

Site Supervisor Internship Handbook



Why have an Intern?

- Interns bring new technology, ideas, and diversity to your organization.
- Interns provide an opportunity for your staff's career growth.
- Interns may become your future workforce.

This handbook includes important information and practical steps to make the internship as effective as possible for both your organization and the intern.

Criteria for an experience to be defined as an Internship

To ensure that an experience, whether it is a traditional internship or one conducted remotely or virtually, is educational, and thus eligible to be considered a legitimate internship by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) definition, all of the following criteria must be met:

1. The experience must be an extension of the classroom: a learning experience that provides for applying the knowledge gained in the classroom. It must not be simply to advance the operations of the employer or be the work that a regular employee would routinely perform.
2. The skills or knowledge learned must be transferable to other employment settings.
3. The experience has a defined beginning and end, and a job description with desired qualifications.
4. There are clearly designed learning objectives/goals related to the professional goals of the student's academic coursework.
5. There is supervision by a professional with expertise and educational and/or professional background in the field of experience.
6. There is routine feedback by the experienced supervisor.
7. There are resources, equipment, and facilities provided by the host employer that support learning objectives/goals.

If these criteria are followed, it is the opinion of NACE that the experience can be considered a legitimate internship:

<http://www.naceweb.org/about/membership/internship/>, July, 2011.

Keep in Mind

Even if a student is working through a school program for which he or she is being “paid” in college credits, the student still has the right, under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), to be paid unless the employer is not deriving an immediate advantage by using him/her.

Paid interns make ideal workers – hungry to learn, eager to make a good impression and willing to perform a multitude of tasks. The relatively small amount of money employers spend on intern wages and benefits is a good investment, because it often produces future, long-term employees.

The employer should identify the specific terms and conditions of employment (e.g. dates of employment, including date internship will end; compensation; organization and/or reporting relationships; principal duties, tasks, or responsibilities; working conditions; and other expectations of the employer), and should discuss these with the prospective intern, so that there is

no misunderstanding regarding the relationship. Also, we recommend that you document such a discussion with a written agreement setting forth both parties' understanding, and have it signed

Step 1 – Identify an Internship Site Coordinator

The Internship Site Coordinator is responsible for completing preparatory work in anticipation of the internship. This includes performing the needs assessment (step 2), setting goals and writing an internship position description (step 3), looking at resources the intern may need (step 4), assigning a mentor/supervisor (step 5), and assessing the value of the internship program at the organization.

When identifying the Internship Site Supervisor it is important to remember that students completing an internship are required to achieve a predetermined list of Learning Objectives. Learning Objectives are written statements that describe what the student will learn, be able to do or be able to demonstrate upon completion of the internship. These are advantageous for Site Coordinators because they help establish a framework to determine intern projects and responsibilities, as well as clear expectations and outcomes for the experience. For the experience to be mutually beneficial, we recommend selecting a Site Supervisor who is interested in the Learning Objectives and/or has a specific skill set that will foster a positive learning environment.

In addition, the supervisor should sit down with the intern at the beginning of the internship to develop personal Learning Objectives.

Step 2 – Assess Internal Needs

Some questions to ask yourself before contacting the College of Charleston:

- What are the ongoing substantive projects?
- What special or extra projects need to be developed or updated?
- What is the workload and how can we ease the workload of our department/organization?
- How many interns can we support?
- Do we have a need for part-time or full-time interns?
- How long will the internship last (12 weeks, 16 weeks, etc)?

Once you have considered these questions, please complete **Appendix A, the Internal Needs Assessment Form**.

Step 3 – Set Goals and Develop a Position Description

The goals of the internship can be based on the Internal Needs Assessment. Be sure that everyone, including management, agrees on the same goals and level of commitment to the internship program so that it is successful.

Once goals have been defined, work responsibilities may be determined. Challenging work assignments that complement and focus on a student's major or area of interest will sell the experience to students. Students who perform only menial tasks may learn little about applying

their expertise to a professional environment. While many students have worked to finance their education, an internship does not classify as a job. The internship is part of the academic program and should offer opportunities to link classroom learning to workplace environment.

Creating a list of work activities that fit your department and a detailed description of typical tasks will help the College to accurately promote your internship and attract the appropriate candidates. The activities and goals may be adjusted after you have selected an intern.

Some tasks that undergraduate students have completed in the past:

- Prepare budget/ financial reports
- Write press releases
- Generate marketing plans
- Conduct studies and research
- Plan and write social media content
- Design marketing material
- Maintain website
- Compose and edit grants
- Gallery management and promotion
- Prepare financial planning proposals
- Assist with creative brainstorming
- Develop and maintain client relationships

Step 4 – Allocate Resources

Financial – If you cannot pay your intern an hourly wage, try to explore other ways of providing monetary compensation such as: a small stipend, reimbursement for mileage/parking, lunch, or assistance with housing and other costs. This is especially important in the summer when students generally work fulltime to earn money to return to school in the fall.

Time – Be prepared for the intern to take some time away from supervisors or co-workers. The intern will have questions and there should be an orientation process as well as regular supervisor meetings.

Material Resources – Give your intern the resources they need. An intern that is constantly transferred from desk to desk senses that he/she is not really valuable.

