KOOP Apprenticeship & Programmer Training

What to Expect

KOOP's Training Team offers monthly training classes on the third week of the month. Any active KOOP volunteer, who has logged at least one hour of time into the volunteer tracking system (Journyx), is eligible to participate in these training sessions and complete the process to become a certified KOOP programmer.

Certified KOOP Programmers are eligible to submit a new program proposal to the Programming Committee, join an existing program collective, or substitute host an existing KOOP show.

The Process

The training process is structured to ensure the "trainee" or "apprentice" receives the right information at the right time. This approximately four to six-month process is designed to flow as follows:

- Volunteer completes and logs at least one hour of volunteer time a month.
- Volunteer attends the two-part KOOP & FCC Training class (3rd Monday and Tuesday of each Month) and completes the apprenticeship application and becomes an apprentice.
- Based on the information in the apprenticeship application, the training team assigns each apprentice to an existing KOOP program to observe.
- After the fifth observation, the apprentice is eligible to participate in the two-part Studio Training class (3rd Wednesday and Thursday of each month).
- The apprentice completes the required 10 observations
- The apprentice takes the certification tests (written and hands on).
- Upon successful completion of the process, the apprentice signs the KOOP Programmers Agreement and becomes a KOOP programmer.

The training program is divided into five key parts: Classes, Apprenticeship, Training Record, Testing, and Certification.

Classes

There are two, two-part classes:

- The first classes, held on the 3rd Monday and Tuesday of each month cover KOOP's internal policies and procedures, Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulations for all radio broadcasts, and the FCC's special regulations for nonprofit radio stations. Send an email to trainme@koop.org to schedule.
- The second classes cover use of KOOP's broadcast studios and equipment (turntables, CD players, Enco, Axia control consoles, etc.). Volunteers are eligible to attend this class after their fifth observation; send an email to trainme@koop.org to schedule.

Apprenticeship

During the first class, trainees submit an apprenticeship application. These applications are used to assign each trainee to an existing KOOP show for apprenticeship observations. Observations consist of being in studio to see the show being produced for a minimum of 30 minutes. Apprentices must observe on 10 different dates to complete the observations.

Apprentices may complete their observations as their personal schedule allows. They are not required to observe each consecutive week. If there are scheduling conflicts for the assigned program time, the apprentice may contact the Training Team for a reassignment. The Training Team will email apprentices with the contact information for the host of the program they are assigned. It is recommended that apprentices and mentors make contact to set up timing for the first observation.

Apprentices should communicate with the mentoring programmer about their expected observation schedule. This helps the mentoring programmer to plan shows. Apprentices are encouraged to ask questions during or after observations (consulting with the mentoring programmer about the best way to do this without disrupting the program being aired). This helps maximize the value of the hands-on instruction and enables the apprentice to develop the skills required to successfully produce and engineer a program at KOOP.

Training Records (Scorecards)

Each active apprentice has a "scorecard", which is to be signed by a Training Team member after each class and by the Programming Mentor for each show observation. The apprentice may need to remind his/her mentor.

Testing

After a trainee has completed all classes (4) and observations (10), s/he may take the KOOP programmer test. The test is part written and part hands-on and includes questions about KOOP policy, FCC rules and regulations, and demonstration of studio use.

Certification

Upon successful testing, the apprentice completes the KOOP Programmer Agreement and becomes a certified KOOP Programmer.

KOOP General Information

The first and only cooperatively run radio station in the United States, KOOP is a 3,000-watt, licensed non-commercial, radio station serving Austin, Texas. KOOP shares its 91.7FM frequency with KVRX, student radio at the University of Texas at Austin. At KOOP, we have created a community resource where anyone can receive training and learn how to promote, produce, and host a radio show. Being part of KOOP means being part of the most diverse radio station in Austin and Central Texas. It can be fun and rewarding, and is also a serious time commitment.

