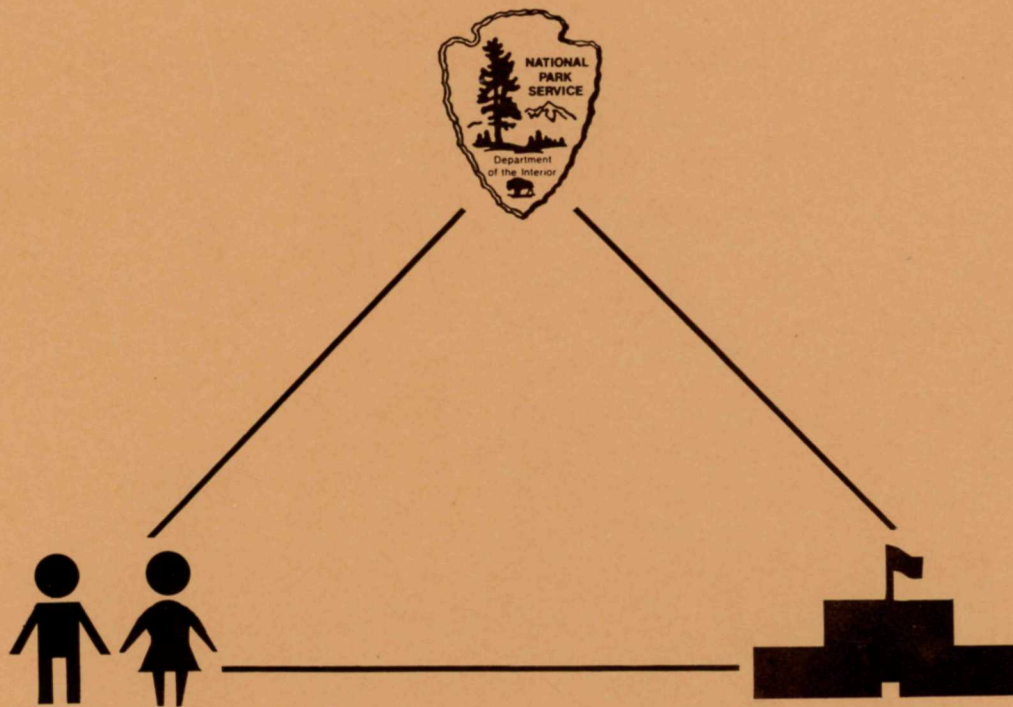


Cooperative Education Guide



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook is intended to serve as a quick reference and as a guide, and is not intended by design to be all inclusive. Questions not covered in these pages should be checked against FPM Chapter 308, or should be referred to the Cooperative Education Program Coordinator in your servicing Regional/Center personnel office, prior to making a commitment to an institution or to a student.

- I. Policy - It is the policy of the National Park Service to explore a variety of potential sources in order to recruit highly qualified candidates under the Cooperative Education Program, and to fully utilize this program in pursuit of the goal of equal employment opportunity throughout the Service. While this program is flexible in nature, it is not intended to be used primarily as a seasonal employment program or a supplement to it. Management, after analyzing projected staffing needs, should appoint approximately that number of cooperative education students who can reasonably be expected to be offered permanent employment in the same Region or Center upon successful completion of their Cooperative Education Program.

- II. Objectives - The combination of education and work experience embodied in the Cooperative Education Program assists in reaching the Service's primary objective of attracting and retaining highly qualified and motivated students who are preparing for professional, administrative, or technical careers. Other objectives of this program are:
 - A. To better control the quality of permanent hires by selecting from among experienced people whom we have had the opportunity to evaluate on the job. This reduces the high rate of turnover characteristic of the first years of employment, and it gives the Service the advantage of being able to direct students toward occupations with promising career opportunities.
 - B. To provide a more realistic approach in support of equal employment opportunity. The Cooperative Education Program allows us to concentrate our recruitment efforts directly at predominantly minority and female institutions, which will assist in meeting our affirmative action objectives.
 - C. To encourage additional numbers of college students to pursue educational programs suited to Service positions for which there is a need. The program gives students the opportunity to see the relevancy of their studies, it acquaints them with the work environment, and it provides exposure to career opportunities.
 - D. To increase the Service's involvement with a variety of educational institutions. It also provides participating schools with the opportunity to enrich their curriculum, to expand their resources, and to add substance to their job counseling programs.
 - E. To provide early exposure to the work environment for college students who are physically handicapped or are disabled veterans.

- III. Responsibilities - The development, implementation, and success of the Service's Cooperative Education Program relies upon the cooperation and earnest commitment of all levels of managerial and supervisory personnel.

- A. The Chief Personnel Officer is responsible for administering the Cooperative Education Program. This includes insuring, through adequate staff and resources, the effective implementation of the program which will include designating a member of his/her staff as Servicewide Program Coordinator.
- B. Servicewide Program Coordinator works closely with the Chief Personnel Officer in implementing the Cooperative Education Program. The Program Coordinator works in an advisory and controlling capacity to ascertain the direction and intent of the program as implemented by field offices. He/she assures that, in support of Affirmative Action Plan goals, participating institutions include an appropriate representation of colleges and universities having a high percentage of minorities and women in their student population, and that efforts are made to include disabled veterans and the physically handicapped in this program. The Program Coordinator also provides Servicewide publicity concerning this program.
- C. Bureau Equal Employment Opportunity Officer is responsible for providing guidance and/or feedback concerning the program and its relation to the Equal Employment Opportunity Program.
- D. Regional/Center Personnel Officer has operating responsibility for the Cooperative Education Program within his/her assigned areas. He/she insures, through adequate staff and resources, the effective implementation of the program and designates a Regional/Center Cooperative Education Program Coordinator.
- E. Regional/Center Program Coordinator is responsible to the servicing Personnel Officer. He/she works in an advisory and controlling capacity in assuring an effective outreach by publicizing the program. He/she also assures that area institutions, including colleges and universities having a high percentage of minorities and women in their student population, Veterans Administration hospitals and outpatient clinics, and state vocational rehabilitation offices, are cognizant of the program and are encouraged to have their students/clients participate in it according to the Region/Center's projected staffing needs.
- F. Regional/Center Equal Employment Opportunity Officer is responsible for working closely with the servicing Personnel Officer and Program Coordinator to assure that the program meets the principles and objectives of the affirmative action plan.
- G. Managers, in conjunction with the Personnel Officer, are responsible for anticipating future mission staffing requirements and for redesigning journeyman level positions to allow for realistic placement of cooperative education students.
- H. Supervisors are responsible for providing challenging on-the-job training and necessary counseling and evaluation to cooperative education students.

IV. Management Considerations - The Cooperative Education Program can be an excellent alternative recruitment method. When properly used, it can:

- Lend stability to occupations with high turnover rates.
- Assist in meeting future staffing needs.
- Rectify imbalances in occupations identified by affirmative action plans.
- Provide a means for directing students into positions which are difficult to fill.

V. Agreements - Any Region/Center contemplating the establishment of a cooperative education agreement with an educational institution should first contact the Servicewide Cooperative Education Program Coordinator (FTS 343-5228) to ascertain whether another NPS unit already has an existing, valid agreement with the same institution. If an agreement is already in existence between the National Park Service and an educational institution, the Region/Center may utilize the existing agreement. Sample Servicewide Cooperative Education Agreements are included in this handbook and may be amended as appropriate to meet the particular needs of a Region/Center, as long as they conform to FPM Chapter 308.

At the time of the initial execution of an agreement, the institution should be thoroughly briefed on requirements governing entry into the Federal service. The briefing should emphasize that cooperative education service does not commit the National Park Service or the student to employment after graduation, even though the main purpose of cooperative education is to provide help to students and employing agencies in the area of career employment in the Federal Government.

Each student, upon initial appointment, should also be similarly briefed, and informed that permanent positions for which he/she may be considered could be in a different element of the organization or at a geographical location other than the one where he/she was employed as student.

VI. Appointments - A variety of appointments are available for students depending upon their academic level.

Students in High Schools

- Students will be appointed under the Schedule A appointing authorities, section 213.3102(g), for part-time employment of students pursuing careers in the office skills or the trades and crafts, or section 213.3102 (a), for employment of students in paraprofessional and technical positions in the GS series and the GS-1 level or wage grade equivalent.

- All appointments are made only for the period of the work assignment, and total time worked must not exceed 1040 hours in any 12-month period. Appointments may be full-time or part-time.
- The proper appointment action on form SF-52 for high school students is "Excepted NTE (the last day of the duty assignment)".

