



**LAKELAND**  
UNIVERSITY



# COOPERATIVE EDUCATION

## STUDENT GUIDE

2020-2021

# LETTER TO STUDENT

Dear Student,

*The Career Readiness and Cooperative Education team is excited to provide you with information about the undergraduate cooperative education experiences at Lakeland University. This structure was established in spring 2017 and is now a critical part of a Lakeland University student experience that reaches all academic programs.*

*Cooperative education was designed to provide you with the opportunity to gain real-world experiences that will aid in your educational journey, connect you with area businesses and organizations and help support your educational expenses.*

*We are very proud of our Founding Employer Partners that have committed their support to Lakeland University to better prepare students for a future workforce. We expect that you will gain important professional skills, develop clarity around your long-term career goals and gain a competitive edge in the job market.*

*This guide will provide you with an overview of the policies and procedures as you go about the journey. Welcome to Lakeland University and all that we have to offer!*

Sincerely,

**Career Readiness & Cooperative Education**

career@lakeland.edu

920-565-1044

William A. Krueger - Office #103



To learn more about students who have experienced cooperative education, please visit [facebook.com/lakelanduniversitycareer](https://facebook.com/lakelanduniversitycareer)

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# INTRODUCTION TO COOPERATIVE EDUCATION

**We know that students learn best by actively applying what they are learning in the classroom.**

By incorporating work experiences into an academic experience, students deepen their learning and are supported to develop themselves as professionals.

Students can gain valuable technical and professional skills through multiple co-op work experiences. Cooperative education at Lakeland University is a partnership among students, the university, employers and academic faculty.

Employer partners representing a diverse group of professional work environments and industries, eagerly collaborate with the university to hire well-prepared, highly motivated students.

By participating in co-op, employers are actively developing their future pipeline of talent and directly influencing the education of students entering a variety of professions.

## KEY TERMS

### Cooperative Education (Co-op) Experience

A professional learning experience that is paid and supports your skills development. It is supervised, evaluated and disciplined.

### Co-op Employer

The organization or corporation employing a cooperative education student for the duration of a term, and provides professional development opportunities and mentorships for students.

### Professional Protocol (EXP 100)

Required, preparatory, career and job search course. Students must be enrolled in this one-credit, graded course and satisfactorily complete the course to participate in credit-bearing co-op employment.

### Cooperative Education Seminar (EXP 300)

Required during an active work experience to reflect upon the opportunity and and further develop professional skills.



## FOUNDING PARTNERS

Lakeland University is very grateful for the support from the Sheboygan County community to establish cooperative education. We continue to actively engage with these area businesses to develop the model and structure that prepare Lakeland University students to be competitive for opportunities. The following employers have been involved from the beginning, and we thank them for their contributions.



**KOHLER®**

United Way of  
Sheboygan County



BLUE HARBOR RESORT  
& CONFERENCE CENTER



  
**CliftonLarsonAllen**



**SARGENTO®**



As cooperative education grows, we will be engaging in conversations with new partners to help identify opportunities that will provide appropriate experiences for degree specific programs. For a current listing of partners, visit: [lakeland.edu/partners](http://lakeland.edu/partners)





## STRUCTURE

The cooperative education experience is comprised of three major components: professional preparation, the work experience and the reflection of the learning that takes place on the job.

**Preparation:** To ensure a student is ready to successfully participate in credit-bearing co-op employment, all cooperative education students must complete EXP 100, a one-credit seminar course, earning a minimum of a "C" grade.

**Work Experience:** The co-op work experience is structured to offer flexibility for students. Depending upon the requirements of the academic program, students may work several experiences of varying lengths. Please refer to the academic catalog, have a discussion with your academic advisor, or meet with a Career Readiness team member about your specific goals.

