

<p>U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION</p> <p>PERSONNEL MANUAL INSTRUCTION</p>	<p>PMI: <u>308-1</u></p> <p>DATE: <u>Feb. 22, 1996</u></p> <p>APPROVED: <u>VERONICA D. TRIETSCH</u> Director, Human Resources Group</p> <p style="text-align: right;">6/02</p>
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Subject: STUDENT EDUCATIONAL EMPLOYMENT AND VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

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I. AUTHORITY

Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 213, Subpart C, Section 213.3202 and Title 5, CFR, Part 308.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Department of Education (ED) to provide students with exposure to public service and to:

1. enhance students' educational experiences by providing education-related work assignments in support of ED's programs and objectives;
2. enhance classroom theory with practical work experience;
3. encourage partnership between ED and educational institutions;
4. attract and recruit well educated graduates into the federal workforce;
5. support, encourage, and provide both employment and volunteer opportunities; and
6. provide flexibility of employment schedules.

Students accepted for enrollment into ED's Student Educational Employment and Volunteer Program will be placed into 1 of 3 education programs:

- A. Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP)
- B. Student Career Experience Program (SCEP)
- C. Student Volunteer Service

III. DESCRIPTION OF INDIVIDUAL PROGRAMS

- A. STEP is a flexible student employment program offering temporary employment to students in positions for 1 year. Students are paid Federal employees, classified as temporary employees into the occupational series for which they are hired at a grade level set according to the appropriate General Schedule (GS) or Wage Grade (WG) classification standard. Appointments may be made at any time during the calendar year (including summer). The STEP allows for:
 1. flexible work schedules (e.g., there are no restrictions or limitations on the number of hours a student may work per week or year, aside from federal, state, or local laws governing employment of minors);

2. work assignments to be unrelated to the student's academic program;
 3. extension of appointments in 1-year increments; and
 4. conversion of students to the SCEP if program requirements are met.
- B. SCEP is a student employment program offering flexible work schedules and appointments anytime during the calendar year. This program focuses on providing education-related work assignments and positioning students for permanent federal employment. The SCEP requires and/or allows for:
1. work assignments to be related to academic studies;
 2. a written agreement between ED, the school, and the student as to the nature of assignments, schedule of assignments, evaluation procedures, and requirements for continuation and successful completion of the program (see Appendix A); and
 3. non-competitive conversion to a career or career-conditional appointment.

SCEP participants are paid federal employees classified as student trainees and are subject to all requirements and conditions governing career and career-conditional employment.

- C. The STUDENT VOLUNTEER SERVICE PROGRAM provides students with academically related experiences at ED on a temporary and uncompensated basis. Permission of the institution at which the student is enrolled is required for participation in the service. Student volunteers are **not** federal employees; however, they are considered employees of the federal government only for the purposes of compensation for work injuries and tort claims. Student volunteers must not displace employees or staff positions which are part of the agency's workforce.

IV. APPLICABILITY

This Instruction applies to any student who is at least 16 years of age, maintains good academic standing, is taking at least a half-time course load at an accredited educational institution, and is pursuing any of the following educational programs:

- o High School Diploma or General Equivalency Diploma
- o Vocational/Technical Certificate
- o Associate Degree
- o Baccalaureate Degree
- o Graduate Degree
- o Professional Degree
- o Harry S. Truman Foundation Scholarship

Student employment must conform to federal, state, or local laws governing the employment of minors and persons with disabilities.

V. DEFINITIONS

1. Accredited School - a public or private secondary school (or other appropriate school for students with mental retardation), vocational school, or institution of higher learning which is accredited by a local board of education, a technical or professional association, or by any other recognized accrediting body.
2. Break in Program - a period of time when a program participant is neither attending classes nor working. In ED, a break in service will be allowed for no longer than 6 months.
3. Half-Time - the definition should be provided by the school in which the student is enrolled.
4. Student - an individual enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a degree (or certificate, diploma, etc.) seeking student taking at least half-time academic/vocational/technical course load in an accredited high school, technical or vocational school, 2 year or 4 year college or university, graduate or professional school.

VI. RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The Director, Human Resources Group (HRG) is responsible for:
 1. evaluating the effectiveness of student programs;
 2. establishing basic departmental policy for student programs; and
 3. assuring compliance with the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM's) annual reporting requirements.

- B. Division Directors or higher officials are responsible for:
 - 1. determining when students can be effectively utilized in their division;
 - 2. selecting the student to be hired;
 - 3. monitoring and evaluating the use of student employees/volunteers; and
 - 4. approving breaks in service (with consultation from student's supervisor).

