

Co-op Handbook

Class of 2009

Northeastern University School of Law

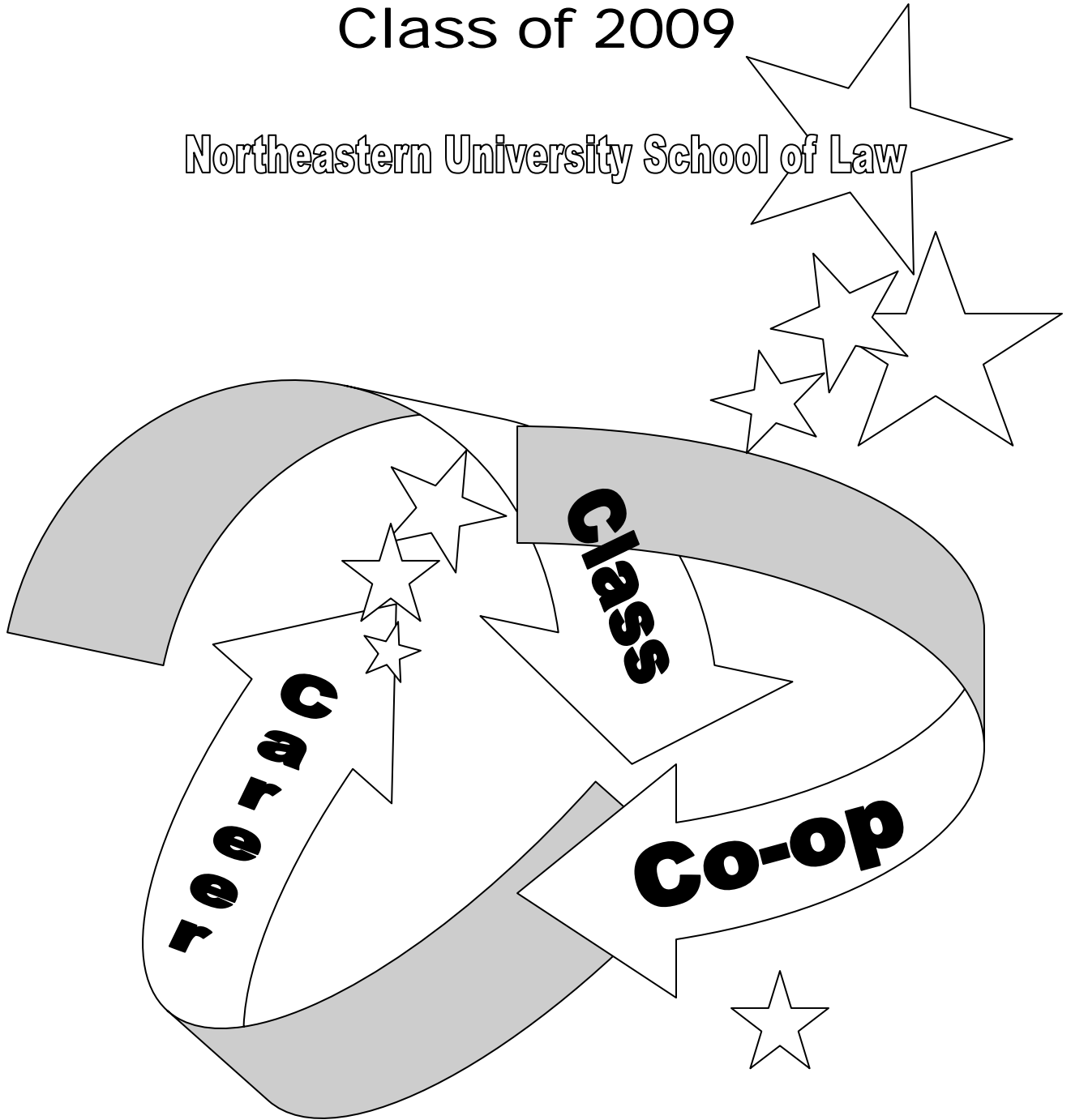


TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION
3	LAWYERS AT WORK – A BRIEF INTRODUCTION
3	Employment Settings and Workplace Culture
6	Practice Areas in Which Lawyers Work
6	Categories of Clients Which Lawyers Represent
6	Lawyering Modes
7	CO-OP GRADUATION REQUIREMENT
7	Essential Core Elements of a Successful Co-op
10	THE NON-COMMUNICATION RULE
12	QUARTERLY SCHEDULE FOR CO-OP PREPARATIONS
12	First Three Weeks – Prepare!
15	Week Four – Resume Submission Deadline!
15	Weeks Five Through Ten – Watch for the Postings!
18	Last Few Weeks – Tie Up Loose Ends!
19	SPECIAL EMPLOYMENT CONSIDERATIONS
19	Government Security Clearance
19	Mandatory Physical Examination/Drug Testing
19	U.S. Citizenship Requirement for Federal Employment
19	International Students with F-1 or J-1 Visas
20	Student Practice Certification Under Massachusetts Rule 3:03 and its Extended Use After Graduation
22	EARLY APPLICATION PROCESS FOR SUMMER INTERNSHIPS
23	DEVELOPING A JOB ON YOUR OWN
24	COMPENSATION
24	Salary
24	Co-op Funding
25	Cooperative Income Sharing Program
25	Income Tax Considerations
27	WHEN YOU'RE ON THE JOB
27	Medical Insurance
27	Unemployment Compensation
28	Workers Compensation
28	Fringe Benefits
28	Restrictions on Use of Lexis/Westlaw Passwords
29	Equal Opportunity

29	Seeking Accommodations on Co-op
31	Staff Visits
31	Problems on Co-op
32	OBTAINING EFFECTIVE SUPERVISION
34	CO-OP PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS & QUALITY QUESTIONNAIRES
36	PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY
36	The Unauthorized Practice of Law
36	Conflicts of Interest
37	Confidentiality
38	PROGRAM POLICIES
38	Violation of Co-op Rules, Policies and Procedures
38	Repeat Co-ops with the Same Employer
39	Enrollment in Academic Courses While on Co-op
39	Part-Time Work with Co-op Employers While in School
39	Switching Divisions/Rotations
40	Enrollment Status
40	Summer Quarter Study Abroad
42	DEFICIENT CO-OP PERFORMANCE AND THE ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL PROCESS
42	Marginal Co-op Performance
43	Unsuccessful Completion of a Co-op
45	CONCURRENT (DUAL) DEGREE PROGRAMS AND SEQUENCING OF CO-OPS
46	HOW TO REACH THE CO-OP OFFICE
47	APPENDICES
47	Non-Communication Rule Hypotheticals
52	Writing Sample Guidelines
53	What's in the Co-op Resource Room?

CO-OP HANDBOOK

Revised August 2006

The Cooperative Legal Education Program ("co-op") is at the heart of your law school curriculum. Co-op provides you with an outstanding opportunity to prepare to join the legal profession by emphasizing the development of practical lawyering skills within the context of traditional academic studies.

We hope that you will take advantage of the Co-op Program to gain a better understanding of the different types of legal practice available to you, as well as an increased understanding of yourself within an employment context- that is, how your interests, values and skills affect both your professional development and job satisfaction. The successful completion of your first year of legal studies will give you the necessary knowledge and skills to perform well on co-op.

As you know, you must fulfill a public interest requirement as a condition of graduation. Although there are several ways in which this requirement can be fulfilled, we encourage you to consider undertaking a public interest/service co-op as one of your four internships. Selecting a co-op with a legal services office, advocacy organization, governmental entity or public defender agency is not only a valuable legal experience, but also consistent with the school's commitment to promoting public interest/service law as a central theme in your education.

As part of your quarterly co-op preparations, you will meet with co-op staff to plan your job strategy, review your resume, and discuss any concerns that may affect your co-op experience. You then will go through the formal job acquisition process. For many of you, the quarterly hiring process will proceed quickly to a successful conclusion; for others, the search for a co-op position may take longer, but conclude just as favorably. Please remember that there is no correlation between the time when a job is obtained and its ultimate educational value.

To participate successfully in the Co-op Program, you must do the following:

- ⇒ ***Read this Handbook*** – You must understand the overall program operations and rules so that you know what to do and when to do it, as well as what not to do. The purpose of the Handbook is to acquaint you with the process of co-op as you will experience it, and to explain the rules, policies and procedures that you are responsible for knowing and following. It may be updated occasionally during the year, with any substantive changes published electronically. The Co-op Program operates under the most current version so that the rules, policies and procedures in effect at any given time are applicable to all students.
- ⇒ ***Attend First Year Co-op Classes*** – These are critically important sessions. We want to introduce you gradually to co-op so that you are not overwhelmed by the process, but are fully prepared to participate in it when the time comes. The information provided in these meetings will assist you in deciding where to apply for co-op, how to interview successfully to obtain desired offers, and how to perform well on co-op to receive excellent work evaluations that are critical to your future ability to obtain full-time post-graduate employment.
- ⇒ ***Meet co-op deadlines*** – The burden of missing a deadline is squarely on you. If you miss a deadline, you miss the chance to get the co-op, and, maybe, even a permanent job! If you anticipate a problem with meeting any deadline, let co-op staff know in advance so that necessary arrangements can be made if possible.
- ⇒ ***Read co-op notices*** – The Co-op Offices communicates with students via the WEBoard and individually by e-mail.

General co-op notices and employer postings are posted on the school's WEBOARD
⇒ [HTTPS://WEBOARD.SLAW.NEU.EDU](https://weboard.slaw.neu.edu). Check frequently for employer postings, information on upcoming programs, job opportunities, deadlines and events.

Individual (one-on-one) co-op notices are sent to you directly on your MYNEU address ⇒ @NEU.EDU. Check your account frequently for them. If you do not use this account as your *primary* e-mail account, you must activate the forwarding option.

- ⇒ ***Be organized*** – Although the co-op process may "feel" overwhelming at times, you can handle it by being organized. Record co-op deadlines and class meeting times in your appointment book! Create a co-op directory in your e-mail account to store co-op e-messages! Keep your co-op materials in a binder for future reference!
- ⇒ ***If you have questions or concerns about co-op, let co-op staff know immediately!***
Do not waste your energies by needless worry or upset! We look forward to working with you towards making co-op a rewarding part of your experience here.

LAWYERS AT WORK – A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

EMPLOYMENT SETTINGS AND WORKPLACE CULTURE

Your post-graduate career options will be shaped to a large extent by your upcoming co-op experience. As you begin to think about how you would like to use your four co-ops, it is critical for you to have an early understanding of the wide range of employment opportunities available to you. Making “good” co-op – hence, career – decisions involves much more than merely determining that you want to work for a firm and not the government. Instead, it involves identifying opportunities where the work environment, type of practice and actual job responsibilities are consistent with your personality, values, interests and skills.

As you begin to engage in this discovery process, you will soon discover that similar types of employers, even those engaged in the same practice of law, may be very different from each other because of their respective workplace “cultures.” It is important to be aware of these differences, since this factor can affect your experience of a given employment situation.

Culture refers to the “personality” of an employment setting, and is often the “feel” you have for a place. You often learn about it from talking to others, reading the Co-op Quality Questionnaires (student evaluations of prior co-op placements), and from your firsthand experience at interviews. Culture expresses itself in both tangible and intangible ways that include, among others, the following: What is the dress code? What is the work ethic? What are the expectations regarding socializing? Is it family friendly? Is there a diverse or homogeneous professional workforce? What forms of address are used, and by whom, towards whom? What is the hierarchy among the professionals? What are the rules governing relations with the support staff? These are often very subtle, but critical distinctions.