Students in Nonbaccalaureate Curricula

- Students will be appointed under the Schedule B appointing authority, section 213.3202(c), or the Schedule A appointing authority, section 213.3102(g) or (q), at either the GS-2 or GS-3 level, or comparable wage grades. The Schedule B authority is for students who are pursuing an associate degree and are employed in one of the following occupational series (Park Technician, GS-026, Clerk Stenographer, GS-312, Secretary, GS-318, Biological Technician, GS-404, Accounting Technician, GS-525, or Engineering Technician, GS-802) during their co-op work periods and are majoring in fields directly related to these occupations.
- All appointments under Schedule B must be for the full period beginning on the date of first appointment and ending at the close of business of the 120th calendar day after the student's anticipated date of graduation. Appointments of all 2-year college students under Schedule A are made for the duration of the work periods only.
- The proper appointment action on form SF-52 for Schedule B is "Excepted Conditional NTE (the 120th day after graduation)". The proper appointment action on form SF-52 for Schedule A is "Excepted NTE (the duration of the work period)".
- No appointment under Schedule A or B will permit a student to be in employee status for more than 2 1/2 years (not including the period allowed after graduation under Schedule B). The total length of any appointments under Schedule A or Schedule B within any 12-month period for any one student will not exceed 1040 hours.

Students in Baccalaureate Curricula

- Students will be appointed under the Schedule B appointing authority section 213.3202(a) at the GS-2 through GS-4 level. This authority is for students who are pursuing a baccalaureate curriculum in a qualifying educational institution as defined in FPM Chapter 308.
- All appointments are for the period not to exceed close of business of the 120th calendar day after the student's date of graduation.
- The proper appointment action on form SF-52 for this appointing authority is "Excepted-Conditional NTE (the 120th day after graduation)".

Students in Graduate Curricula

- Students will be appointed under the Schedule B appointing authority, section 213.3202(b), at the GS-5 through GS-9 levels. This authority

is for students who have completed all requirements for a bachelor's degree and are enrolled as graduate students in curricula related to the occupation to which appointed. In addition, they must meet the full Office of Personnel Management qualification requirements, including passing scores on written tests, if appropriate. Programs have been approved for entry-level occupations in the general fields of management and administration, and in engineering, accounting, and the physical and life sciences, and also in park management and safety management.

- All appointments are for the period not to exceed close of business of the 120th calendar day after the student's completion of degree requirements.
- The proper appointment action on form SF-52 for this appointing authority is "Excepted Conditional NTE (the 120th day after completion of degree requirements).

VII. Work Schedules

Students in High Schools

- Work periods will be scheduled during school terms to every extent possible, and all periods of work must not be scheduled exclusively during summers or school vacation periods.
- Work periods should not be planned so that they delay a student's graduation date.
- All students must work on a schedule planned in advance rather than on an intermittent or "when needed" basis.
- A student's work schedule (or his/her work and classroom attendance together) should not generally exceed 40 hours in any one work week.

Students in Nonbaccalaureate Curricula

- For students under Schedule B, each work period should, when possible, total at least 60 calendar days in length and will usually correspond to a semester or quarter. Periods for students under Schedule B will be planned so that the student will meet requirements (26 weeks or 1040 hours) for noncompetitive conversion prior to graduation.
- Work periods will not be scheduled exclusively during summer or vacation periods (except for students preparing for positions in the park technician occupational series under Schedule B), nor will part-time schedules prior to graduation be authorized.

Students in Baccalaureate Curricula

- Schedules will assure that the students will have the required minimum of twenty-six work weeks involving two separate work

periods, with a least one work period within eighteen months of the graduation date, prior to graduation.

- Work will be scheduled for periods corresponding with, or approximating, semesters, trimesters, or quarters in accordance with the academic calendar of the institution.
- Work periods will not be scheduled exclusively during summer or vacation periods (except for students preparing for positions in the park technician or park ranger occupational series), nor will part-time schedules prior to graduation be authorized (except for students preparing for positions in the park technician or park ranger occupational series).

Students in Graduate Curricula

- Schedules will assure the students will have the required minimum of 16 work weeks or 640 hours of employment. Students may work up to 26 weeks or 1040 hours during a 12-month service year in one or two separate periods.
- Work periods will not be scheduled exclusively during summer periods (except for students preparing for positions as park rangers or park managers). Most of the work-study assignments should be completed on a full-time basis. However, part-time schedules may be arranged when situations related to the assignment require them.

VIII. Training - The training a student receives on an assignment is the single most important factor in a cooperative education program. Cooperative education students are to receive meaningful and progressively responsible assignments in the career area for which they are targeted. Upon completion of the program, the students should have acquired such a sound understanding of an occupational area that they are considered highly qualified applicants for positions at the Office where they received their work experience.

The cooperative education concept is built around on-the-job training, and should include administrative, technical, sub-professional and professional duties as appropriate. During the course of their training, the students should be given a variety of progressively more complex, demanding, and responsible work experiences commensurate with their achievements and interests as well as the academic studies they have completed or will be assigned except as they are an inherent, inseparable part of the assigned work. Attendance at training courses in job-related topics is appropriate and may be a valuable asset to the student's development on the job. The student's work experience program must be supported by a comprehensive individual development plan from program entry to completion and should include a detailed outline of the tasks to be accomplished, the expected performance standards and the time schedule.

The supervisor is the most important participant in providing the student with a meaningful work assignment. It is the supervisor's responsibility to motivate the student to achieve and for setting an example in the field as well as teaching the skills needed to perform at the required level.

IX. Pay, Leave, and Employee Benefit

- A. Pay - All students will be paid in accordance with the regular pay schedules set by law for their grade, and will receive pay for all officially directed or permitted overtime.

-All students will be paid for holidays which fall within their work periods if regulations qualify them for such pay.

- B. Leave - All students earn sick leave at the rate of four hours per pay period, and earn annual leave at the rate authorized for their length of Federal service, including military service.

-Students appointed under Schedule A, 213.3102(g) or (q) will not be placed on leave without pay status after the completion of a work period. All other students will be placed on leave without pay status when they complete a period of work and return to the institution.

C. Benefits

1. Retirement - Students appointed under the Schedule A authority are not eligible for Federal retirement coverage. They must be covered by FICA in accordance with Social Security requirements. For appointments under Schedule B which exceed one year, participation in the Federal Retirement System is mandatory. In the unforeseen situation in which the appointment is less than one year, the student will be covered under FICA.
2. Health and Life Insurance - Students appointed under the Schedule A authorities are not eligible for Federal health and life insurance benefits. Students appointed under Schedule B authorities whose employment in the program is scheduled to continue for at least one year and who will be in a pay status for at least one-third of the total time required for completion of the program will be eligible to participate in health benefit plans and to select life insurance.

X. Classification and Promotion

- A. Promotion - Promotion from one grade to another is contingent upon the student meeting not only the Office of Personnel Management qualification standard (the GS-099 is used as a basis for qualification, regardless of the titling of the position), but also the performance standards required of the job as determined by his/her supervisor.

The following are the minimum standards for each grade for cooperative education students:

GS-3 - One full year of academic study (30 semester hours or equivalent).

GS-4 - Two full years of academic study (60 semester hours or equivalent).

GS-5 - Completion of three-fourths of the total number of periods of study required for the bachelor's degree and one year of employment at GS-4.

or

Completion of two and one-half years of academic study plus six months of GS-4 work experience.

Graduate students must meet the full qualification requirements required by Handbook X-118 for promotion.

B. Classification

1. Series and title determinations are based on the target position for which the student is employed.

-Students in High School - Should be classified to the series of the target position. Titles should be based on appropriate practices for the series as described in the standard.

-Students in Non-Baccalaureate Curricula - Should be classified to the series of the target position. Titles should be based on appropriate practices for the series and described in the standards.

-Students in Baccalaureate Curricula - When the target position is classifiable to a professional series (a series with a positive education requirement in accordance with X-118), the student trainee series should be used for the student's position. For example, the Social Science Student-Trainee Series, GS-199; the Biological Science Student-Trainee Series, GS-499; the Engineering Student-Trainee Series, GS-899; etc. Titles for professionally targeted positions should be constructed based on the Student-Trainee series as follows: Social Science Student-Trainee, Biological Science Student-Trainee, Engineering Student-Trainee, etc. Do not title these positions based on the title of the target position but rather on the title of the occupation group to which assigned.

When the target position is not classifiable to a professional series but is classifiable to a two-grade interval series for which there is a supporting technical or clerical series, the student's position should be classified to the technical/clerical support series and titled in accordance

with the titling practice for the technical/clerical support series. For example when the target position is Park Ranger, GS-025, the student's position is Park Aid or Park Technician, GS-026; the target position is Management Analyst, GS-343; the student's position is Management Clerk or Management Assistant, GS-344, etc.

When the target position is not professional, and there is no appropriate support series, the series for the target position and appropriate titling practice may be used, e.g., Air Traffic Controller, GS-2152.

- XI. Trial Period and Performance Appraisal - Since the primary intent of this program is to identify candidates for permanent career assignments in the National Park Service, it is necessary that the appraisal system identify highly qualified candidates as well as select out candidates who do not show promise for an interest in future career service. The student's first and succeeding work periods are to be considered screening periods during which the student should receive counseling and feedback concerning his/her employment as deemed necessary by the immediate supervisor. Performance appraisals will be made prior to the end of each work period by the immediate supervisor, in consultation with others who have worked directly with the student, covering those specific skills, knowledges or abilities identified as being the most important to the target position.

