

A photograph of two men on a modern balcony with glass railings. The man on the left, wearing a dark blue long-sleeved shirt and jeans, is smiling and holding a black laptop. The man on the right, wearing a grey polo shirt and dark pants, is pointing towards the laptop. Several white papers are scattered on the railing between them. In the background, a multi-story building with many windows is visible.

**UVIC**

# Annual Report

Co-operative Education Program & Career Services

May 2024-April 2025

# Letter from the Executive Director

## 2024/25 in numbers



More than 30 years ago, I joined the University of Victoria's Co-operative Education Program. For three decades, I have been privileged to foster the program as it has grown into one of Canada's leading hands-on learning programs, supporting students across all faculties in close to 120,000 co-op work terms.

Today, UVic Co-op and Career includes the co-op program, Career Services and Community-

Engaged Learning and provides thousands of opportunities for UVic students to put their learning into practice.

I am tremendously proud of the ways that UVic students make a positive impact in communities around the globe through their hands-on learning experiences. From addressing food insecurity in Japan, to leading a research project that looked at Single-Use Plastics Regulations for the healthcare industry, to nurturing elementary students' nature literacy, they leave a lasting legacy.

As I prepare to step into retirement in 2026, I look forward to following along as UVic's Co-op and Career programs continue to spark transformative learning for students and community alike.

It has been a true pleasure.

Sincerely,

Andrea Giles  
Executive Director  
Co-op and Career

70%

of co-op students graduated with a job offer (versus 48% of students who didn't take part in co-op)

**3,666**

co-op work terms completed

**4,884**

students accessed Career Services

**58%**

of eligible students took part in co-op

**\$3,677**

average monthly co-op salary

**83%**

of graduating students found a job related to their studies

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## New & ongoing initiatives

This section of the report aligns with the University's Academic Action Plan:

- **Enhancing the student experience** includes topics related to recruitment and retention, student experience & student outcomes; ..... 11
- **Fostering innovation in scholarship** includes topics related to research-enriched learning and teaching and interdisciplinary scholarship, including publications and presentations..... 14
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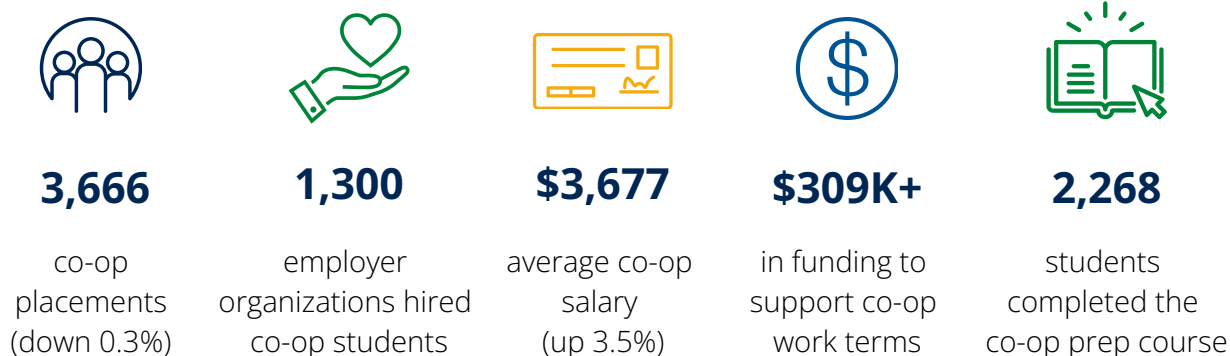
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## CO-OP HIGHLIGHTS

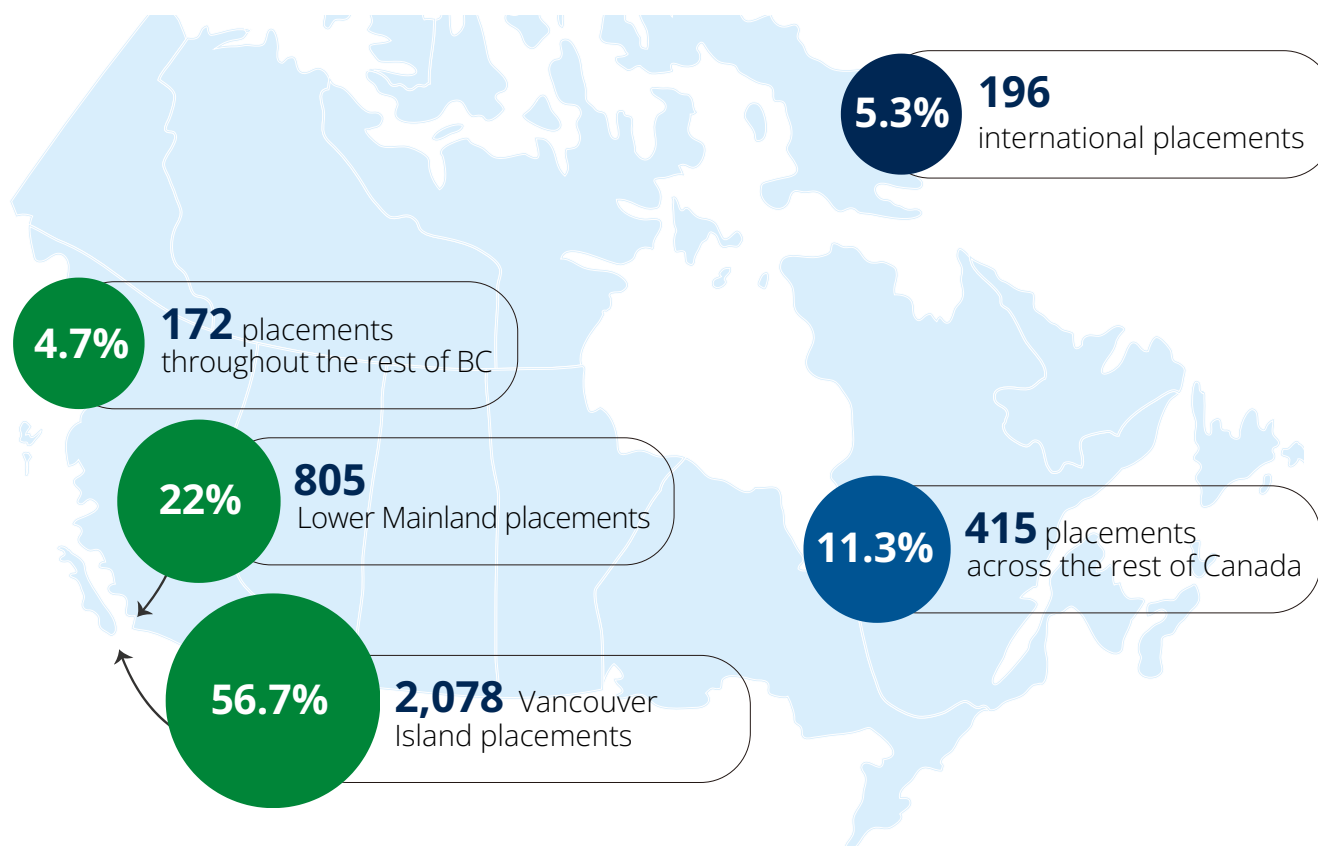
### What did co-op look like in 2024/25?



