INF3903H F
Co-operative Education Placement
Fall 2024
Asynchronous

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
Faculty of Information

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Acknowledgment: We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

Course Description

Workplace-integrated-learning is the umbrella term used to describe educational experiences that combine periods of in-class study with actual workplace experiences. Examples of workplace-integrated learning include internships, practicums, and Co-operative education.

As the name suggests, Co-operative education describes the three-way partnership that is established through negotiation, contractual agreements, and ongoing communication between the student, the employer, and the University.

INF3903H (Co-operative Education Placement) is worth .5 FTE.
Students who are completing a Fall 4-month placement or a Summer 8-month placement will be enrolled in the Fall Co-op course. It comprises two parts: (a) 25% for the placement itself, in the student's field of interest/study; and (b) 75% for the completion of graded coursework deliverables.

Prerequisites

(a) Students must be enrolled in full-time studies in a master's program at the Faculty.
(b) Students must have secured an approved work placement, consistent with their area of interest/study.

Course Objectives

1. *In the workplace:* As a result of their job placement, students will be able to do the following:

- Develop a Learning Agenda, comprising sets of individual learning goals + objectives + activities, that are challenging, achievable and measurable;
- Reflect critically on their own learning through course deliverables;
- Reflect critically on the connections between their classroom learning (theoretical concepts, professional values, technical knowledge, ethics) and their onsite work experiences through conversation with co-workers, supervisors and/or Co-op course instructor;
- Enhance their professional communication skills while on the job through their engagement with co-workers, supervisors, customers, and others;
- Practice creative problem-solving for issues that arise during their work placement, experienced directly through assigned tasks, or indirectly through observation;
- Grow their sense of professional identity through observation and participation in professional work.

2. *After the workplace*

Following the successful completion of their 4-month Co-op term, students will be able to speak fluidly about their work experience, the relationship to their studies and to their profession. They will be able to convey this learning concisely through the creation of either the final poster or final video assignment.

The poster will be part of a poster repository that will allow future MI Co-op students and employers access the posters and understand the innovative, creative, and rich ways that Co-op students significantly contribute to organizations' operational and business needs.

Co-op Learning Objectives

1. Students will build practical knowledge, defined in the Master of Information Co-op option as the understanding of information practices in dynamic professional work environments in their field, and the impact of these practices on individuals, institutions, and society. This is reflected in students who can demonstrate a proven ability to do meaningful professional work, by connecting theoretical knowledge (acquired through prior course work) with workplace projects and deliverables, documented through course deliverables such as the Learning Agenda and final poster or final video.

2. Students develop their professional capacity and autonomy, defined in the Master of Information Co-op option as the ability to contribute to their profession through active and critical integration of information concepts, theories and practices with institutional practices and goals. This is reflected in students who are described by their Co-op placement supervisors as able to exercise initiative, personal responsibility, and accountability.

Relationship of Learning Objectives to MI Program Learning Outcomes

MI Student Learning Outcome #6:
Students continue in life-long intellectual growth beyond graduation. The Co-operative program is designed to maximize the student's ability to master the skills associated with independent professional learning beyond the formal classroom environment.

Course Structure: 4-month and 8-month Co-op Placements

There will be no class meetings during the placement. Quercus will be used to distribute information about the course assignment deliverables, communicate updates, and collect deliverables.

All students in the Fall Co-op course are required to meet the course deliverables according to the set deadlines, regardless of whether you are doing a Fall 4-month placement or a Summer 8-month placement.

Students who are completing a Summer 8-month placement or a Fall 4-month placement, will be enrolled in the Fall Co-op course during the Summer.

Deliverables in both the Summer and Fall Co-op courses are identical for students doing 4-month or 8-month placements, except for one thing. In your first Co-op term, your assignment will be to design a poster. If you do a second Co-op term, your assignment will be to create a video. The idea is that every Co-op student will have the opportunity to produce a poster. The poster will be part of a poster repository that will allow future MI Co-op students and employers access the posters and understand the innovative, creative, and rich ways that Co-op students significantly contribute to organizations' operational and business needs.

This half course (0.5 FCE) comprises one term work placement (minimum 12 weeks AND minimum 30 hours per week AND minimum 360 hours in total), together with course assignment deliverables as described below.

Students are encouraged to connect with the instructor to address any concerns at all during the workplace and help resolve any issues. Students will be able to schedule check-ins throughout the term if they would like to connect with the instructor.

