A. Co-op Work Assignment

Workday is a web-based on demand software company that develops and sells financial and human resource management solutions. I began my first term at Workday as a member of the Quality Assurance (QA) Team. The QA team plays a crucial role in the software development process because it is their responsibility to thoroughly test new features and ensure the software is functional and easy to use before it is released to customers.

Due to Workday's relatively short release cycles, I arrived just a few weeks before an upcoming release, which is the busiest time for the QA team. As a result, after spending the first few days going through self-paced online tutorials to familiarize myself with the Workday product, I was asked to immediately start actively testing new features. I was specifically assigned to help one member of the QA team, whose main focus was testing the functional aspects of features surrounding Procurement and Worker Spend Management. During this time, I participated in organized group testing, ran testware for multiple product features, and completed security updates. Working closely with a member of the QA team taught me a lot about the responsibilities of a QA engineer.

Following the release, we attended a formal training course on how to build automation scripts using Workday's internal testing tool. We then spent the second half of our fall work term on the QA Automation team developing automated regression and performance test suites with our focus on adding regression coverage for all of the new features just released. It was pretty exciting to be creating automated regression tests for features I had manually tested so that they would never have to be manually re-tested again.

B. Assessment of Learning and Development

By splitting my work term into working with a functional QA lead and then developing automation with the QA automation team, I was able to get a taste for both the functional and the technical sides to the QA field. This experience taught me a lot about a field that I didn't know very much about and sparked my interest in the software development process. I learned that to be in the QA field, you need to have good problem solving skills and excellent communication skills because you constantly need to communicate with product managers or developers about problems or necessary enhancements. I was constantly learning on the job, and found that my
computer science and object oriented programming classes that I have taken helped me at times to better understand the software. If I were to go through this experience again, I would have liked to have a little more of a business background. At times I was not given specific testware, so I had to try to anticipate all the different possibilities that a customer might use the software and determine whether or not the software was behaving correctly, which would have been easier if I better understood the business application so I could come up with more realistic use cases. However, the QA lead that I worked with was extremely patient with me and very good at explaining all the features he was responsible for testing. He was especially good at giving me examples that I could personally relate to.

C. Life Outside of Co-op

We decided to take over the apartment the previous co-ops lived in, which made the housing search very easy. The apartment was located in Pleasanton, CA, less than a five minute walk away from the office. It was great having such a short commute, however, there is not much else in the area around the apartment and because we didn’t have a car, that made getting to other places somewhat difficult. However, we managed by ordering groceries online and getting the occasional ride from someone at work.

Living in California was a very welcome change from living in Ithaca. I loved the weather and all the free time after work. I joined a gym nearby where I played tennis and attended different classes throughout the week and then on the weekends I tried to explore different parts of the Bay Area as best I could without a car. Pleasanton, CA is located approximately an hour BART ride outside of San Francisco, which is a great city with tons of things to do. I also flew down to LA a couple of weekends, which was very easy to do. Looking back, I really wish we had a car. A car isn’t necessary but it would have made getting around so much easier.

D. Evaluation

By far the best parts about this experience were the people I worked with and the environment at the office. I was so surprised by how friendly, approachable and helpful everyone was. If I asked someone a question and they did not know the answer, they would always point me in the right direction or introduce me to someone else who did. It was also exciting to be a part of such a rapidly growing start-up and to work with people who are so passionate about what they do. I looked forward to coming into work every day because I was working with extremely talented people who always treated me as more than just an "intern." Between going out to lunch every Friday and
other events like the Halloween Release party, my Workday experience was fun and rewarding. I am really going to miss everyone in the spring, and I can't wait to come back next summer!
John Wright

Fall 2009

This fall, I completed my Co-op experience for Workday in Pleasanton California. The company develops ‘SaaS’ (Software-as-a-Service) software used to replace traditional ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) software. I worked in the Quality Assurance Tech department and was involved in both functional testing and automation testing of the software.

My first day at Workday involved multiple meetings that helped get me oriented with the company and what I would be doing. I was then introduced to self help tutorials to start learning Workday’s software. After spending a day or so on the self help tutorials I jumped into doing functional testing on Business Processes. I spent multiple weeks on Business Process, learning how the software worked while finding and reporting bugs. I was then entered into a weeklong company training session for developers. Following this, I spent the remainder of my term here building automated regression tests suites which are used to find bugs in future releases of the software.

