



INFORMATION FOR EMPLOYERS

[Overview Slideshow](#)

[Internships](#)

[Employer Benefits](#)

[CWEE Documents](#)

[Contact](#)

Cooperative Work Experience Education (CWEE) is a work-based learning program in which employees or volunteer workers earn college credit for what they learn on the job.

Any employee or volunteer, whether a trainee or long-time, experienced worker, can earn up to 8 units in one semester, and can earn a total of 16 units of degree applicable college units that transfer to 4-year universities.

Units are awarded based on the completion of learning objectives that have specific and measureable outcomes. Learning objectives are created by the college instructor, employee/student, and employer working cooperatively. The learning objectives must be appropriate for the job, meet the needs of the employer, and meet the requirements of a college-level learning experience. Learning objectives can be selected from pre-written learning objective ([see samples](#)) or unique learning objectives written specifically for the job and the employee.

The typical CWEE student is an employee who enrolls in CWEE and then meets with the supervisor to enlist the supervisor's involvement and to discuss potential learning objectives. This benefits the student by earning them college credit; it also benefits the employer by having a more capable and versatile employee. There are [other benefits](#) to the employer, as well...

How it Works:

Employees enroll in one of the CWEE courses

The employee/student attends an orientation provided by the CWEE program

The employee/student completes a CWEE application, which is signed by the work supervisor.

The supervisor:

- recommends and approves learning objectives;
- signs monthly time sheets;
- meets briefly with the CWEE instructor (at the work site);
- reviews and signs the employee/student's self-evaluation at the end of the semester; and
- completes a [one-page evaluation](#) (check-list format) of the student.

[What Students Say about Cooperative Work Experience Education at Mendocino College](#)

Internships

An internship is a variation of CWEE but which is college- or employer-initiated, and has pre-determined learning objectives.

College-initiated internships: a specific program, typically a vocational certificate program, may offer a CWEE course as a “field experience” or “practicum” in order to provide students with the opportunity to integrate classroom learning in a real-world work setting. Learning objectives for the course, based on knowledge and skills learned in the classroom as well as the requirements of the employer, are developed by discipline faculty in consultation with employers or an employer-based advisory committee. A CWEE/practicum course is often paired with a classroom seminar facilitated by a subject-matter expert. This directed, program-specific and focused learning experience, or internship, is typically a “capstone” course – one offered at or near the conclusion of classroom study.

Employer-initiated internships: a directed program of work-based learning developed by an employer, or industry group, which wishes to be involved in training the workforce, whether for existing positions, future positions, or to generally create a more robust and effective workforce. Learning objectives that either relate to a specific place of employment or, more broadly, to the industry, provide interns with skills and knowledge that are both immediately applicable as well as transferable. Ideally, a “progressive learning plan” is also developed that organizes learning objectives into beginning, intermediate, and advanced objectives.

Interns can be a valuable addition to your team, injecting fresh energy and creativity to the workplace. They bring enthusiasm and a "beginner's mind" perspective to the job; mentoring employees are often forced to reexamine policies, procedures and attitudes when instructing or supervising interns.

Some employers have a paid "intern" job classification, in which case interns are employees and have all the rights and responsibilities of an employee. However, many internships are unpaid. If the employer is a for-profit entity, unpaid interns are not allowed to supplant a paid employee or otherwise occupy an essential position. The internship in this situation must clearly be educational in nature. That’s not to say that the education is not productive, but that it must clearly be for the benefit of the intern. Read more information on [unpaid internships](#) and the [Fair Labor Standards Act](#)...

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN DEVELOPING A CWEE-BASED INTERNSHIP PROGRAM FOR YOUR BUSINESS OR AGENCY, [CONTACT US](#) AND WE'LL WORK TOGETHER

- Start by completing an [Employer Application](#)
- The CWEE program will assist you in creating an Internship Education Program specific to your workplace, helping assure that you are not in violation of labor laws regarding uncompensated employees (the Fair Labor Standards Act)
- A cooperative relationship between the College, the employer and the intern will maximize the educational value of the internship to the intern and the productive value of the intern to the employer
- Mendocino College will market your workplace as an internship site
- Potential interns are pre-screened by the college to save you time and trouble
- Mendocino College will provide Worker’s Compensation and liability insurance for interns enrolled in the College’s CWEE program

How Do Employers Benefit By Partnering With Cooperative Work Experience Education?

- An internship allows an employer to assess the intern as a potential employee, without obligation of hiring the intern
- If the intern becomes an employee, employer training costs and employee turnover are minimized. Nationally, 60 percent of interns go to work for their internship employers
- Employers establish a cooperative relationship with the college, providing an opportunity to influence vocational education and address industry training needs
- Employers benefit when supervisor-employee communications and relationships are improved
- CWEE students are often more motivated, enthusiastic employees because their work is evaluated and translated into college units.

Employer-related CWEE documents

- [CWEE Manual for Employers](#)
- [Internship Manual for Employers](#)
- [Memorandum of Agreement](#)
- [Employer Job Notification form](#)- pdf
- [Employer Job Notification form](#)- in WORD (doc) format.
- [Supervisor Evaluation of Student form](#)

Other Forms and Information for Employers:

- [The Benefits of Work-Based Learning and Occupational Coursework in the California Community Colleges](#): A Study Prepared for the California Community College Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Work-Based Learning and Employment Services (5/3/04).
- US DOL Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 12-09: [Joint Guidance for States Seeking to Implement Subsidized Work-Based Training Programs for Unemployed Workers](#)
- [DOL Fact Sheet 6: Fair Labor Standards Act](#)
- [Work Permit FAQs](#)
- [Statement of Intent to Employ Minor and Request for Work Permit](#)

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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http://www.mendocino.edu/tc/pg/2095/work_experience_education.html