An important note for all assignment deliverables

1. The four assignment deliverables will be graded numerically. Please note that to maintain fairness, **no resubmission** will be permitted for assignments that receive a poor/failing grade, whatever the cause; it is the student's responsibility to ensure they understand what is expected, when it is due, and to contact the course instructor and/or TA if they are uncertain.

2. **Can use Generative AI tools**
    Students may use artificial intelligence tools, including generative AI, in this course as learning aids or to help produce assignments. However, students are ultimately accountable for the work they submit.

Writing Support

As stated in the Faculty of Information's Grade Interpretation Guidelines, "work that is not well written and grammatically correct will not generally be considered eligible for a grade in the A range, regardless of its quality in other respects." With this in mind, please make use of the writing support provided to graduate students by the SGS Graduate Centre for Academic Communication. The services are designed to target the needs of both native and non-native speakers and all programs are free. Please consult the current SGS Workshops Schedule for more information.

Declaring an Absence in ACORN

Students who miss an academic obligation and wish to seek academic consideration in a course may declare an absence using the ACORN Absence Declaration Tool. Students who declare an absence in ACORN should expect to receive reasonable academic consideration from their instructor without the need to present additional supporting documentation. Students can only use the ACORN Absence Declaration Tool once per academic term (e.g., the fall term) for a maximum period of 7 consecutive calendar days.

The ACORN Absence Declaration Tool requires students to select the course(s) they wish to have academic consideration granted, as well as provide the email address(es) to whom their course syllabus identifies as the contact (e.g., instructor, advisor). A record of the absence is sent to the self-provided email(s) at the time of submission, and a receipt of the absence declaration is also sent to the student's University of Toronto email address.

Submitting an absence declaration does not initiate the process of academic consideration. It is the student's responsibility to arrange for academic consideration by contacting the course instructor using the contact information provided in the syllabus. Students who have already used one absence declaration in a term will be restricted from declaring any further absences using the ACORN Absence Declaration Tool.

Students are required to arrange any further academic consideration directly with the course instructor and/or student services advisor. Students may be asked to provide supporting documentation as evidence of their absences such as the University approved verification of illness form (VOI).

Extensions and Late Policy

Please look carefully at the due dates, which relate *both* to the calendar and to the number of weeks from your first day of work. Your first and last day of work will be taken from the letter of agreement signed by your employer to determine due dates.

If you are registered with Accessibility Services, do connect with the course instructor if you require an extension.

***In general, if you have a request for an extension for any course deliverable, please do connect with the course instructor as soon as you can. Inform the course instructor of what you need, provide the date that you think you would be able to submit the assignment. This way you can receive the support you need to ensure you stay on track with your course deliverables.

The late penalty will be 2% of the assignment grade per calendar day (i.e., weekends count). For example, an assignment that received a grade of 80% would be lowered to 74% if it were due on a Friday (i.e., by 11:59pm), but not submitted until the following Monday (i.e., after 12:00am).

Extensions beyond the term in which the course is taken are subject to guidelines established by the School of Graduate Studies (SGS).

Please see the [Coursework Extensions – School of Graduate Studies (utoronto.ca)](https://utoronto.ca) in which the course was offered, not the instructor of the course."

Students must petition the graduate unit for extensions, using the standard form provided in the section 1. Petitions for Extensions to Complete Coursework on [Coursework Extensions – School of Graduate Studies (utoronto.ca)](https://utoronto.ca) page.

Students with a disability, health/mental health condition, and/or diverse ways of learning.

Students with disabilities and diverse learning styles are welcome in this course. If you have a disability or health consideration that may require accommodations, please connect with me and/or Accessibility Services as soon as possible.

Accessibility Services staff are available by appointment to assess your specific accommodation needs, provide referrals to academic resources, and arrange appropriate accommodations. The sooner you let them know your accessibility needs, the quicker they can assist you to achieve your learning goals in this course. Visit the [Accessibility Services registration process](https://utoronto.ca) for more information.

Each class presents different barriers for different students. If you find your usual accommodations are insufficient or a mismatch for this course, please book an appointment with the course instructor or your Accessibility Advisor to ensure you are best served in this learning environment.

While registering with Accessibility Services is the best way to guarantee consistency in accommodations during your degree, there are a number of barriers to registering. If you are having difficulty registering with the office, please inform the course instructor to be able to work together to arrange interim accommodations while you register.

Peer Advisor Drop-In Sessions are available throughout the week to discuss the Accessibility Services registration process and using your accommodations to the fullest potential. Visit Peer Advisor Drop-in Session for more details on these sessions.