While the following descriptions will give you a brief introduction to some of the major types of employment settings where lawyers work, bear in mind that employers within each setting will differ because of the culture.

Private Practice

Large and medium firm private practice can encompass every area of law, and because of the involvement of some firms in *pro bono* work, virtually every type of client. Many large and medium firms serve primarily substantial corporate and individual clients. Generally, these firms have several specialized departments, such as corporate, litigation, real estate, bankruptcy, intellectual property, estate planning and probate.

Lawyers at these firms are usually assigned to a particular department where they work on specialized projects which fall under the rubric of that department. Some firms have a “rotation program” that allows new associates to work for designated time periods in several or all of the departments. Many students and recent law graduates seek positions with large

and medium firms because these firms offer them the opportunity to be exposed to a wide variety of practice areas, have ample resources for training and development, and pay high salaries. In exchange for high salaries, however, such firms expect an increasingly large time commitment expressed in billable hours from their employees.

As in the case of large and medium firms, small firms practice in every area of law for every type of client, although they usually serve more privately-held businesses and individuals than do large firms. Size, however, is not always determinative of the nature or sophistication of a firm's practice. Some small firms are relatively recent spin-offs of their larger counterparts; others are "boutique" firms that specialize in particular, and often extremely complex, practice areas.

Usually, small firms are less hierarchical and departmentalized than large firms. In addition, small firms frequently give interns and new associates greater responsibility and autonomy more quickly than large or medium firms do. Although there is a broad range in compensation, small firms generally pay lower salaries than large or medium firms. Lower salaries, however, do not necessarily translate into lower billable hour expectations, although lawyers in small firms may have more flexibility with their time.

Government

The opportunity to perform public service work is available through federal, state and municipal government positions which offer a great variety of practice options for students and lawyers. In some areas, such as criminal prosecution, government employment provides the only practice setting. Salaries for those working in government positions vary greatly, but are generally lower than salaries in private practice. Government jobs often provide generous benefits and sometimes permit a more regular work schedule than other practice settings.

Public Interest / Social Justice

One of the special characteristics of NUSL is the significant number of graduates who undertake public interest co-ops and begin their legal careers in public interest law. Included in the category of public interest employers are legal services organizations, public defender offices, advocacy organizations, and law firms devoted to serving the underrepresented. (For excellent descriptions of various types of public interest employers, see Harvard's *Public Interest Job Search* available in the Resource Room.) In addition, many NUSL students secure public interest fellowships upon graduation which enable them to pursue careers in public interest law.

Many students – and lawyers – work in public interest law because of their desire to serve clients who otherwise might go without legal representation or to promote causes to which they feel a strong personal commitment. Many feel that the satisfaction derived from performing public interest work is impossible to duplicate in the private sector despite the lower salaries they receive in comparison to the private sector.

The Judiciary

A judicial internship or post-graduate clerkship can provide students and new lawyers with valuable exposure to the judicial system and an opportunity to further refine their legal research and writing skills. Clerkships are usually one or two year positions in state or federal courts, working for a particular judge or as a member of a pool assisting a number of judges. Judicial clerks are exposed to all levels of practitioners and gain unparalleled insight into the judicial process. These clerkships are considered extremely prestigious by the legal community and, as a result, former clerks are often able to obtain positions with legal employers who would not have considered them prior to such experience.

The same is true for co-op experiences as a judicial intern. Students who have performed a judicial internship are generally considered extremely attractive to employers. Therefore, students who enter NUSL directly from college with little or no legal experience may want to consider a judicial internship for their first co-op as one of the available ways to enhance their marketability for later co-ops.

Corporations and Unions

Legal positions with businesses and corporations can offer the challenges of private law firm practice without the pressures of meeting billable hour quotas. Students with a strong interest in the business side of law are often drawn to these types of positions because of the substance of the work, the work setting, and the potential for dividing one's time between acting in the dual capacity of lawyer and business advisor.

Academia

Teaching law offers another potential career direction for law school graduates. Traditionally, law faculty positions have been held by graduates who served on the board of their law school's law review or who completed a prestigious clerkship. Due in part to the increasing emphasis on clinical programs in law school curricula and the expanding use of adjunct professors, law faculty are now drawn from a broader pool, including those who have practiced law for a number of years. NUSL students interested in teaching after graduation may want to consider seeking a clerkship or pursuing an advanced law degree in order to enhance their opportunities.

Law-Related Opportunities

It is important to remember that there are lawyers employed in almost every type of organization performing legal and non-legal functions. The opportunities available are limited only by the scope and degree of your imagination. Your law degree adds to the educational and professional experience that you acquired prior to law school, and should therefore broaden, not limit, your career options. Publications for individuals considering less traditional career choices are available in the Resource Room.

PRACTICE AREAS IN WHICH LAWYERS WORK

Just as there are a wide variety of employers that hire lawyers, there are a wide variety of substantive practice areas in which lawyers work, e.g. labor and employment, environmental, securities law, real estate, immigration, etc. Your level of satisfaction with your co-op job will be largely dependent upon the degree to which you are interested in the type of legal issues central to your work.

You may have had an interest in certain types of legal issues and practice areas prior to commencing your legal studies; in fact, your interest in certain practice areas may have been the reason why you decided to become a lawyer. The "Legal Practice Series ("LPS")", presented by the Co-op Office as part of its first year curriculum, is designed to provide you with an overview of many of the major practice areas, as well as employment settings, in which lawyers work. You will find this information essential to making your co-op selections, speaking intelligently about your areas of interest in interviews, and determining your career goals.

CATEGORIES OF CLIENTS WHICH LAWYERS REPRESENT

In addition to identifying the type(s) of practice areas and employment setting(s) in which you are interested, it is also important to consider the type(s) of clients which you would like to represent. If, for example, you are interested in employment law issues, would you prefer to represent the employer or the employee? If you are interested in real estate issues, would you prefer to represent buyers of property, land developers or advocacy groups raising environmental concerns? This information is another "piece of the puzzle" in helping you shape your co-op selection strategy as you begin to define your future role as a lawyer.

LAWYERING MODES

Finally, in addition to determining the practice settings, practice areas, and type of clients that interest you, you also must address *how* you want to use your legal skills to represent your clients. There are many lawyering modes or ways in which you use your legal skills to represent others. For example, if your interest is employment law and you wish to represent employees, there are a number of ways in which you could represent your client. These methods of representation or lawyering modes include litigating on the behalf of an individual employee or bringing class action suits, resolving conflicts through alternative dispute resolution processes, drafting legislation or employment contracts and policies which are protective of their interests, and lobbying for the rights of employees.

CO-OP GRADUATION REQUIREMENT

In order for you to graduate, you must meet the following basic co-op requirement:

You must successfully complete four cooperative quarters, each quarter consisting of at least eleven weeks of full-time legal work with one employer under the supervision of an attorney or judge.

Essential Core Elements of a Successfully Completed Co-op Quarter

Each of your four employers is required to submit a written evaluation of your work performance to the Co-op Office that will be incorporated into your official academic transcript. In order to fulfill the graduation requirement, you must "successfully complete" each of those co-ops. The essential core elements of a successfully completed co-op quarter relate first, to your fulfillment of the attendance requirement for full-time work over an eleven week period; second, to the performance of supervised legal work; and third, to your ability to demonstrate basic competency in conducting legal research, performing correct legal analysis, producing useful written work products, and engaging in effective oral advocacy, depending upon the nature of your job.

Full-time means working a minimum of 35 hours per week for eleven weeks during a cooperative work quarter for one employer. "Split" work quarters (*e.g.*, six weeks with Employer X and five weeks with Employer Y, or 20 hours/week with Employer A and 20 hours/week with Employer B) do *not* qualify for co-op credit under this definition.

Legal work encompasses a broad range of activities that vary according to the type of employment setting and the kind of substantive work expected, and such work must be performed under the supervision of a member of the bar or bench in good standing. In some jobs, typically larger law firms, judicial clerkships and corporate legal departments, research and writing will take up most of your time. In contrast, legal assistance, public defender, government agencies, and smaller firms tend to use students in more varied roles. In addition to traditional research and writing, students can expect to be involved with interviewing clients, drafting motions or other pleadings, appearing at court or agency hearings, assisting with depositions, and responding to discovery requests. While an employer may occasionally request an intern to perform some non-legal work (*e.g.*, photocopying, answering phones, filing papers in court, *etc.*), the focus of the co-op must remain law-related in terms of the program objectives and the development of your legal skills.

Basic competency must be demonstrated in all aspects of your performance. In evaluating this, employers rely on criteria that typically carry different weight according to the context of the internship as described above. Despite the natural differences that exist among legal settings, all employers normally expect their interns to demonstrate a level of basic competency in the five areas summarized below.

Legal Research and Knowledge

Lawyers seldom "know" the law in a given area unless it is one in which they are constantly engaged or have recently researched. Likewise, you are not presumed to know all relevant law, but rather to understand fundamentals and be able to learn readily through study and research. Thus, all employers will expect you to develop and demonstrate solid research skills. You must be able to make productive and accurate use of a law library, investigating both substantive and procedural issues, or questions of law as reflected in statutes, case law, regulatory materials, and secondary sources such as law review articles and standard topical treatises. You must be able to perform this research efficiently, both manually and on-line via Lexis or Westlaw.

Factual Research

Employers will expect you to handle factual research with appropriate facility. You must know what questions to ask in order to collect legally significant data. Such relevant facts are usually those answered by the questions, "Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?" Facts typically provide the context of your legal research, so knowing how to conduct factual research is important.

Oral and Written Expression

By your words – written and spoken – you must be able to convey to your employer that you understand the law, that you have a good command of language, and that you can effectively communicate to others your (and your client's) point of view. This encompasses the following:

- ⇒ ***Writing Skills*** – Your thoughts must be organized logically. Good sentence and paragraph structure, appropriate choice of words, conciseness, proper tone, and correct grammar and punctuation are critical. Your written product also should be visually easy to read.
- ⇒ ***Legal Analysis*** – You must be able to apply the relevant law to the facts in order to diagnose the issue or problem confronting you. Quality work, in terms of accuracy, sound reasoning and strong legal analysis, is the expectation which all employers have of their interns.
- ⇒ ***Oral Skills*** – Good diction and effective communication skills are necessary in all legal settings. In addition, if oral advocacy is the *primary* focus of your internship,

an employer will want to see how quickly you "think on your feet," how well you react to pressure, and how persuasively you present your position.

Since all of these skills are always subject to improvement, employers seldom expect students to be polished attorneys. However, they do want to see a "best effort" made, including a genuine interest in the work that is assigned to you, and evidence of an aptitude for law in the work which you produce for them.

Diligence

As an intern you must be ethical in your dealings, conscientious about your work, and committed to your employer as follows:

- ⇒ ***Reliability*** – Employers expect their interns to be dependable and responsible. Your employer will expect you to fulfill your eleven week, full-time attendance obligation (no excessive absences), be punctual, and to notify supervisors in advance of any necessary absence.
- ⇒ ***Work Habits*** – Employers expect students to fully complete assignments, to meet all deadlines, and to alert them to any difficulties or problems which arise that might hinder this effort. This means that you must be able to manage your time effectively, to follow directions, to take appropriate initiative, to seek necessary guidance, to pay attention to details, to exercise good judgment and to use common sense. Employers place a high value on these traits.

Interpersonal Relations

Typical co-op experiences entail "learning the ropes" on the job in a relatively short period of time. Highly important, then, is your ability to listen, to communicate, to accept constructive criticism, to cooperate, and to be flexible and adaptable. Specific legal skills can be learned on the job, but general "human relations" skills are ones that you must bring with you. Observing the unspoken rules of your work place culture, respecting the confidentiality of clients and colleagues, being courteous to everyone, and showing genuine interest in your work – traits reflected in your attitude, demeanor and decorum – are just as important as your ability and intelligence.

