

# Tech Snacks: The Career Center

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What we do: Provide a comprehensive network of employment services for students, graduates, alumni, and employers.

## How does the Career Center support students?

- Manage the Co-op internship process
- Offer resume-building support and interview preparation opportunities
- Provide access to Handshake, which allows them to search for co-op internships, on- and off-campus jobs, and professional career opportunities
- Coordination of college-to-career programming (industry presentations, etc.)
- Organization of on-campus job recruiting events (career fairs, employer info sessions)
- Coordination and communication of on-campus and off-campus job opportunities
- Serve as a resource for campus clubs that want to pursue industry partnerships
- Offer professional work attire for interviews, presentations, etc.

## How does the Career Center support faculty and staff?

- Offer classroom presentations to students about Career Center services
- Serve as industry liaison to help bring industry representatives onto campus and into classrooms
- Facilitate co-op conversations between students and advisors
- Administer the MSUN Graduate Survey and communicate results to campus

## MSU-N Career Fairs

The Career Center hosts an on-campus career fair each semester in partnership with industry leaders. The fair gives students the opportunity to meet employers, explore career options they may not have previously considered, and interview for open positions. The Spring Career Fair will take place on February 18, 2026, from 9:00 a.m. to noon in the Armory Gymnasium, and will feature employers from a wide range of industries, including law enforcement, diesel and automotive, agriculture, education, nursing, and more.

## Co-op Internships

What is a co-op internship?

- A co-op internship is an experiential, on-the-job learning opportunity that allows students to apply skills in a professional setting while gaining field-specific experience. Learning outcomes include professional skill development, maturity, motivation, and increased post-graduation employment prospects.
- Co-ops help students explore career paths, refine or redirect academic focus, and “try out” employers, while allowing employers to evaluate potential hires. Positive co-op experiences often lead to job offers or future hiring of MSUN graduates.
- Co-op credits may count as upper-division electives, helping students fulfill common degree credit requirements.

## What is the process for setting up a co-op internship?

- The student notifies the Career Center (CC) and their academic advisor(s) of their interest in a co-op.
- With or without a specific employer in mind, the student consults the CC and advisor(s) to identify a position that meets academic outcomes and practical considerations (e.g., pay, location, duration, career goals).
- Students, advisors, and the CC will work collaboratively to define the co-op learning objectives and outline the tasks that must be met by the student during the co-op.
- The CC coordinates all required co-op hiring paperwork, utilizing Handshake to track the process.
- The CC ensures the student is registered for the co-op through the Registrar.
- The CC monitors student progress through timesheets and midterm and final reflective assessments.
- At the conclusion of the co-op, the CC administers an employer survey and collects feedback on the experience.

## Things to remember about co-ops:

- They are taken on a pass/fail basis.
- A co-op can count for 1 to 12 credits (50 hours of work = 1 credit).
- It is highly recommended that students receive compensation (wage or stipend) unless the placement is with a governmental or nonprofit organization, or if working for an international company; ie: Canadian ag operation, etc.
- Students pay for credits just as they pay for other course credits.
- The Career Center routinely connects co-op students with the Financial Aid office, especially for summer term. Sometimes students have more funding than they realize.
- Co-op employers (and recruiters) are explicitly forbidden from recruiting students away from their studies before they've graduated.

**Learn more about the Co-op process by visiting the [MSUN Co-op Internships](#) page on our website.**

## Handshake

The Career Center uses a program called Handshake to connect students and alumni with employers, and to manage the Co-op program. Handshake can be downloaded on a phone or accessed through a desktop or tablet. Similar to LinkedIn or Facebook, Handshake allows students and alumni to create a profile with their skills, work history, and education. They can upload their resumes and make their profile visible to employers, and through the Handshake algorithm they can be connected with potential career opportunities based on their academic goals. They are able to search for professional positions, co-op internships, and on- and off-campus jobs. Handshake can be accessed at [www.joinhandshake.com](http://www.joinhandshake.com).