Appointments with the On-Location Accessibility Advisor can be booked via the Accessibility Services front desk. They can be reached via email (accessibility.services@utoronto.ca), phone (416-978-8060), or in-person (455 Spadina Avenue, Room 400).

Consultation appointments are available to discuss any questions about the Accessibility Services registration process and/or potential accommodation support. The on-location Accessibility Advisor at the Faculty of Information is Michael Mercer - michael.mercer@utoronto.ca

Academic integrity

Please consult the University's site on Academic Integrity. The iSchool has a zero-tolerance policy on plagiarism as defined in section B.I. 1. (d) of the University's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. You should acquaint yourself with the *Code* and Appendix "A" Section 2. Please review the material you covered in Cite it Right and, if necessary, consult the site How Not to Plagiarize.

Course Support

Students are encouraged to connect with the instructor and/or TA to address any concerns at all during the workplace and help resolve any issues. Students will be able to schedule check-ins throughout the term if they would like to connect with the instructor.

Again**,** if you wish to request an extension, for whatever the reason, please do connect with the course instructor Chioma Ekpo, chioma.ekpo@utoronto.ca as soon as you can. Let her know what you need so she can support you and make sure you stay on track with your course deliverables. Please type in the email subject line "INF3903_Firstname_Lastname" to ensure a prompt response.

Evaluation and Due Dates

Deliverable/Milestone	Due Date	Value
Assignment #1: Learning Agenda	Since students start their Co-op placements at different times, review the schedule below to help you identify the due date for assignment #1. The due dates are based on the Co-op start dates. **Assignment #1: Due date schedule** • If your Fall Co-op is an extension of your Summer Co-op, assignment #1 is due Sunday, October 6, 2024 (11:59pm). • If your Fall Co-op is your first Co-op and you started your placement **prior to the week of September 9**, assignment #1 is due Sunday, October 6, 2024 (11:59pm). • If your Fall Co-op is your first Co-op and you started your placement **during the week of September 9**, your assignment #1 is due Sunday, October 6, 2024 (11:59pm). • If your Fall Co-op is your first Co-op and you started your placement during the week of September 16, your assignment #1 is due Sunday, October 13, 2024 (11:59pm). • If your Fall Co-op is your first Co-op and you started your placement during the week of September 23, your assignment #1 is due Sunday, October 20, 2024 (11:59pm). • If your Fall Co-op is your first Co-op and you started your placement during the week of September 30, your assignment #1 is due Sunday, October 27, 2024 (11:59pm).	20%
Assignment #2: One Reflection Journal	For the reflection journal assignment, select only **one** journal (A or B or C) and respond to the two-part questions. **Journal A:** Due Sunday, October 27, 2024 (11:59pm) OR **Journal B:** Due Sunday, November 3, 2024 (11:59pm) OR **Journal C**: Due Sunday, November 10, 2024 (11:59pm)	15%

Assignment #3: Learning Agenda Outcomes Assessment	Sunday, November 24, 2024 (11:59pm)	20%
Assignment #4: Poster or Video	Sunday, December 8, 2024 (11:59pm)	20%
Employer Summative Assessment	Friday, December 13, 2024 (11:59pm) The course instructor will coordinate the assessment submissions with the employers. This assessment makes up the final grade. Do take time to review the assessment details in the pages ahead and understand how your work performance will be assessed so you can be proactive in meeting the work expectations.	25%

The final grade for this course will be either "pass" (course credit) or "fail" (no course credit). To receive a "pass" for this course, an **overall minimum total grade of 70%** must be accrued.

The assignment details and requirements for each assignment is outlined below in the Description of Deliverables/Assessment.

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Assignment #1: Learning Agenda (20%)
Deadline: Refer to the Evaluation and Due Dates section above for the assignment deadline.

Description of Deliverables/Assessment:

Learning Agenda & Learning Agenda Tutorial Video

If you took INF3900H, you will adapt the Learning Agenda you produced in that course, tailoring it carefully to your workplace. The structure and format will be identical, but the minimum requirements will be fewer: a minimum of six (not ten) top-level goals, and a minimum of one (not two) per 'bucket' or category (i.e., Professional Skills, Communication Skills, Technical Skills). You may use content directly from this Learning Agenda, but you will likely need to rewrite much of it to be appropriate to your placement role and context.

If you did not take INF3900H, then you need to watch the 30-minute Learning Agenda Tutorial Video posted on Quercus. This video provides instructions on how to construct a Learning Agenda.