THE NON-COMMUNICATION RULE

Chief among the rules governing the co-op process is the Non-Communication Rule. Its purpose is to insure fairness in the co-op process, and it is to be read broadly as prohibiting any and all conduct that gives you an advantage over your classmates. The Rule is set forth as follows:

Except as otherwise provided by applicable co-op rules,

YOU ARE PROHIBITED AT ALL TIMES

(before, during and after the formal quarterly co-op process)

FROM CONTACTING AND COMMUNICATING DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY

(through faculty, friends or other persons acting on your behalf)

WITH CURRENTLY PARTICIPATING CO-OP EMPLOYERS

INDEPENDENTLY OF THE CO-OP OFFICE

WHERE THE OUTCOME

(whether intentional or unintentional)

RESULTS IN YOUR EMPLOYMENT

(whether paid or unpaid)

AS A FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME LEGAL INTERN

AT ANY POINT DURING YOUR TENURE AT THE LAW SCHOOL.

Participating co-op employers include those listed in the quarterly Employer Book and new employers posted on the WEBoard. **If in doubt about the propriety of any contact or communication with an employer, your first responsibility is to check with the Co-op Office!**

The Non-Communication Rule operates on the honor system, and prohibits and holds you responsible for any and all conduct that gives you an unfair advantage over your classmates in obtaining employment as legal interns with employers currently participating in the Co-op Program. This means that you have an affirmative duty to know or to ascertain the status of an employer where contact or communication with such employer is made independently of the Co-op Office. In addition, the prohibition of the Non-Communication Rule is broad and extends to conduct engaged in by others on your behalf, even without your knowledge or permission. It is in effect and remains

applicable to you at all times, it represents a responsibility that you undertake personally as part of your legal training.¹

Violations of the Non-Communication Rule may result in disciplinary action as determined by the Director for Administration. While the Non-Communication Rule is one of strict liability, the imposition of sanctions depends on the circumstances of the violation, including your participation in or knowledge of the offense. Violation of the Non-Communication Rule may, *inter alia*, preclude you from applying to the employer in question, accepting a job offer, or receiving credit towards your co-op graduation requirement which would affect your eligibility to take a July bar examination following the May graduation of your class. Appeals from any sanction imposed by the Director for Administration may be taken to the Associate Dean for Experiential Learning. Violations of the Non-Communication Rule also may result in charges of academic dishonesty being brought against you before the University Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution.

The Purpose of the Non-Communication Rule

The Non-Communication Rule goes to the heart of the co-op process, for it controls the access you have to program employers. ***It operates to open and to preserve internship opportunities for all students*** without regard to connections occasioned by birth, charm, ambition, accident or design. In this respect, co-op does not reflect the "real world" where such connections would operate to give one job seeker an advantage over another. Instead, co-op operates as a process where we are trying to level the playing field as much as possible – that is, students compete with each other for co-op jobs with program employers based only on their resumes, writing samples, and co-op/academic evaluations. We believe the fairness inherent in this process far outweighs the inequities that would prevail in the absence of the rule.

¹ The Appendix contains a series of hypothetical scenarios that are offered as examples for understanding how the Rule applies in situations commonly encountered by students.

QUARTERLY SCHEDULE FOR CO-OP PREPARATIONS

First Three Weeks - PREPARE!

1. Pick up your Resume Packet on the first day of the quarter.

Resume packets are the large manila envelopes in the Resource Room. They contain the updated **Important Information Memorandum** for the quarter, instructions on how to submit your resumes, and **List of Employer Choices**. The Important Information Memorandum updates the Co-op Handbook and details everything you need to know to participate in the co-op process, including all co-op deadlines for the quarter. You need to read it at the beginning of the quarter so that you know what's up! This memorandum is also available electronically on the Co-op Office website at www.slaw.neu.edu/coop.

2. Prepare your resume and any supplemental attachments.

Refer to the Important Information Memorandum for guidance on this step. You may need to, among other things, follow-up with your employer if you have not received your co-op evaluation, speak with references for permission before listing them on your resume, and obtain express permission from your employer before using a co-op work product as a writing sample.²

Academic and/or co-op evaluations may be required by employers, or submitted at the discretion of students when the employer does not specifically require such submissions. **Students who are required or select to submit academic evaluations must submit *all* academic evaluations issued to date even if such evaluation is under appeal by the student. Students who are required or select to submit co-op evaluations, must submit *all* co-op evaluations received to date unless a specific co-op evaluation is under appeal and the student has received express permission from the Director for Administration or Director for External Relations to withhold the evaluation.**

3. Schedule appointments with co-op staff.

Sign-up sheets will be posted on or near the door of each co-op advisor's office at the beginning of each quarter.

4. Check for following for co-op communications daily.

⇒ **The WEBoard for all employer postings and Co-op announcements.**

² See "Writing Sample Guidelines" in the *Appendix*.

⇒ **MYNEU address for individual (one-on-one) e-mails that affect you directly.** If you do not use this account as your primary e-mail account, you must activate the forwarding option so that you do not miss something important. In addition, periodically clean out your e-mailbox so that incoming messages are not blocked. You also might want to consider creating a Co-op E-Mail Directory to store the e-messages which we sent to you during a quarter; then, you can delete them at the end of the quarter.

5. Utilize the materials in the Resource Room.³

In the Resource Room you will find basic information on participating co-op employers in the **Employer and Judicial Internship Books**. To focus your use of these resources effectively, you can use the **Geographical and Type of Practice Index** (e.g., civil rights, commercial, government, legal services, etc.). Use these resources with the most recent version of **The Hiring List**, the list that tells you whether an employer is hiring for the upcoming quarter. These resources are also available electronically through E-Coop.

Perhaps the most valuable employer information is found in reports called “**Student Quality Questionnaires**” that are kept in the confidential employer files. These reports are submitted by students who held co-op jobs with the employers. It is really important to maintain the confidentiality of these records in order to encourage students to provide candid evaluations of their co-op experiences. ***Employers are not permitted direct access to these files, and you should never share this information with them.*** This information is in hard copy only.

All materials or information on employers must be submitted to the Co-op Office for inclusion in the Employer Files, and not placed directly in the files by students.

The materials in the Resource Room are for you and your classmates to use in that area. Please put back what you use in the right place. ***You may not remove materials from the Resource Room without permission from Co-op or Career Services staff.***

A Note on Electronic Access to Co-op Employer Information

You can conduct your preliminary search of co-op employers using the **E-COOP BOOK**. It contains the same information as the Employer and Judicial Internship Books in the Resource Room for all participating employers. You can search employers by geographical location, hiring status, and type of practice.

³ See “What’s in the Co-op Resource Room?” in the Appendix.

HOW TO ACCESS THE E-COOP BOOK

- Visit ⇒ **<http://www.slw.neu.edu/coop/student.html>**
- Your username for this site is the same as your MYNEU username for e-mail; however, the password is different. The password is the last four digits of your student ID, plus the last two digits of your birth year.
- A window will allow searches by any combination of the following criteria: City, State, Zip, Hiring Status, or Type of Practice/Specialty.
- Once you have entered your search criteria, click on the “**Search**” button. The page will reload, and the results will be shown below the search button. Click on the **Coop Name** link to display the “Coop Employer Details” page. This page contains information similar to what can be found in the Co-op Employer Book, and can be printed by using your web browser’s print function.
- If you have trouble logging in or otherwise accessing the system, contact the Office of Computer Services at **slw_ocs@neu.edu** -or- **(617) 373-8919**. Questions related to employer information should be directed to co-op staff.

**THE ABOVE INSTRUCTIONS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE
AS UPDATES ARE MADE TO THE SYSTEM.**

Week Four - RESUME DEADLINE!

1. ***Strictly observe the deadline for submitting your Resume Packet.***

The co-op submission deadline is posted at the beginning of each quarter. You are expected to meet this deadline. In the rare instance that an emergency prohibits you from meeting the deadline, call the Co-op Office immediately to inquire if an accommodation is possible. Directions for submitting your co-op materials are detailed in Important Information Memorandum included in your Resume Packet, and must be followed exactly. Never place materials in your co-op file if you miss a deadline – always check with co-op staff.

You should also be aware that there are often early mailing deadlines for certain jobs. If employers request resumes in advance of our usual mailing deadline for a given quarter, we notify students through the WEBoard.

2. ***Maintain your personal co-op file.***

In March you will be provided with a hanging file in the co-op administrative area. The manila folder inside the file contains materials that are for office use only, and you should leave this folder alone. The area behind the manila folder, however, is for you to store your resumes and other materials used for co-op. Always keep a copy of a complete set of your current materials in your file, and discard outdated materials. **You have free access to your file whenever the Co-op Office is open, but only to your file. Any student accessing another student's file will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University.**

Weeks Five through Ten - WATCH FOR THE POSTINGS!

Messages from co-op employers – *requests for interviews and offers* – are posted on WEBoard. You are considered to have notice of all postings. If at any relevant time you will not have internet access, ask a friend to check the WEBoard for you; do not call co-op staff for this information.

1. ***Employers have expectations.***

Our employers know the co-op rules which you are expected to follow. Do not put yourself in the position of having an employer register a complaint about your failure to follow co-op rules or your lack of courtesy in failing to return a call.

2. ***Use of co-op telephones.***

You may use the co-op telephones in the Resource Room for co-op related calls only. It is your responsibility to exercise good faith and common courtesy when using these phones. The school pays for all calls. ***Personal calls (local or otherwise) are not permitted.*** No reimbursement will be provided for co-op calls made off-campus without prior approval from co-op staff; all international calls also must be pre-approved by co-op staff.

For hearing impaired students, a TTY machine is available. If you need to use a TTY, it is kept in the bottom drawer of the file cabinet at the Circulation Desk of the law school library – just ask the person staffing the desk for it.

3. ***When an employer requests you to call for an interview, don't delay.***

You must respond within 24 hours of the posting (or the next business day if such response time falls on a weekend or holiday). If an employer calls you at home, notify co-op staff as soon as possible. You may not delay the scheduling or timing of an interview to wait and see about other interview requests and offers. Note: Be prepared to make decisions without hearing from all of your employers – this is a normal part of the co-op process. However, if you are really interested in an employer who has not responded to your application, always check with co-op staff before taking any action.

4. ***After the interview, but before a hiring decision is made, take no action.***

If you need information from an employer that has not yet made an offer, check with co-op staff since you are not permitted to communicate directly with the employer (e.g., calling to inquire about your status, etc.). If, however, the employer has expressly asked you to call prior to accepting another employer's offer, you may do so.

5. ***When an employer makes an offer to you, the “Three Day Rule” takes effect.***

THE THREE DAY RULE

You must either *accept or decline* a job offer by 5:00 P.M. on the *third business day following* the day on which the offer is made.

If the offer is from a judge in the Co-op Program, you may *not* decline the offer *unless* you have an offer *in hand* from another participating judge within the *same* three day period.

Thus, if an offer is posted on Wednesday, you must respond by Monday at 5:00 P.M. Likewise, if an employer makes a job offer directly to you on Wednesday, but does not call the Co-op Office until Friday, you still must respond on Monday.

You may not ask an employer to extend the time in which you have to respond.

At 5:00 P.M. on the third day, an unaccepted job offer is considered to be automatically revoked, and the employer will be asked to select another student for the position.

