exceptions may be made for positions in non-profit organizations, medical settings, or outside of the Canada. Research positions funded through faculty research grants may qualify if they conform to the requirements above. Student-found jobs should be submitted to CEE for approval using a [Job Information Form](#) no later than seven days after employment starts. Students should review prospective placements with the Graduate Co-op Officer as early as possible to ensure that the position meets minimum university requirements.

**Work Term Reports:** All graduate students must complete one work term report to receive credit for completing co-op placement. For MA students the report must encompass one work term and may encompass two. For PhD students the work report must encompass two work terms. In general, the work term reports should be a scholarly reflection on some aspect of the job placement experience. The report is not a summary of duties performed on the job; it is an analytical examination of sociological phenomenon upon which the placement sheds light.

Reports should be 8-10 pages in length excluding references, with an appendix of reflection memos (approximately 3-4 pages for 1 work term, 6-7 for 2 work terms). See Sociology Graduate Co-op Work term Report Guidelines for more details. Reports should be submitted to the Graduate Co-op Officer via Learn no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> working day of the academic semester following placement. Students should discuss the content of the work term report with the Graduate Co-op Advisor as early as possible. Completion of co-op requirements is recorded as a Milestone in Quest.

**Learn:** The Department maintains a Learn site for graduate co-op students where updates, job notifications, and other information is shared. Requests to join the Learn site should be directed to the Graduate Co-op Advisor or the Graduate Coordinator and Advisor.

**Co-op Fees:** A co-op fee of approximately \$750 per work term is applied to a student's Quest account during the first weeks of a placement for MA students. PhD co-op students do not pay co-op fees.

**Other coursework:** Graduate students are permitted to take one course during a co-op placement and may be permitted to take two with permission of the employer and the Graduate Coordinator and Advisor. However, students are encouraged to complete course requirements during regular academic semesters.

**Forms: Links to all forms needed for graduate co-op are below.**

**From GSO:** <https://uwaterloo.ca/forms/graduate-studies>

The [Program/Plan Change](#) form should be used to 'switch in' and 'switch out' of co-op programs. MA students switching in to co-op need to file a Program/Plan Change form in the first week of the semester prior to placement in order to have access to WaterlooWorks.

The [Change of Enrolment Status](#) form is used to inform GSPA that a student is going on co-op placement instead of continuing with academic study. Graduate funding allotted to the student will be put on hold for future academic semesters with this form. A change of status form is required for each work placement and should be filed as soon as a placement is confirmed.

Both forms should be submitted to the Department's Graduate Coordinator and Advisor. The Graduate Coordinator and Advisor will assist the student in obtaining signatures that may be required.

**From CEE:** <https://uwaterloo.ca/co-operative-education/get-hired/forms>

The [Request for Academic/Work Term Sequence Change](#) form is used when MA students depart from the default sequence defined in their WaterlooWorks account. The default sequence for MA students is normally two semesters of academic study followed by one semester on placement (Spring). Students who have obtained an offer for a second placement should complete the sequence change form and submit it directly to CEE. Please note that students



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would also need to submit a Change of Enrolment Status form (above) to notify GSPA of the second placement.

The [Job Information Form](#) is used to have student-found jobs approved for co-op credit. The form should be completed within the first week of work.

For more information about graduate co-op in the Department of Sociology and Legal Studies, contact the Department Graduate Coordinator.

### **Department Graduate Coordinator**

Adrian Buchanan

E-mail: [adrian.buchanan@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:adrian.buchanan@uwaterloo.ca)

Office: PAS 2047

Phone: 519-888-4567 x48151