With the exception of a few paid office staff, KOOP is completely run by volunteers. This means that all programmers are required to perform volunteer work for the station (see Volunteer Requirements section). KOOP has a modest annual operating budget. Funding is raised in several ways, including two membership drives per year, underwriting, fundraisers, city contracts, and grants.

KOOP's Mission Statement

KOOP's mission is to enrich and engage the community by cooperatively broadcasting under-represented voices that express our diversity through (high-quality) music, news and educational opportunities.

KOOP Broadcast Schedule

KOOP broadcasts on 91.7 FM. Our regular airwave broadcast hours are Monday through Friday, 9AM - 7PM and Saturdays & Sundays, 9AM - 10PM. KOOP also produces Internet-only at koop.org, broadcasting most weekday evenings 7PM - 11PM.

Station Meeting

Station meetings are usually held on the first Monday of each month. (Any changes due to holidays/ conflicts are published on KOOP List. The meetings are open to everyone and all volunteers are strongly encouraged to attend. (Attending volunteers earn thirty minutes of volunteer time.) The usual location is the Vortex Repertory Theater 2307 Manor Road.

Station Contact Information

Office/Executive Director: (512) 472-1369

Studio: (512) 472-5667 (472-KOOP); (888) 917-5667 (toll free)

Executive Director: Kim McCarson (kim@koop.org)

Development Director: Leah Manners (leah@koop.org)

Bookkeeper: Charlie Martin (charlie@koop.org)

Volunteer Coordinator: Lisa Scheps Lisa@koop.org

General Questions: info@koop.org

Volunteer Contact Information

Since most KOOP operations and team efforts are 100% volunteer, email is the preferred method of communication. It allows volunteers to respond in a way that doesn't conflict with other commitments.

Email List

The KOOP list serve groups are the primary form of communication for KOOP members. It is important to use the list to stay informed about activities, news, and information. Many of the KOOP teams have an email list of their own. You can subscribe to the general list by sending a request to kooplist@koop.org.

- **KOOPlist** – For programmers, apprentices, and volunteers; others may also request membership on this list.
- **KOOPnews** – For news and public affairs programmers
- **KOOPmusic** – For music programmers and music Library volunteers
- **KOOP Tech Team** - for the Tech Team
- **KOOP IT Team** - for the Information Technology (IT) Team
- **KOOP Training Team** - for Training Team Members
- **KOOP Production List** - for Production Team Members

Area Coordinators

Each KOOP committee, team, as well as the Board of Directors, have a volunteer who functions as 'Area Coordinator' (AC) to manage the activities or communications of that group. (This is also the person who is authorized to approve volunteer hours for work performed in conjunction with that team or committee.) For information about volunteer opportunities in a specific area, contact the AC. Many volunteer opportunities are also posted regularly on the KOOP list serve.

Useful Emails

At this time, there is not a centralized directory of contact information for individual programmers. Below is a list of emails for different groups and specific areas at KOOP

- Board – Board@koop.org
- CC – CommunityCouncil@koop.org
- PC – KoopPC@koop.org
- Training – Training@koop.org
- Radioactivity – Radioactivity@koop.org
- Website – Webmaster@koop.org
- Journyx – Volunteerhours@koop.org
- Volunteer Coordinator – Volunteer@koop.org

Volunteer Requirements

KOOP relies on volunteers for all aspects of operations. The daily operation of the station alone is a huge task. Therefore, KOOP has a specific policy that defines the time contribution required of voting Volunteers and Programmers. Volunteer hours are carefully tracked to ensure smooth operation of the station.

Volunteer in Good Standing

Any volunteer who has performed and logged, at least the required minimum quantity of volunteer time for the previous three months is considered to be 'in good standing' which allows him/her to be a voting member of the cooperative and eligible to participate in the Programmer Training Program.

Programmer

Every programmer must be a volunteer member of KOOP in good standing and have completed the required training/certification process. Programmers with active programs on the broadcast schedule (air or Internet), must complete additional volunteer time based on the length of their program. Each broadcast hour requires a ½ hour of additional volunteer work per month. This is calculated based on an average four-week month (see chart below).