- C. Regional and Headquarters Customer Service Teams (CSTs) will:
 - 1. maintain a roster of recruitment sources from which candidates for the program may be sought;
 - 2. designate an individual to coordinate the student program;
 - 3. work with educational institutions to develop program designs and negotiate agreements;
 - 4. ensure that the required documentation for student employees/volunteers is complete and in accordance with the applicable regulations; and
 - 5. serve as liaison with officials of educational institutions.

- D. Supervisors are responsible for:
 - 1. assigning work to the student which contributes to his/her overall development, and
 - 2. evaluating student performance and recommending the student's retention, promotion, or separation status.

- E. The Executive Officer (EO) will prepare appropriate student documents for the requesting office and submit these documents to the CST when requested. On an annual basis, EO will also submit to the CST a listing of the number of appointments made in both Regional Offices and Headquarters under the STEP and the SCEP, and the anticipated need for the coming fiscal year.

VII. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES

A. Program

1. **STEP, SCEP, and Volunteer Service Program**
participants are required to *maintain good academic standing* for entrance and continuation in the program.
2. For students in the **STEP**, the *nature of the duties* does not have to be related, to the student's academic/career goals. However, for students in the **SCEP** and the **Volunteer Service**, the work experience must be related to the student's academic/career goals.
3. **SCEP** is a formally structured program and requires a *written agreement* (see Appendix A) by all parties (ED, school, student) as to the:
 - a. nature of work assignments;
 - b. schedule of work assignments and class attendance;
 - c. evaluation procedures; and
 - d. requirements of continuation and successful completion of the program.
4. An authorized official for ED, participating educational institutions, and students in the **SCEP** should agree on a *formally-arranged schedule* and work to ensure that:
 - a. work responsibilities do not interfere with academic performances;
 - b. completion of the education program and completion of the SCEP are accomplished in a reasonable and appropriate time frame;
 - c. ED is informed and prepared for the student's periods of employment; and
 - d. requirements for non-competitive conversion to career-conditional employment are understood by all parties.
5. The **volunteer services** of groups of students or of an individual may be accepted upon *written agreement* between an authorized ED official and a recognized educational institution. (See Appendix B for the format for this agreement.) The agreement must be approved by the CST Team Leader or his/her designee at Headquarters and Regional offices before the student reports for work.

6. Limitations placed on **student volunteer** work are:
 - a. Students will not be used when they: displace any employee; reduce the opportunities for paid employment of employees; or conflict with established paid student employment programs.
 - b. Generally, students will not have access to confidential records and documents.
 - c. Students' hours of work should be scheduled during the basic administrative work week.
 - d. Students will not be assigned to dangerous or hazardous assignments.
7. A *break in program* for students participating in the **STEP** and the **SCEP** is permitted only for periods no longer than 6 months with prior approval.
8. **Student volunteers** are still regarded as *students during the interim between school years* if the interim lasts no more than 5 months and the student demonstrates a bona fide intention of continuing a course of study.

B. Appointment

1. The *appointing authority* for the **STEP** is 5 CFR Schedule B 213.3202(c); for the **SCEP** it is 5 CFR Schedule B 213.3202(d); and for the **Student Volunteer service** it is 5 United States Code (USC) Section 3111. *These authorities apply to any educational program being pursued.*
2. The **STEP, SCEP, and the Student Volunteer Service** are year-round programs and *appointments may be made any time* during the year, including summer.
3. Students receive 1-year appointments in the **STEP** and the **Student Volunteer Service**. Appointments may be extended in 1-year increments as long as the individual continues to meet the definition of a student. Appointments to the **STEP** and the **Student Volunteer Service** cannot exceed the date the student completes the requirements for his or her academic program.

4. Once a student has completed the requirements for his/her degree, diploma, certificate, etc., he/she is no longer a student, and must be separated from **STEP** and/or the **Student Volunteer Service**, even if the not to exceed (NTE) date on the current appointment has not been reached.
5. Appointments to the **SCEP** are subject to all the requirements and *conditions governing career or career conditional employment*, including investigation to establish an appointee's qualifications and suitability.
6. All appointments to the **SCEP** are for a period NTE close of business of the 120th calendar day after the student's anticipated fulfillment/completion of the educational program. If at the end of the 120th day, the graduate has not been converted to a position in the competitive service, he/she must be separated.
7. In accordance with Title 5, CFR, Part 310, students in the **STEP**, **SCEP**, and **Student Volunteer Service** may *work in the same agency with a relative* when there is no direct reporting relationship and the relative is not in a position to influence or control the student's appointment, employment, promotion, or advancement within ED.