The work I did for Workday didn’t specifically relate to my engineering classes other than the general problem solving that I’ve developed from them. I did, however, find the work both challenging and fulfilling. The best part of my experience with Workday was the people I got to work with. They treated me as though I was a permanent member of their team. I was able to work on the same caliber projects the other employees worked on. If there was ever a situation where I didn’t have the tools necessary to be able to carry out the work I was doing, they always did their best to assist me in that so I could learn the whole process. I think the responsibility I was given was appropriate and really motivated me to work hard and care about what I was doing.

The area I lived in is mostly residential, with a mall and several department stores nearby. I did not have a car, which made things such as getting groceries much more difficult. The other co-ops and I
found ways around this by ordering our groceries online and having them delivered, as well as generous offers for rides from our co-workers. We were able to easily visit San Francisco by taking the BART train system, which was accessible by bus. Our apartment was literally 5 minutes walking distance from Workday’s office.

If I were to go through this same experience again, I would change nothing other than to try and work on having a car. Workday has been a fun company to work with and I look forward to returning in the summer.
It was a great feeling returning to Workday and having everyone say how excited they were to have me back. Workday is a web-based on demand software company that develops and sells financial and human resource management solutions. For my summer work term, I rejoined the QA Automation team. I arrived just a few weeks before Workday’s next release team so I was asked to jump right back in and help the QA Automation team clean up their test suites for the upcoming release. I was asked to help figure out what was breaking our test cases. Maintaining and debugging our testing platform presented a whole new set of challenges and I also got to experience the release deadline pressures of only having a day to find and fix a problem. Participating in the co-op program has been a great learning experience. I now have a better understanding of the software development process and roles a QA Engineer and QA Automation Engineer have in this process.

By far the best parts about this experience were the people I worked with and the environment at the office. It was extremely exciting to be a part of such a rapidly growing start-up. I was amazed to see how much had changed and how much Workday had grown in the short time that I had been gone. Since the fall, Workday had gone from 380 employees to over 550 of which 30 were recent college grads, which made the work environment all the more fun. They had also established a special program for the new college hires, which included a speaker series that we could attend to learn more about Workday. This speaker series helped me to better understand Workday, and how the company fits in to the Enterprise Software Industry.

This summer my living situation was infinitely better than in the fall. This time around I had a car and instead of living in Pleasanton I decided to live in Berkeley. Even though, Berkeley is a 35 minute commute to Pleasanton I would highly recommend living there. The commute is a reverse commute so there isn’t any traffic. Also, it was easy to find summer housing because Berkeley is a college town so I was able to find a very affordable studio just a block off campus. Berkeley is much closer to San Francisco, and there is a lot more to do there then in Pleasanton. By having a car I also had the opportunity to explore the Bay Area and travel to Napa Valley, Muir Woods, Stinson Beach, Monterey, and Santa Cruz. I also spent one weekend in Southern
California and went to Disneyland. California is an amazing place to live and I would highly suggest getting a car out there if you can!
I spent this summer working at Workday in Pleasanton, California. My primary role was as a Quality Assurance Automation Engineer. Workday is a SaaS (Software-as-a-Service) provider of enterprise business services. The main modules provided are Human Resource Management, Financial Management, and Payroll software. The company was founded by Cornell alum Dave Duffield in 2005 and has been growing rapidly over the past few years.

My role in the company involved building and maintaining a large collection of regression test scripts. These scripts are run in every release cycle in order to test the software that would have otherwise been manually tested. When I started this summer, the development cycle was in the maintaining phase so I was able to jump in and start working on correcting scripts that have been broken by changes in the software. Later on in the summer I transitioned into creating new test scripts that tested various functional areas in the software. The training I had received in my first term at the company was sufficient for the work I did this summer. However, I still had questions every day, and was able to get help from my coworkers.

The work I did here involved an in-house scripting language that I learned the first term out here. My major is ECE which didn’t directly apply to the work I did here. However, the general problem solving skills I developed over my time at Cornell played a significant role here. Creating good test scripts that can be run for years forward is definitely an ability learned by practice. Some of the biggest challenges that I encountered involved planning for future software changes and creating test scripts that would work and be effective at the specific functional area being tested.
This position influenced my professional development in a positive way. I now know that the software industry is something I want to be involved in. I learned that being able to effectively test software involves collaborating with a network of people every day. This includes the product managers, developers, functional quality assurance leads, and even the security team. This experience has given me insight into how a company works from the inside development to the outside sales team. One of the most important things that I understand going forward from this term is that I want to be surrounded by people that are passionate about what they do. Everyone I encountered at Workday was interested in helping me and happy about what they were doing. It was a great culture to work in and it is something I will be looking forward to in the future.

