



Name: Simon Lai

Major, Minor: Double Major in Economics and International Relations

Intended Graduation Date: May 2006

Past Co-op Work Placements and Positions:

Vancouver Chamber Choir - Marketing Assistant

Silicon Chalk - Technical Writer

The Economical Insurance Company - Underwriting Assistant

What valuable skills and knowledge have you gained from your major that have helped you in your Co-op experience/positions?

Critical thinking. More specifically, the ability to analyze situations critically to make informed and sensible decisions. And also research and writing skills. I have learned how to research information and present it in a clear and concise manner. Economics and IR are two subjects that present to their students a "big picture" view of the world. By studying the subject, you learn a lot about what goes on in the world, and are equipped with the skills needed for any job.

How has your Co-op experience contributed to your undergraduate experience at UBC?

Co-op is definitely the highlight of my undergrad experience. Aside from going on work terms to gain valuable work experience, I am involved in the Co-op community working with enthusiastic and dedicated people to improve the program for everyone involved. The amount of support I get from the program, job-related or not, is tremendous. It has made my undergrad experience truly special.

How will your Co-op experience assist you in your future career goals?

My career goal is to become an economist. Using the job hunting skills I developed throughout my Co-op experience, I was able to identify a job opening, write an effective resume and cover letter, and perform well in an interview to land a job at the Bank of Canada, a great first step towards my future career goal. Without my previous Co-op experience, I doubt I can even get past the initial resume screening process, let alone landing an interview and eventually a job!

What advice do you have for students considering Co-op?

Do it. It broadens your horizon and equips you with the skills you need to have a head start ahead of others. Not only will you learn essential job-hunting skills, you will also become a mature and responsible individual ready for any challenges ahead.



Name: Colleen Cunningham

Major, Minor: Economics Major, Political Science Minor

Intended Graduation Date: Summer 2007

Past Co-op Work Placements and Positions:

Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management - Policy Advisor

BC Progress Board - Co-op Student

What valuable skills and knowledge have you gained from your major that have helped you in your Co-op experience/positions?

Social sciences students are often adept at research and academic writing, as well as thinking critically. Economics students in particular tend to be strong in data analysis and working with data to solve business quandaries or inform public policy. In my Co-op positions, this ability to work with and utilize data has, combined with strong writing and research skills, been a definite benefit. As well, many government positions ask specifically for students with a background in Economics and/or Political Science.

How has your Co-op experience contributed to your undergraduate experience at UBC?

Interlacing co-op terms with school enriches both streams. I have identified several areas of interest through both my term working at the Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management and at the Progress Board that have led me to register for courses I wouldn't have otherwise taken. Co-op also has given me a greater sense of the value of my undergrad Economics degree, and certain required Econ courses (301, 302, 325, etc) have provided a necessary foundation for working with data.

How will your Co-op experience assist you in your future career goals?

Directly, Co-op has provided me the opportunity to gain valuable work experience in government doing policy analysis, policy writing, data analysis, and research. Co-op has also pushed me to make contacts in areas that I am interested in and discuss with them how to enter their field, while the job application process has drastically improved my ability and confidence in writing applications and performing job interviews. Indirectly, through Co-op I have defined and refined my career interests, and have been able to identify the "must haves" for any future job.

What advice do you have for students considering Co-op?

If you are even thinking about it, you should definitely apply. Co-op can get you experience that would be very difficult to get on your own, and provides the opportunity to try out positions in various areas of interest so you can find out first-hand if this something you actually want to do everyday.