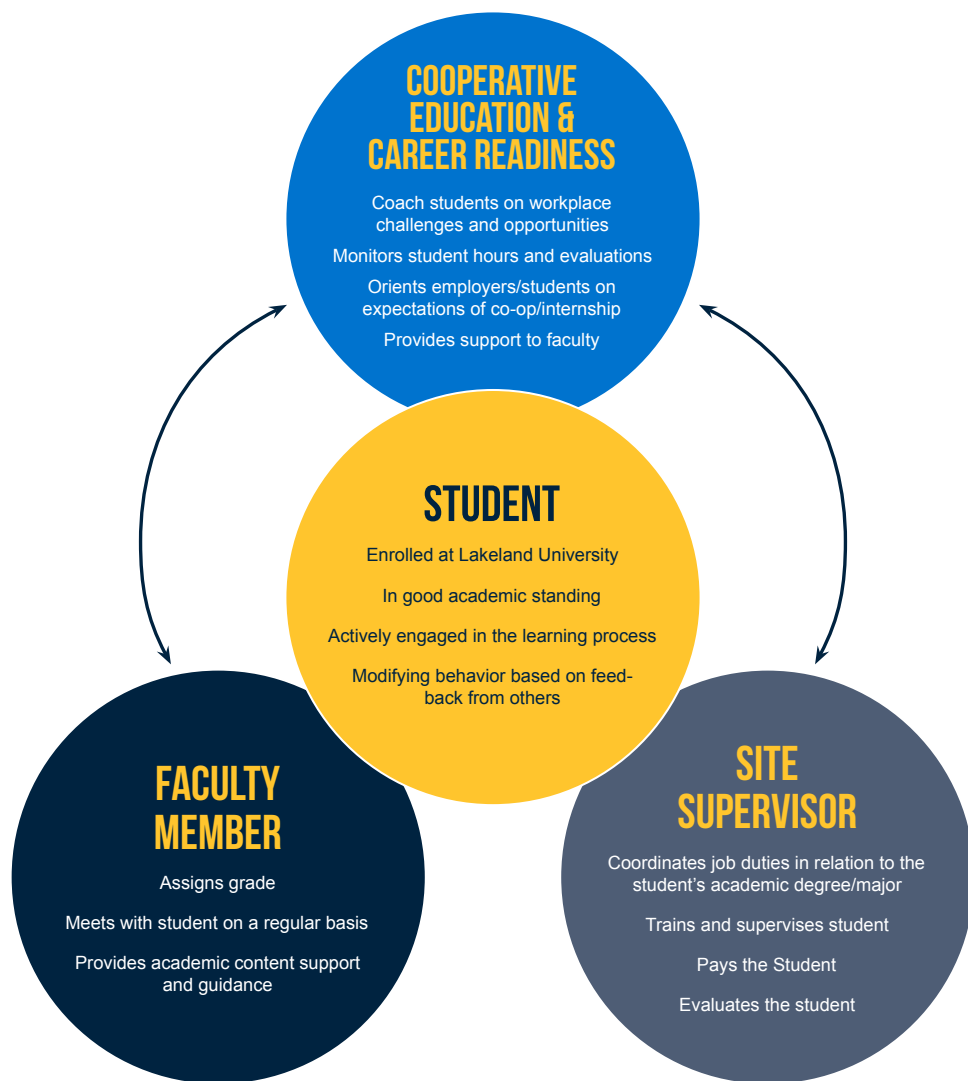
**Reflection:** While enrolled in a co-op work experience, students complete a one-credit co-op reflection course, Cooperative Education Seminar (EXP 300).

## LEARNING THROUGH THE EXPERIENCE

Reflection is a critical component of learning through cooperative education - it is what turns a simple experience into a learning experience. Throughout participation in cooperative education, lessons and assignments help facilitate learning. Students are expected to improve their understanding of the working world, explore their interests and preferences and gain knowledge about their strengths, skills and talents. While participating in a cooperative education experience, students will also be enrolled in EXP 300. This aids students in identifying their technical and professional skills and explore how these skills and employer connections might be transferred into both their academic program and future occupation environments.

## PARTNERSHIP

We believe that students learn best when they feel supported and guided through a process. While a student is working with a organization and a direct supervisor, there are regular check-in points with a Cooperative Education & Career Readiness team member and a student's faculty advisor. It is our goal that with strong partnerships, site supervisors feel comfortable engaging in regular communication with the Lakeland University faculty and staff, as we positively support and mentor the student every step of the way.



# PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

Co-op is a structured experience for students in good academic standing as defined by the academic catalog. Those enrolled in Cooperative Education need to maintain satisfactory progress toward their degree.