At the expiration of each work period, the student shall also be given an opportunity to report on and evaluate his or her work experience and accomplishments. Appraisal information will be shared with both the agency and the institution and made a part of the student's personnel folder.

On the basis of the rating of the student's job performance, interest, and fitness and conduct, the supervisor shall make:

- A recommendation for retention of the student, and if appropriate, with an indication of whether promotion is warranted and what action is planned for strengthening performance or correcting deficiencies.
- A recommendation that the student be separated from the program.
- A recommendation that the student be converted to permanent employment.

XII. Permanent Employment Upon Graduation

High school students and nonbaccalaureate students appointed under the Schedule A authority are ineligible for noncompetitive conversion to career positions upon completion of their programs. However, these students should be advised of their right to compete through examination for placement after graduation in the career service at any level for which they qualify, in either the same or another occupation and in either the same or another agency.

Nonbaccalaureate students appointed under the Schedule B authority are eligible for noncompetitive conversion to a career position at the GS-4 level only when the following requirements are met:

- Has successfully completed all requirements for an associate degree in the area in which he or she completed his or her co-op work.
- Meets all qualification standards for the position which he or she will enter, except for test requirements.
- Has completed before graduation in the agency recommending his/her conversion one or more work periods totaling 26 weeks (1040 hours) of full-time cooperative education experience in pay status, (or its equivalent on a part-time basis if the Office of Personnel Management has approved the part-time employment), all in an occupational series which was approved for Schedule B appointment prior to the graduation date.
- Meets the citizenship requirements and is converted by the 120th day after graduation.

Baccalaureate students are eligible for noncompetitive conversion to a career position at the GS-5 level when the following requirements are met:

- Meets the qualification standards for the GS-5 position, except for any written test.
- Successfully completed all the requirements for a bachelor's degree.
- Has completed, in the agency recommending conversion and before graduation, a minimum of 26 work weeks or 1040 work hours of full-time cooperative education work experience in a pay status (or its equivalent on a part-time basis if the Office of Personnel Management has approved the part-time employment). The work must have involved at least two separate work periods with an intervening period of study and must be within 18 months of the student's expected graduation date. The required hours of employment must have been in the same occupational area and must have been related to the student's major field of study.
- Meets the citizenship requirements and is converted by the 120th day after graduation.

Baccalaureate students are eligible for noncompetitive conversion to a career position at the GS-7 level in some instances. (See FPM Chapter 308, Subchapter 2 for further information).

Graduate students are eligible for noncompetitive conversion to career positions at the GS-5,7,9, or 11 level when the following requirements are met:

- Successfully completed a minimum of 16 weeks or 640 hours of work assignments.
- The student's graduate study program must not have exceeded 30 months for the master's or 42 months for the Ph.D degree.
- A written recommendation is received from appropriate agency supervisory officials knowledgeable of the student's performance.
- Meets the citizenship requirements and conversion is effected by the 120th day following completion of requirements for the degree.

Students appointed under Schedule B, who fail to receive a noncompetitive conversion to a career position, should be advised of their right to compete through Office of Personnel Management examination for placement after graduation in the career service at any level for which they qualify, in either the same or another occupation and in either the same or another agency.



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

HIGH SCHOOL COOPERATIVE EDUCATION AGREEMENT

This agreement establishes a basis for mutual understanding between the U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, and _____ in matters relating to the employment of cooperative education students, who are enrolled in high school programs, under the regulations of the Office of Personnel Management.

I. Definitions

As used in this agreement, "School" denotes the high school entering into this agreement, "Agency" refers to the U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, and "Student" defines the Cooperative Education Student.

II. Objectives

The Cooperative Education Program outlined by this agreement is designed to provide the student with instruction in an occupational field by combining periods of study with periods of related paid employment. This combination of education and work experience has advantages for the student, the school involved, and the National Park Service. More specifically, it provides the student the opportunity to see the relevancy of his or her studies, it acquaints him or her with the work environment, and it provides exposure to career opportunities. It provides the school the opportunity to enrich its curriculum and to add substance to its job counseling programs. It provides the National Park Service with the advantages of being able to direct students toward occupations with promising career opportunities, to publicize the employment available in the National Park Service and its mission, and to support equal employment opportunity.

III. Responsibility

In conformance with the regulations of the Office of Personnel Management concerning cooperative education:

A. The school will:

1. Designate a representative to work with the agency liaison officer.
2. Publicize cooperative education employment opportunities among prospective school candidates.

3. Recommend all interested and qualified students to the agency without regard to age, sex, religion, national origin, race, color, or physical handicap.
4. Coordinate work and academic experience of students to ensure that they are receiving maximum benefit from participation in the cooperative education work assignment.
5. Furnish the agency with any necessary data and information about the student, which the school is authorized to release or is subject to signed release by the student.
6. Notify the agency if a student drops below a satisfactory academic schedule or drops out of school.
7. Periodically monitor and evaluate the student's progress at the agency through on-site visits.

B. The agency will:

1. Designate a staff member who will serve as liaison to the school.
2. Keep the school informed of cooperative education employment opportunities.
3. Establish work schedules which accommodate the academic calendar of the school and enable the students to meet the objectives of this agreement.
4. Consider students recommended by the school for participation in the program without regard to age, sex, religion, national origin, race, color, or physical handicap, and promptly advise the students and the school of action taken.
5. Handle personnel processing related to the employment of students.
6. Provide necessary orientation, supervision and counseling to all students, and complete an Individual Development Plan for each student within 30 days of employment.
7. Provide the students with meaningful and increasingly responsible work assignments related to the curriculum being pursued, and guide the students in carrying out the assignment.
8. Conduct periodic appraisals of each student's performance, counsel students as appropriate, and furnish the school with a supervisory evaluation of the student after each work period.
9. Notify the school as far in advance as possible of any anticipated or proposed personnel action to terminate the appointment of a student.

C. The student will:

1. Maintain grades predictive of graduation from high school.
2. Demonstrate a continuing interest and commitment to all phases of the program.
3. Provide the agency and the school with necessary evaluation reports.

IV. Conditions of Student Employment

A. The student will:

1. Be studying full-time for the purpose of earning a high school diploma and be recommended by appropriate officials at the school.
2. Be a citizen of the United States, be at least 16 years of age, and not be the son or daughter of an employee of the Department of Interior.

B. Appointment

1. Students will be appointed under the Schedule A appointing authority, section 213.3102(g), for part-time employment of students pursuing careers in the office skills or the trades and crafts, and Schedule A, section 213.3102(q), for employment of students in paraprofessional and technical positions in the GS series at the GS-1 level or the wage grade equivalent.
2. All appointments are made only for the period of the work assignment, and total time worked must not exceed 1040 hours in any 12-month period. Appointments may be full-time or part-time.
3. The agency has final responsibility for selection of students, and will make selections based upon the agency's needs and the individual's apparent capacity to meet those needs.
4. A student's appointment may be terminated at any time for any one of the following reasons: resignation; suspension; expulsion, withdrawal, or graduation from the school; unsatisfactory work performance; failure to maintain academic standards; physical unfitness for duty; and inability of the agency for administrative reasons to retain the student in the position.

C. Work Schedules

1. The agency and the school will work together to develop schedules to meet the following requirements:
 - A. Work periods will be scheduled during school terms to every extent possible. All periods of work must not be scheduled exclusively during summers or school vacation periods.

- B. Work periods should not be planned so that they delay a student's graduation date.
- C. All students must work on a schedule planned in advance rather than on an intermittent or "when needed" basis.
- D. No student will work more than 1040 hours in the agency's cooperative education program in any 12-month period.
- E. A student's work (or his/her work and classroom attendance together) should not generally exceed 40 hours in any one work week.

D. Pay, Leave and Employee Benefits

1. Pay and Leave

- A. Students will be paid in accordance with the regular pay schedules set by law for their grade, and will receive pay for all officially directed or permitted overtime.
- B. Students will be given and paid for holidays in accordance with Federal regulations.
- C. Students will earn and use sick leave and annual leave in accordance with Federal regulations.

2. Benefits

- A. Students are covered by FICA in accordance with Social Security requirements, and are not eligible for Federal retirement coverage.
- B. Students are not eligible for coverage under Federal health and life insurance benefits.

E. Performance Appraisal

- 1. The student's first and succeeding work periods are to be considered screening periods during which the supervisor will review the student's performance, confer with the student to discuss work performance to date, and determine interest in continuing employment.
- 2. Performance appraisals will be made prior to the end of each work period by the immediate supervisor, in consultation with others who have worked directly with the student, identifying at least three specific skills, knowledges, or abilities identified as being the most important to the target position. In addition, they must also be rated on the following items:
 - Competence with which assigned tasks were performed.