### How many work terms were completed by specific student groups?



### Where did co-op students work?



## Who hired UVic co-op students?

**68.1%**
**private sector**

- 62.4% private business
- 5.7% not-for-profits

**31.9%**
**public sector**

- 8.5% federal government + agency
- 21.5% provincial government + agency
- 1.9% municipal government

## CAREER DEVELOPMENT HIGHLIGHTS

UVic's Career Services offices provides dedicated career development support to students and alumni through one-on-one appointments, pop-up events, targeted workshops and presentations, a self-directed Brightspace course called Your Career Starts Here, and a range of other programming.

The team supports students from all faculties and departments, as well as students in Continuing Studies and UVic alumni.

## How did students access career support?


**2,335**

appointments  
with career  
educators


**1,756**

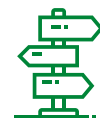
students attended  
workshops and  
presentations


**900+**

students attended  
career fairs


**364**

students accessed  
the Your Career  
Starts Here course


**4,455**

students accessed  
programming  
overall

## What programs and events were offered?


**2**

major  
career fairs


**3**

major networking  
nights and  
career panels


**51**

career events &  
workshops


**24**

employer  
information  
sessions


**280**

employers met  
students  
at events

## COMMUNITY-ENGAGED LEARNING HIGHLIGHTS

The Community-Engaged Learning (CEL) Office creates and supports opportunities for faculty members, students and community partners to collaborate on initiatives that advance experiential learning in curriculum courses.

CEL supports faculty through internal granting programs like the Experiential Learning Fund (ELF) and the Emergent Activities Funds, and supports faculty, students, and community partners by applying for external funding.

Community-Engaged Learning is unique in that CEL is part of course curriculum and students receive academic credit. At the core of Community-Engaged Learning is the reciprocal, mutual beneficial partnership between community, faculty, and students. The activities that take place in CEL courses contribute to community initiatives and provide mentorship opportunities for community partners to work with UVic students.

See summaries of this year's initiatives, funding and more on pages 10, 13 and 15.

### How did students take part in community-engaged learning?



**11,914**

students enrolled  
in CEL or  
experiential  
courses



**37**

departments  
offered CEL or  
experiential courses



**289**

CEL or  
experiential courses  
offered at UVic



**35**

faculty members accessed  
CEL grant funding

### What funding was available through CEL?



**\$69.5K**

in Experiential Learning  
Fund (ELF) grants (a total of  
\$420K awarded  
over the past 10 years)



**\$50K**

in iHUB grant money to  
support faculty members as  
they develop CEL  
opportunities in their courses



**\$54K**

in BHER grant money to  
support CEL initiatives  
related to climate  
action projects

# Convocation survey results

Every June and November, we survey graduating students to gather feedback about our services. This survey poses questions about students' employment status and anticipated salaries, as well as whether students participated in co-op and the impact of this experience on their employment status.

## Career outcomes for all UVic graduates



**48%**

of graduating students received a job offer before graduation

Of these students,

**30%**

received more than one offer

**83%**

found career-related positions in their chosen field



**48%**

obtained a salary of more than \$50,000 a year



**52%**

found work in Greater Victoria



**26%**

of students had accessed Career Services during their degree

## Career outcomes for UVic co-op graduates

**42%**

of students who responded to the survey participated in co-op

**70%**

of graduating co-op students received an offer of employment before graduation

**16%**

of students found their position as a result of their co-op experience



# Hands-on learning in action

**More than 10,000 students** engage with UVic's co-op program, career development team and community-engaged learning office each year. Hands-on learning plays a major role in the UVic experience.

Over the next few pages, you can **see examples of student experiences** in three areas: co-operative education work terms, community-engaged learning, and general career development.

## CO-OP STORIES

### Focusing on environmental sustainability

As someone who is committed to sustainability, **biology** student **Sebastian Leroux** (he/him) found the ideal position as environmental sustainability coordinator with BC Ferries' Environment Team in Vancouver, BC. He spent last summer working on several projects that aim to improve water quality, fuel consumption and environmental impact.

"Each decision we make can have a monumental impact on greenhouse gas emissions from our operations."



### Addressing food insecurity in support of the UN SDGs

During her work term at Apex K.K in Tokyo, **commerce** co-op student **Lauren McDiarmid** (she/her) organized a food drive, raising 56,000¥ and supporting the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

Lauren's work term was part of a new UVic co-op and UNITAR program where students can receive UN accreditation for engaging in co-op work terms that advance the UN SDGs as part of their experiences. They must also lead a community-based activity that supports the SDGs in their host country.



### Creating space for neurodivergent identities

As someone with a neurodivergent identity, **Alex Thornevell** (he/him, **electrical engineering**) finds the typical job application process frustrating. He applied for 90 co-op positions and had 18 interviews over 5 terms before connecting with UVic's accessibility and inclusion co-op coordinator.

They worked together to help employers adjust their interview process. Alex landed a job as a junior electrical engineer with Urban Solar and helped the company rethink their hiring and retention practices.





