What is Co-operative education or Co-op?
Cooperative education combines academic study with a paid work experience. The Cooperative Program at UTA College of Nursing and Health Innovation is designed to assist on-campus pre-licensure and RN to BSN students integrate work experiences into their total education.

Why should I enroll in Co-op?
Co-op is designed to provide the student an opportunity:
- to expand classroom walls beyond campus boundaries;
- to increase opportunities to practice skills and use theory learned in the classroom;
- to integrate the work experience into their total education;
- to assist the student in the financing of post-secondary education;
- to gain professional experience prior to graduation and enhance employability.

Do I get credit for Co-op?
Yes, there are 4 course numbers, N3100, N3200, N4100, and N4200. You can earn from 1 to 6 credits of undergraduate elective credit.

Do I pay tuition for Co-op?
Yes, you must register for the courses and pay the appropriate tuition.

What are the academic requirements for participation in Co-op?
You must be enrolled in the on-campus BSN program (Junior year) or in the RN-to-BSN on-campus program and must have and maintain an overall Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.0 or higher in Nursing at all times to participate in the program. Continuation in the nursing Co-op program is dependent upon the student's satisfactory performance in the workplace during each Co-operative work experience.

How do I get a job?
A part of applying for Co-op is preparing your resume and obtaining an appropriate position if not already employed. It is the student’s responsibility to obtain acceptable employment for the Co-operative learning experience. If not currently employed, most students apply to one of the agencies where they have had clinical experience. Students also apply to various health care agencies that offer summer extern programs in special areas such as operating room, labor and delivery, and telemetry.

Can I work in any health related job?
No, not every job in health care meets the objectives of the Co-op program. Pre-licensure students must be under the supervision of a Registered Nurse at all times. The job must have a specific (official) job description that reflects the goals of the program. Any questions about the appropriateness of a job should be clarified with the Co-op Coordinator prior to registration.

Can I have a job that is out of the immediate area?
Yes. The job description must meet the goals of the program. The Nursing Co-op Coordinator would need to review and approve the job description as appropriate for the program. Students work at hospitals in various parts of Texas and some have been out of the state and out of the country. The Coordinator is always willing to evaluate jobs on an individual basis.
Examples of some unique experiences:

- One RN to BSN student went to Africa with a mission group. She developed specific goals for the experience related to nursing concepts she was covering in the RN to BSN program.
- A pre-licensure student wanted an experience in reconstructive surgery, a local physician employed a BSN RN and the RN (along with the coordinator) wrote a job description that enabled the student to expand her knowledge during the summer.
- Several students with special credentials such as Certified Nurse Aide, Certified Surgical Technician and LVN have been able to work closely with their employer to provide them with additional supervision in certain aspects of their job so that they might practice the skills and theory they were learning in the course.

What are the conditions of employment?
Such things as job location, transportation, work hours, wages, benefits, and physical conditions, are set at the discretion of the employer. Before accepting a job, you should consider all employment factors.

Co-op Uniform
Students will wear the uniform and identification required by the agency.

Do I receive a grade in Co-op?
All Co-op credit is Pass/Fail. Each student is responsible for providing the Co-op Coordinator a completed application including: Goals, Resume, and a copy of the official agency Job Description.

Are there assignments?
At the end of the semester, the student completes a self-evaluation and the supervisor completes an evaluation of the student and verifies their work hours. The student must write a 5 page APA formatted, referenced paper (first person essay) describing how the goals were met and the value of this experience to their nursing career. All assignments and a satisfactory evaluation by their supervisor must be submitted to the Co-op Coordinator by the designated due date in order to receive a grade of “Pass” in the course.

Am I required to work for the employer after graduation?
No. Continued employment after graduation is at your and the employer's discretion.

I’m already working – how can I do this, too?
Your Co-op experience will not require an additional job. The hours you work at your job are used to satisfy the requirements of Co-op – that is why we must see a job description so that we are sure that position qualifies for Co-op.

How can I learn more about Co-op?
Additional information may be obtained from Dr. Mancini, the Co-op Coordinator, in Pickard Hall.