- Extent to which tasks were completed on time when the student has control over the time factor.
 - Ability to win the respect and confidence of others in the performance of assigned tasks.
 - Physical fitness to perform the job adequately.
3. At the expiration of each work period, the student will also be given an opportunity to report on and evaluate their work experience and accomplishments. Appraisal information will be shared with both the agency and the institution and made a part of the student's personnel folder.
 4. On the basis of the rating of the student's job performance, interest, fitness and conduct, the supervisor shall make:
 - A. A recommendation for retention or release of the student.
 - B. A recommendation that the student not return for another work period.

G. Employment After Termination

Prior participation in this program infers no special employment privileges and students cannot be retained noncompetitively in any position following ineligibility or termination. They can qualify for career-conditional appointments through the competitive process required by Office of Personnel Management procedures.

V. The Agreement

- A. The conditions of this agreement are in general conformity with Federal regulations. It is understood, however, that the conditions at no time supersede, alter or take the place of such regulations. Since this program is conducted pursuant to Office of Personnel Management regulations and law, changes in either regulations or law necessarily become effective without modification. However, the agency will advise the school of such changes as quickly as possible and if substantive, they will be incorporated into this agreement by mutual consent as soon as practical. Changes or modifications which are not required by new laws or regulations will be made only by the written and mutual consent of the agency and institution.
- B. This agreement is void if there have been no students from the school employed by the agency for the previous 12-month period. A new agreement must be executed before student placements may be resumed.

For: National Park Service

Title

Office

Date

For: The School

Title

Phone

Date



National Park Service

Nonbaccalaureate Cooperative Education Agreement (Does Not Permit Noncompetitive Conversion)

This agreement establishes a basis for mutual understanding between the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, and _____ in matters relating to the employment of _____

Institution

cooperative education students, who are enrolled in nonbaccalaureate programs leading to an associate degree under the regulations of the Office of Personnel Management.

I. Definitions

As used in this agreement, "Institution" denotes the academic institution entering into this agreement, "Agency" refers to the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, and "Student" defines the cooperative education student.

II. Objectives

The Cooperative Education Program outlined by this agreement is designed to provide the student with periods of study, interspersed with periods of study-related employment. This combination of education and work experience has advantages for the student, the institution involved, and the National Park Service. More specifically, it provides the student the opportunity to see the relevancy of his or her studies, it provides exposure to career opportunities, and it acquaints him or her with the work environment.

It provides the institution the opportunity to enrich its curriculum, expand its resources, and add substance to its job counseling programs. It provides the National Park Service with the advantages of being able to direct students toward occupations with promising career opportunities and to support equal employment opportunity.

III. Responsibility

In conformance with the regulations of the Office of Personnel Management concerning cooperative education:

A. The institution will:

1. Designate a representative to work with the agency liaison officer.

2. Publicize cooperative education employment opportunities among prospective institution candidates.
3. Recommend all qualified students to the agency without regard to age, sex, religion, national origin, race, color, or physical handicap, including all veterans discharged under honorable conditions, who express an interest.
4. Coordinate work and academic experience of students to ensure that they are receiving maximum benefit from participation in the cooperative education work assignment.
5. Furnish the agency with any necessary data and information about the student, which the college is authorized to release or is subject to signed release by the student.
6. Advise the agency immediately if the student in the program drops from the institution's Cooperative Education Program, leaves the institution, changes curriculum or course of study, falls below a 2.0 grade point average on a 4.0 system, is placed on academic suspension or probation, or any other administrative action that may affect the student's retention in the program.

B. The agency will:

1. Designate a staff member who will serve as liaison to the institution.
2. Keep the institution informed of cooperative education employment opportunities.
3. Establish work schedules which accommodate the academic calendar of the institution and enable the students to meet the requirements under this agreement.
4. Consider students recommended by the institution for participation in the program without regard to age, sex, religion, national origin, race, color, or physical handicap, including veterans discharged under honorable conditions, and promptly advise the students and the institution of action taken.
5. Handle personnel processing related to the employment of students.
6. Provide necessary orientation, supervision and counseling to all students, and complete an individual development plan for each student within 30 days of employment.
7. Provide the students with meaningful and increasingly responsible work assignments related to the curriculum being pursued, and guide the students in carrying out the assignment.

8. Conduct periodic appraisals of each student's performance, counsel students as appropriate, and furnish the institution with a supervisory evaluation of the student after each work period.
9. Notify the institution as far in advance as possible of any anticipated or proposed personnel action to terminate the appointment of a student.

C. The student will:

1. Remain a candidate in good standing for the associate degree, and maintain a 2.0 grade point average on a 4.0 system.
2. Demonstrate a continuing interest and commitment to all phases of the program.
3. Provide the agency and the institution with necessary evaluation reports.

IV. Conditions of Student Employment

A. Student Eligibility - The student will:

1. Be enrolled and studying full-time in pursuit of an associate degree in a qualifying college, and pursuing a major field of study closely related to the job for which he or she is being considered.
2. Be a citizen of the United States, be at least 16 years of age, and meet appropriate medical and security requirements.
3. Not be the son or daughter of an employee of the Department of the Interior.
4. Be recommended for employment by the appropriate officials at the institution.
5. Be maintaining a grade of "C" at all times in the major subject and courses required for qualification at the GS-4 level after graduation and maintaining an average equivalent to 2.0 on a 4.0 scale.

B. Appointment

1. Students will be appointed under the Schedule A appointing authority, section 213.3202(g) or (q) of the Code of Federal Regulations as a student trainee, GS-2 or GS-3.
2. All appointments are made only for the period of the work assignment and total time worked must not exceed 1040 hours in any 12-month period. Appointments may be full-time or part-time.

3. No appointment will permit a student to be in employee status for more than 2 1/2 years.
4. A student's appointment may be terminated at any time for any one of the following reasons: resignation; change to a curriculum which will not qualify the student for the position; suspension, expulsion or withdrawal from the institution; unsatisfactory work performance; failure to maintain academic standards; physical unfitness for duty; and inability of the agency for administrative reasons to retain the student in the position.

C. Work Schedules

1. Students will not work in excess of 1040 hours in the agency's Cooperative Education Program in any 12-month period. Students must work on a schedule planned in advance rather than on an intermittent or when-needed basis.
2. Work will usually be scheduled for periods corresponding to a semester, trimester or quarter, and each work period will, when possible, total at least 60 calendar days in length.
3. Work periods will not be scheduled exclusively during summer or vacation periods (except for students in positions in the park aid occupational series).

D. Pay, Leave and Employee Benefits

1. Pay and Leave

- A. Students will be paid in accordance with civil service pay schedules. While overtime work is allowed only in special circumstances, a student who works overtime must receive overtime pay unless he/she elects compensatory time.
- B. Students will be paid for holiday time in accordance with civil service rules and regulations governing career staff.
- C. Students earn sick leave at the rate of four hours per pay period and annual leave at the rate authorized for their length of Federal service, including military service.

2. Benefits

- A. Students are covered by FICA in accordance with Social Security requirements, and are not eligible for Federal retirement coverage.
- B. Students are not eligible for coverage under Federal health and life insurance benefits.

E. Classification and Promotion

1. A student is eligible for promotion to GS-3 after 1 year of study.
2. Promotion from one grade to another is contingent upon the student's meeting not only the above qualification standards, but also the performance standards required of the job.

F. Trial Period and Performance Appraisal

1. The student's first and succeeding work periods are to be considered screening periods during which the supervisor will review the student's performance, confer with the student to discuss work performance to date, and determine interest in continuing employment.
2. Performance appraisals will be completed prior to the end of each work period by the immediate supervisor, in consultation with the student, covering at least three specific skills, knowledges, and abilities identified as being the most important to the target career-job. In addition, they must also be rated on the following items:
 - Degree of competence with which assigned tasks were performed.
 - Extent to which tasks were completed on time when the student has control over the time factor.
 - Ability to accept and follow directions and adhere to established regulations in the performance of the job.
 - Ability to win the respect and confidence of others in the performance of assigned tasks.
 - Ability to take initiative in assigned tasks.
 - Physical fitness to perform the job adequately.
3. At the expiration of each work period, the student shall also be given an opportunity to report on and evaluate his or her work experience and accomplishments. Appraisal information will be shared with both the agency and the institution and made a part of the student's personnel folder.
4. On the basis of the rating of the student's job performance, interest, and fitness and conduct, the supervisor shall shall make:
 - (a) A recommendation for retention of the student, with an indication of whether promotion is warranted and what action is planned for strengthening performance or correcting deficiencies.

(b) A recommendation that the student be separated from the program.

G. Employment After Graduation

1. Students appointed under Schedule A, section 213.3102 (g) or (q) are ineligible for noncompetitive conversion to career-conditional appointments. However, they should be advised of their right to compete through Office of Personnel Management examination for placement after graduation in the career service at any level for which they qualify, in either the same or another occupation and in either the same or another agency.
2. All students will be terminated at the end of a work period. Following graduation students cannot be retained in the same job under an excepted appointment and cannot be reassigned noncompetitively to other positions.