## A commitment to holistic health care

**Recreation and health education** student **India Edwards-Lowen** (she/they) believes in a holistic approach to health. So when they were looking for a co-op position where they could make a difference, they found the right fit as a patient care coordinator with **Glow Integrative Clinic**, a multi-disciplinary healthcare clinic in Oak Bay, BC.

"This co-op has had countless direct correlations to my course work," she says. "It has reaffirmed my dedication to my education because the overlap is undeniable and extremely helpful."



## Gaining practical experience in government

**Tanvir Kahlon** (he/him, **software engineering**) knew he wanted to study at a university where he put his studies into practice. The international student from India spent eight months as a web analyst for the BC Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction.

"My co-op gave me practical experience that complements my academic studies," says Tanvir. This hands-on experience helped shape my career path and prepare me for the challenges and opportunities ahead."



## Blending science and business to change the future of algae

**Ashley Roulston** (she/her, **BCom '10**) and **Robert Roulston** (he/him, **BEng '11**) are siblings, UVic graduates and co-founders of Industrial Plankton, a company that makes equipment to grow live algae cultures that are used to stabilize the aquaculture food chain.

We spoke with them on season 2 of the **Work It podcast**, where they shared how their time at UVic gave them the skills to tackle a business, and talk about the importance of co-op in their hiring and retention strategy.



Read more about these students experiences at [uvic.ca/coop/stories](https://uvic.ca/coop/stories).



Listen to co-op grads on the Work It podcast at [uvic.ca/career-services/podcast](https://uvic.ca/career-services/podcast).



## CAREER DEVELOPMENT STORIES

### Connecting with international employers and alumni

Iranian **Master of Economics** student **Fatemeh Kalantari** (she/her) attended an event through UVic's Career Service that brought international alumni and employers to campus to share their experiences navigating the Canadian job market.

"The event delivered big time—hearing directly from employers and international alumni made everything feel more real and achievable."



### Developing a career in Canada

When **Abhay Kadkol** (he/him) graduates this year with a degree in **psychology** (and a business minor), he'll be ready to explore a career in organizational behaviour and human resources. Born and raised in Bangalore, India, Abhay came to UVic four years ago and attended the Build a Career in Canada event.

"It was really great to hear from a diverse panel of speakers, most of whom have faced the struggle of finding a job in Canada as immigrants. I came out of this event having made strong connections."



### Accessing career support

When **Chehak Nayar** (she/her, **computer science**) needed some career support, she booked an appointment with her career educator.

"My dream job is to work as a product manager for a wellness platform like Calm or Headspace. I'm inspired by the larger purpose behind these companies: to help people attain mental wellness in today's fast paced world. Career Services has helped me immensely in my job search. Meet with your career educator, as many times as you need to...two heads are always better than one!"





## COMMUNITY-ENGAGED LEARNING STORIES

### Embracing the full scope of community-engaged learning

**Brigitte Larkin** (she/her, **environmental studies**, right) has taken part many CEL opportunities at UVic. This includes field schools on Denman Island and in France, traveling to Malaysia for a CAPI internship, working with the Victoria Native Friendship Centre as part of the SOCI 300 “Working in Community” class, and most recently, co-delivering workshops as part of CE 300.

Brigitte’s experience was rooted in connection and relationship building with UVic faculty.

“This type of learning is not just about gaining community experiences and connections; it changes how you think, how you learn, how you perceive and understand your own value and contributions.”



### Advocating for nature literacy

As a fourth-year undergraduate student, **Merah Gasmu** (she/her) took Dr. Jennifer Gruno’s EPHE 435 course, working with Hillcrest Elementary School teachers to develop an outdoor classroom, learning garden and nature literacy curriculum. This experience convinced Merah to pursue her **Master of Arts in EPHE**. In 2024, she became a teaching assistant in EPHE 435 and supported a new cohort of UVic undergraduate students. She helped develop a curriculum around the life cycle of mason bees and how they are integral to pollinating plants for food production.

“Nature literacy is more than just knowing the facts about, it’s about belonging in nature, having the skills to engage with nature, and wanting to return to it. The goal is to show that nature literacy can thrive in schools—and that when it does, students and teachers can grow together, with the natural world.”

Dr. Gruno’s course received funding through the BHER grant (see page 13).



### ENHANCING THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

This section includes developments related to recruitment and retention, student experiences and success and student outcomes.

#### CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

##### **Overall co-op placement numbers reach 112,291**

By spring 2025, co-op work term placements reached 112,291. We continue to see program growth from student and employers.

##### **Indigenous Mock Interview Clinic and Career Fair continues to see growth**

The Career Fair for Indigenous students saw an increase of 54% in student participation and 45% increase in employers over last year. Employers were selected based on their demonstration of supportive and Indigenous hiring practices. Students attended a career fair and took part in mock interviews with employers.

##### **Breakfast at the House strengthens staff connections and practice**

Indigenous Co-op Coordinator David Busch led several Breakfast at the House events for Co-op and Career staff in 2024 and 2025. Staff were invited to learn from Elders and share their lived experiences and identities, while learning about topics like how to support Indigenous students in their work search and how to speak with employers about decolonizing their hiring and recruitment efforts.

##### **Staff accessibility and inclusion guide launched in Brightspace**

In response to staff requests about how to best support students with diverse lived experiences and identities across all programs, Accessibility and Inclusion Co-op Coordinator Niels Melis-De Lamper developed a staff-directed Brightspace course called the Co-op + Career Accessibility and Inclusion Guide. This practical course provides asynchronous self-paced information about:

- the accessibility and inclusion coordinator role
- workplace accessibility principles and legislation
- supporting a student across all stages of their co-op experiences
- leveraging principles of universal design

##### **Additional coordinator role supports expansion of ECS program**

As part of the Engineering and Computer Science (ECS) expansion, Co-op and Career secured funding for an additional 1.0 FTE co-op coordinator position starting in the spring of 2025.

### Hi-Tech Fair continues to facilitate key connections

The Hi-Tech continued to be a major draw for students and employers alike, with 19 employer booths and 500 students in attendance. The first day of the two-day fair was cancelled due to snow.