My life outside work was also very enjoyable. Being in California near San Francisco gives plenty of opportunities to explore the city and everything this part of the country has to offer. I stayed in a housing complex directly next to work so getting to work was very easy. I would definitely recommend a car if at all possible. Being able to drive around this area makes life much better and gives you even more opportunities to explore. However, the BART train system makes getting into and out of the city very easy without a car. Workday's intern and recent college graduate program is building up and is very active which gives everyone something to do after work and on weekends.

In conclusion, my experience at Workday was very positive and I highly recommend the experience to anyone at Cornell. The culture and work environment was something that allows everyone to have fun and take pride in what they're doing at the company.
Co-op Work Assignment

Workday is an online HR company that offers services including HCM, Payroll, Financials, etc. to enterprise companies. Workday follows a rapid development cycle by releasing new versions of their product three times a year. This involves feature developments and improvements in all areas. Like any other software, this requires a lot of testing for any bugs in the system. The large QA department at Workday handles the testing phase of the product. The QA Automation team is an integral part of this department as it builds, maintains, and executes test scripts in the Workday system. These test scripts are created so that old and new features can be tested repeatedly to find any code changes that may have broken other features. This is much more efficient since the alternative is manual testing which would require a lot more time. Once a test script is created and entered into a test suite, it is executed on a nightly basis.

As part of the QA Automation team, I was involved in creating and maintaining many test scripts for the Workday 12 release. Workday has its own proprietary language called XpressO which is based on Java and the test scripts were created within this system. To learn how to work with this system, we attended a 3-day training class held at Workday by the original programmers of the Workday system. I also attended a 3-day training course to learn how to use the automated testing tool. These training courses were quite instructive and interesting. I also learned how to create test suites using soapUI for web services which is done using XML.

The guidance at Workday is plentiful. I never felt that I didn’t have enough resources to learn the material that I was working on. The people here are more than willing to help you get started and I always felt comfortable asking questions. Managers also always made time for us by having weekly meetings and responding to any questions or concerns quickly.

Assessment of Learning and Development

As an Electrical & Computer Engineer, I took several programming classes including Object-Oriented Programming. Although not required for the work that we do, it is helpful to know the topic to gain a better understanding of how the system works. Using good coding techniques such as creating generic cases and commenting efficiently was also helpful. Workday was a great place to learn how to work in a
professional environment as I learned how to work within a team along with doing work assigned specifically to me. Effectively communicating with the team was also a strong skill set that I developed during my time there. There were usually multiple issues to handle at any given time so balancing time and remembering to follow-up with other issues was also important. We had team meetings twice a week and so I learned how to update others on the work that I have been doing and listen to others carefully to know who I should talk to when I need help with specific things. In general, everyone at Workday is super approachable and I never felt uncomfortable asking questions or getting help when needed. If I was to have the same opportunity again, I would try to ask for more work after the first week. Training was necessary in the beginning but it was easier to just dive into existing work and learn more through that.

Life Outside of Co-op

I was very satisfied with my housing arrangement during my time in California. There is an apartment complex right next to the Workday office and so the two other co-ops and I just got an apartment there. It was relatively cheap after we split the cost of rent and utilities across the three of us. If we had any problems in our apartment, we would report it to maintenance and they would fix it usually by the next business day. There are several restaurants in the area and a mall in walking distance as well. To get groceries, there is a bus stop in walking distance that takes you to Safeway (grocery store similar to Wegmans), Target, and other stores which are about 10 minutes away. There are several Workday employees that live in the area and so we often drove with them to get groceries as well. To get to San Francisco, we took a bus to the BART (train) station which would take about 40 minutes to get downtown. There is construction underway for another BART station and that would just be walking distance.

There are plenty of opportunities for social activities. Within the company itself, there is a club consisting of all the college hires and co-op/interns. Activities such as movie nights, sport days, and lunches with high-ranking Workday employees are organized by this group. Through this, we were able to even have lunch with Dave Duffield and Aneel Bhusri (co-founder and co-CEOs of Workday). Along with the help of the other co-op interns, I also organized casino nights at work for this club which was a lot of fun. There are company sport teams as well for basketball and soccer so it is possible to join those
as well. The Cornell Silicon Valley also organizes some events that are free for co-ops that we attended where we met lots of other co-op interns in the area. I was also fortunate to be able to organize a trip to Los Angeles during Thanksgiving weekend with other co-op interns in the Bay Area and people from Workday.