V. The Agreement

1. The conditions of this agreement are in general conformity with Federal regulations. It is understood, however, that the conditions at no time supersede, alter or take the place of such regulations. Since the program is conducted pursuant to Office of Personnel Management regulations and law, changes in either regulations or law necessarily become effective without modification. However, the agency will advise the institution of such changes as quickly as possible and if substantive, they will be incorporated into this agreement by mutual consent as soon as practical. Changes or modifications which are not required by new laws or regulations will be made only by the written and mutual consent of the agency and institution.
2. In accordance with Office of Personnel Management regulations, this agreement is void if there have been no students from the institution employed by the agency for the previous 12 month period. A new agreement must be executed before student placement may be resumed.

For: National Park Service

For: The Institution

Title

Title

Office

Phone



National Park Service

Nonbaccalaureate Cooperative Education Agreement

(Permits Noncompetitive Conversion)

This agreement establishes a basis for mutual understanding between the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, and _____ in matters relating to the employment of

_____ Institution

cooperative education students, who are enrolled in nonbaccalaureate programs leading to an associate degree under the regulations of the Office of Personnel Management.

I. Definitions

As used in this agreement, "Institution" denotes the academic institution entering into this agreement, "Agency" refers to the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, and "Student" defines the cooperative education student.

II. Objectives

The Cooperative Education Program outlined by this agreement is designed to provide the student with periods of study, interspersed with periods of study-related employment. This combination of education and work experience has advantages for the student, the institution involved, and the National Park Service. More specifically, it provides the student the opportunity to see the relevancy of his or her studies, it provides exposure to career opportunities, and it acquaints him or her with the work environment.

It provides the institution the opportunity to enrich its curriculum, expand its resources, and add substance to its job counseling programs. It provides the National Park Service with the advantages of being able to select career employees based on proven job performance, to direct students toward occupations with promising career opportunities, and to support equal employment opportunity.

III. Responsibility

In conformance with the regulations of the Office of Personnel Management concerning cooperative education:

A. The institution will:

1. Designate a representative to work with the agency liaison officer.
2. Publicize cooperative education employment opportunities among prospective institution candidates.
3. Recommend all qualified students to the agency without regard to age, sex, religion, national origin, race, color, or physical handicap, including all veterans discharged under honorable conditions, who express an interest.
4. Coordinate work and academic experience of students to ensure that they are receiving maximum benefit from participation in the cooperative education work assignment.
5. Furnish the agency with any necessary data and information about the student, which the college is authorized to release or is subject to signed release by the student.
6. Advise the agency immediately if the student in the program drops from the institution's Cooperative Education Program, leaves the institution, changes curriculum or course of study, falls below a 2.0 grade point average on a 4.0 system, is placed on academic suspension or probation, or any other administrative action that may affect the student's retention in the program.

B. The agency will:

1. Designate a staff member who will serve as liaison to the institution.
2. Keep the institution informed of cooperative education employment opportunities.
3. Establish work schedules which accommodate the academic calendar of the institution and enable the students to meet the requirements under this agreement.
4. Consider students recommended by the institution for participation in the program without regard to age, sex, religion, national origin, race, color, or physical handicap, including veterans discharged under honorable conditions, and promptly advise the students and the institution of action taken.
5. Handle personnel processing related to the employment of students.
6. Provide necessary orientation, supervision and counseling to all students, and complete an Individual Development Plan for each student within 30 days of employment.

7. Provide the students with meaningful and increasingly responsible work assignments related to the curriculum being pursued, and guide the students in carrying out the assignment.
8. Conduct periodic appraisals of each student's performance, counsel students as appropriate, and furnish the institution with a supervisory evaluation of the student after each work period.
9. Notify the institution as far in advance as possible of any anticipated or proposed personnel action to terminate the appointment of a student.

C. The student will:

1. Remain a candidate in good standing for the associate degree, and maintain 2.0 grade point average on a 4.0 system.
2. Demonstrate a continuing interest and commitment to all phases of the program.
3. Provide the agency and the institution with necessary evaluation reports.

IV. Conditions of Student Employment

A. Student Eligibility - The student will:

1. Be enrolled and studying full-time in pursuit of an associate degree in a qualifying college, employed in one of the occupational series (including Park Technician, GS-026) identified in FPM Chapter 308, Subchapter 4-3, during their co-op work periods and who are majoring in fields directly related to the occupation. Only those students in these series will be eligible for consideration for noncompetitive conversion.
2. Be a citizen of the United States, be at least 16 years of age, and meet appropriate medical and security requirements.
3. Not be the son or daughter of an employee of the Department of Interior.
4. Be a high school graduate.
5. Be recommended for employment by the appropriate officials at the institution.
6. Be maintaining a grade of "C" at all times in the major subject and courses required for qualification at the GS-4 level after graduation and maintaining an average equivalent to 2.0 on a 4.0 scale.

B. Appointment

1. Students will be appointed under the Schedule B appointing authority, section 213.3202(c) of the Code of Federal Regulations as a student trainee, GS-2 or GS-3. No initial appointments are made at the GS-4 level.
2. All appointments are for the full period beginning on the date of first appointment and ending at the close of business of the 120th day after graduation. If graduation exercises are delayed more than 15 days after the student completes his/her academic requirements, the 15th day after the completion of these requirements will be considered the graduation date and the beginning of the 120-day period.
3. No appointment will permit a student to be in employee status for more than 2 1/2 years (not including the period allowed after graduation).
4. A student's appointment may be terminated at any time for any one of the following reasons: resignation; change to a curriculum which will not qualify the student for the position; suspension, expulsion or withdrawal from the institution; unsatisfactory work performance; failure to maintain academic standards; physical unfitness for duty; and inability of the agency for administrative reasons to retain the student in the position.

C. Work Schedules

1. The agency and the institution will work together to develop program schedules that will assure the student will have the required minimum of one or more work periods totaling 26 weeks (1040 hours) of full-time cooperative education experience in pay status (or the equivalent in part-time work if the Office of Personnel Management has approved a part-time arrangement) prior to graduation.
2. Work will usually be scheduled for periods corresponding to a semester, trimester or quarter, and each work period will, when possible, total at least 60 calendar days in length.
3. Work periods will not be scheduled exclusively during summer or vacation periods (except for students preparing for positions in the park technician occupational series), nor will part-time schedules prior to graduation be authorized.

D. Pay, Leave and Employee Benefits

1. Pay
 - A. Students will be paid in accordance with civil service pay schedules. While overtime work is allowed only

in special circumstances, a student who works overtime must receive overtime pay unless he/she elects compensatory time.

- B. Students will be paid for holiday time in accordance with civil service rules and regulations governing career staff.

2. Leave

- A. Students earn sick leave at the rate of four hours per pay period and annual leave at the rate authorized for their length of Federal service, including military service.
- B. Students will be placed on leave without pay status when they complete a period of work and return to the institution.

3. Benefits

- A. For appointments which exceed one year, participation in the Federal Retirement System is mandatory. In the unforeseen situation in which the appointment is less than one year, the student will be covered under FICA.
- B. A student whose employment in the program is scheduled to continue for at least one year and who will be in pay status for at least one-third of the total time required for completion of the program will be eligible to participate in health benefit plans and to select life insurance.

E. Classification and Promotion

- 1. A student is eligible for promotion to GS-3 after 1 year of study.
- 2. Promotion from one grade to another is contingent upon the student's meeting not only the above qualification standards, but also the performance standards required of the job.

F. Trial Period and Performance Appraisal

- 1. The student's first and succeeding work periods are to be considered screening periods during which the supervisor will review the student's performance, confer with the student to discuss work performance to date, and determine interest in continuing employment.
- 2. Performance appraisals will be completed prior to the end of each work period by the immediate supervisor, in consultation with others who have worked directly with the student, covering at least three specific skills,

knowledges, and abilities identified as being the most important to the target career-job. In addition, they must also be rated on the following items:

- Degree of competence with which assigned tasks were performed.
 - Extent to which tasks were completed on time when the student has control over the time factor.
 - Ability to accept and follow directions and adhere to established regulations in the performance of the job.
 - Ability to win the respect and confidence of others in the performance of assigned tasks.
 - Ability to take initiative in assigned tasks.
 - Physical fitness to perform the job adequately.
3. At the expiration of each work period, the student shall also be given an opportunity to report on and evaluate his or her work experience and accomplishments. Appraisal information will be shared with both the agency and the institution and made a part of the student's personnel folder.
4. On the basis of the rating of the student's job performance, interest, and fitness and conduct, the supervisor shall make:
- (a) A recommendation for retention of the student, with an indication of whether promotion is warranted and what action is planned for strengthening performance or correcting deficiencies.
 - (b) A recommendation that the student be separated from the program.

