

# A PART-TIME JOB VS. AN INTERNSHIP OR CO-OP

A crucial part of an internship or co-op experience is contributing to the organization through meaningful work, such as career-related tasks that encourage and allow the student to learn professionalism and obtain skills they do not yet possess. While part-time jobs can contribute to an individual's personal and professional growth, they do not generally contribute to their academic growth. Here are some distinctions:

## DIFFERENCES BETWEEN A PART-TIME JOB, INTERNSHIP, AND CO-OP

	PART-TIME JOB	INTERNSHIP	CO-OP
PURPOSE	Completed primarily for monetary purposes	Completed for several possible reasons, which may include gaining experience, academic credit, and/or compensation	Completed for experience and compensation
LEARNING	Tasks of job must be learned in order for the work to be adequately completed	Learning reflects the goals of the student, the outcomes expected by the employer, and the requirements of a faculty member/internship coordinator (if for academic credit)	Learning reflects the goals of the student and the outcomes expected by the employer
TYPE OF WORK	Work is assigned which needs to be completed; may or may not be directly related to an academic pursuit	Involves projects or ongoing work that is purposeful and of a professional nature, often related to an academic pursuit	Completes assigned work and projects that are purposeful and of a professional nature
SUPERVISOR	Supervisor serves as an authority figure to whom the employee reports	Supervisor serves as the main point of contact for assignments and projects; supervisor is also expected to ensure that mentoring occurs, either by doing it him/herself, or by arranging for another appropriate member of the organization to take on the role	Supervisor serves as the main point of contact for assignments and projects; supervisor is also expected to ensure that mentoring occurs, either by doing it him/herself, or by arranging for another appropriate member of the organization to take on the role
DURATION	It is anticipated that the employee will stay through their graduation or until terminated, depending on the position	A set period of time, either a semester, year or summer; can be extended if the role continues to evolve	Lasts approximately 6 months; can be extended one additional cycle
HOURS	May range anywhere from 3 – 20+ hours per week, depending on employer need and student availability	May be 8-15 hours per week during the semester; up to 40 hours per week during the summer	May range depending on employer need and student availability Minimum: 35 hours per week Maximum: 50 hours per week
ELIGIBILITY	Undergraduate & graduate students	Undergraduate & graduate students	Undergraduate students