In the interest of fairness and courtesy, do not sit on an offer. If you know that you are not going to accept an offer, you should decline immediately. Likewise, if it's the job of your dreams, don't delay your acceptance. This keeps the co-op process moving.

Occasionally, an employer will insist that you respond before your three days are up. While we discourage this, there unfortunately is no recourse, and you must respond as requested.

6. *As soon as you accept an offer, sign-up on the Yellow Sheet in the Co-op Office.*

Find your name on the posted Yellow Sheet in the Co-op Office and write the name of your employer next to it. **Do this immediately** to inform co-op staff that you are no longer available if other employers call for you. If you are out-of-town, contact the Co-op Office with this information.

Once you have accepted an offer, you have made a binding commitment. You absolutely may not renege on an accepted offer. If an unforeseen problem develops that makes you believe that you must break your commitment, you must immediately consult with co-op staff for guidance before taking any action.

7. *Once you have accepted an offer, you still respond to outstanding interview requests and offers.*

After accepting an offer and signing up on the Yellow Sheet in the Co-op Office, you must call all employers who subsequently request you to call for an interview (this usually happens if you do not immediately sign-up on the Yellow Sheet after accepting a job); with whom you have scheduled an interview; with whom you already have interviewed, but no offer has been made; or with whom you have an outstanding offer which you have not yet accepted.

8. *Co-op offers are valid only for the immediate quarter in which you are seeking employment.*

You may not simultaneously decline a job offer for the quarter under consideration and request that it be carried over to a future quarter. Likewise, if an employer makes an offer to you for a future quarter, you may not accept it except under very limited circumstances which require the prior approval of a co-op advisor.

9. ***Supplemental Mailings.***

There are two types of mailings which supplement the initial resume mailing. The first is **“The Supplemental Mailing,”** a single mass mailing to undersubscribed employers that takes place three to four weeks after the first mailing. The second consists of a series of ongoing **weekly mailings** to employers who contact us during the placement period. Hiring lists are normally posted Friday with applications due the following Monday. Check the WEBoard for these notices. Necessary details about participating in both of these mailings are provided in the Important Information Memorandum enclosed in your Resume Packet.

Last Few Weeks of the Quarter - TIE UP LOOSE ENDS!

1. ***Apply for Co-op Funding if applicable.***

Co-op stipends (including co-op federal work-study funds) are awarded to a limited number of students with demonstrated financial need who accept unfunded or minimally funded public interest co-op positions (legal services, public defender offices, non-profit legal advocacy organizations, and governmental entities) and judicial internships. **The Memoranda on Co-op Funding and Co-op Work-Study Procedures, located in the Co-op Office and available electronically, provide information regarding co-op stipends.**

2. ***Apply for Student Practice Certification if applicable.***

You will know if your co-op job requires that you be certified in order to appear in court under applicable state student practice rules (*e.g.*, intern positions in public defender or legal services offices). If so, you are responsible for securing the appropriate letter of certification through the Co-op Office ***before*** you go on co-op. **Information on how and when to obtain student practice certification is in the quarterly Important Information Memorandum.** Note that some jurisdictions (*e.g.*, California) impose a fee for certification that you are responsible for paying.

3. ***Ensure that the Co-op Office has you confirmed in your co-op placement.***

You are responsible for providing the Co-op Office with the necessary information regarding both your co-op placement and your mailing address while on co-op. If you have developed your own co-op, you must ensure that your placement has been approved after the receipt of a letter from your supervising attorney as set forth in the Section: “Developing Your Own Co-op.”

SPECIAL EMPLOYMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Government Security Clearance

You will be informed if your co-op job requires that you undergo a security clearance as a pre-condition of employment (*e.g.*, intern positions in U.S. Attorney Offices). ***If so, make sure that you take care of this as early as possible.***

Students who must be fingerprinted as a condition of employment may make arrangements through the University's Public Safety Office by calling (617) 373-2698. Be prepared to provide two forms of picture ID at the scheduled appointment time.

The clearance process can take a surprising amount of time, and requires that you be vigilant in checking periodically on the status of your clearance. Always see co-op staff if you have any questions or problems with the process.

Mandatory Physical Examination and/or Drug Testing

Students should be aware that several co-op employers require their employees and student interns to undergo and pass physical examinations and/or drug testing as a condition of employment. Drug testing may include urine and/or hair samples.

This information is provided in the Co-op Employer Handbook. Do not apply to these employers if you are unwilling to comply with these requirements.

U.S. Citizenship Requirement for Federal Employment

If you are not a U.S. citizen, you may not be eligible for co-op or full-time employment with offices, agencies or departments associated with the federal government. Eligibility for such positions depends on your country of origin and the particular agency or department. If you are affected by this, check with co-op staff.

International Students with F-1 or J-1 Visas

Under the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) that went into effect in January 2003, there are important federal laws that govern the stay of international students in the United States. These laws will be strictly enforced by the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the Department of State, so it is essential that you understand your responsibilities as a holder of a student visa classification.

Your co-op internship experience is officially classified as "curricular practical training," and **you are required to obtain a Co-op Authorization for each and every co-op placement, regardless of where the co-op is located and whether or not you are compensated.** The three steps which you should follow to obtain the required Co-op Authorization are as follows:

- ⇒ As soon as you obtain your co-op job for an upcoming quarter, complete the Co-op Authorization Form for International Students ISSI Form 152 available electronically on the Co-op Office's website, and have it signed by a co-op advisor.
- ⇒ Schedule an appointment with an International Student Advisor at the University's International Student and Scholar Institute ("ISSI"), 206 Ell Hall (617/373-2310 or 617/373-2318).
- ⇒ Bring to your meeting with the International Student Advisor your Passport, your I-94, and your I-20 (F-1 Visa Holders) or DS-2019 (J-1 Visa Holders), along with the partially completed ISSI Form 152.

These requirements cannot be waived, and it is your responsibility to obtain Co-op Authorization for *each* co-op quarter *before* you go on co-op. If there are any factors that prevent your co-op from being authorized (*e.g.*, you worked on a previous co-op in the U.S., but did not obtain proper authorization; your passport expired; your enrollment status is "WNR"), you will be referred to the appropriate university office to resolve the problem.

Note: You will need a Social Security Number (issued by the U.S. Social Security Administration) in order to be paid while on co-op. If you do not have a Social Security Number, please request a letter and information at the ISSI.

Student Practice Certification Under Massachusetts Rule 3:03 and Its Extended Use After Graduation

The chief purpose of MA Student Practice Rule 3:03 is to provide students the opportunity to gain in-court experience under the supervision of attorneys under limited and specified situations.

In addition to providing supervised training, it may provide the added benefit of enabling students who obtain post-graduate employment with a limited number of employers with the opportunity to represent those employers during the period right after the bar exam and up until the results of the July bar exam. The qualifying employers in Massachusetts are legal services organizations representing the indigent, the Committee for Public Counsel Services (CPCS), county district attorney offices, and the MA Attorney General's Office.

The Supreme Judicial Court will not issue such certification simply to enable a student to obtain post-graduate employment with a prosecutor's office or public defender's office. If you have never been certified under MA Student Practice Rule 3:03 before, and if you are being considered for post-grad employment with a CPCS office or district attorney's office here in Massachusetts requiring such certification, you need to get that certification request approved at least 3 months prior to graduation in order to be permitted to work for those employers from late July/early August up until the first bar results (which are in early November). Accordingly, 3:03

certification must be obtained at least three months prior to graduation, which means sometime on or about February 25 of your graduation year.

Failure to obtain such certification three months prior to graduation may bar you from accepting such employment prior to the first bar results. However, Rule 3:03 certification will only be issued three months prior to graduation if it is being obtained in conjunction with a rule qualifying co-op employer, a rule qualifying clinic, or a rule-qualifying special project.

Remember the following:

Getting 3:03 certification for a co-op requires that it be with a qualifying co-op employer in which you are representing an indigent client in civil matters, indigent clients in criminal defense matters for CPCS, or a District Attorney's office in Massachusetts or the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office.

If you never previously received 3:03 certification for a qualifying law school clinic prior to the start of your last academic quarter in the Spring of your graduation year, you must pre-register for a law school clinic in February to ensure you meet the "three month prior to graduation" requirement. Late enrollment in a clinic in the final academic quarter in spring will, in all likelihood, disqualify you from obtaining such certification.

If you previously received 3:03 certification through a co-op or clinic, such prior certification will count. You should see Jeff Smith in the Co-op Office about how to amend that certification to qualify for your post-grad employment with CPCS or a district attorney's office.

If you never previously received 3:03 certification and will not be working for a co-op employer that qualifies you for 3:03 certification in the spring of your graduation year, but you previously obtained student practice certification in another state, you may be eligible to have that certification honored for 3:03 certification for purposes of post-graduate employment. Remember- this applies only to Massachusetts Student Practice Certification Requirements.⁴ If you have any questions about MA Student Practice Rule 3:03, please see Jeff Smith in the Co-op Office.

EARLY APPLICATION PROCESS FOR SUMMER INTERNSHIPS

⁴ Students in other jurisdictions should consult the student certification rule of that jurisdiction.

The usual co-op job application process takes place at the beginning of a quarter for the following quarter (*e.g.*, June for the Fall Quarter, September for the Winter Quarter). ***The Summer Quarter is different!*** Since students from other law schools apply for summer positions much earlier than our usual co-op schedule, we provide an early application process for summer internships to insure that our students are not precluded from consideration by employers who otherwise might have completed their summer hiring before receiving resumes from us.

The main summer mailing is in mid-January with an early mailing in mid-November for employers that expect to conduct interviews and make hiring decisions before the end of January. The supplemental summer mailing is in mid-March. Students will receive timely notice of how to participate in them, including a co-op class meeting devoted exclusively to this process. In addition to these mailings coordinated by the Co-op Office, there are a number of summer job announcements that require students to apply on their own to employers. Students are informed of these opportunities, as well as any other *ad hoc* “early” summer mailings coordinated through the Co-op Office, on the WEBoard.

Please note that the Summer Mailings coordinated by the Co-op Office are separate and distinct from the “Fall and Winter Recruitment Programs” coordinated by the Office of Career Services.

Each year the Office of Career Services coordinates several special recruitment programs in the fall and winter for *second year students* seeking summer positions with a number of legal employers. While a number of well known public interest employers participate in these programs, the majority of these employers are large firms recruiting students for “Summer Associate Programs.” These formal programs are specifically utilized by the firms to evaluate participants for employment after law school. They are extraordinarily competitive since students from other law schools also apply for the limited number of positions. Students participating in them receive co-op credit.

Each office holds informational sessions so that you will fully understand what these programs are and how to participate. If you are participating through the Co-op Office’s process, application rules are specified in the memorandum that it distributes in the fall entitled, “Instructions for Participating in the November and January Summer Mailings.”

Co-op stipends, including work-study awards for unfunded summer positions, will not be made until the regular funding application period in the spring. This means that you may be in the position of having to accept a position without knowing if you will receive funding. As always, see co-op staff with questions.

DEVELOPING YOUR OWN CO-OP

You may pursue co-op job opportunities with any employer who is *not* currently participating in the Co-op Program. ***Employers that are listed as not hiring for a particular quarter are participating employers and, therefore, cannot be contacted regarding co-op opportunities.*** Many currently participating employers were brought into the Co-op Program by students who developed jobs with them on their own.

The details of how to develop a job on your own are covered in a separate memorandum entitled, "Developing Your Own Co-op."⁵ Copies are available in the Co-op Office Room and electronically. A first year class meeting is also devoted to this subject, and it includes a discussion on developing international internships.