G. Employment After Graduation

1. Students appointed under Schedule B, section 213.3202(c), are eligible for noncompetitive conversion to career-conditional appointments at the GS-4 level only, provided the following eligibility requirements are met:
- A. The student has successfully completed all requirements for an associate degree in the area in which he/she completed his/her co-op work. A statement from the institution which indicates completion is acceptable in place of a diploma.
 - B. The student meets all qualifications standards for the position which he/she will enter, except for test requirements.

- C. The student has completed before graduation in the agency recommending his/her conversion one or more work periods totaling 26 weeks (1040 hours) of full-time cooperative education experience in pay status (or the equivalent in part-time work if the Office of Personnel Management has approved a part-time arrangement), all in an occupational series which was approved for Schedule B appointment prior to the student's graduation date.
 - D. The student meets the citizenship requirements at the time of conversion.
- 2. All students will be converted or terminated as soon as possible and in all cases by the 120th day after graduation.
 - 3. Although the prime purpose of the agency employment of cooperative education students is to prepare students for the agency's permanent work force, the agency sometimes cannot, for administrative reasons, convert noncompetitively all the co-op graduates which it has trained as students. Students who are not converted may seek eligibility through the competitive process at any entry level for which they qualify, in either the same or another occupation and in either the same or another agency. In addition, the permanent positions for which the student may be considered may be in a different element of the organization or at a geographic location other than the one where he/she was employed as a student.

V. The Agreement

- A. The conditions of this agreement are in general conformity with Federal regulations. It is understood, however, that the conditions at no time supersede, alter or take the place of such regulations. Since the program is conducted pursuant to Office of Personnel Management regulations and law, changes in either regulations or law necessarily become effective without modification. However, the agency will advise the institution of such changes as quickly as possible and if substantive, they will be incorporated into this agreement by mutual consent as soon as practical. Changes or modifications which are not required by new laws or regulations will be made only by the written and mutual consent of the agency and institution.
- B. In accordance with Office of Personnel Management regulations, this agreement is void if there have been no students from the institution employed by the agency for the previous 12-month period. A new agreement must be executed before student placements may be resumed.

For: National Park Service

Title

Office

Date

For: The Institution

Title

Phone

Date



National Park Service

Baccalaureate Cooperative Education Agreement

This agreement establishes a basis for mutual understanding between the U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, and _____ in matters relating to the employment of _____ Institution cooperative education students, who are enrolled in baccalaureate programs, under the regulations of the Office of Personnel Management.

I. Definitions

As used in this agreement, "Institution" denotes the academic institution entering into this agreement, "Agency" refers to the U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, and "Student" defines the cooperative education student,

II. Objectives

The Cooperative Education Program outlined by this agreement is designed to provide the student with periods of study, interspersed with periods of study-related employment. This combination of education and work experience has advantages for the student, the institution involved, and the National Park Service. More specifically, it provides the student the opportunity to see the relevancy of his or her studies, it provides exposure to career opportunities, and it acquaints him or her with the work environment. It provides the institution the opportunity to enrich its curriculum, expand its resources, and add substance to its job counseling programs. It provides the National Park Service with the advantages of being able to select career employees based on proven job performance, to direct students toward occupations with promising career opportunities, and to support equal employment opportunity.

III. Responsibility

In conformance with the regulations of the Office of Personnel Management concerning cooperative education:

A. The institution will:

1. Designate a representative to work with the agency liaison officer.

2. Publicize cooperative education employment opportunities among prospective institution candidates.
3. Recommend all qualified students to the agency without regard to age, sex, religion, national origin, race, color, or physical handicap, including all veterans discharged under honorable conditions, who express an interest.
4. Coordinate work and academic experience of students to ensure that they are receiving maximum benefit from participation in the cooperative education work assignment.
5. Furnish the agency with any necessary data and information about the student, which the college is authorized to release or is subject to signed release by the student.
6. Advise the agency immediately if the student in the program drops from the institution's Cooperative Education Program, leaves the institution, changes curriculum or course of study, falls below a 2.0 grade point average on a 4.0 system, is placed on academic suspension or probation, or any other administrative action that may affect the student's retention in the program.

B. The agency will:

1. Designate a staff member who will serve as liaison to the institution.
2. Keep the institution informed of cooperative education employment opportunities.
3. Establish work schedules which accommodate the academic calendar of the institution and enable the students to meet the requirements under this agreement.
4. Consider students recommended by the institution for participation in the program without regard to age, sex, religion, national origin, race, color, or physical handicap, including veterans discharged under honorable conditions, and promptly advise the students and the institution of action taken.
5. Handle personnel processing related to the employment of students.
6. Provide necessary orientation, supervision and counseling to all students, and complete an individual development plan for each student within 30 days of employment.
7. Provide the students with meaningful and increasingly responsible work assignments related to the curriculum being pursued, and guide the students in carrying out the assignment.

8. Conduct periodic appraisals of each student's performance, counsel students as appropriate, and furnish the institution with a supervisory evaluation of the student after each work period.
9. Provide the institution with needed information on the student's performance.
10. Notify the institution as far in advance as possible of any anticipated or proposed personnel action to terminate the appointment of a student.

C. The student will:

1. Remain a candidate in good standing for the bachelor's degree, and maintain a 2.0 grade point average on a 4.0 system.
2. Demonstrate a continuing interest and commitment to all phases of the program.
3. Provide the agency and the institution with necessary evaluation reports.

IV. Conditions of Student Employment

A. Student Eligibility - The student will:

1. Be enrolled and in attendance in a curriculum leading to a bachelor's degree on a substantially full-time basis, be enrolled in the institution's Cooperative Education Program, and be pursuing a major field of study closely related to the job for which he or she is being considered.
2. Have completed a minimum of 30 semester or 45 quarter credits.
3. In most instances, not have completed more than 90 semester or 135 quarter credits. This is to ensure that the student will have the required hours and periods of employment necessary to acquire eligibility for non-competitive appointment upon graduation.
4. Be a citizen of the United States, be at least 16 years of age, and meet appropriate medical and security requirements.
5. Be recommended for assignment by the appropriate staff at the institution.
6. Not be the son or daughter of an employee of the Department on Interior.
7. Be maintaining at least a 2.0 overall scholastic average on a 4.0 scale or the equivalent, and possess grade "C" or

above in all major fields of study and possess a record as a student that is in all ways predictive of graduation.

B. Appointment

1. Students will be appointed under the Schedule B appointing authority, section 213.3202(a) of the Code of Federal Regulations as a student trainee, GS-2, GS-3 or GS-4. No initial appointments are made at the GS-5 level.
2. All appointments are for the full period extending from the initial appointment to a date not to exceed 120 days after graduation. If the formalities of graduation are delayed, the 120-day period begins on the 15th day after the student has completed his or her studies.
3. A student's appointment may be terminated at any time for any one of the following reasons: resignation; change to a curriculum which will not qualify the student for the position; suspension, expulsion or withdrawal from the institution; unsatisfactory work performance; failure to maintain academic standards; physical unfitness for duty; and inability of the agency for administrative reasons to retain the student in the position.

C. Work Schedules

1. The agency and the institution will work together to develop program schedules that will assure the student will have the required minimum of twenty-six work weeks involving two separate work periods prior to graduation. At least one work week period must have been within eighteen months of the date of graduation.
2. Work will be scheduled for periods corresponding with, or approximating, semesters, trimesters, or quarters in accordance with the academic calendar of the institution.
3. Work periods will not be scheduled exclusively during summer or vacation periods (except for students preparing for positions in the park technician or park ranger occupational series), nor will part-time schedules prior to graduation be authorized (except for students preparing for positions in the park technician or park ranger occupational series).

D. Pay, Leave and Employee Benefits

1. Pay

- A. Students will be paid in accordance with the regular pay schedules set by law for their grade, and will receive pay for all officially directed or permitted overtime.

- B. Students are paid for holidays which fall within their work periods if regulations qualify them for such pay.

2. Leave

- A. Students earn sick leave at the rate of four hours per pay period and annual leave at the rate authorized for their length of Federal service, including military service.
- B. The student will be placed on leave without pay status when he or she completes a period of work and returns to the institution.

3. Benefits

- A. For appointments which exceed one year, participation in the Federal Retirement System is mandatory. In the unforeseen situation in which the appointment is less than one year, the student will be covered under FICA.
- B. A student whose employment in the program is scheduled to continue for at least one year and who will be in a pay status for at least one-third of the total time required for completion of the program will be eligible to participate in health benefit plans and to select life insurance.
- C. Payment of travel to and from the job and payment of study costs are generally not applicable to all students and are, therefore, not covered by this agreement. When made, such payments are subject to Federal regulations.

E. Classification and Promotion

- 1. Students may be appointed in co-op positions with the agency at grades GS-2 through GS-5, however, no initial appointments may be made at GS-5.

- 2. The following are the minimum standards for each grade for cooperative education students.

GS-3 - One full year of academic study (30 semester hours or equivalent).

GS-4 - Two full years of academic study (60 semester hours or equivalent).