### Co-op launches SDGs-in-action course

In 2024/25, Co-op and Career collaborated with the International Centre for Students and the Gustavson School of Business to hire a co-op student to design an asynchronous course for students completing an outbound international experience. Students will learn about the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and consider how to advance the SDGs in their host community. Students are eligible to receive a UN certificate from CIFAL Victoria upon completion of the course.

## CAREER DEVELOPMENT

### Event supports international students seeking work in Canada

Co-op and Career partnered with the International Centre for Students and the UVSS to run a session for international students on the topic of building a career in Canada. The session included a panel of employers who hire international students as well as employers who started off as international students and have carved out careers in Canada. Sixty-four international students and six panelists attended the event.

### Working closely with Kaplan to support international student recruitment

Over the course of 2024 and 2025, the Co-op and Career team continued to work with representatives from Kaplan International Pathways to provide information showcasing the hands-on learning opportunities that international students can access at UVic. This included sending two staff members to accompany Kaplan team members on a recruitment trip to India in April 2025.

### "Work It" podcast series continues to showcase alumni journeys

Co-op and Career released the second season of "Work It: a career exploration podcast", including interviews with four recent UVic graduates who are making a positive impact through their careers, as well as three ask-an-expert episodes where we spoke with career educators about topics ranging from how to use AI in your work search to gaining work experience without a job. Season 3 of "Work It" will be released in fall 2025. Listen to Work It at [uvic.ca/career-services/podcast](https://uvic.ca/career-services/podcast) or anywhere you listen to podcasts.

### Virtual fair partnership sees increased engagement

UVic continued to work closely with colleagues from Simon Fraser University and the University of British Columbia to run a virtual career fair for students and alumni from all three post-secondaries. The 2025 fair ran from May 19 to 20 and included a series of preparation workshops run by UVic and attended by students from UVic, UBC and SFU. More than 400 UVic students and alumni and 62 employers took part.

### COMMUNITY-ENGAGED LEARNING (CEL)

#### **Staff support students to gain community-engaged learning experience**

In 2024/25, UVic's CEL team supported faculty, students and community organizations collaborate through community-engaged learning courses (CEL). Through CEL, students gain meaningful hands-on experience that supports and honours community partnerships. Thirty-seven departments offered 289 experiential or CEL courses, and 11,914 students were enrolled these types of experiences.

#### **\$50K grant supports CE notation pathways in Social Science**

In 2024/25, CEL coordinators secured a \$50,000 iHUB grant through Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning Canada (CEWIL Canada) to support the inaugural term of the Community-Engagement (CE) Notation Pathways option in the Faculty of Social Sciences. Working with faculty member Ryan Hilperts, this pathway added an additional CE foundational course for students wanting to specialize in community engagement as part of their overall degree.

Students who choose the option as part of their academic program complete CE 200 (Foundations of Community Engagement), CE 300 (Applications of Community Engagement Principles and Protocols), and two SOSC capstone Community-Engaged courses. Students apply individually to be part of the CE Notation Pathways option.

In the fall of 2024, 35 students participated in CEL workshops and received a stipend that supported their 40-hour student placements. Students worked with over 25 community organizations in Victoria and the CEL office delivered workshops and hosted a final CEL-celebration event for all partners and students to attend.

#### **BHER grant wraps up after two years**

The CEL Office wrapped up a two-year grant from Business and Higher Education Roundtable (BHER) to support Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) and BHER's Network to Net Zero initiative. This grant provided \$85,000 in faculty funding over the past two years, including \$54,000 in 2024/25.

Funding supported 612 students across disciplines, providing students with inspiration, career clarity, skill/knowledge development, and networking with community change-makers through their participation in local climate action projects.

The grant funding supported collaboration with 65 non-profit organizations, farms, local businesses, Indigenous Nations, and local government bodies. The CEL Office facilitated valuable relationship-building between 19 faculty teaching over 32 community engaged courses, which equipped students with examples of how their studies can benefit regional green initiatives and how they can continue to find local solutions to the climate crisis while in school and after graduation.

### FOSTERING INNOVATION IN SCHOLARSHIP

This section includes developments related to research-enriched learning and teaching and interdisciplinary scholarship.

#### CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

##### **Humanities and Fine Arts co-op course included in May 2024 academic calendar**

The HUFA Co-op program continuously works to enhance the co-op prep course, called Introduction to Professional Practice. In 2024, this included working with the fine arts and humanities faculties to include the HUFA IPP course in the May 2024 calendar allowing students to enrol when they register for classes. The HUFA Co-op team also set up systems to admit more students to the program, making co-op more accessible.

##### **Co-op and Career continues to identify initiatives and experiences that align with United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs)**

In 2024/25, Co-op and Career staff continued to map ongoing initiatives, projects, partnerships and student experiences to the 17 UN SDGs. This included data from an employer survey where employers identified the ways their work connected to the SDGs, as well as whether co-op student projects contributed to these goals. This mapping can be viewed at [uvic.ca/coop/sdgs](https://uvic.ca/coop/sdgs).

##### **Partnerships with local Chambers of Commerce continue**

For more than a decade, UVic Co-op and Career has partnered with Camosun to promote co-operative education to employers across the region. Through sponsorship agreements, we connect with members of the Victoria Chamber and Westshore Chamber of Commerce. In 2024/25, this included hosting two webinars for Chamber members; one of these webinars focused on the co-op hiring process and funding opportunities for employers, and the second focused on how to support diverse identities in the workplace. This second webinar was co-hosted by Accessibility and Inclusion Co-op Coordinator Niels Melis-de Lamper and Indigenous Co-op Coordinator David Busch.

##### **Awards luncheon celebrates students and employers**

In April 2025, we celebrated our 2024 co-op award winners with a luncheon that showcased students' experiences and the impact of hands-on learning. More than 40 students, employer partners and staff came together to celebrate.



## CAREER DEVELOPMENT

### Career development course helps students build career pathways

In 2024/25 Co-op and Career's Curriculum Working Group launched a new career course called Your Career Starts Here, that helps students answer 4 big questions: What do they love?, What are they great at?, What does the world need?, and What can they be paid for? The free, self-directed modular course is offered in Brightspace. Three-hundred-and-sixty-four students have taken part in the course so far; the Working Group is assessing feedback and will launch an updated version in 2025/26.