Students must receive *prior* approval from a Co-op advisor *before* starting any co-op with a non-participating employer. Such approval requires the prior receipt by a co-op advisor of a letter signed by the supervising attorney, stating:

- (1) The student has been hired to work as a legal intern on a full-time basis (minimum of 35 hours per week) for at least 11 weeks (specifying the start and end dates);**
- (2) The kind of projects the student will be assigned as well as a brief description of the employer's work;**
- (3) The student will be supervised by an attorney (or judge); and,**
- (4) The employer will submit a written evaluation of the student's work (on a form that the school provides) at the conclusion of the co-op internship.**

Students going on co-op in, or planning on traveling to, countries for which there are current travel advisories posted by the U.S. Department of State and the Center for Disease Control must execute an Agreement for Assumption of Risk, Waiver of Liability and Indemnification available in the Co-op Office prior to their departure.

Once you have obtained a job, you ***must sign-up on the yellow sheet*** in the Co-op Office and provide the additional information requested on the adjoining sheets. A letter of confirmation will be sent to your employer from the Co-op Office that contains information on the Co-op Program as well as a copy of the office's Guide to Supervision for Legal Employers and Law Students.

⁵ The NUSL Library has also put together a publication on how to research employers. The html version of that publication is available at ⇒ <http://www.slaw.neu.edu/library/researchempl.htm>.

COMPENSATION

The primary purpose of the Co-op Program is to enhance the quality of your legal education. There is no necessary relationship between a job's educational value and its pay scale. Salaries vary depending on the employer's ability to pay.

Salary

Salaries are typically set by employers, although occasionally they may be negotiated between a student and an employer. There are clear regional variations, but generally, the range for large law firms is \$1,900 to \$2,500 per week; for medium firms, \$700 to \$1,200; corporations, \$600 to \$1200; government jobs, advocacy organizations and small firms, \$0 to \$500. Judicial clerkships, with a few exceptions, are unfunded.

Important Note:

Under no circumstance should you be hired by an employer as a "consultant" or "independent contractor" because, as the I.R.S. has ruled, students lack the requisite skills and experience. All Northeastern student-employees on co-op jobs retain their status as full-time students. An employer who compensates you directly thus must take the requisite deductions from your salary.

Co-op Funding

Co-op funding includes both **co-op federal work-study** and **co-op stipends**. While no one may depend on receiving co-op funding from the law school, there are limited funds available from various sources to support students *with demonstrated financial need* who accept public interest/public service jobs that are unfunded or minimally funded (*e.g.*, legal services, non-profit legal advocacy organizations, prosecution and public defender offices, government agencies and judicial internships).

Since the co-op funding process takes place near the end of the quarter, students typically must accept jobs *before* they know whether they will receive funding and, if so, how much. Awards are issued by the University as close to the start of a co-op quarter as possible.

All co-op stipend awards issued by the school are initially deposited in a student's tuition account. This is the same procedure utilized for student loans and other forms of financial aid such as scholarships. If there is no outstanding balance in terms of tuition or other fees, you will be issued a refund check in the full amount of the co-op stipend award. If you owe the University any money, that amount which you owe will be deducted from your award and your refund check will be the full co-op stipend award less what you owe. Hardship cases will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

Full-time co-op work-study funding awards are not subject to this requirement. Students getting full-time co-op work-study funding will be issued regular pay checks through the University's Work-Study Office.

Recipients of co-op funding (with some exceptions such as co-op federal work/study funds) are required to write a formal thank you letters that are forwarded by the Co-op Office to the donors of the various funds as an incentive for them to continue their support.

In order to apply for and receive co-op funding (that includes both co-op stipends and co-op federal work-study), you must follow a procedure promulgated by the Financial Aid Office to ensure university compliance with federal loan regulations. You cannot be awarded co-op funding unless you have been cleared by the Financial Aid Office, and the amount of such award may not exceed the amount for which you were cleared. This is because such co-op funding is counted as part of your financial aid package.

For a complete explanation of the co-op funding process and funding criteria, you should consult the **Co-op Funding Memorandum** as well as the **Full-Time Co-op Work-Study Procedures Memorandum**. These memoranda are available in the Co-op Office and Resource Room as well as electronically.

Cooperative Income Sharing Program

Known as "CISP," this *totally student-run* program is an innovative way of underwriting certain co-op jobs. CISP traditionally funds low-paying or unsalaried public interest co-ops serving the underrepresented in this society and/or making social impact in such areas as civil rights or poverty law.

Each year many students, graduates, faculty and staff contribute to CISP. Each quarter any student may submit a proposal for funding for a particular job. Participating CISP members then vote on the proposals and make their awards. Watch the bulletin boards and e-mail notices for further information.

Income Tax Considerations

Co-op earnings, including federal work-study, are considered taxable income that must be reported under applicable provisions of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended. Thus, all deductions required by federal and state income tax laws must be taken by the employer from the wages of students. Accordingly, your co-op employer should require you to complete the Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate (IRS W-4). In addition, deductions for social security taxes must be taken from your wages unless you are a student with an F-1 or J-1 Visa, or your employer is exempt under the social security law.

In contrast, the University Counsel has concluded that *co-op stipends awarded by the school for public interest jobs, including CISP awards, are not considered "compensation for services" and thus treated as scholarships.* This means that the University will not issue IRS 1099 forms or W-2 forms. *So long as these grant monies are used to defray your educational expenses (e.g., tuition and fees), they should not be taxable.* However, if you are the recipient of a full or partial academic scholarship, you should consult with your tax advisor regarding appropriate tax treatment of your co-op stipend award.

Lastly, *all international students with F-1 or J-1 Visas must file federal tax returns, even if they have no earned income to report for the tax year.* The university's International Student & Scholar Institute holds a Tax Seminar Series in the spring for international students, and information regarding date, place and time can be found on its website or by calling the office at (617) 373-2310. The applicable tax rules are very complex. Students affected by this should attend the series and/or consult a tax advisor.

WHEN YOU'RE ON THE JOB

Medical Insurance

Your Northeastern University Health Insurance will continue in force while you are on co-op. If you have a medical need while on co-op and subscribe to the university sponsored student health insurance, you should be aware of the following:

⇒ ***Non-emergency medical visits:*** Services are rendered through the Lane Health Center and its defined network of providers in the metropolitan Boston area.

Students must receive ***prior*** authorization from Lane Health Center in order to access medical insurance coverage without incurring unnecessary deductibles and co-payments. Call the Lane Health Center (617) 373-2772 and speak with a nurse regarding your situation. A registered nurse is on duty 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

In effect this means that non-emergency medical coverage during out-of-town co-ops is limited. Students should take care of any non-emergency medical problems prior to their departure from Boston.

It is your responsibility to read the Medical Insurance Plan brochure distributed by the Center so that you follow the appropriate procedures for obtaining medical services.

⇒ ***Emergency visits:*** These visits cover acute trauma or severe illness. Obtain the necessary medical assistance first; then, you must notify the Lane Health Center (617/373-2772) within the next 24 hours in order for appropriate authorization to be made. Again, you should refer to the Medical Insurance Plan brochure for details.

⇒ ***Co-ops abroad:*** If you will be on co-op outside the United States, contact The Chickering Group at (800) 783-1732 regarding Assist America coverage, included in your insurance package.

Unemployment Compensation

The end of your eleven week co-op job is a voluntary termination not attributable to your employer, but due solely to the nature of the school's educational program. Therefore, unemployment compensation claims are inappropriate and barred under both federal and state law for cooperative education students.

Workers Compensation

In the event of an accident or injury on the job, you should inform your supervisor immediately, and both you and your employer should file a Workers Compensation Injury Report with the proper state agency.

Fringe Benefits

The granting of any fringe benefits (*e.g.*, paid holidays, paid vacations, paid sick leave, free meals, *etc.*) is entirely within your employer's discretion.

You are advised to clarify the employer's policy regarding these benefits at the beginning of your employment, since they may vary from employer to employer.

Use of Lexis/Westlaw on Co-op

While on Co-op, Northeastern students may use their law school **Westlaw** passwords for:

1. public interest internships ***not including*** federal, state, or local government and courts;
2. pro bono and public service program activity required for graduation;
3. research for a law professor, or for a law school course, clinic, or moot court.

Students may not use their law school Westlaw passwords for research for a court, government office, law firm, or any job where a client would be charged for the students' work.

While on Co-op, Northeastern students may use their law school **Lexis** passwords for:

1. public interest internships ***including*** federal, state, local government and courts;
2. pro bono and public service program activity required for graduation;
3. research for a law professor, or for a law school course, clinic, or moot court.

Students may not use their law school Lexis passwords for research for a court, government office, law firm, or any job where a client would be charged for the students' work.

Any questions regarding the Westlaw or Lexis policy may be addressed to Kyle Courtney, Reference/Electronic Services Librarian. Kyle may be reached by email at k.courtney@neu.edu or at 617-373-3480.

Equal Opportunity

Northeastern University is committed to providing equal opportunity to its students and employees, and to eliminating discrimination when it occurs. Northeastern University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin, ancestry, veteran status or disability status. Moreover, the university will not ignore any form of discrimination or harassment, including sexual harassment, nor will Northeastern condone any form of retaliatory activity against any person who brings a complaint of discrimination or harassment, or who cooperates in a complaint investigation.

To obtain a handbook containing the university's nondiscrimination policies and its grievance procedures, or to make inquiries, please contact:

Office of Affirmative Action and Diversity
716 Columbus Avenue, Room 424
Boston, MA 02115
Phone: (617) 373-2133
TTY: (617) 373-5814
Fax: (617) 373-4146

At the School of Law, any conduct that undermines the spirit of this policy, whether or not explicitly stated, will not be tolerated. Our interpretation of this anti-discrimination policy extends to all forms of intolerance, including all forms of harassment and discrimination based on gender identity or expression. The School of Law reluctantly makes one exception to this policy. Under threat of loss of federal funding to the university, the military is permitted to recruit on campus, despite is discrimination based on sex or sexual orientation. This exception to our policy is made under protest and does not, in any way, reflect acceptance of, or agreement with, discriminatory hiring practices.

If you have any questions or concerns relating to harassment or discrimination on co-op or relating to the hiring process, you should contact a co-op advisor immediately.

Seeking Accommodations on Co-op

Because the school's co-operative education program is part of the academic program, the law school has an obligation to ensure that qualified students with a disability have an equal educational opportunity to participate in the co-op program.

The nature of the obligation is complicated by the fact that students on co-op have two statuses, one as a student and one as an employee.

With regard to the student status, the law school is obligated to ensure that the co-op process operates in a manner that reasonably accommodates the diverse needs of students with disabilities so that they have equal access to the range of services and opportunities available for all students.

With regard to the employment status, the employer is responsible for providing reasonable accommodations to students on co-op; the law school cannot and does not assume the obligation to ensure an employer's compliance with the ADA. Co-op employers have an exclusive and independent legal obligation under the ADA and other applicable state and federal law not to discriminate against qualified individuals with a disability in any employment decisions. For example, employers may not make pre-hiring inquiries about a co-op applicant's disability, although in some instances a post employment inquiry is permissible. Once hired, it is the personal decision of a student whether to waive confidentiality and disclose a disability in order to request an accommodation which the student deems necessary and appropriate. The employer is under no legal obligation to accommodate the student unless the student requests an accommodation and provides any required documentation. Once the student does this, it is the legal obligation of the employer to provide a reasonable accommodation. Co-op advisors and the disability services coordinator are available to consult with students regarding such matters.