GS-5 - One of the following:

Completion of three-fourths of the total number of periods of study required for the bachelor's degree and one period of employment at GS-4,

or

Completion of two and one-half years of academic study plus six months of GS-4 work experience.

3. Promotion from one grade to another is contingent upon the student's meeting not only the above qualification standards, but also the performance standards required of the job.

F. Trial Period and Performance Appraisal

1. The student's first and succeeding work periods are to be considered screening periods during which the supervisor will review the student's performance, confer with the student to discuss work performance to date, and determine interest in continuing employment.
2. Performance appraisals will be made prior to the end of each work period by the immediate supervisor, in consultation with others who have worked directly with the student, covering those specific skills, knowledges, or abilities identified as being the most important to the target position. In addition, they must also be rated on the following items:
 - The degree of competence with which assigned tasks were performed.
 - The extent to which tasks were completed on time when the student has control over the factor.
 - The ability to accept and follow directions and adhere to established regulations in the performance of the job.
 - Demonstrated ability to win the respect and confidence of others in the performance of assigned tasks.
 - Demonstrated ability to assume a leadership role in assigned tasks.
 - Demonstrated physical fitness to perform the job adequately.
3. At the expiration of each work period, the student shall also be given an opportunity to report on and evaluate his or her work experience and accomplishments. Appraisal information will be shared with both the agency and the institution and made a part of the student's personnel folder.
4. On the basis of the rating of the student's job performance, interest, and fitness and conduct, the supervisor shall make:
 - (a) A recommendation for retention of the student, with

an indication of whether promotion is warranted and what action is planned for strengthening performance or correcting deficiencies.

- (b) A recommendation that the student be separated from the program.

G. Employment After Graduation

- 1. A cooperative education student, irrespective of occupational group, is eligible for noncompetitive conversion to a career or career-conditional appointment in a professional, technical or administrative position within a 120-day period after graduation if the following conditions are met:

A. Conversion to GS-5

- (1) Meets the qualification standards for the GS-5 position, except for any written test.
- (2) Successfully completed all the requirements for a bachelor's degree including any specialized courses required for the position for which the student has been in training.
- (3) Has completed, in the agency recommending conversion and before graduation, a minimum of 26 work weeks or 1040 work hours of full-time cooperative education work experience in a pay status (or its equivalent on a part-time basis if the Office of Personnel Management has approved the part-time arrangement). The work must have involved at least two separate work periods with an intervening period of study and must have been completed prior to graduation. One work period must be within 18 months of the student's expected graduation date. The required hours of employment must have been in the same occupational area and must have been related to the student's major field of study.
- (4) Meets the citizenship requirements on the date of recommendation.
- (5) Recommended for conversion by the agency not later than 120 days after his or her graduation.

B. Conversion to GS-7

- (1) Meets the qualification standards for the GS-7 position.
- (2) Successfully completed all the requirements for a bachelor's degree, including any specialized

courses required for the position for which the student has been in training, not more than 120 days before the date of conversion.

- (3) Meets the citizenship requirements on the date of recommendation.
- (4) Has served at the GS-5 level as a cooperative education student for 12 calendar months, of which 60 days have been in work status.
- (5) Meets one of the following requirements:

- (a) Has served in work status (i.e., excluding LWOP) for at least 52 weeks (2080 hours) between appointment and graduation, the work has included at least 2 separate periods prior to graduation with an intervening period of study; both periods were at least 60 days in length and in the same agency and one period fell within the 18 months immediately prior to graduation; at least one of the two periods counted for the purpose of conversion did not fall wholly within the established summer employment period; and both periods were in the same agency and in the same field of work in which the student is seeking conversion.

or

- (b) Has completed 26 weeks in work status as required for noncompetitive conversion at the GS-5 level and has also met the conditions for the Superior Academic Achievement provision of the Office of Personnel Management.

2. Although the prime purpose of the agency employment of cooperative education students is to prepare students for the agency's permanent work force, the agency sometimes cannot, for administrative reasons, convert noncompetitively all the co-op graduates which it has trained as students or cannot convert them at the grade for which they are eligible. Students who are not converted may seek eligibility through the competitive process in the same or another area of work, and will be counseled by the agency accordingly. Those who do not meet the work requirements for noncompetitive conversion at the GS-7 level may also seek eligibility at that level through the competitive system. In addition, the permanent positions for which the student can be considered may be in a different element of the

organization or at a geographical location other than the one where he or she was employed as a student.

3. Students who are not appointed within 120 days after graduation must be terminated. These students cannot be reassigned noncompetitively to other positions in the agency.

V. The Agreement

- A. The conditions of this agreement are in general conformity with Federal regulations. It is understood, however, that the conditions at no time supersede, alter or take the place of such regulations. Since the program is conducted pursuant to Office of Personnel Management regulations and law, changes in either regulations or law necessarily become effective without modification. However, the agency will advise the institution of such changes as quickly as possible and if substantive, they will be incorporated into this agreement by mutual consent as soon as practical. Changes or modifications which are not required by new laws or regulations will be made only by the written and mutual consent of the agency and institution.
- B. In accordance with Office of Personnel Management regulations, this agreement is void if there have been no students from the institution employed by the agency for the previous 12-month period. A new agreement must be executed before student placements may be resumed.

For: National Park Service

For: The Institution

Title

Title

Office

Phone

Date

Date



National Park Service

Graduate Cooperative Education Agreement

This agreement establishes a basis for mutual understanding between the U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, and _____

_____ in matters relating to the employment of
Institution

cooperative education students, who are enrolled in graduate programs, under the regulations of the Office of Personnel Management.

I. Definitions

As used in this agreement, "Institution" denotes the academic institution entering into this agreement, "Agency" refers to the U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, and "Student" defines the cooperative education student.

- II. The Cooperative Education Program outlined by this agreement is designed to provide for agreed upon schedules of periods of study at accredited educational institutions of higher learning with periods of work-related assignments. The objectives of this combination of education and work experience are to (1) provide the National Park Service the opportunity to evaluate student performance and potential before deciding whether students should be recommended for noncompetitive conversion to career service jobs, (2) support National Park Service affirmative action programs, (3) build a better understanding among students and educators of the National Park Service mission, and (4) bring about a stronger relationship between education and the employment needs of the National Park Service.

III. Responsibility

In conformance with the regulations of the Office of Personnel Management concerning cooperative education:

A. The institution will:

1. Designate a representative to work with the agency liaison officer.

2. Publicize cooperative education employment opportunities among prospective institution candidates.
3. Recommend all qualified students to the agency without regard to age, sex, religion, national origin, race, color, or physical handicap, including all veterans discharged under honorable conditions, who express an interest.
4. Coordinate work and academic experience of students to ensure that they are receiving maximum benefit from participation in the cooperative education work assignment.
5. Furnish the agency with any necessary data and information about the student, which the college is authorized to release or is subject to signed release by the student.
6. Advise the agency immediately if the student in the program drops from the institution's Cooperative Education Program, leaves the institution, changes curriculum or course of study, is placed on academic suspension or probation, or any other administrative action that may affect the student's retention in the program.
7. Provide signed documentation from the appropriate deans or department heads of the graduate schools which confirms the relevance of the proposed work-study assignments to the academic programs and affirms that the work experience either meets degree requirements or will be credited toward the degrees.

B. The agency will:

1. Designate a staff member who will serve as liaison to the institution.
2. Keep the institution informed of cooperative education employment opportunities.
3. Establish work schedules which accommodate the academic calendar of the institution and enable the students to meet the requirements under this agreement.
4. Consider students recommended by the institution for participation in the program without regard to age, sex, religion, national origin, race, color, or physical handicap, including veterans discharged under honorable conditions, and promptly advise the students and the institution of action taken.
5. Handle personnel processing related to the employment of students.

6. Provide necessary orientation, supervision and counseling to all students.
7. Provide the students with meaningful and increasingly responsible work assignments related to the curriculum being pursued, and guide the students in carrying out the assignment.
8. Conduct periodic appraisals of each student's performance, counsel students as appropriate, and furnish the institution with a supervisory evaluation of the student after each work period.
9. Provide the institution with needed information on the student's performance.
10. Notify the institution as far in advance as possible of any anticipated or proposed personnel action to terminate the appointment of a student.

C. The student will:

1. Remain a candidate in good standing for the graduate degree.
2. Demonstrate a continuing interest and commitment to all phases of the program.
3. Provide the agency and the institution with necessary evaluation reports.

IV. Conditions of Student Employment

A. Student Eligibility - The student will:

1. Be enrolled and in attendance as a graduate student in a field of study related to the position to which he or she would be appointed. The position must be in an entry-level occupation in the general fields of park management, management and administration, engineering, accounting, the physical and life sciences or safety management.
2. Meet the full Office of Personnel Management qualification requirements, including passing scores on written tests, if appropriate.
3. Be able to complete master's degree requirements within 30 months or PH.D. requirements within 42 months from the beginning of their graduate education programs.
4. Be a citizen of the United States and not be the son or daughter of an employee of the Department of Interior.

