

ALTERATIONS

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Co-op offers chance for more money to grads

Cooperative education in engineering at Texas A&M University usually means extra money for students on graduation, according to a recent survey.

"Students who receive degrees in engineering with cooperative education experience start at better salaries," said Dr. Charles A. Rodenberger, assistant dean of engineering.

He found in a survey of companies who recruit engineers from Texas

A&M that "co-op" participation leads to \$600 to \$1,200 a year more in starting salaries.

The findings support the idea that a cooperative education student will be a more valuable asset to industry at the time of graduation than would be a non-experienced graduate, Rodenberger said.

Cooperative education combines a student's college studies with institutionally supervised work experience with cooperating organiza-

tions. An almost universal program at Texas A&M, it is used by the Colleges of Agriculture, Architecture and Engineering, Design, Liberal Arts, Science, Veterinary Medicine (biotechnology) and the College of Education. The students earn academic credit in exchange for the co-op experience.

In the College of Engineering, at least 12 months work experience is required. The student's major course of study with degree work. Work periods are usually a semester long.

Rodenberger's survey indicates that graduates who have had cooperative education are more mature and capable of entering the workforce.

"Mixed replies were received as to whether the co-op students have a higher rate of advancement," Rodenberger added. "The rate of advancement was more personal characteristics than co-op experience."

He said 26 of 28 respondents that have hired co-op graduates have indicated that the experience at between \$1,200 a year more. Most surveyed companies that have co-op students indicated that they pay higher salaries.

"Since respondents were anonymous, we cannot draw conclusions regarding their experiences with graduates," Rodenberger said.

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