- **Academic:** Students must minimally have a 2.0 GPA to be eligible to participate in cooperative education and maintain a 2.5 GPA for continued cooperative education options. The GPA is reviewed on an annual basis during the financial aid awarding process. If a student does not meet the requirements, a student may submit an appeal for review. Academic challenges may impact a student's ability to remain in cooperative education; until academic concerns are resolved, the student's co-op status could be delayed.
- **Tuition & Fees:** Students are required to pay tuition while they are enrolled in classes. Maintaining full-time status allows students to continue to live in a residence hall (if they choose), participate in student organizations and have access to campus resources. Maintaining full-time enrollment also allows students to retain health insurance, prevents loans from having to be paid, and permits students to earn academic scholarships.
- **Earning Academic Credit and Maintaining Student Status:** While engaged in a co-op, students are able to maintain their full-time student status. Co-op education awards academic credit for the integrated co-op courses a student enrolls in before and during the co-op work experience.
- **International students** may participate, but must consult with a SEVIS Official for approval one semester prior to all work experiences.
- **Students must resolve any disciplinary, financial or academic probation issues,** or have their co-op advisor approve a plan to resolve these issues, prior to being referred to a co-op employer.

# SCHOLARSHIP REQUIREMENTS

To ensure the renewal of scholarship each academic year, students must:

- Report employment each term (fall, spring, and summer) via Handshake OR work-on-campus. Students may vary the amount of hours worked per term from 5 to 40 hours per week.
- Meet with a member of the Career Readiness team fall and spring semester to evaluate co-op and career related goals.
- Meet with a member of the Financial Aid and Educational Funding team each fall and spring to evaluate financial goals.

# EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING STUDENT ASSOCIATION

Established in 2018, the Co-Op Association was designed for all students who are motivated to succeed in their future career. The students coordinate various activities to connect with employers, learn about Sheboygan-area community groups and complete a service project each year. Events include tours of major companies, speakers on employment related issues and the plan a professional clothing drive. Cooperative education students are highly encouraged to participate and attend the regular meetings. The group is advised by the Career Readiness staff. We welcome all students to participate, regardless of year in school or major.