### New career educator positions support UVic alumni and graduate students

In the spring of 2024, the career educator team expanded to include two new term-based roles: a dedicated career educator for UVic alumni, and a career educator who supports graduate students. The Career Services team now includes 7 career educators and also supports current undergraduate students from all faculties, as well as Continuing Studies students.

## COMMUNITY-ENGAGED LEARNING (CEL)

### CEL office marks 10 years of Experiential Learning Fund (ELF)

Community-Engaged Learning Office is celebrating a decade of its Experiential Learning Fund (ELF), a grant program that provides UVic faculty with support for experiential learning. Over the last 10 years, the CEL office has administered a total of \$420,000 to 73 faculty members through the Experiential Learning Fund (ELF). The grant helped faculty members engage students in experiential learning opportunities that bridge the gap between classroom instruction and practical application. Successful ELF grant applicants receive up to \$7,500 to support CEL course development, and field-based courses.

In February 2025, the CEL Office granted \$69,500 in ELF grants to 10 UVic faculty members working to develop courses and programs that strengthen community partnerships and provide CEL opportunities to UVic students. Approximately 250 students will benefit from these curriculum projects in 2025.

Assistant Teaching Professor **Dr. Navneet Popli** used ELF grant funding to redesign **SENG 321: Requirements Engineering** to provide 78 students with an experiential learning environment that bridged the gap between academic concepts and real-world software development.

Students were paired with industry mentors who provided real challenges drawn from professional contexts and simulated client interactions. Students presented their projects at the UVic Tech Challenge.



## PRESENTATIONS AND RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS

Co-op and Career staff regularly contribute to academic papers and give presentations on the team's unique contributions to work-integrated learning. In 2024/25 this included:

### Presentations and workshops

- Benner, A., & Thompson, M. (2024). Reimagining career services at UVic: A career course as hub and spoke. Presentation at the ACE-WIL BC conference (New Westminster, May 27-28, 2024).
- Evans, C., & Benner, A. (2024). From WIL Practitioner to leader: Strategies for career progression success. Presentation at ACE-WIL BC conference (New Westminster, May 27-28, 2024) and CEWIL conference (Calgary, June 24-27, 2024).
- McQuillan, S. (2024 & 2025). Student Engagement in SDGs: Outbound Curriculum and Community Projects. Presentation at Canadian Bureau for International Education conference (November 2024) and Asia-Pacific Association for International Education conference (March 2025).
- McQuillan, S. (2025). Global Internships: Advancing CQ and UN SDGs through Community Engagement. Presentation at Asia-Pacific Association for International Education conference (March 2025).
- McQuillan, S. (2024). The Future of WIL Research in ACE-WIL. Presentation at the ACE-WIL BC conference (New Westminster, May 27-28, 2024).
- McQuillan, S. (2025). Building Cultural Intelligence (CQ): Enhancing Your Ability to Thrive in a Globalized World. Workshop at University of Central Asia (April 2025).
- Ogrodnik, S & Senini, A & Spalteholz, L & White, K (2024). Using generative AI to improve critical thinking and self-awareness in career development, University of Victoria. Presentation at Let's Talk About Teaching Conference (UVic, Summer 2024).
- Pearce, J. (2024). Review of research findings on best practices in work-integrated learning. Presentation at ACE-WIL BC Conference (New Westminster, May 27-28, 2024).
- Ramji, K. (2024). Cultivating Global Professionals: Exploring Key Factors in post-Graduate Employability. Panelist at Opening Employability Plenary at International Internship Conference (Dublin, Ireland, June 2024).
- Ramji, K. (2024). Advancing UN Sustainable Development Goals through Co-operative Education: A UVic Co-op & Career - CIFAL Victoria Partnership. Presentation at International Internship Conference (Dublin, Ireland, June 2024).
- Ramji, K. (2025). Civic Engagement panelist at City of Victoria Welcoming Cities Conference (March 2025).
- White, Karae. (2024). How to Use AI to Land Your Next Job. Presentation for Women in Leadership (February 2024).
- White, Karae. (2024). AI and the Workforce of Tomorrow. Presentation for ACE-WIL BC (November 2024).
- White, Karae. (2024). AI in the Workforce – Balancing Opportunities. Presentation for CEWIL (Dec 2024).

### Publications

- Procter, F., & Pringle, L. (2025). Experiential learning: law school learning beyond the classroom and why it matters. National Association for Law Bulletin (June 2025).
- Ramji, K. (2024). Indigenous Community Engagement in WIL Research. CEWIL-funded research project (April 2024).

### ADVANCING SCHOLARLY CULTURE

This section includes developments related to equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging; collegiality and mentorship, and reputation. It includes information from the co-op, career development and CEL teams.

#### **IIA team continues partnership with CIFAL Victoria and UNITAR**

Co-op and Career's Indigenous, International and Accessibility team continued to partner with CIFAL Victoria, a training centre connected to the United Nations' Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), to give students who do co-op terms outside of Canada that advance the UN Sustainable Development Goals with the opportunity to receive UN accreditation. In these experiences, students also lead or organize a community engagement activity where they use their cultural intelligence to advance UN SDGs (see Lauren's story on page 7 as an example). Twenty-five students have earned this certificate to date and UVic partnered with UNITAR to produce a publication showcasing these experiences in 2024.

#### **IIA team receives Albert S. Barber Award from CEWIL**

In 2024, UVic Co-op and Career's International, Indigenous and Accessibility (IIA) team was selected as the recipient of the 2024 Albert S. Barber Award from Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning Canada (CEWIL Canada). This award recognizes outstanding contributions to the advancement of the philosophy and practice of co-operative education in Canada. The IIA team works to remove barriers to WIL for students of under-served and underrepresented communities and to provide inclusive and culturally relevant experiences that support students' career development and wellbeing.

#### **Continued funding announced for accessibility and inclusion co-op coordinator**

For the past 3 years, Co-op and Career has sought continuing resources to fund the accessibility and inclusion co-op coordinator, a role that supports students with diverse lived experiences and marginalized identities as they develop their career pathways. In 2024, we secured continuing funding for this role. Learn more about this position at [uvic.ca/coop/edi](https://uvic.ca/coop/edi).