Because of the law school's obligation to ensure non-discrimination in the co-op program and because of its interest in ensuring that students successfully complete each co-op experience, the law school may request that students on co-op provide information about whether they have requested a reasonable accommodation from the employer and, if so, what the nature of the accommodation is and whether the employer is meeting its obligation. In these circumstances, it may be desirable for the student to waive confidentiality in communications between the employer and the school so that they can communicate about effective accommodations and compliance.

If a student on co-op experiences any problem with obtaining a reasonable accommodation from his or her employer, in addition to notifying the employer, the student should immediately notify a co-op advisor and/or the Assistant Dean of Academic and Student Affairs so that adjustments, if possible, can be negotiated. Without this notification, the law school may not be able to intervene with the student or the employer to assist compliance.

If a co-op employer is reasonably believed by the law school to have discriminated against a co-op student on the basis of a disability, among other options, the law school may assist the student in obtaining an alternate placement or making another adjustment. In addition, if a student believes that his or her co-op evaluation is inaccurate or unfair because of disability discrimination or because of a failure of reasonable accommodation, the student has the right to a review of the evaluation

pursuant to provisions provided herein. The law school has the right to remove an employer from the co-op program for any reason it seems appropriate, including if the school reasonably believes that the employer has violated our anti-discrimination policy or will be unwilling or unable to comply with our policies in the future.

Students are strongly encouraged to explore these disability-related issues in advance of a co-op with designated faculty and administrative staff as noted above, particularly co-op advisors.

Staff Visits

Co-op is an integral part of your legal education. Visits by the co-op staff strengthen the school's relationship with employers and present an opportunity to answer questions about the program, make recommendations and solicit suggestions. Visits also are helpful if problems arise on the job. While it is not feasible for the staff to visit each job every quarter, you may request a visit at any time.

Problems on Co-op

In rare instances, an employer may fail its co-op obligations in ways that are detrimental to your co-op experience and/or performance (*e.g.*, not providing appropriate assignments, failing to supervise your work, being unresponsive to reasonable requests for help, making threats, or subjecting you to demeaning or discriminatory treatment). If you become aware of any such problem in the process of obtaining your co-op or while on your co-op, you should contact the Co-op Office *immediately* so that it can assist you in rectifying the problem or, in extreme cases, finding another placement.

OBTAINING EFFECTIVE SUPERVISION

By participating in our Cooperative Education Program, employers have assumed a special role. In hiring you, they serve not only in the capacity of employer, but also as an instructor of law. We offer the following suggestions in an effort to provide you with some guidance on how to obtain effective supervision:

You should be assured of having enough, but not too much work. You should expect to be busy and productive during the employer's normal working hours, but you should understand that, on occasion, a particular project may demand an additional time commitment. Your "work," of course, must be law-related in terms of the program's objectives and the development of your legal skills.

Consistent with reasonable employer needs, assignments should encompass a spectrum of substantive and procedural areas of concentration allowing for some flexibility for your interests. If possible, you should have the opportunity not only to acquire experience in different substantive legal areas, but also to begin learning the diverse legal skills lawyers must utilize in their practices. These include analyzing problems, participating in case planning and strategy, performing legal research and writing, drafting pleadings, interviewing and counseling clients, advocating for clients, conducting factual investigations, negotiating, and observing conferences and court sessions.

If you perform well, your employer should provide more challenging work; if your performance requires improvement, instruction and guidance should be increased.

Assignments should be made as specific and concrete as possible. In order to help you focus on relevant issues and avoid unnecessary work, the purpose of an assigned project should be made clear. Ask for assignment clarification as necessary. There's no need to spin your wheels and frustrate yourself.

You should be provided with sufficient factual background to undertake an assignment. Understanding a project in its proper factual context will encourage you to focus on and carry out your assignment in a more efficient manner.

You should have a sense of how much time you think a project should take to complete, how many pages a memo should be, and any other information pertinent to an assignment. Consult with your employer if you believe that the project cannot be completed within the original time framework.

Ask to be introduced to those materials or approaches which will help you become more productive. Particular resources or "tools of the trade" may not be obvious to you. Further, each office usually has specialists within it with particular approaches to problem solving, and you should have the benefit of their expertise.

Make an honest assessment of what your needs are, and take the lead in arranging for opportunities for targeted feedback and constructive criticism to help improve your legal skills.

In addition to communicating about specific tasks, your employer should give you feedback concerning your general strengths and weaknesses. Consistent and constructive feedback should result in improved work performance.

To help you further understand the key role you play
in the supervision process,
refer to:

**A Practical Guide to Cooperative Supervision for Law
Students and Legal Employers**

provided as part of your Co-op materials.

CO-OP PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS & QUALITY QUESTIONNAIRES

You will receive a separate performance evaluation for each of the four co-ops you complete. Employers will provide a description of the tasks you performed, and evaluate your legal skills (research, writing, analytic, oral & advocacy skills) as well as diligence. These evaluations become a permanent part of your academic record and are key tools used by prospective employers to evaluate your candidacy for subsequent co-ops and post-graduate positions.

In addition, you are required to submit a Student Quality Questionnaire on your job experience immediately upon completion of the work quarter. These questionnaires are *confidential* documents for use only by your classmates and involved members of the staff and faculty. Employers are not allowed access to them and the information and opinions contained therein are to be treated with discretion. They are probably the single most valuable source of relevant information we have about employers. You and your classmates will rely heavily on them in researching potential co-ops. Your questionnaire should be filled out thoughtfully and candidly, and to the extent possible, should objectify your work experience in terms of its educational value.

It is your responsibility to ensure that the Co-op Office receives your Co-op Performance Evaluation and Quality Questionnaire immediately following the completion of your co-op internship. You should check the WEBoard one month prior to the end of each quarter you are on co-op for the Co-op Evaluation & Quality Questionnaire Information Posting for Students Returning from Co-op that includes a memorandum and blank evaluation form for you to provide your supervisor, and a blank quality questionnaire for you to complete and return to the Co-op Office. Students may submit their Quality Questionnaires electronically; employers, however, may submit only hard copies of their Co-op Performance Evaluations of students because of the Registrar's requirement of an original signature. Faxed evaluations may be used on a temporary basis for co-op applications and clearance for graduation.

Once you return from co-op, check the clipboard on the counter in the Co-op Office to confirm whether or not we have received your evaluation. If not, please contact your employer ASAP! Ask them to fax it to our office at 617-373-4996 and mail the hard copy. You will want to include the evaluation in your upcoming applications for your next co-op, or its receipt will be required for graduation clearance.

If you are concerned about the contents of a co-op evaluation, you should discuss it with your supervisor or co-op advisor immediately. Students who are required or select to submit co-op evaluations, must submit all co-op evaluations received to date unless a specific co-op evaluation is under appeal and the student has received express permission from the Director for Administration or Director for External Relations to withhold the evaluation.

Co-op classes in March of your first year will focus on how to perform well on co-op, and thus receive positive co-op evaluations. Criteria used to evaluate co-op interns include analytic, research and writing ability, oral and advocacy skills, initiative, judgment, maturity and sense of responsibility. The following is a list of qualities that make a successful intern from an employer's perspective.⁶

- Sound intellectual development and judgment, including the ability to think, speak articulately, and write clearly.
- Demonstrated capacity to absorb extensive information and analyze, summarize, and derive conclusions from it.
- An ability to engage in unstructured problem-solving.
- An ability to produce quality research and writing assignments on a timely basis.
- A willingness to work within the social and organizational framework of the office with fellow interns, attorneys, and office staff.
- A capacity to function efficiently with a friendly outlook in a busy office.
- A willingness to undertake a variety of tasks as assigned and desire to shoulder more than one's share of less glamorous office tasks.
- Self-sustaining motivation and initiative, especially if supervisory time is limited.
- Trustworthiness, discretion, and an understanding of the sensitive and confidential nature of legal work.

⁶ The Co-op Office regrets that it lacks information to provide appropriate attribution to the contributor(s) of this section.

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

Students on co-op are subject to the same standards of professional conduct as lawyers. Students should be familiar with both the ABA Model Code of Professional Responsibility and applicable state rules of professional conduct. In Massachusetts, students should refer to Supreme Judicial Court Rules 3:07 and 3:08. Ethics rules for all jurisdictions are available at: www.hricik.com/StateEthics.html.

Any ethical questions which arise in practice should be discussed with your supervising attorney and, as necessary, with a co-op advisor.

The Unauthorized Practice of Law

Co-op is a wonderful educational experience. It also creates some risks. As a student, you are not yet an attorney, and therefore, you must be circumspect in what you do. ***Tell everyone with whom you deal in person or in writing that you are a student, not an attorney.*** All correspondence should be signed by you with the designation “Legal Intern” under your name.

Disclosure solves many, but not all problems. Each jurisdiction that permits students to appear in court has exact rules governing such appearances. *Read and follow these student practice rules.* See, e.g., Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court Rule 3:03.

Be cautious. If you feel that you may be overreaching, talk to your supervising attorney, or call the school. Your professional career is at stake, and in most jurisdictions there are sanctions for the unauthorized practice of law.

Conflicts of Interest

Particular care should be taken to avoid conflicts of interest in your co-op positions. If you are involved on one side of a matter for an employer, you cannot be involved on the other side of the same or substantially related matter for a different co-op employer, whether the employer is a judge, firm, advocacy organization, governmental entity, etc. ***You have an affirmative obligation to disclose this information to your employer because of the potential conflict of interest it raises.*** Thus, keep a list of cases you work on during your co-ops so you can provide it to subsequent employers. When in doubt, err on the side of disclosure. This is a sensitive area, and questions or concerns should be brought to the ***immediate*** attention of your employer. You may also want to check with the Co-op Office for guidance.

Confidentiality

Information which you have acquired on your co-op job is subject to the lawyer-client privilege. Be careful and be discreet. This caution applies not only to general conversations in which you might engage, but also to requests for assistance with a co-op assignment that you might direct to a faculty member or other person.

Special care must be taken with writing samples that you may distribute to prospective employers. You must *always* obtain the permission of your present employer before using any in-house work-product as a writing sample. In fact, every writing sample should contain on its face the following statement: This [brief, memorandum] is being distributed as a writing sample with the permission of [employer's name].

Also, you should be aware that the deletion of client names is often *not* enough to address confidentiality issues. Employers to whom such writing samples may be distributed (particularly in the Boston area) may represent other parties in the same cases and could easily recognize the subject matter to which the memo applies. While these concerns are less applicable to "public" papers (*e.g.*, briefs filed in court), you should still be wary. Again, always ask for permission to use a work product as a writing sample. *See also* "Writing Sample Guidelines" in the Appendix.

PROGRAM POLICIES

Violation of Co-op Rules, Policies and Procedures

All students are required to abide by the program rules, policies and procedures (“operational guidelines”) that are set forth in this Handbook (as it may be amended and updated from time to time). The purpose of the operational guidelines is to clarify expectations of what conduct is required and what conduct is prohibited in the interests of fairness, consistency, and professionalism.

Students who violate or fail to follow the program’s operational guidelines may be subject to disciplinary action by the Director for Administration, and the University Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution. These measures may include, but are not limited to, denial of co-op credit (resulting in a late graduation and ineligibility for the July Bar), restricted participation in the co-op process, and suspension or expulsion from the University. Appeals from any sanction imposed by the Director for Administration may be taken to the Associate Dean for Experiential Learning.

Repeat Co-ops with the Same Participating Co-op Employer

Repeat co-ops with the same participating co-op employer are generally not permitted. You must petition the Co-op Office in advance for an exception, and the grounds for approving a repeat co-op are narrowly circumscribed. This policy is consistent with the school's focus on maximizing the breadth of your cooperative work experiences, as well as ensuring that all students have access to the available co-op opportunities.