Evaluation

Overall, the best feature of this job was really just working at such a great cultured company. We always felt appreciated during our time here and the work never became too stressful. There weren't any problems communicating any questions and concerns that you might have. I really enjoyed my time here.

The only bad feature that I can think of about my term is that it was a bit of a slow start in the beginning.
Corinne Lusher  
ccl72  
Operations Research and Information Engineering  
Workday  
Fall 2011

This past semester I co-oped at Workday, a company that provides Human Resource Management software to other companies. I worked in the Test Engineering Department, the purpose of which was to write automated tests for the software. My time was split half and half between writing the aforementioned tests and doing a separate project, the goal of which was similarly creating an automated process to hopefully remove day-to-day manual labor in a process at Workday. The project involved Java coding and the automated tests are written in a separate (but still object-oriented) language unique to Workday. The course work at Cornell that this co-op most related to was CS-2110, although I believe any major would enjoy the work.

We had an assigned mentor during our time at Workday. We would meet several times per week to review the status of the group project we were assigned and to resolve any other outstanding issues. We also had weekly meetings for the whole Test Engineering department, which I enjoyed because it is nice to know what other team members are doing and what projects they are working on.

Our mentor headed up a team of myself and the other co-ops called Generation Workday Beta, which was recently formed at Workday. It is for younger interns and recent college grads to determine where their interests lie and to explore different areas of the company. This team was beneficial and will continue to be because it enables you to find out about departments other than your own that may be of interest.

One of the most best features of Workday was the culture. There are an abundance of recent college grads at Workday that participate in weekly sports events and other fun outings. Everyone at Workday was friendly and intellectual and they were all incredibly fun people to hang out with. We had two company outings, one a picnic at a local winery, the other was a Urban Spy Adventure in San Francisco. Co-workers were also very eager to help you if you had questions at work. It was great being able to ask the people in the same pod as me for help when needed.

At my time at Workday, I lived at home because I am from Pleasanton. There are a lot of things to do in the Bay Area but it does help if you have a car. However, there are trains to San Francisco and Berkeley which are very convenient.

At the end of the semester, we presented the project we worked on to others, which was gratifying because I felt the work that we did was valuable. In addition, the co-op allowed us to practice professional skills such verbal communication and writing. The interesting work and great people made Workday a very enjoyable experience and I very much look forward to returning in the summer.
Corinne Lusher  
ccl72  
Operations Research  
Workday Inc.  
Summer 2012

This summer I was part of the Generation Workday Beta Team, which is a subset of the Test Engineering group. My projects this summer did not deal with testing or quality assurance, which was touched upon in the first semester of my co-op. Instead, I worked on a project team to develop internal tools for other teams within the company. The goal for all the projects was to automate processes teams would normally have to perform manually. I learned a lot about good application design principles and object oriented programming. I also learned a new programming language (Ruby). Because this project was team-based, our team met every morning to discuss what we did yesterday, what we planned to do the next day, and any obstacles we encountered. These daily meetings were very helpful in order to gather thoughts about the project and stay on track with deadlines. We also had code reviews, which were very helpful to the process. We had an assigned mentor for the project. There are also full time Generation Workday Beta members who are available to answer any questions we might have.

My co-op related to the computer science side of the Operations Research major. In addition to coding, I was able to perform some mobile testing for Workday on the iPhone and iPad. I really enjoyed my co-op because of all the new technologies I learned about and the wealth of skills I gained working in a professional environment. There are also a lot of interns at Workday so it was nice to talk to them about their work to see what area I may potentially want to work in. Probably the best part of Workday is the culture. People here are extremely nice and willing to help. This co-op was a highly positive experience due to the interesting projects we were assigned and the people we worked with in order to complete them.

In terms of housing, most people live in the Stoneridge mall apartments which are right next to Workday. The Stoneridge Bart station is also walk-able from work, so it is easy to commute to Berkeley or San Francisco. The wealth of interns and the beautiful bay area lend to ample social opportunities. Workday also had sports nights every week, which was extremely fun to participate in.

I honestly do not have any negative experiences from my co-op term. If I were to go through the same experience again though, I would have talked to more people throughout my internship here, learning what they do and what projects they are involved in. I know that I personally was unsure what direction to take with my major, so I believe it is invaluable to leverage your social network to find out what areas may interest you for the future. I had a great experience here and am very happy to have gained the work experience that I did.