You will need to negotiate your Learning Agenda with your supervisor to ensure that they are able to support you in achieving your learning goals. And because the agenda will be shared with your supervisor and course instructor, you may have goals that you would choose not to include for reasons of privacy. You may certainly maintain a private agenda outside the scope of the placement course for private goals.

No student should feel compelled to include anything in their Learning Agenda that feels embarrassing or humiliating in a professional setting.

Assignment #1 Cover Page:
Create a cover page for this assignment and provide the following details:
- Student Name:
- Student Number:
- Academic Concentration
- Co-op Company Name:
- Co-op Job Title:
- Date:

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Assignment #2: Reflection Journal (15%)
Deadline: Refer to the Evaluation and Due Dates section above for the assignment deadline.

Description of Deliverables/Assessment:

The purpose of this assignment is to help you reflect on your learning experience beyond the concrete items contained in your Learning Agenda. The journal assignment should be at least 200 words.

For the reflection journal assignment, select only **one** journal (Journal A OR Journal B OR Journal C) from the list below. You can see that each journal has two questions, Question 1 and Question 2, so be sure to answer the corresponding two questions for the one journal you select.

Journal A: Due Sunday, October 27, 2024 (11:59pm)
* Question 1. What has surprised you the most so far in your placement?
* Question 2. What has been the main challenges of working in-person, remotely, or in a hybrid format (in-person and remote) so far?

OR
Journal B: Due Sunday, November 3, 2024 (11:59pm)
* Question 1. What is the most important thing you have learned so far in your placement?
* Question 2. Apart from having to work remotely or in a hybrid format (in-person and remote), if you could change one thing about your placement, what would it be? Why?

OR
Journal C: Due Sunday, November 10, 2024 (11:59pm)
* Question 1. Looking back to the beginning of your placement, in what ways have you changed how you manage yourself and your time? (e.g., starting and ending, taking breaks, more or less time working independently, etc.)
* Question 2. What course(s) have helped you the most in your placement, and what course(s) do you think would be the most important to take next year, given everything you have experienced?

Assignment #2 Cover Page:
Create a cover page for this assignment and provide the following details:
* Date:
* Student Name:
* Student Number:
* Academic Concentration
* Co-op Company Name:
* Co-op Job Title:
* State which one journal you are responding to (Journal A or B or C) and state the corresponding two questions you are responding to.

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Assignment #3: Learning Agenda Outcomes Assessment (20%)
Deadline: Sunday, November 24, 2024 (11:59pm)

Description of Deliverables

In this assignment, you will have the opportunity to document your placement experience, both descriptively, and in terms of personal impact. Done properly, this assignment will become a helpful reference resource in the future, to help you talk meaningfully about what you accomplished, what you learned, and what you might have done differently. (There is applicability to any number of interview questions that begin with "tell me about a time when you …".)

Your report should be approximately 2,000 words (not including your cover page or any appendices), organized into the four categories as described below. It is up to you to decide how to allocate space to each section. However, consider that the first two sections can be described concisely, and that the second two sections should be given more weight.

1. Organizational Context
Describe the company, including the industry or sector, its position and size, and main competitors (if applicable). What is the mission of the organization? Describe where your unit/department fits into the organizational structure and function. (You may also wish to append an organization chart if you feel that would be helpful, but it is not required, and often such charts are misleading or inaccurate.)

2. Summary of Placement
Describe your job title, duties, and to whom you report. (You may also wish to append the job description, either because it is detailed and accurate, or because it changed a great deal and is something you will discuss later, but this is not required.) Summarize your major contributions to the work of the unit. Go beyond describing your responsibilities, include a discussion of what you achieved in terms of deliverables.

3. Personal Impact
Evaluate each of the 6+ Learning Agenda goals, one at a time. Note that it is normal (maybe even universal) that some goals (and many objectives!) may not have been achieved for a wide range of reasons, and it is vital that you position your description as transparent, not defensive. Discuss how each one played out (or why it did not). What unplanned changes were there in your work? That is, in what ways did your placement evolve or change suddenly due to unforeseen circumstances, or unexpected opportunities? What surprises did you encounter concerning your chosen profession, the workplace context, and/or yourself?

4. Evolution

If you took INF3900H, what portions of that course did you find applicable/useful in your placement? Are there topics that you now wish had been included? Are there topics that did not turn out to be applicable, and why not? If you did NOT take INF3900H, what professional development topics would you have liked to have covered prior to doing your placement?

In what way(s) has your placement informed your career planning? What kinds of new learning objectives would you like to work towards now?