Exceptions to the “no-repeat” co-op policy are only made under the following circumstances:

1. The employer has filled the number of intern positions advertised with the Co-op Office for the given quarter, and certified to the Co-op Office that it has sufficient work for an additional co-op intern. A repeat co-op may be permitted since the student who wants to return is, in effect, an “extra” intern.
2. The employer formally requests the exception because the student has special expertise and unique qualifications for continuing work on a particular matter. A repeat co-op may be permitted under such exceptional circumstances.
3. The employer formally certifies that a *bona fide* offer of post-graduate employment is absolutely contingent upon the student successfully completing a repeat co-op (usually, a student’s final or fourth co-op). A repeat co-op will not be permitted if it is a matter of mere preference or convenience on the

employer's part, or if the repeat co-op might simply hold the potential for increasing the likelihood of a post-graduate offer.

4. The employer has made a good faith effort and has been unsuccessful in obtaining an intern for the given quarter after being included in the quarterly Supplemental Mailing. A student seeking a repeat co-op only then may apply to and/or accept an offer from such employer.

Enrollment in Academic Courses During a Co-op Quarter

You may *not* be enrolled in academic courses during your co-op quarters except under very limited circumstances which must be approved *in advance* by the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs and the Co-op Office.

Part-Time Work with Co-op Employers During an Academic Quarter

You may *not* solicit part-time jobs with participating employers during your in-school academic quarters. You may, however, work as a part-time intern following a co-op with an employer who requests you to do so, or you may respond to an employer's request for part-time help. Note, however, Standard 304(c) of the A.B.A. Standards for Approval of Law Schools prohibits you from engaging in such part-time work for more than 20 hours per week.

Switching Divisions / Rotations

There are two co-op "divisions": one goes on co-op in the Summer and Winter Quarters (Division B, the Summer-Winter Rotation), and the other goes on co-op in the Fall and Spring Quarters (Division A, the Fall-Spring Rotation). Your first co-op must be consistent with your initial division registration. So, if you want your first co-op to be in the summer, you must request to be registered in Division B, the Summer-Winter Rotation; if you want your first co-op to be in the fall, you must request Division A, the Fall-Spring Rotation. *See "Notes on Selecting Your Co-op Division."*

Absent special circumstances warranting a change of division, you are expected to remain in your original division. It is important that the two divisions be balanced as much as possible in order to facilitate a sufficient number of co-op opportunities and to ensure effective delivery of academic courses. ***If your request to remain in school is premised on your inability to obtain a desired co-op, it will be denied if a significant imbalance between the divisions would result.***

The following procedure governs the approval process for Change of Division Requests:

Students who wish to take a leave-of-absence or to change division must submit change of status forms to the Office of Academic and Student Affairs and receive approval from the Director for Administration, the Assistant Dean for Academic and

Student Affairs and Director of Financial Aid. Change of division forms must be submitted by Wednesday during the second week of the quarter. This insures that if the request to remain in school is not granted, students have the opportunity to participate in the co-op process. Requests usually will be reviewed on Thursday morning of the second week. A request to change division is granted based on compelling need. However, when the number of students in each rotation becomes significantly unbalanced, such requests may be denied due to the impact on both class size and students' ability to secure future co-ops. ***When a change of rotation request is granted, the student is placed at the end of the wait list for any over-subscribed limited enrollment courses.***

You should be aware that changing divisions may have medical insurance coverage and financial aid implications. Students should check with the Finance Office, 249 Richards Hall, to determine the extent of medical insurance coverage. For financial aid purposes, an academic year runs from the summer through the spring. You cannot receive financial aid for more than two academic quarters in a given year. Thus, your financial aid may be affected by a change of division if your request is granted and results in your having three academic quarters within one year. It is the student's responsibility to contact the Office of Financial Aid to determine the implications of such change. Since circumstances may change for students during a quarter, additional change of division requests will also be reviewed during the sixth and ninth weeks of each quarter.

Enrollment Status

In order to be considered a currently enrolled student, you either must be registered for an academic quarter or on a confirmed co-op; otherwise, you are considered a Withdrawn-Not-Registered ("WNR") student. The consequences of a WNR status are numerous, including being removed from the official student roster and losing eligibility for financial aid.

To be registered for an academic quarter, you must sign your "I am here" registration form from the Office of Academic and Student Affairs at the beginning of that quarter. To be on a confirmed co-op, you must sign-up on the Yellow Sheet in the Co-op Office no later than the last day of the quarter before you go on co-op.

Summer Quarter Study Abroad

If you want to undertake an academic quarter abroad through an approved summer program of legal studies, you must obtain *prior* authorization from the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs; then discuss your plans with the Co-op Office.

You are required to return to a cooperative work quarter in the fall following your summer studies abroad. You have the option of developing your own job with an employer outside the Co-op Program before you leave or after your return, or you may participate in the job application process for the fall that is coordinated by the Co-op Office. You must check with the Co-op Office as soon as your summer abroad program

had been approved to review special co-op application procedures. If you do not obtain a job through that process, you must be prepared to be flexible in terms of finding a job from those available at the end of the summer.

Deficient Co-op Performance and the Administrative Appeal Process

You must successfully complete each of your four co-op internships in order to meet the school's graduation requirement. The performance evaluations submitted by your employers are reviewed by the co-op advisors. Occasionally, an employer may supplement an official performance evaluation with additional information on your performance or conduct which is communicated to the school in writing or orally.

In reviewing all of this information in light of the essential core elements of a co-op, the co-op advisors make an initial determination as to whether your co-op has been successfully completed or if there is a performance deficiency present. A performance deficiency can mean either a "marginal" or an "unsuccessful" co-op performance, and there are different consequences which follow as described below.

Marginal Co-op Performance

A marginal co-op performance is *not* an "unsuccessfully completed co-op" for the purpose of the graduation requirement; however, it raises concern because of a perceived deficiency in some aspect or aspects of your performance on co-op.

If there is an initial determination that your performance was marginal, you will be asked to meet informally with a co-op advisor to discuss the circumstances of your internship and to present information relevant to assessing the situation. Following such meeting, the co-op advisor may contact the employer to further discuss your internship and determine what actions, if any, would be appropriate. If the matter can be resolved satisfactorily, no further action will be necessary except for the customary processing of the performance evaluation (or any agreed upon revision).

In those instances where consideration of all the facts points to the existence of a marginal performance with respect to an essential core element of the co-op experience, you will be requested to formulate an appropriate plan/strategy to address the reasons underlying your marginal performance *prior* to undertaking your next scheduled co-op.

Such plan/strategy should be developed in consultation with any one or more of the following persons: the Assistant Dean for Academic and Student Affairs, the Director of Legal Practice, the Director for Administration of Co-op, or other law faculty or university administrators appropriate to the situation (*e.g.*, the Director of the Academic Success Program or the Director of the Disability Resource Center). The purpose of this action is to maximize your potential to perform well on co-op.

Unsuccessful Completion of a Co-op

In contrast to a marginal co-op performance, an unsuccessful co-op performance has a direct bearing on your ability to fulfill the co-op graduation requirement.

If there is an initial determination that your co-op may *not* have been successfully completed, you will be asked to meet informally with a co-op advisor to discuss the circumstances of your internship and to present information relevant to assessing the situation.

Following such meeting, the co-op advisor may contact your employer to further discuss the internship and determine what actions, if any, would be appropriate. If the matter can be resolved satisfactorily, no further action will be necessary except for the customary processing of the performance evaluation (or any agreed upon revision).

If the matter cannot be resolved satisfactorily, the Director for Administration shall make a determination that co-op credit *not* be granted and shall notify you in writing. You may appeal such determination by submitting a written statement ("Statement") to the Associate Dean for Experiential Learning.

The Statement must specify with reasonable particularity the basis for your appeal, and must be submitted to the Associate Dean for Experiential Learning within 20 calendar days of the day when you receive written notice of the Director for Administration's determination. The Associate Dean's response to you and final disposition of the matter shall be completed within 30 calendar days of the submission of your Statement. All parties shall cooperate and act expeditiously in processing your appeal to completion.

If you prevail in your appeal to the Associate Dean, no further action will be necessary except for the customary processing of your performance evaluation (or any agreed upon revision). If not, any further appeal shall be pursuant to the Graduate Student Academic Appeals Procedures as set forth in the current Graduate Student Handbook of Northeastern University.

If you are successful in your University appeal, no further action will be necessary except for the customary processing of your performance evaluation (or any agreed upon revision). If you are unsuccessful, there shall be no further appeal and no credit shall be granted for the co-op quarter.

If you fail to complete a co-op quarter successfully, you must make up the quarter pursuant and subject to the terms and conditions outlined in the Academic Rules set forth in current NUSL Student Information Handbook. In addition, in order to

regain eligibility to go on co-op, you are required to formulate an appropriate plan/strategy to address the reasons underlying your failed co-op performance *prior* to undertaking your next scheduled co-op.

Such plan/strategy shall be developed in consultation with any one or more of the following persons: the Assistant Dean for Academic and Student Affairs, the Director of Legal Practice, the Director for Administration of Co-op, or other law faculty or university administrators appropriate to the situation (*e.g.*, the Director of the Academic Success Program or the Director of the Disability Resource Center). The purpose of this requirement is to maximize your potential for success on co-op.

Concurrent (Dual) Degree Programs and Sequencing of Co-ops

There are concurrent degree programs available to law students through Northeastern University's Graduate School of Business Administration, Graduate School of Professional Accounting, and the *Law, Policy and Society Program* of its Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. In addition, the law school has established a dual degree program with Tufts University School of Medicine leading to a J.D./M.P.H. degree.

The issue for co-op is the sequencing of appropriate internships. There may be more or less flexibility depending on the specific program and financial aid considerations. Interested students should undertake preliminary planning with the Assistant Dean for Academic and Student Affairs and the Director of Financial Aid. Then, appropriate co-op strategy can be developed with co-op staff.

HOW TO REACH THE CO-OP OFFICE

Address: Office of Cooperative Legal Education
Northeastern University School of Law
400 Huntington Avenue, Suite 125
Boston, MA 02115

Phone: (617) 373-3002

Fax: (617) 373-4996

Office Web Site: www.slaw.neu.edu/coop

Office Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:30 A.M. – 4:30 P.M.

Staff: Gerald M. Slater (“Jerry”)
Director for Administration
(617) 373-2618, g.slater@neu.edu

Jeffrey A. Smith (“Jeff”)
Director for External Relations
Co-Director of Public Interest Advising
(617) 373-4942, jef.smith@neu.edu

Amy Goldstein
Co-op Advisor
(617) 373-4936, a.goldstein@neu.edu

Erica Horenstein
Database Manager / Program Coordinator
(617) 373-4935, e.polles@neu.edu

Barbara Clifford
Staff Assistant
(617) 373-3002, b.clifford@neu.edu

Katy Masters
Staff Assistant
(617) 373-3002, k.masters@neu.edu

APPENDIX: Non-Communication Rule Hypotheticals

- 1. You are interested in working at the New York City office of a co-op employer. The Employer Handbook lists only the Boston office, and there is no yellow sheet posted for the New York City office. *Can you apply directly to the New York City office, independently of the Co-op Office?***

Yes! Only employers with offices or branches listed in the Employer Handbook (or employers posted on yellow cards) are "participating employers" for the purpose of the noncommunication rule. You may not, however, use the non-participating N.Y.C. branch office of the participating employer to get a job in Boston with the participating employer.