Programmer in Good Standing

For a programmer to be in good standing (relative specifically to volunteering), the required volunteers hours (32 annual volunteer/membership drive plus hours calculated based on program) must completed and correctly logged in a timely manner. This is tracked on a quarterly basis.

Sample Hours Requirements for Programmers

If a programmer hosts a one-hour program each week, s/he will be on air four hours each month, so they will need to perform two hours of volunteer time monthly to be a programmer in good standing. The two program requirement hours are in addition to the one volunteer requirement, so the programmer will need to volunteer a total of three hours a month.

Member Type	Show Length	Monthly Hour Requirements		
		Volunteer	Show	Total
Volunteer		1		1
Programmer	30 Minutes	1	1	2
	60 Minutes	1	2	3
	90 Minutes	1	3	4
	120 Minutes	1	4	5

The Importance of Being in Good Standing

KOOP is able to function and stay on the air only because of the participation of all of our volunteers. It is especially critical that the programmers, who benefit from this effort, meet their commitments to the running of the station. Because of the amount and variety of work at the station, there is always an opportunity for volunteer hours. Although no one likes rules enforcement, it is necessary to ensure the station runs smoothly and volunteering is equitable.

Programmers not in Good Standing

Programmers, who do not meet their commitment for volunteer hours and logging, may be suspended and their program possibly cancelled.

Volunteers not in Good Standing

Volunteers not in good standing are ineligible to participate in programmer training.

Volunteers and programmers not in good standing are ineligible to vote in KOOP elections.

If, due to extraordinary circumstances, a programmer has a time period when it will not be possible to fulfill his/her volunteer obligations, s/he may set up a discussion with the Executive Director to determine how to remain in good standing. This should be carried out as soon as it appears there will be a problem, and must be done prior to the end of the reporting period when the difficulty is experienced.

Logging Volunteer Time

Every volunteer is responsible for keeping track of his/her own volunteer hours. Each month, hours must be self-reported on KOOP's web-based volunteer timekeeping system, Journyx.

The Executive Director and/or Volunteer Coordinator will establish an account on Journyx, which assigns the volunteer a user name and password. For every task reported, the date, amount of time and a brief description of the task performed are required.

- System login information – www.koop.org/volunteerhours
- Username: First initial and last name (i.e. jsmith where name is John Smith)
- Initial Password: koop

Volunteer Opportunities

There isn't always someone at the station to organize volunteer activities. Contacting an area coordinator in an area of interest is a great way to get involved and get consistent monthly hours. Possible volunteer opportunities include:

- Cleaning the station
- Assisting with administrative work
- Working with the Community Council to connect KOOP with the Austin community
- Tabling at different KOOP events around Austin
- Reviewing CDs
- Maintaining the station's on-air equipment with the Tech Team
- Making public service and underwriting announcements with the Production Team
- Review programs through the Peer Review process (contact the P.C. to sign up)

Regular Meetings

Some of the different ACs and volunteer teams meet at the station at regular times to offer volunteers opportunities to help make the station better.

- Tech Team meets almost every Thursday evening at 7pm
- Community Council hosts a work party most 2nd Saturdays
- IT & Web-design Team meets every 3rd Thursday (subject to change)

Volunteers may also attend any of the KOOP team or committee meetings. These meetings are a great place to learn about new KOOP projects and for volunteers to get involved. Some, but not all time spent participating in meetings on an ad hoc basis, will count towards volunteer hours. Most meetings are held on a regular monthly schedule and may be subject to change.

- Station Meeting held the 1st Monday of each month
- Community Council meets the 2nd Tuesday each month
- Training Team meets the 3rd Tuesday each month
- Programming Committee meets the 4th Thursday of each month
- Board of Directors meets the 4th Wednesday of each month

There may also be informal groups, which form for a specific purpose, e.g. News and Public Affairs Programmers, benefit night planning, Strategic Planning, or Policy & Procedure revisions. These meetings are generally announced on the KOOP list serve.