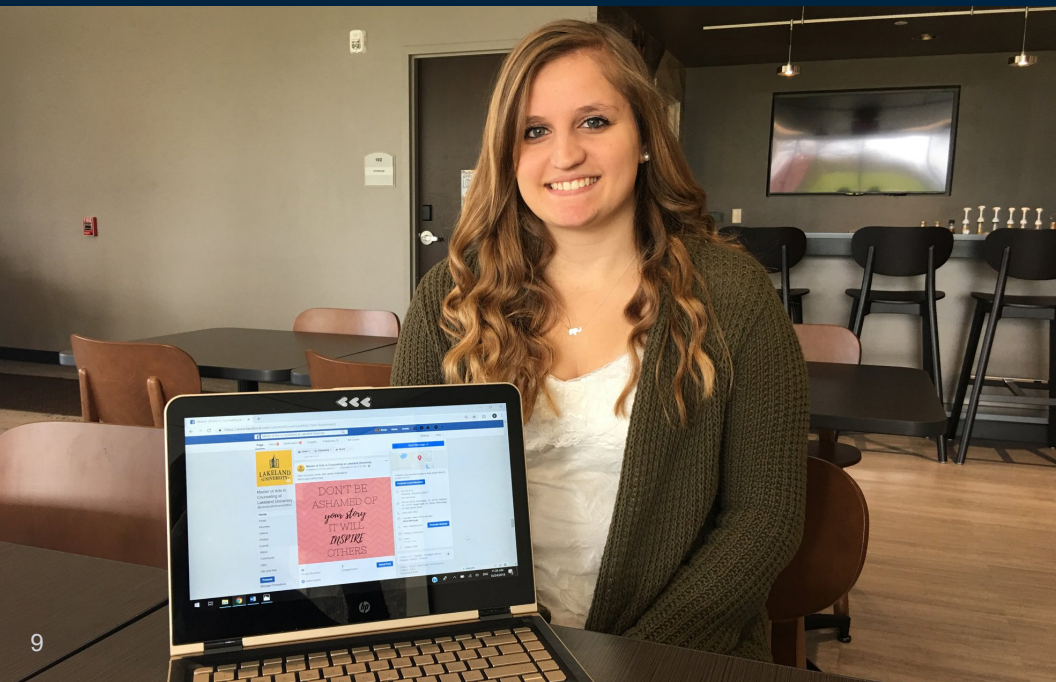
# PREPARATION FOR CO-OP EMPLOYMENT

**UPON ADMISSION TO THE UNIVERSITY,** students may have been awarded a scholarship for co-op participation. Students are then placed into an on-campus position in areas such as the fitness center, library, facilities, food service, or operations. Students will work up to 15 hours per week to establish their connections on campus and for evaluative purposes prior to going off-campus. If a student has any performance concerns in the on-campus role, the Career Readiness team assists in providing feedback for growth and improvement. On-Campus positions are intentionally developmental in nature and provide a safe-space for growth.

If an on-campus role does not provide enough financial support or hours per week, students can work with the Career Readiness team to explore other competitive options.

**EXP 100: PROFESSIONAL PROTOCOL** is a required preparatory course designed to provide students with the necessary resources and strategies to successfully secure a co-op experience. Through a variety of interactive teaching methods and assignments, students will participate in activities that include: self-assessment, industry research and goal setting. Students will prepare to engage in the job search process through resume writing, interviewing, professional networking and practicing professional behaviors. The goal of this course is to assist each student in developing a plan to successfully participate in a cooperative education experience.

*EXP 100: Professional Protocol is a one-credit, letter graded course. Students must receive a minimum of a "C" grade to be considered for co-op employment.*



# CO-OP SEARCH

A minimum of one semester prior to a student engaging in a cooperative education work experience, students need to begin to evaluate options and connect with employers. The following are strategies and options to do so.

*Note: Some employers begin the recruitment process one year prior to the experience. If you have interest in working with a particular organization, you are encouraged to connect with Career Readiness as early as possible.*

## ONLINE JOB BOARD

Handshake is Lakeland University's online database of co-op, internship, and job opportunities. New employers are connecting with us to post positions and interview opportunities across the nation daily! Employer partners can also utilize the platform to identify candidates of interest. Students must have a resume on file.



## INTERVIEWS FOR CO-OP EMPLOYMENT

Most employers contact students directly to schedule interviews for co-op employment. The interview may be held on campus, on-site or via phone/Skype. It is not unusual for students to participate in several rounds of interviews with an employer before a decision is reached. Career Readiness team members assist students in preparing for interviews. If questions arise around employer communication, the student should consult directly with the Career Readiness team.

## FINDING YOUR OWN OPPORTUNITY

While Lakeland University has a range of resources available to help students to find a co-op position, students are also encouraged to call upon their own connections to find a suitable experience. Students may apply directly on company sites and utilize a variety of searching techniques. Students should work closely with a Career Readiness team member to make sure a position found outside of the university's resources meets co-op requirements.

## INTERNSHIP & CO-OP FAIRS

Internship & Co-Op Fairs occur every October and February on-campus. Lakeland University also provides transportation to other major fairs in the region, including the WorkForce Career & Internship Fair hosted by the Wisconsin Independent Private Colleges in Milwaukee and the Lakeshore Community Job Fair. For specific dates and details, check out Handshake.

“ Career Readiness and faculty help **open doors for students** and actively connect students with employers. We are proud of our **personal relationships** with hiring managers and will assist in connecting students to appropriate organizations. This has always been a special aspect of LU and part of who we are! ”

-Jess Lambrecht

Associate Vice President for Cooperative Education & Career Readiness



# CO-OP TIMELINE

The following is a suggested hiring timeline for our employer partners. Students are advised to connect with employers approximately one semester prior to start date to ensure full consideration.

## JAN – SUMMER JUNE – DEC

Summer	Sept – Oct	Explore co-op and career interests with Career Readiness
Aug 1	Jan 5	Positions posted via Handshake
Aug – Oct	Jan – Feb	Submit applications via Handshake
Early Oct	Feb	Internship Co-op Fair Participation
Mid-Oct – Nov 30	Feb – March	Interview with organizations of interest
Dec 15	April 15	Deadline for employers to extend an offer to ensure academic credit for term.
Dec 15 – Jan 1	April 15 – May 1	Report co-op via Handshake for academic approval and verification of offer.
Jan 6	May 15	Student can begin employment prior to the start of the term, but must begin within the first 10 days of the term.
End of Feb	End of June	Evaluation Requested
Early May	Early Aug	Evaluation Requested
Summer Term	Fall Term	Continued work experience and evaluations

## FLEXIBLE START

We recognize that some employers may have needs that are developed/created during times of organizational growth and may not always be able to follow the timeline suggested above.