#### **Changemaker awards created to support co-op students**

The first Co-op Changemaker Awards were distributed in 2024. These awards celebrate co-op students who have made significant contributions to their workplace, community and/or their personal learning. There are four categories: the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Award, the International Student Award, the Reconciliation Award and the Sustainable Development Goals Award. Fundraising for the Changemaker Awards took place during Giving Tuesday and more than 50 students applied for the first round of funding. See the award winners on page 24.

#### **EDI Committee strengthens cross-unit communication**

UVic Co-op and Career's EDI committee continued to meet in 2024/25. The committee includes staff from across the unit who meet to identify ways to enhance collaboration and learning opportunities. Last year, this included collecting feedback from staff on psychological safety and creating a "Let's Talk About It" series where staff share their experiences and processes on different topics.

## ONGOING INITIATIVES

The following projects and initiatives are part of Co-op and Career's annual strategic outreach.

- **Career Services support:** Our six career educators provide a range of services to students from every UVic program area, including Continuing Studies. Support includes career preparation programming, one-on-one career drop-in sessions and appointments, workshops and targeted networking and career exploration events. In 2024/25, **4,884 students** accessed these services.
- **Mock interview clinics:** All co-op students take part in a mock interview clinic prior to applying for their first work term. **178 employers** volunteered their time to provide one-on-one feedback to **791 UVic co-op students**, including **34 Indigenous students**.
- **International exchange opportunities:** In 2024/25, UVic placed **167 students** in **196 international work terms** in a total of **37 countries**.
- **Competency assessment framework:** UVic is the only institution in the world to use a competency-based framework to assess co-op learning outcomes at the start, middle and end of the work terms. Detailed competency data can be requested from the Office of the Director of Co-op and Career.
- **Partnerships with local Chambers of Commerce:** For more than a decade, UVic Co-op and Career has partnered with Camosun College to promote co-operative education to employers across the region. Through sponsorship agreements, we connect with members of the Victoria Chamber and Westshore Chamber of Commerce.



## CO-OP STUDENTS OF YEAR

Each year, we recognize co-op students who have demonstrated outstanding achievement in their co-op work terms. Learn more at [uvic.ca/coop/studentawards](https://uvic.ca/coop/studentawards).



### **Business Co-op**

#### **Henry King (commerce)**

After being hired as a co-op student with Bailey Electronics, Henry King stepped into a project manager role when his supervisor unexpectedly left the company. Soon, the entrepreneurship student was overseeing 9 projects for the manufacturer of engineering joysticks, armrests, sensors and throttles for the off-highway industry.

"This experience greatly improved my ability to prioritize, organize and lead under pressure," says Henry, who is also active in his community. He's a varsity rower, serves as his team's fundraising chairperson, and is an Impact Investment Fellow with Propel Impact.



### **Engineering and Computer Science Co-op**

#### **Aislin Dressler (civil engineering)**

After a co-op in software engineering at Teck Resources, then as a building science and restoration student with RJC Engineering, and most recently as a Rising Star Research Fellow with the University of Waterloo's civil and environmental engineering team, Aislin Dressler has made the most of her co-op experiences.

"My work-integrated learning experiences have not only deepened my understanding of the field but also reinforced my commitment to making a difference in sustainable transportation."



### **Optional and Professional Co-op**

#### **Izzy Morrissey (biology)**

Fifth-year biology student Izzy Morrissey completed her second co-op at Victoria General Hospital, where she received the BioTalent wage subsidy award, enabling her to pursue hands-on learning.

At Rehab Medicine, Izzy worked everyday with Spasticity patients; measuring range of motion, assisting and hand holding during procedures. The research Izzy was apart of is known as Cryoneurolysis for Spasticity, pioneered by Dr. Daniel Vincent and Dr. Paul Winston.

"This experience solidified my passion for healthcare and my desire to pursue a career that integrates scientific knowledge with compassionate care," says Izzy.





## 2024 CHANGEMAKER AWARD WINNERS

In 2024, UVic Co-op and Career launched the Changemaker Awards to celebrate co-op students who have made significant contributions in 4 key categories:

- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs)
- Reconciliation
- International student award

See the full stories AND contribute to the Changemaker Awards at [uvic.ca/coop/changemakers](https://uvic.ca/coop/changemakers).



### Reconciliation category

#### Maci Clements (political science)

Maci Clements incorporates truth and reconciliation into everything she does. She spent two co-op work terms working as a policy analyst with the Yuułu?ít?Ath Government, a self-governing modern treaty Indigenous government that is part of the Ucluelet First Nation. She worked to advance the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Call to Action 45, which aims to reaffirm the nation-to-nation relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the Crown.

"This co-op position gave me incredible insight into advancing treaty relationships for Indigenous nations, as well as the opportunity to support a critical element of Indigenous resurgence and reconciliation."



### UN SDGs category

#### Drea Pedersen (commerce)

When Drea Pedersen learned that the Canadian healthcare industry produces up to 87,000 tons of waste each year and accounts for up to 4.6% of Canada's total greenhouse gas emissions, she decided to tackle the problem head-on.

Drea worked as an environmental sustainability co-op student with Island Health, leading a research project that looked at Single-Use Plastics Regulations for the healthcare industry and launching a campaign that uses circular

economy principles to reallocate assets between facilities and departments and divert them from landfills.



### International student category

#### Hikaro Saito (commerce)

When Japanese student Hikaru Saito had the opportunity to return to his home country for a co-op work term with award-winning executive recruitment firm Apex KK, he knew it would be the perfect chance to put this cultural intelligence into practice. Having cultural backgrounds both in Japan and Canada, Hikaru was able to apply his cultural intelligence by being sensitive to the cultural expectations and fostering effective communication and collaboration with his colleagues.

## CO-OP EMPLOYERS OF THE YEAR

Each year, we recognize employer organizations that offer extraordinary learning opportunities to UVic co-op students. Read more about these employers at [uvic.ca/coop/employerawards](https://uvic.ca/coop/employerawards).



### Employers hiring for 5 years or less

#### Bucketlist Rewards

When Bucketlist Rewards was founded in 2015, it aimed to help organizations build their dream workplace cultures through a customizable recognition and rewards platform. The fully remote company extends that same approach within its own team by fostering engagement, innovation and meaningful employee experience, and has made hiring UVic co-op students a part of their practice.