Any volunteer may see something at the station that could use some improvement. It is best to contact the related area coordinator, to see if it is something already in the works, or it is something new, which needs attention. Where there is a willing volunteer, many positive things may be accomplished. Without our volunteers, KOOP radio would not exist. A list of the current teams and area coordinators is at www.koop.org in the "Behind the Mics" section.

KOOP's Governance

KOOP is governed by its members; there are five member classes:

- Volunteer – Anyone that donates time to KOOP
- Programmer – A volunteer that has completed programmer training
- Supporter – Anyone who donated to KOOP at the membership level or higher
- Business member – A member of a local business that works with the Community Council
- Community member – A member of a local community organizations that works with the Community Council

Board of Directors

- The Board of Directors is the governing body of KOOP.
- Anyone can run for the Board of Directors, even if not a member of KOOP.
- There are nine members of the Board who serve staggered two-year terms.
- Board responsibilities include making/adopting policy for the station, strategic planning, hiring of the Executive Director, and approving the station budget.

Community Council

- The Community Council is KOOP's community outreach and station advisory body.
- Anyone can run for the Community Council, even if not a member of KOOP.
- There are up to sixteen council members who serve staggered two-year terms.
- Up to eight of those members represent community organizations, while the other eight represent business, volunteer and individual supporter members.

Programming Committee

- Programming Committee (PC) is the body that oversees KOOP's schedule.
- Only KOOP Programmers that are certified and in good standing for six months can run for the PC.
- There are seven PC members who serve staggered two-year terms.
- The PC makes decisions about KOOP's schedule changes during the two, six-month seasons of programming during the year.

Elections

The Election Oversight Committee organizes and oversees elections. Elections are held each year in October and the terms start in November. Board of Directors and Community Council are voted in by the entire membership. Only programmers in good standing are eligible to vote in Programming Committee elections. Anyone interested in serving on one of these bodies, or who simply wants more information, is encouraged to read KOOP's By-Laws and the Programming Policy document, available online at www.koop.org

Disciplinary Action

In order to safeguard the station and our FCC licensing, KOOP has implemented a series of policies, which have the potential for disciplinary actions when violated.

Any programmers or volunteers found with drugs on their person while at KOOP will be suspended immediately for thirty days. Programmers are responsible for the behavior of their guests while on the KOOP premises and are encouraged to relay this policy to any guests they may bring to the station. The following constitute typical, but not all, infractions for which warnings and suspensions may result:

- Not showing up or arriving unreasonably late for an on-air shift.
- Failure to log playlists.
- Failure to fulfill the minimum monthly and/or membership drive volunteer hour requirement
- Bringing drink or food into the on-air studios.
- Failure to comply with FCC regulations
    - Obscenity and indecency violations
    - Call-to-action violations
    - Commercial value mentions for products and/or events
    - Using words of enticement, such as "FREE"
    - Not filing a quarterly report (for news & public affair programs) with the Executive Director.
- Failure to properly complete logs, specifically:
    - Failure to sign logs
    - Failure to properly sign in and out of an on air shift
    - Failure to air and/or log Public Service Announcements (PSAs), Underwriting Announcements (UAs), or Promotional Announcements (PRMs)
    - Failure to log transmitter power meter information
    - Failure to air and/or log legal IDs

Disciplinary action for programmers is often suspension from air time. If deemed necessary a programmer's show may also be cancelled and, if warranted, a programmer or volunteer may be suspended from KOOP indefinitely.

Disciplinary Appeals

If a programmer or volunteer wishes to appeal a suspension or other disciplinary action an appeal request (verbal or written) is presented to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director declines the appeal, the programmer may then present the appeal request to the Board of directors. If a programmer wishes to appeal a portion of KOOP's policy and procedures s/he may present a proposed amendment to the policy and procedures to be voted on by the membership at a station meeting.