C. Classification

1. Classification of students in the **STEP** is based on the occupational series for which they are hired. Grade level is to be set according to the criteria in the appropriate GS or WG classification standard and is commensurate with the duties assigned and expected levels of performance. **SCEP** participants will be classified as student trainees (the 99 series) of the appropriate occupational group.

D. Status

1. **Student volunteers** are *not federal employees*, but their service may be creditable as experience under examination rating schedules. They are considered employees of the federal government only for the purposes of: 5 USC 8101 relating to compensation for work injuries, and 28 USC 2671-2680, relating to tort claims.

2. **Student volunteers** are covered by 5 CFR Part 308, *Volunteer Service* and may not be treated as employees under 5 CFR Part 213, Subpart C.
3. Participants in the **STEP** are covered by 5 CFR 351.502 for purposes of *RIF*. **STEP** participants are in the excepted service Tenure Group III provided they have completed 1 year of current continuous service; **SCEP** are in the excepted service Tenure Group II.
4. **SCEP** participants are accorded the same *retention rights* as excepted service employees and may qualify for severance pay if involuntarily separated under 5 CFR Part 550, Subpart G.

E. Work Schedule

1. Students in the **STEP, SCEP, and the Student Volunteer Service** may work full-time or part-time schedules. There are no limitations on the number of hours a student may work per week, but the student's work schedule should not interfere with the student's academic schedule and they may not routinely work overtime. For **STEP** and **SCEP**, overtime may be authorized on an occasional basis such as during vacation periods or when school is closed (as per Federal, state, or local laws governing employment of minors). Students are also entitled to holiday pay if the holiday is part of their regular tour of duty.

F. Compensation and Benefits

1. **STEP** students are eligible for the following *benefits*:
 - a. annual and sick leave; and
 - b. health and life insurance coverage as detailed in 5 CFR 870.202, 890.102, and 890.502.

STEP students are ineligible for retirement coverage as provided for by 5 CFR 831.201.
2. **SCEP** students are eligible for the following *benefits*:
 - a. annual and sick leave;
 - b. retirement coverage (generally) from the Federal Retirement System (FERS) when there is no prior service or with less than 5 years

of prior civilian service (refer to 5 CFR Part 842); and
c. health and life insurance coverage as detailed in 5 CFR 870.202 and 890.102.

3. Student volunteers are not eligible for benefits such as annual and sick leave; life or health insurance; retirement benefits; compensation; travel, subsistence expenses, quarters and any other reimbursement or payment in kind; or credit for service computation date.
4. ED may use the training authority in 5 USC Chapter 41 and 5 CFR Part 410 to pay all or part of the students' *training expenses* for **STEP** and **SCEP** students. **SCEP** students may have other expenses related to training, such as travel and transportation between duty station and school, paid by ED.

G. Conversion

1. Students in the **STEP** and the **Student Volunteer Service** are not eligible for *non-competitive conversion* to a career or career-conditional appointment. Students in the **SCEP** may be non-competitively converted to career or career-conditional appointments at any time within 120 days after satisfactory completion of the requirements for his/her diploma, certificate, or degree, as well as completion of at least 640 hours of career-related work. **SCEP** participants must also have been recommended by ED for non-competitive conversion and have met the qualification standard for the targeted position. Conversion must be to an occupation related to the student's academic training and career-related work. The conversion may be to a position within ED or any other agency within the federal government.
2. **STEP** participants may be *non-competitively converted to the SCEP* whenever they meet the requirements of that program and an appropriate position is available. Work experience related to the academic and career program may be credited towards the 640 hour work experience necessary for

non-competitive conversion to a career or career-conditional appointment. Conversions would not be subject to Subparts C and D of 5 CFR Part 302.

H. Evaluation and Promotions

1. Students under the **STEP** and the **SCEP** are *eligible for promotions* based on fully successful performance as appraised by the Department's General Performance Appraisal system, PMI 430-2, and a supervisor's recommendation. Promotions should be documented as a conversion to another excepted service appointment, citing the same authority as was used for the original appointment. Any OPM test requirements are waived for **SCEP** participants. Officials authorized to accept **volunteer service** may recognize the contributions made by volunteers. Cash awards may not be given, but *certificates of accomplishment* or similar forms of recognition are appropriate.
2. Prior to the end of the first work period, a *written evaluation* must be made of each student in the **SCEP** program by his/her supervisor. The evaluation must be discussed with the student to learn of any factors which may have affected performance negatively; consider possible approaches to improve performance; determine the student's interest in future employment with ED; and assess promotional eligibility.