In the past two years, Bucketlist has hired 15 co-op students from programs that include art history, business, engineering, computer science and music. Students have had diverse work experience, working as content marketing coordinators, junior business analysts, redemption coordinators, data and IT analysis and software developers. The company also hires UVic graduates; four team members are co-op alumni.

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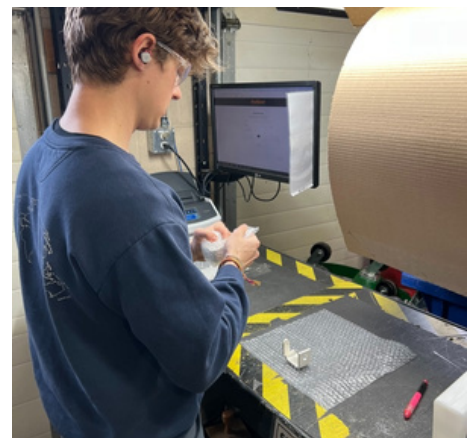
“We believe in giving students the opportunity to gain real-world experience in a people-centric, culture-focused tech company. Co-op students bring fresh perspectives, energy, and innovation to our team, and in return, they get a taste of what it's like to work in a fast-growing, mission-driven organization early in their careers.”

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### Employer with fewer than 50 employees

#### Rainhouse Manufacturing Canada Ltd.

Since joining UVic's co-op program in 2023, Rainhouse Manufacturing Canada Ltd. has quickly become a sought-after workplace known for its commitment to student development. Specializing in custom manufacturing solutions, Rainhouse provides students with hands-on experience, including client and vendor engagement, site visits, and significant responsibilities. This hands-on approach has resulted in UVic co-op graduates returning to Rainhouse in full-time roles.



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“At Rainhouse, we hire co-op students because their passion and innovative thinking bring new energy to our projects. Their hands-on experience not only supports our work but also plays a crucial role in shaping the future of manufacturing. By fostering this talent, we're helping build a stronger community and advancing the industry.”

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## Employer with more than 50 employees

### Schneider Electric

Having hired a whopping 200+ co-op students since 2011 from a wide range of engineering disciplines, Schneider Electric's Victoria office is a co-op powerhouse. As a leader in the digital transformation of energy management and automation, the Schneider Electric team sets each student up for success by assigning a buddy and connecting them to a senior team member and department supervisor. This strategy leads to success for all—a significant number of full-time staff are former co-op students.

Schneider Electric knows how to leverage students' skill sets to make the most of their co-op experiences. Software and computer science students often contribute to cutting-edge AI projects and international client support, while electrical and computer engineering students tackle firmware and hardware design, and mechanical engineering students are involved in sustainable product evolution or eco-design projects.

UVic co-op students rave about their work terms on Schneider Electric's inclusive and supportive teams. Schneider Electric was also named the 2024 Co-op Industry Partner of the Year by the Association for Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning Canada.

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## International partner

### United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)

Co-op students looking to contribute to social change on a global scale a new way to gain work experience thanks to a partnership between UVic and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR). Through this collaboration, students who do co-op terms outside of Canada that advance the UN Sustainable Development Goals receive UN accreditation for their experiences. They also lead community engagement activities where they use their cultural intelligence to advance the UN SDGs.

Last year, UVic and UNITAR co-published a report highlighting students who have taken part in the program.

Additionally, since 2023, three UVic students have been hired to work at the UNITAR's headquarters office in Geneva, where they've helped develop training workshops and courses on topics as diverse as water management, maternal and infant health and breastfeeding education, women empowerment and more.

*Pictured:* Biology co-op student Morgan Chisan (biology) worked as a research assistant at Aga Khan University Hospital (AKUH) in Nairobi, Kenya. She coordinated a blood drive to address the blood shortage in the country as her community engagement activity.



## FUNDING FOR STUDENTS & EMPLOYERS

Co-op and Career facilitates several funds and scholarships that help students engage in unique work experiences in Canada and around the world. In 2023/24, this funding was distributed as follows:

**Graham Branton Co-operative Education Endowment Fund:** Established in 1996 in memory of Dr. Branton, the co-op program's longest-serving director who dedicated 17 years to the development of UVic Co-op, this fund supports students who undertake international work term placements in developing countries where there is often little remuneration. **7 students** received this funding in 2024/25 for a total of **\$5,000**.

**President's Asia Partners Fund:** This funding supports students as they pursue co-op work terms and internships in the Asia Pacific region. **4 students** received this funding in 2024/25 for a total of **\$12,500**.

**Thouvenelle scholarship:** This scholarship is given to students who take part in co-op work terms related to community development or service learning both in and outside of Canada. **51 students** received this funding in 2024/25 for a total of **25,378.80**.

**Strategic Framework Experiential Learning Fund (SF-ELF):** UVic's SF-ELF funding supports a range of work-integrated learning opportunities for students. In 2024/25, UVic awarded **\$267,000** in funding to the following:

- **56 students** were awarded a \$1,000 travel stipend through the **Travel Award for Work Terms in Canada but outside Victoria**
- **21 students** were awarded a \$3,000 travel stipend through the **Travel Awards for Work Terms with Not-For-Profits outside Canada**
- **16 students** were awarded up to \$5,000 for approved entrepreneurial co-op work term through the **Wage Subsidy Program for Entrepreneurial Work Terms**
- **8 employers** who hold charity or not-for-profit status were awarded up to \$5,000 to cover a portion of the cost of hiring a co-op student through **Not-for Profit Wage Subsidy Program**
- **7 Indigenous community organizations** were awarded up to \$5,000 to cover a portion of the cost of hiring a co-op student through the **Indigenous Co-operative Education Wage Subsidy Program**

**Community-engaged learning funding:** See summaries of funding administered through the Community-Engaged Learning office on pages 13 and 15.

# PROGRAM UPDATES

## Engineering and Computer Science (ECS)

**Employer in residence program continues:** The ECS Co-op Program continued its popular Employer in Residence program this year, where employers from 4 organizations spent an hour meeting one-on-one with students to discuss their industry and provide career advice and hiring tips. Sixty-four students participated in 2024/25.