Assignment #3 Cover Page:
Create a cover page for this assignment and provide the following details:
- Student Name
- Student Number
- Academic Concentration
- Co-op Company Name
- Co-op Job Title
- Date

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Assignment #4: Poster or Video (20%)
Deadline: Sunday, December 8, 2024 (11:59pm)

Description of Deliverables/Assessment:

Poster:
If the Fall Co-op is your first Co-op, you will produce a poster from your Co-op placement for Assignment #4.

Be sure to include the following details on your poster:
- Student Name
- Academic Concentration
- Co-op Company Name
- Co-op Job Title
- Fall 2024 Co-op Term

The main purpose of the poster is to describe the organization, your role, your project/challenge/responsibilities, the outcome, **AND** lessons learned. **Do not forget to outline the lessons learned.**

You may choose any one of four PowerPoint templates provided for you on Quercus – they are all the same size but vary in proportion and orientation. The template includes the Faculty of Information logo, which you may move or resize. Everything else about how to design your poster and what to include will be up to you.

Consider that the most common poster design mistake is to include too much text. Consider whether taking screen captures of your workplace, or other imagery (perhaps from the organization's website) might help break up text and provide visual interest. You have access on Quercus to the posters from past Co-op cohorts to guide you as you create your own.

Video:
If you did a Summer Co-op and the Fall Co-op is your second Co-op, you will produce a Video for Assignment #4.

The video is intended to simulate a live class presentation where you will talk about your placement experience. It is expected that you will submit one continuous 'take' of approximately 5-10 minutes of speaking - no video editing is expected. You may use any video software you wish, so long as the local file that is produced can be uploaded to Quercus, not a link to an online location.

You may be asked if you are willing to make your video available to new Co-op students as an information resource. If you agree, you will be asked to sign a release. Whether you provide this permission will have no impact on your grade either way, but it is envisioned that a video "advice" library will grow over time that will have great value to those who follow you.

Accordingly, in addition to briefly describing your position, the focus of the presentation will be: what advice would you give yourself if you could go back in time to the beginning of the placement? The advice could include logistical content, but it should also address how to optimize learning and professional development. **Do not forget to state the advice in the video.**

Videos from last year's cohort are available in the Quercus course shell for you to view and to guide you in preparing your video.

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Employer Summative Assessment of Placement Success (25%)
Due: Friday, December 13, 2024 (11:59pm)

The course instructor will send an assessment form to all supervisors, to be completed and submitted back to the course instructor. This evaluation assessment makes up part of the final grade in the course. Review the Employer Assessment Rating and Performance Criteria.

It's a really good idea to review the performance criteria as you begin your Co-op to help you understand how you will be assessed at the end of the role. This will allow you to pay attention to various work competences, such as punctuality, professionalism, problem-solving, time-management, as you manage yourself and work to meet and exceed the expectations of the role.

Your supervisor will assign a summative placement rating for you at the conclusion of this course, according to the performance criteria. Note that the employer's assessment is weighted to prevent it from being able to unilaterally cause a student to fail **or** to pass the course.

Employer Assessment Rating "Excellent" (25/25)
Performance Criteria

The student is consistently punctual and diligent, and consistently shows a high level of professionalism in problem-solving and interacting with others. The student demonstrates effectiveness working independently and in a team. The student manages their time effectively and requires little intervention. The student makes a meaningful contribution to the work of the department or unit. The supervisor would hire the student permanently if there was an opportunity do so, and would provide an excellent reference.

Employer Assessment Rating "Competent" (20/25)
Performance Criteria

The student is capable, diligent, and shows clear improvement over the course of the placement in professional skills and professionalism, based on supervision and mentoring. The student demonstrates consistently positive relationships with coworkers and competent work products. The supervisor has had a good experience overall with the student, would be willing to provide a positive reference.

Employer Assessment Rating "Inadequate" (15/25)
Performance Criteria

The student required close supervision to stay on work tasks. Relationships with coworkers may be difficult or strained. The quality of work products did not add value to the work of the department or unit. Punctuality and other facets of professionalism were not strong, and these did not show marked improvement over the course of the placement. The supervisor did not have a strong experience overall with the student and would not likely be willing to provide a reference. Normally this rating would first involve significant communication between the employer and the placement instructor, who may have had to intervene directly with the student during the course of the placement.

Employer Assessment Rating "Incomplete" (10/25)
Performance Criteria

The placement did not meet the minimum number of hours for reasons attributable to the student's performance, such as severe punctuality problems, the student resigned, the student was terminated by the employer for cause. This rating would normally first involve significant communication between the employer and the placement course supervisor to try to correct the situation during the course of the placement.