I. Separations

1. Appointments in the **STEP**, **SCEP** and the **Student Volunteer Service** may be *terminated* at any time by ED, the student, or the educational institution for any of the following reasons:
 - a. suspension, expulsion or withdrawal from the educational institution;
 - b. unsatisfactory job performance; and,
 - c. inability of the agency, for administrative reasons, to retain the student in the job (e.g., budget cuts, RIF, etc.)

For **SCEP** only, appointments may also be terminated for the student's change to a curriculum which does not directly relate to the appointed position.

Notice of an ED-initiated termination of services should normally be furnished to the student and to his/her educational institution at least 2 weeks before the effective date of the termination. The CST to which the student is assigned is responsible for furnishing this notice explaining the circumstances of the termination.

J. Records

1. An Official *Personnel Folder* for **STEP, SCEP, and Student Volunteer Service** participants shall be established which contains the student's resume, agreement statement (for SCEP and volunteers), a statement of the service to be performed, and a copy of the SF-50 (which documents the entrance on duty and separation).

K. Veteran Preference

1. For veteran students applying for **STEP** and **SCEP** positions, agencies are not required to apply the appointment procedures for veteran preference. However, each agency shall *follow the principles of veteran preference* as far as administratively feasible and, on the request of a qualified and available preference eligible, shall furnish him/her with reasons for nonselection.

VIII. DOCUMENTATION

A. Documents Required from Requesting Office are:

1. personnel actions for both entrance on duty and termination (duration of the assignment will be shown as "not to exceed" one year, or the end of the requested period as appropriate);
2. statement of services/duties to be performed;
3. for student volunteers, certification by the student's supervisor stating that volunteer services will not displace any employee;
4. copy of the written agreement for the SCEP and Volunteer Service Students; and
5. resume prepared by the student.

B. Documents Prepared by HRG

1. SF-50 - Notification of Personnel Action. For Student Volunteer Service appointments, the SF-50 must include the statement: "Under 5 USC 3111, a student volunteer is not a Federal Employee for any purpose other than injury compensation and laws related to the Tort Claims Act.

Service is not creditable for leave accrual, retirement, or other employee benefits."

2. Data on student volunteers should not be forwarded to the Central Personnel Data File.

C. Records Maintained by Requesting Office

Attendance records must be maintained by the Requesting Office. The form should be accurately maintained so that it can be used to provide information to the student's educational institution when required. Attendance is recorded on the "Flexible Schedule Certification Form".

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
STUDENT CAREER EXPERIENCE PROGRAM**

WORKING AGREEMENT

I. Purpose

This agreement establishes a basis of mutual understanding between (Name of employing office), Department of Education (ED), (Name of educational institution), and (Name of student) for ED's Student Career Experience Program (SCEP).

II. Responsibilities

A. ED agrees to:

1. Appoint a liaison with the educational institution;
2. Handle all personnel processing related to employment of students;
3. Enrich the learning of students and orient them to the occupation and work setting;
4. Provide personnel and program counseling to participating students;
5. Inform the educational institution of student progress; and
6. Notify the institution and the student of intent to release.

B. The educational institution agrees to:

1. Inform all students of SCEP opportunities;
2. Refer eligible candidates who express an interest in the program;
3. Furnish ED with any needed data and information about appointees which the institution is authorized to release;
4. Notify ED of any change in student status including discontinuance of the educational institution's career experience program, the student's failure to remain in good academic standing, or the student's dismissal from the school for any reason; and

5. Take action to strengthen the relationship between the student's study and work assignments.
- C. The student agrees to:
1. Maintain good academic standing;
 2. Perform tasks and duties as assigned;
 3. Work according to assigned schedule; and
 4. Inform ED of any change in student status including academic standing, course of study, break in service, discontinuation of SCEP, or dismissal from school.