## Exercise Science, Physical and Health Education (EPHE)

**Increased engagement in EPHE Co-op:** In 2024/25, the EPHE co-op team collaborated with faculty members in kinesiology, educational psychology and curriculum and instruction to increase the visibility of the co-op program, resulting in student enrolment numbers more than doubling from 30 to 68. Staff also collaborated with CARSA's Wellness, Recreation and Athletics team and Split-Second Basketball in Vancouver to encourage coaches to consider hiring international co-op students, who often struggle to find coaching positions.

**EPHE creates micro-credential in partnership with the Jane App:** After hearing from healthcare employers that a significant amount of time was required to onboard co-op students on using booking and payment platforms, the EPHE co-op coordinator reached out to the Jane healthcare booking app to run a workshop as part of the co-op preparation course. So far, seven students who chose to complete a related assignment have earned a micro-credential certificate.

## Humanities and Fine Arts (HUFA)

**Success in HUFA event shines light on opportunities:** The Success in HUFA networking event was offered again in 2024/24 as a networking activity for co-op students. Over 60 students participated this integral part of the co-op prep course, learning from alumni and employer panelists from the Maritime Museum of BC, the Royal BC Museum, Theatre SKAM, the UVic Libraries and the Vancouver Island South Film and Media Commission.

**DEIA Workshop coordinated for Legacy Galleries:** HUFA continues to develop its capacity to support students with a disability or mental health challenge and support employers in their work to enhance accessibility and inclusion. HUFA staff partnered with the accessibility and inclusion co-op coordinator to design and deliver a special workshop that supported employer partners like the Legacy Galleries in their initiatives to increase their inclusive practices.

## Science

**Increased participation in co-op following removing GPA requirement:** 2024/25 was the first year where GPA requirements for taking part in Science Co-op programs was removed. This was also the first year that SCIE 201, which co-op preparation course that co-op students take before seeking their first co-op work term, was offered as a fall course; it was previously spread out through the fall and spring terms. 357 registered in SCIE 201 in fall 2024; 75 of these students had a first-year GPA below 4.5 and would have not been accepted into co-op before the GPA change.

## Social Sciences

**Student consultation highlights opportunities for adjustments:** Social Sciences Co-op staff led a student focus group event last year to identify student priorities. Students asked for more detail about the co-op experience and what it takes to secure a co-op placement before they join. They also requested more support preparing for job searches, enhanced one-on-one support from co-op coordinators, and program-specific workshops.

In response, staff created a [Social Sciences Blog](#) to help students better understand what the co-op program is and created an FAQs section sourced from student questions. Staff also updated the SOCI 201/501 co-op preparation course to clarify program requirements, how to secure a work term and how to prepare for a job search.

**Program-level support for psychology co-op students:** In 2024/25, Social Sciences Co-op staff worked with the Department of Psychology to co-create an online [tool](#) to help psychology students explore career possibilities.

## Health Information Science (HIS)

**Processes streamlined to build program capacity:** As the HIS program expands, staff are building new processes to support additional students. This includes shifting to online forms for submitting work term reports, readiness assessments and registrations. It also includes revising the BrightSpace resource sites so that students can self-register, ensuring immediate access to important timelines and resources.

**New partnership developed with the Yukon Hospital Corporation:** In 2024/2025, HIS Co-op staff developed a partnership with the Yukon Hospital Corporation and several students accept co-op positions as clinical information assistants at Whitehorse Hospital.

**Co-op opportunities cultivated for graduate students in nursing:** In 2024/25, students in Uvic's Double Master's Degree in Nursing Informatics completed co-op terms with the UBC Faculty of Medicine, specifically in their Innovation Support Unit. Students took part in diverse projects, including conducting research on how artificial intelligence could support the management of chronic health conditions.

### Law

**Making connections in the law community:** In February 2025, UVic's law co-op coordinator attended the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) 150 anniversary celebration and welcomed three judges to the UVic Law School to meet students. She also attended a networking dinner with the Chief Justice of Canada and Chief Judges of the BC Supreme Court and BC Court of Appeal, and the National Association for Law Placement in April 2024 to connect with legal recruiters and law school career professionals across Canada and the USA. Additionally, she attended several Victoria Bar association networking events.

**Providing more opportunities for hands-on learning:** In 2024/25, the UVic law co-op coordinator collaborated with the Law Careers Office and UVic Development to submit a report on co-op positions funded by the Law Foundation.

### Public administration

**Adjusting to a shift in the labour market:** In anticipation of a reduction in BC public sector co-op positions over the next year, the Public Administration has actively supported and encouraged students to apply to federal and municipal government roles, as well as exploring placements with non-profit and Indigenous organizations.

## LOOKING AHEAD TO 2024/25

### Working group sub-committee to update centralized curriculum

The Co-op and Career AI Working Group had been meeting monthly since March 2025. A sub-committee is creating an update to the GenAI information in our central career development content on the Career Services website. Updates to the online content will be completed by the end of the summer.

### Faculty of Health updates

Co-op and Career is preparing for the launch of UVic's new Faculty of Health on May 1, 2025. While our day-to-day program coordination is staying the same so students will continue working with their existing co-op coordinators, but some of our programs are shifting their home faculties.

Specifically:

- the Kinesiology, Recreation and Health Education, and Health Information Science Co-op programs will be housed within the Faculty of Health
- the Public Administration Co-op Program will move to the Faculty of Social Sciences
- Child and Youth Care (graduate co-op) will shift to the Faculty of Education

This annual report identifies trends, developments and program statistics from May 2024 to April 2025. This report was produced in October 2025 by the Office of the Director of UVic's Co-operative Education Program and Career Services. See [uvic.ca/coop/annual-report](https://uvic.ca/coop/annual-report) for a digital version. For detailed statistics on individual faculties or for historical data and trends, contact [coopcareercomms@uvic.ca](mailto:coopcareercomms@uvic.ca).

**Photography:** UVic Photography Services & UVic co-op students. **Cover:** Computer science co-op student Liam Shatzel (he/him) spent several work terms as a software developer with Motorola Solutions in Vancouver.

UVic's co-op programs are accredited by Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning Canada (CEWIL).