- 2. Your Alumni/ae Office Connections Program mentor works in the office of a co-op employer. She suggests that you apply to them for a co-op. In fact, you were planning to apply to them through the co-op process. *What do you say or do?***

You thank her for her special interest in you, but remind her that under the school's co-op rules, you have to apply for a job through the co-op process along with everyone else. While listing her as a reference on your resume would be permissible, you should advise her that she should not otherwise act affirmatively in any way to help you obtain a co-op job with her employer outside of the regular co-op process because it would be unfair to your classmates. If your mentor happens to be the co-op hiring contact, you should speak with the Co-op Office for further guidance.

- 3. You are on co-op in Washington, D.C. You are trying to develop another co-op with employers not in the program as well as develop leads for post-graduate employment. Your sister suggests that you write to every NUSL graduate in the area as part of your networking effort. Several of them are co-op employers or work in the offices of co-op employers. *What can you say or do?***

Networking with graduates who are co-op employers or who work in the offices of co-op employers may be problematic. You run the risk of violating the rule by gaining an unfair advantage over your classmates in any future co-op process through "distinguishing" yourself. Thus, your first - and standing - obligation under the rule is to check with the Co-op Office before taking any action since you are dealing with a co-op employer.

In general, if your networking with a graduate is for the purpose of developing a co-op job with an employer who is NOT in the program, you'll have a green light. The same would apply if your networking was for the purpose of establishing contacts for post-graduate employment. If, however, your discussion with a graduate leads to talk about working for them on co-op, you have to forego the opportunity. Why? Because by establishing contact, you would have a "leg up" on your classmates. Again, because this type of situation raises doubt, your responsibility under the rule is to bring the issue to the Co-op Office before taking any action.

4. **As far as you know, you are the *only* person in your rotation without a co-op job and all the hiring through the co-op process has been completed for your classmates. Your roommate's mother feels sorry for you, and in an effort to help, tells her husband about your plight. He is a judge and a currently participating employer in the program. Although he had indicated on the co-op hiring list that he was "not hiring" for the quarter, he calls you up and offers you a job. What can you say or do?**

You thank him and tell him that co-op rules require you to discuss the matter with the Co-op Office first. Why? Because you are not permitted to accept a job offer from a co-op employer outside of the formal co-op process, or independently of the Co-op Office. Your next step would be to bring the matter to the immediate attention of the co-op administrators.

5. **The co-op hiring process is still going on, but most of your classmates have jobs. Nothing seems to be coming through for you. Your husband decides to help you out without your knowledge. He sends your resume to his uncle who works in the office of a co-op employer where the weekly intern salary is \$2,600. The employer has already completed its hiring for the quarter, but succumbs to the uncle's solicitation on your behalf and creates another position for you. You later receive an offer to work there. What can you do or say?**

You thank the employer, but say that the school's co-op rules preclude you from accepting a job with a co-op employer outside of the co-op process, independently of the Co-op Office. You then should discuss the matter with the Co-op Office. Under most circumstances, you would not be able to accept the job. Why? Because (1) despite the good intentions of both your husband and the employer, and (2) notwithstanding the fact that no other students were "hurt" since the position was created for you, your entree into the firm still compromised the co-op process. You gained access to a program employer using connections which other students may or may not have and which the rule prohibits them from using.

- 6. You respond to a public advertisement for part-time work with an employer who also is in the program. You receive an offer. *What can you do or say?***

You can accept the publicly advertised position. You cannot, however, then later take affirmative steps to make the employer aware that you are interested in applying for a co-op position. If the employer asks you to apply for a co-op position, you thank him for his interest in you, but say that under the school's co-op rules, you have to apply for a job through the co-op process along with everyone else. You should also inform the Co-op Office so that it can talk with the employer about its hiring plans.

- 7. Prior to law school, you worked directly with the head partner of a firm that is in the program. The partner wants you to apply for a co-op, but is not the person who reviews the resumes of applicants. *What can you do or say?***

You may apply to the firm through the co-op process, but you cannot take affirmative steps to make the partner aware that you are applying for a co-op position. This does not preclude you, however, from listing the partner's name as a reference on your resume or making specific reference to him in your resume job description.

- 8. You are participating in a school sponsored public interest job fair for post-graduate employment that features several co-op employers. They are very interested in talking to you about working for them as an intern during one of your co-ops. *What can you do or say?***

Special rules apply to school sponsored job fairs which the Career Services Office customarily coordinates. You should refer to the special memo on Fall and Winter Recruitment Programs which is disseminated by the Career Services Office. It explains how the various co-op rules apply in certain instances. In general, you must confine your discussion to inquiries regarding employment opportunities after graduation. You should tell the employer that the co-op rules bar you from discussing employment as a co-op intern with them, and that you would have to apply to them through the regular co-op process. In contrast, if the fair is designed for summer internship employment, you obviously may discuss co-op employment for that specific purpose - but, you may not use the fair to lock up an internship with a co-op employer for some other quarter. However, since there may be special considerations which apply to your particular situation, your best bet is to check with the Co-op Office for further clarification.

- 9. You completed a co-op job, and the employer wants you to continue working on a part-time basis. The employer also offers you a co-op position for another quarter. *What can you do or say?***

You may accept the part-time job offer, but cannot accept a co-op offer for a future quarter. Check with a co-op advisor to review the situation if you have any questions.

- 10. You miss the early deadlines in September for submitting your resumes to participate in the summer associate programs. Some of the employers are in the Co-op Program and others are not. *What can you do?***

You may apply directly to any employer that is not in the co-op program. You should check with the Co-op Office, but absent extenuating circumstances (*e.g.*, a death in the family, severe illness, etc.), you will be foreclosed from applying on your own to those employers which are in the program.

- 11. You interview with a co-op employer, receive an offer and turn it down. Several quarters later, the employer contacts you directly and offers you a co-op job. *What can you do or say?***

You thank the employer, but explain that you cannot accept an offer extended outside of the co-op process. Check with a co-op advisor to review the situation if you have any questions.

- 12. You list a NUSL faculty member on your resume as a reference. You have an interview with a co-op employer. The faculty member approaches you and offers to call the employer on your behalf. *What can you do or say?***

You thank the faculty member, but explain that until the employer calls her, she should not initiate contact with the employer on your behalf because it places you in violation of Co-op Rules and may preclude your accepting a job offer with the employer or receiving co-op credit for the internship.

- 13. You initiate contact with an employer that is not part of the Co-op Program. During your "negotiations" for an internship position, you see a notice that the same employer has just joined the program. *What can you do or say?***

You should discuss this with the Co-op Office without delay. Under the circumstances, you would have the right to continue your independent negotiations with the employer without violating the rule. The Co-op Office would back you!

- 14. Despite your best efforts to comply with the rule, you discover that you made a mistake and inadvertently violated it. The Co-op Office is unaware of the occurrence. *What should you do?***

The rule operates on an honor system. Own up to it and discuss the situation with the Co-op Office. There is always the chance that something may be salvaged in the situation. You run a greater risk by remaining silent.

APPENDIX: Writing Sample Guidelines

Writing samples may be required by some employers or may be submitted on a selective basis at the discretion of students. Below are general "rules of thumb" regarding writing samples:

1. Employers prefer a sample of *legal* writing – that is, written work that shows the application of law to facts and legal analysis.
2. Make sure that your writing sample is neat, easy to read (font is large enough, ample margins), and is free of typos and grammatical errors.
3. The writing sample should be representative of *your* own work, not a third-person edited piece of writing.
4. If you want to use something that you prepared on co-op, you must obtain the ***express permission*** of your employer to use that work product as your writing sample. It is advisable to note on the front of the writing sample that it is being used as such with the permission of your employer.
5. Employers prefer short writing samples, five to ten pages, though first year students may be limited to longer Legal Practice work products. If you use an excerpt of a longer piece of writing, make sure you include enough facts so that the piece is understandable in its shortened version.

If you think it would be helpful to give some context to your writing sample and/or to explain that you are submitting an excerpt of a longer piece (where other portions may or may not have been written by someone else), you can attach a *cover sheet* with a short explanation. For example, the cover sheet can state the following:

The attached writing sample is an excerpt of a lengthy bench memorandum concerning a complex multi-party securities fraud case prepared while I was doing a legal internship with Judge X. The judge has given me express permission to use it as my writing sample. The attached excerpt includes the facts and one of the legal issues addressed in the lengthier memorandum.

6. Remove confidential identifying information. If you redact the names of parties, it is preferable to substitute new names that identify whether the party is a person or corporation; for example, "Mr. A" or "Corporation B." This makes the writing sample easier to understand.
7. Print your writing sample on plain xerox/copy paper, not bond paper.
8. For co-ops after your first one, employers prefer something other than your first year legal practice brief. However, if that is all you have, you can use it as is or edit it further to reflect your advanced skills.

APPENDIX: What's in the Co-op Resource Room?

The Co-op Office shares a resource room with the Career Services Office. It is adjacent to their joint office suite and is open the same hours as the Law Library. Co-op resources include the following:

Employer Books

These books contain descriptions of all employers currently participating in the Co-op Program. They are updated each quarter and can be found on the tables or on top of the file cabinets. This resource is available electronically (*see Co-op Handbook* at page 21).

Co-op Indexes

There are two types of indexes located on top of the file cabinets: one that lists all the employers by *geographical area*, and the other by *primary type of practice area*. These indexes can be cross-referenced with the *Employer Handbooks*.

Hiring/Not Hiring Lists

This an alphabetical listing of co-op employers which shows whether the employer is *hiring*, *not hiring*, or *uncertain* about its hiring for the upcoming quarter. These lists are updated several times during a quarter *prior* to the First Mailing Deadline. The list is available in hard copy and also electronically as described in the *Important Information Memorandum* for the quarter.

Quality Questionnaires

These student evaluations of their co-op experiences are filed alphabetically by employer name in the co-op employer file drawers. The judges are filed separately, listed alphabetically under the name of the court, and within the court, alphabetically by the name of the judge.

The quality questionnaires of non-participating employers are in loose-leaf binders on top of the file cabinets. Students use these as leads for developing their own co-ops. The binders are categorized by types of employers, such as law firms, judges, government, corporate, legal services and advocacy organizations and international law. Within each binder, the quality questionnaires are organized by geographic location.

The Pink Pages

This is an optional confidential addendum to the Quality Questionnaires for the benefit of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students. These are filed in a loose-leaf binder and contain information about “coming out” and the work environment.

The Yellow Pages

This is an optional confidential addendum to the Quality Questionnaires for the benefit of students with disabilities. These are filed in a loose-leaf binder and contain information about disclosure and accommodations, *inter alia*.

Sample Job Descriptions

These books contain sample descriptions for diverse jobs and are a helpful tool for preparing your resume.

Wall Trays

These holders contain the following forms and information: Student Practice Certification Forms, Missing Co-op Evaluation Letter, List of Employer Choices Form, Quality Questionnaire Forms, Funding Applications, Co-op Work-Study Memorandum, Funding Memorandum, Important Information Memorandum, Placement List (current list of students on co-op and where they are working), Pink and Yellow Page Forms, Developing Your Own Co-op Memorandum, Supervision Guide, Effective Cover Letter Writing Guide, Resume Writing Guide, and Public Interest Requirement information.

Inactive Co-op Employer “Blue Sheets”

These are binders which contain descriptions (*on blue paper*) of employers who participated in the co-op program in the past but are now inactive. Students may apply directly to these employers. The information on these sheets is current only as of the date the employers were assigned an inactive status.

International Organizations/Internships Loose-leaf Binder

There is a binder which contains a resource list and the names and descriptions of some international organizations that may offer internship opportunities. There also are additional materials on international law in the adjoining Career Services area.

In addition, students interested in international law should check the Co-op web page, “International Law Opportunities,” www.neu.edu/coop/international.html.