

Experiential Education

Experiential education is a broad category of opportunities designed to help students define and validate their educational and career goals by exploring the realities of the work world. Experiential education through UAB Career Services includes cooperative education (co-op), internships, mentoring, job shadowing and volunteering. The Office of Student Academic Engagement includes additional experiential learning opportunities in research, study away, and service learning. Each opportunity is a carefully monitored work or service experience in which students have intentional learning goals and reflect actively on what they are learning throughout the process.



Cooperative Education

Cooperative education, or “co-op,” is a unique partnership among employers, students and the university that combines classroom studies with professional work experience. Co-op positions are typically paid experiences in which students work for a minimum of two semesters on either the alternating or parallel work schedule. Co-op positions must be directly related to a student’s major.

Internships

An internship is generally a single semester work experience (paid or unpaid) that offers students an opportunity to engage in further career exploration. Internships may or may not be directly related to a student’s major. Students should check with their respective schools to see if they can receive elective credit for their internship experience. School sponsored internships may have additional eligibility requirements.

Mentoring

Mentoring serves to supplement student knowledge through one-on-one interactions with professionals in the field. Mentors are encouraged to advise, inform, clarify and empower students to achieve their educational and professional goals. Through mentoring, students gain firsthand knowledge of the trends, realities and expectations of their chosen career field.

Job-Shadowing

In a job-shadowing situation, students observe professionals on the job, ask questions and gain a better understanding of a career. The intent of these informal relationships is to offer students a glimpse at a typical workday within a career. Students may shadow as many professionals as they

would like at any time throughout their academic career. Through Career Services, students can learn the best techniques to conduct an informational interview and explore their chosen profession in depth.

Volunteering

One of the best ways for a student to gain entry into an organization is to volunteer with them. There are countless opportunities for students to make worthwhile contributions to an organization while at the same time gaining professional experience and important contacts in the field.

Statistics:

- 70% of students who intern receive permanent job offers
 - Of those, 73% accept
- 73% of students who co-op receive permanent job offers
 - Of those, 81% accept

Dragon Trail hosts positions and opportunities for students to participate in experiential opportunities.