B. Appointment

1. Students will be appointed under the Schedule B appointing

authority, section 213.3202(b) of the Code of Federal Regulations. All initial appointments are to be made at the GS-5, GS-7, or GS-9 levels.

2. All appointments are for the full period extending from the initial appointment to a date not to exceed 120 days after completion of degree requirements. The length of appointment will be developed jointly by the agency and the institution, and will provide adequate time for students to complete requirements for graduate degrees.
3. Students who discontinue their education before completing degree requirements must be terminated from the cooperative education program.

C. Work Schedules

1. The agency and the institution will work together to develop program schedules that will assure the student will have the required minimum of 16 work weeks or 640 hours of employment. Students may work up to 26 weeks or 1040 hours during a 12-month service year in one or two separate periods.
2. Work periods will not be scheduled exclusively during summer periods (except for students preparing for positions as park rangers or park managers).

D. Pay, Leave and Employee Benefits

1. Pay

- A. Students will be paid in accordance with the regular pay schedules set by law for their grade, and will receive pay for all officially directed or permitted overtime.
- B. Students are paid for holidays which fall within their work periods if regulations qualify them for such pay.

2. Leave

- A. Students earn sick leave at the rate of four hours per pay period and annual leave at the rate authorized for their length of Federal service, including military service.

3. Benefits

- A. For appointments which exceed one year, participation in the Federal Retirement System is mandatory. In the unforeseen situation in which the appointment is less than one year, the student will be covered under FICA.

- B. A student whose employment in the program is scheduled to continue for at least one year and who will be in a pay status for at least one-third of the total time required for completion of the program will be eligible to participate in health benefit plans and to select life insurance.

E. Classification and Promotion

Promotion from one grade to another is contingent upon the student's meeting not only the Office of Personnel Management qualification standards, but also the performance standards required of the job as determined by his/her supervisor.

F. Trial Period and Performance Appraisal

1. The student's first work period is to be considered a screening period during which the supervisor will review the student's performance, confer with the student to discuss work performance to date, and determine interest in continuing employment.
2. Performance appraisals will be made prior to the end of each work period by the immediate supervisor, in consultation with others who have worked directly with the student, covering those specific skills, knowledges, or abilities identified as being the most important to the target position. In addition, they must also be rated on the following items.
 - The degree of competence with which assigned tasks were performed.
 - The extent to which tasks were completed on time when the student has control over the factor.
 - The ability to accept and follow directions and adhere to established regulations in the performance of the job.
 - Demonstrated ability to win the respect and confidence of others in the performance of assigned tasks.
 - Demonstrated ability to assume a leadership role in assigned tasks.
 - Demonstrated physical fitness to perform the job adequately.
3. At the expiration of each work period, the student shall also be given an opportunity to report on and evaluate their work experience and accomplishments. Appraisal information will be shared with both the agency and the institution and made a part of the student's personnel folder.
4. On the basis of the rating of the student's job performance, interest, fitness and conduct, the supervisor shall make:

- (a) A recommendation for retention of the student, with an indication of whether promotion is warranted and what action is planned for strengthening performance or correcting deficiencies.
- (b) A recommendation that the student be separated from the program.

G. Employment After Graduation

Graduate students who have successfully completed the Cooperative Education Program are eligible for noncompetitive conversion to a career or career-conditional appointment in a professional, technical or administrative position for which they meet the qualification requirements in the field of work in which they received their training, if all of the following conditions are met:

1. The student must have completed a minimum of 16 weeks or 640 hours of work assignments.
2. The student's graduate study program must not have exceeded 30 months for the master's or 42 months for the Ph.D. degree.
3. A written recommendation is received from appropriate agency supervisory officials knowledgeable of the student's performance.
4. Conversion must be effected within 120 days following completion of requirements for the degree. If graduation or the awarding of the degree is delayed more than 15 days after completion of academic requirements, the 15th day after the completion of such requirements represents the beginning date for the 120 day period. Those students who are not converted within this time must be separated from their excepted appointments.
5. Students disqualified before completing the cooperative education program or those not recommended for conversion must be terminated and may only be reappointed through competitive procedures.

V. The Agreement

- A. The conditions of this agreement are in general conformity with Federal regulations. It is understood, however, that the conditions at no time supersede, alter or take the place of such regulations. Since this program is conducted pursuant to Office of Personnel Management regulations and law, changes in either regulations or law necessarily become effective without modification. However, the agency will advise the institution of such changes as quickly as possible and if substantive, they will be incorporated into this agreement by mutual consent as soon as practical. Changes or modifications

which are not required by new laws or regulations will be made only by the written and mutual consent of the agency and institution.

- B. In accordance with Office of Personnel Management regulations, this agreement is void if there have been no students from the institution employed by the agency for the previous 12-month period. A new agreement must be executed before student placements may be resumed.

For: National Park Service

For: The Institution

Title

Title

Office

Phone

Date

Date



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
COOPERATIVE EDUCATION STUDENT
REFERENCE INQUIRY

Instructions: This form must be completed by a representative of the school's Cooperative Education Office when referring a student for consideration in the National Park Service's Cooperative Education Programs.

Applicant's Name: _____

Position: Student Trainee (Cooperative Education Program)

Name of Individual Providing Information: _____

Title of Individual Providing Information: _____

School: _____ Phone: _____

1. How long and how well have you known this individual, and in what capacity?

2. Do you have any reason to believe that he/she will not remain in the co-op program if selected for a job assignment with the National Park Service? If yes, please explain.

3. Why would you recommend or not recommend individual for employment? Indicate which.

4. What are his/her strongest points; weakest points?

5. Do you know of anything which might hamper the applicant in the job for which considered? (List known disciplinary actions, arrests, suspensions, etc).

6. Do you feel that the applicant is capable of maintaining a 2.0 overall average (on a 4.0 scale), and a 2.0 average (on a 4.0 scale) in his/her major? If no, please indicate where academic weakness lies.

7. Comments:

Signature of School Representative _____ Date _____



National Park Service

Performance Appraisal of Cooperative Education Student

Student _____

Institution _____

Major _____

Office/Park _____

Title/Grade _____

Work Period: From _____ To: _____

Instructions: Based on the following rating scale and questions, the student's immediate supervisor (in consultation with others who have worked directly with the student) should evaluate the student's work performance against previously established performance standards. This form should be completed at least one week prior to the end of the student's work period to allow for appropriate review by the student. Please forward a copy of this form to the Cooperative Education Coordinator in the Regional/Center Personnel Office, for inclusion in the student's official personnel folder.

Appraisal Value Definitions

- 1 - Always exceeds the required performance standards for this task.
- 2 - Often (more than 35% of time) exceeds the required performance standards for this task.
- 3 - Fully meets the required performance standards for this task.
- 4 - Marginal, needs improvement.
- 5 - Fails to meet the required performance standards for this task.

Appraisal of Student Performance of Tasks

	1	2	3	4	5
Degree of competence with which assigned tasks were performed.	()	()	()	()	()
Extent to which tasks were completed on time when the student has control over the time factor.	()	()	()	()	()

Ability to accept and follow directions and adhere to established regulations in the performance of the job. () () () () ()

Ability to win the respect and confidence of others in the performance of assigned tasks. () () () () ()

Ability to take initiative in assigned tasks. () () () () ()

Physical fitness to perform the job adequately. () () () () ()

Identify any additional tasks performed by the student which are important to the target career job.

() () () () ()

() () () () ()

() () () () ()

() () () () ()

() () () () ()

Narrative Critique - Please provide narrative comment on any aspect of the student's performance which you wish to address.

Recommendations for Continued Employment

Student is recommended for:

() Retention without promotion

() Retention and promotion



National Park Service

Student Evaluation of Cooperative Education Experience

Student _____

Institution _____

Major _____

Office/Park _____

Title/Grade _____

Work Period: From _____ To: _____

Instructions: In order to continue to provide meaningful work assignments during the cooperative education work experience, please evaluate your work experience with this in mind on the following rating scale. This completed form should be returned to Regional/Center cooperative education coordinator and a copy should be sent for inclusion in your official personnel folder.

- 1 - Excellent 2 - Good 3 - Average 4 - Marginal
5 - Unsatisfactory

	1	2	3	4	5
Orientation to position and work site.	()	()	()	()	()
Quality of work assignments.	()	()	()	()	()
Communication with supervisor.	()	()	()	()	()
Relationships with Co-Workers (Both permanent and seasonal)	()	()	()	()	()
Relevance of Employment to Academic Major.	()	()	()	()	()

Would you recommend this NPS Office/Park to potential cooperative education students?

Yes

No

Uncertain (please explain)

Comments:

Are you interested in a career with NPS after graduation? Why?

Comments and Suggestions for Program Improvements.

This report has been discussed with my supervisor Yes

No

Signed _____
Student

Date

Signed _____
Supervisor

Date