*If a student works part-time hours and for a longer time period than suggested above, the hiring timeline is still the same. However, credits/hours of work can vary based on employment needs/demands.*



# JOB OFFERS

## **ACCEPTING A JOB OFFER**

Students are expected to notify the Career Readiness team upon receiving an offer (verbal/written) of co-op employment. Often verbal offers are extended to students in advance of formal, written notification. Once a co-op employer extends an offer, students are expected to notify the employer within three business days if they intend to accept or decline the offer. When the student verbally accepts a co-op position, he/she has committed to the position and must refrain from seeking alternate co-op employment.

## **COMPENSATION**

All students receive compensation while employed during a co-op experience. Career Readiness staff may consult with employers to help develop appropriate pay scales; students should be aware that significant variances in pay rates exist among positions.

## **PRE-EMPLOYMENT SCREENING**

Many co-op employers require applicants to undergo a pre-employment screening, such as drug testing, credit checks, physical examination, security clearance and/or criminal record checks. Failure to complete and pass these checks may prevent a student from being hired for that position.

## **TRANSPORTATION & HOUSING**

Transportation, relocation and housing are the responsibility of the student. Students living on campus who accept a position within the area may continue living on campus. Shuttle services are available for residential students locally and students may request transportation as needed.

Students who secure a position out of the Sheboygan area are encouraged to inquire with their employer for suggestions on available housing options. The Career Readiness team could also provide alumni in various communities for additional support and guidance.

## **TRANSFER STUDENTS**

Transfer students must have successfully completed at least one full-time semester prior to their work experience or gain approval from the co-op advisor.

## **FORMS/PAPERWORK/SCREENINGS**

Once employment is confirmed, students must complete all company employment forms and report their professional co-op hire in Handshake. Students

must also make certain there are no advising or financial holds on their student record. Active holds will prevent registration for the co-op experience and the student from starting co-op employment.

Once an offer of co-op employment has been extended by an organization and accepted by a Lakeland University student, all of the co-op partners, including the university, enter into an agreement that outlines the expectations and responsibilities for all parties. It is the co-op student's responsibility to initiate the completion of the co-op agreement in Handshake. The co-op agreement form has several required parts and it must be on file prior to the start of student experience.

## **NECESSARY PAPERWORK FOR EMPLOYER**

Students are encouraged to have access to all necessary documents for a timely process.

- **Verification of eligibility to work:** All students must complete an I-9 to verify their identity and legal authorization to work. See the following site for a list of acceptable document(s) you will need to provide the employer [//www.uscis.gov/i-9-central/acceptable-documents](http://www.uscis.gov/i-9-central/acceptable-documents).
- **Tax withholding:** Employers will require co-op students to complete tax withholding documents.
- **Other:** Each employer may have its own set of additional documents co-op students will need to complete.

## **ABSENCES & MEDICAL LEAVES**

Students should contact their supervisor immediately if they must be absent because of illness or emergency. If the absence lasts for an extended period, students should contact their direct supervisor and consult with Career Readiness to determine the best plan of action. Students are advised that interrupted enrollment (including leaving a co-op early) may have an impact on student loan grace periods and repayment expectations.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION & SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY**

Access to the Cooperative Education program is available without regard to race, color, sex, religion, creed, marital status, ancestry, citizenship, arrest record, conviction record, military discharge record, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, veteran status or any other characteristic protected under federal, state or local laws. For assistance or to request accommodations, please contact the Career Readiness team.

## **ECONOMIC CONDITIONS**

On rare occasions, economic conditions may force employers to terminate co-op employment before the end of the co-op term. If a co-op student is notified of a layoff, the student should contact a Career Readiness team member as soon as possible to make other arrangements for the co-op term.

## **TERMINATION**

Co-op students are expected to perform their work assignments like any other employee at the partnering company. Employers may terminate a co-op student for reasons such as unsatisfactory performance, irregular attendance or tardiness or unacceptable behavior. Employers are encouraged to contact the Career Readiness team to discuss concerns and to assist with resolving any problems. Students should contact Career Readiness team member immediately if they have been discharged from their co-op position.





# SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Employers are required by law to provide reasonable accommodations for a qualified individual with a disability. Students who believe that they will need a reasonable accommodation to apply for a co-op position should make the request to the Career Readiness team and discuss with their potential employer. Career Readiness team members can assist students and answer questions regarding co-op employment.

## FINANCIAL AID

It is important for students to contact the Financial Aid and Educational Funding office in order to understand and maximize student aid. Students who rely on financial aid to fund their education must understand how aid may be handled or affected by co-op participation.

To receive financial aid, students must be enrolled in credits during the co-op semester. One of the primary financial benefits of participating in cooperative education is that the federal government does not require students to include their professional co-op earnings as part of their expected student contribution on the FAFSA form.

## STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Co-op students are ambassadors of Lakeland University and are expected to observe Lakeland University's student conduct code as outlined in the student handbook. While on co-op, the student is an employee of the company and is under the supervision of that organization in the performance of duties. Each student is expected to meet all of the requirements of professionalism inherent in the employing organization.

A copy of the Lakeland University student handbook can be found at: [lakeland.edu/shandbook](http://lakeland.edu/shandbook)

## VACATION & TIME-OFF

Students are expected to work from the beginning of the co-op term to the end of the work assignment. Exact start and end dates must be clarified before accepting an offer; students should discuss these dates with their employer and the Career Readiness team. Students on co-op observe only company holidays, not university holidays or vacations during the co-op semester. Employers expect students to be responsible and have regular punctual attendance while working as a co-op. Students are expected to arrange for personal and college-related commitments to take place outside of regular working hours.

## MILITARY STUDENTS

Students with military training obligations that require time off from work should notify a Career Readiness team member and their prospective employer. Students in the military reserves who get activated for service while on co-op should contact the Veteran's Coordinator to ensure appropriate military leave is recorded with the university.

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

All international students are required to complete documentation with the SEVIS Official following acceptance of a co-op position and prior to the beginning of their co-op term. International students should work closely with the Career Readiness team and the SEVIS Official to complete paperwork. The student must receive written authorization prior to starting employment to ensure that they are not in violation of their visa status. Any changes in employment or employment dates require prior approval from the Career Readiness team and the SEVIS Official to ensure compliance.

## STUDENT-ATHLETES

Lakeland University works with the athletic department and coaches to determine appropriate co-op cycles for athletes to accommodate students' schedules. It is the student's responsibility to request co-op work schedule modifications at the time of the interview. At the employer's discretion, co-op work schedules can be modified on a case-by-case basis.



# RECOGNITION EVENTS



**EXP<sub>y</sub>**  
AWARDS

## EXP<sub>y</sub>'S

In winter, we host an annual recognition event to showcase the successes of our students and employers. A review committee evaluates nominations for consideration. Students, employers, faculty members, staff, and family members are invited to participate. Select nominations may proceed onto national award levels for continued recognition.

## CO-OP SIGNING DAY

In December and May of each year, Lakeland University hosts signing events to recognize students who will be partnering with organizations in the subsequent term and earn academic credit. We expect that all students involved in a cooperative education learning experience will attend and request the participation of partnering employers/supervisors. For exact dates/information, please contact the Career Readiness team.

## REFLECTIVE PRESENTATIONS

At the end of each term, students who complete a credit-bearing cooperative education experience are required to give a presentation to their peers, supervisors, and invited guests. Students provide insight into their experiential education term and share the skills and abilities that were developed during the term.

### **Co-op Participation Does Not Guarantee Employment**

*Career Readiness & Cooperative Education team members will make every reasonable effort to help students prepare search materials, interview successfully and secure a position, but Lakeland University does not guarantee that every student will secure a co-op. Working closely with a Career Readiness staff and actively engaging in a job search will increase the likelihood that a student will secure an experience. Employers, ultimately, make the final hiring decision. While the student's interests are a significant part of the hiring equation, it is important for students to maintain a broad perspective on opportunities to gain experience.*

COMMUNITY

in our body that protects against disease

system

identify pathogens

ies

contact with antigen

blue print

reintroduce





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