III. Program Criteria

A. Student Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for participation in ED's education program, a student must be:

1. At least 16 years of age;
2. In good academic standing;
3. Enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a degree (or certificate, diploma, etc.) seeking student;
4. Taking at least a half-time academic/vocational/technical course load;
5. Pursuing a major course of study which is related to the type of work performed in (Name of employing office of the Department); and,
6. Recommended for assignment in (Name of employing office of the Department) by the appropriate staff of the educational institution;

B. Classification

1. SCEP participants are paid Federal employees classified as student trainees of the appropriate occupational group that is commensurate with the duties assigned and are subject to all requirements and conditions governing career and career-conditional employment.
2. To the extent possible, standard position

descriptions will be used for students participating in this program.

3. Promotions may be granted on the basis of applicable qualification requirements and meritorious performance during work and study periods.
4. SCEP allows for non-competitive conversion to a career or career-conditional appointment.
5. A student's appointment may be terminated at any time for any of the following reasons:
 - a. Change to a curriculum which does not directly relate to the appointed position;
 - b. Suspension, expulsion or withdrawal from the educational institution;
 - c. Unsatisfactory job performance; and
 - d. Inability of the agency for administrative reasons to retain the student in the job. (e.g., budget cuts, reduction in force, etc.)

C. Work Schedule

(Include a statement about the nature of assignment, schedule of assignments and beginning and completion dates, and successful completion/continuation of the program.)

D. Pay and Benefits

(Include a statement which confirms the application of regularly established pay schedules; health benefits; life insurance; and type of retirement coverage provided; annual and sick leave provisions; payment for recognized holidays occurring during the regular work tour; and, if applicable, support of study costs.)

E. Performance Appraisal

(Include a statement on the employing office's performance appraisal requirements.)

F. Appointment or Termination Upon Completion of Education

1. (Include a statement which lists the conditions governing noncompetitive conversion for the particular type of SCEP student employed.)
2. Students who are disqualified from continuation in the SCEP or not converted to a career or career-

conditional appointment will be terminated. Such students cannot be reassigned noncompetitively to other positions.

IV. Conditions and Terms of Agreement

The (Name of employing office), (Name of educational institution), and (Name of student) agree to change the contract as described upon mutual review and consent. This agreement becomes effective on (enter effective date), and remains in effect for (enter duration), expiring on (enter expiration date).

V. Appropriate Signatures

A.

Name of Institution

Name of Liaison Person

Signature

Title

Date

B.

Name of Employing Office

Name of Liaison Person

Signature

Title

Date

C.

Name of Student

Signature

Parent or Guardian
(if student is under 18 years of age)

Date

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
STUDENT VOLUNTEER SERVICE AGREEMENT**

Section I - Assignment Data

1. Student's Name:
2. Academic Discipline, if Applicable:
3. Educational Institution:
4. Academic Level:
5. Statement of Duties: Attached
6. Assignment Location:
7. Proposed Length of Service:
8. Proposed Tour of Duty:

Section II - Education Institution Agreement

I certify that (Name of student) is a student enrolled not less than half-time and is in good academic standing. The duties to be performed and scheduled hours of work are approved as appropriate for the course of study or training that he/she is pursuing. The student (will/will not) be given academic credit for the volunteer service.

I understand that a record of the student's attendance and an evaluation of his/her performance will be provided to this institution when the volunteer service is completed.

Signature of Approving Official

Date

Title

Educational Institution

Section III - Volunteer Student Agreement

I have read the attached statement of duties and agree to perform the assignment as described in that statement.

I understand that:

I am to receive no pay or other compensation for services rendered;

I am not considered to be a Federal employee for any purpose other than for purposes of the Federal Tort Claims provisions published in 28 U.S.C. 2671 through compensation for injuries sustained during the performance of work assignments;

I am to conduct myself with honesty and integrity in the performance of my duties;

I am to consciously safeguard government business which is not for public information;

This agreement may be terminated at any time by myself, my educational institution, or the Department of Education; and

A record of my attendance and an evaluation of my performance will be provided to me and my educational institution when my work assignment is completed.

Signature of Student

Date

Section IV - Division Director's and/or Supervisor's Agreement

Supervision of the student volunteer will be provided and a record of attendance and a written evaluation of the student's performance will be provided to the student and the educational institution at the end of the assignment.

I certify that the volunteer services to be performed by the student, as outlined in this Volunteer Service Agreement, will not displace any employee.

Signature of Division Director/Supervisor

Date

Section V - U.S. Department of Education Agreement

The U.S. Department of Education agrees to accept the volunteer service described in Section I.

Signature of Approving Official*

Date

*** Customer Service Team Leader or Designee**

Attachment: Statement of Duties