Step 5 – Identify a Mentor/Supervisor

The internship mentor should be someone with knowledge of the project and the organization who is willing to train or teach and is committed to dedicate the time needed in helping the student achieve the Learning Outcomes (see Step 1 for full details). The success of the internship is grounded in planning and having an on-site person to mentor and supervise the intern on a daily basis. The mentor will monitor and evaluate the intern's tasks and responsibilities.

Tips for Mentors:

- Communicate – Give constructive feedback on a regular basis.
- Be prepared – Have tasks ready. When an intern is successful with one project, give him/her another task that uses the same skills on a larger scale or adds new skills.

- Include the intern – Make the intern feel part of the group. Take him/her to meetings/lunches.
- Be sensitive – Interns do not always possess the everyday knowledge you take for granted, such as office etiquette and appropriate dress. Provide coaching on these topics on an ongoing basis and also when needed.
- Be interested – Listen to the intern’s ideas. He/she wants to contribute to the organization.

Step 6 – Recruit, Select and Interview Candidates

Recruit – Contact the Career Center at the College of Charleston to post and recruit for your internship positions. Post your position on CISTERNonline by filling out our job form found at (<http://careercenter.cofc.edu/employers/listjobs.php>) and please read our ***Policies and Guidelines*** (<http://careercenter.cofc.edu/employers/postingpolicies.php>) for posting.

Begin recruiting early. The longer you are accepting applications, the more time you have to select a good candidate.

Screen Applicants – One difference you will notice in evaluating potential interns as opposed to job applicants is that interns will not have the same level of work experience listed on their résumés as job candidates. Students may instead list relevant coursework or academic projects they have completed, as well as transferable skills or experience gained through extracurricular or community activities. With careful consideration, you will find an intern who best fits your organization.

Interview – The interview process for interns is very similar to that of potential new employees. Use the interview to give a brief description of your organization. It’s a good opportunity for the candidate to gain a sense of whether they are a good fit for you. Be sure to ask which, *if any*, faculty or staff member from College of Charleston will be advising the student through his/her internship. **For some Sample Interview Questions**, please see **Appendix C**.

Make an offer – Define the starting and ending dates, time required per week, and compensation. There are legal issues to consider when hiring an intern. If considering an international student, you will want to know the legal issues involved.

Step 7 – Orientation

The initial days on the job define the expectations for the intern – you will be making an immediate impression. When first assigning tasks, the student will learn what to expect from you. Therefore, giving the intern little or nothing to do sends the message that the internship is easy and potentially boring.

Many students are unfamiliar with the activities, environment and objectives of business and industry. Even though a student may have worked part-time, the experience may not have exposed him/her to organizational politics, the need for confidentiality, the importance of teamwork, or the profit-making orientation of business. Students also may not understand that they should not engage in personal work or social media during internship time. It is this training dimension of the internship experience that emphasizes the partnership role of the sponsoring organization.

The sooner the student intern understands what your agency does and how it operates, the sooner the intern will assume assigned responsibilities and become productive. **Appendix D** is an **Orientation Checklist** which will help to successfully acclimate your intern to the new environment.

Step 8- Monitoring and Supervision

As an internship supervisor you will lead, motivate, delegate, communicate, train and evaluate. The student will look to the supervisor as a mentor who assists in the transition from classroom to work environment. Since the internship is an extension of the learning process, a supervisor should provide opportunities to bridge the academic with the work environment by:

- assigning daily tasks, monitoring and evaluating the work
- creating goals with deadlines
- giving the intern support when needed to succeed

The supervisor should be aware of the intern's daily tasks. Watch for signs of the intern being bored or confused. It's easy to be shy with new people who all know each other. Observe whether the intern is working on a project that needs another person's input.

Meet regularly to provide feedback concerning his/her performance. During the meetings, you may coach, counsel, and reinforce positive attitudes and performance. Encourage the intern to develop teamwork and communication skills.

Some internships lend themselves to producing a portfolio of work accomplished during the experience. The portfolio created by the intern, and maintained electronically. This could help fulfill the intern's academic requirements and provide a sense of accomplishment. In addition, it will give the supervisor a basis to discuss his/her professional growth.

Keep the intern busy and directed towards his/her learning outcomes. Students rarely complain of being overworked, but they do complain if they are not challenged. Encourage professionalism by assisting the intern in developing interpersonal skills, decision-making abilities and managing office politics. Demonstrate how this work relates to overall efforts of the department or agency.

Final Review

The final evaluation of the intern's work should encompass both hard and soft skills learned. The hard skills pertain to the technical proficiencies and abilities required for the position related to the student's area of study. Soft skills include communication, self-management, leadership, decision making, etc. It is important for students to know that success on the job is related to both of these skill sets. Note in the evaluation how the intern grew and developed as well as areas for improvement. **Appendix E** provides a sample **Final Assessment** that you can use if not already provided one from the faculty/staff supervisor.

Step 10 – Evaluating the Internship Program

Think about the ways your company has benefited from the program.

- How well is the internship meeting your program's needs?
- How well is the internship meeting the needs of your intern(s)?
- Are there other projects or departments where an intern could add value?
- There is an investment of time by staff members in any internship. Was the time invested worthwhile to your organization?

Legal Issues

The following portion on legal issues is taken from “*Starting and Maintaining a Quality Internship Program*” compiled and edited by Michael True, Director of the Internship Center at Messiah College.

Do you have to pay the intern?

The U.S. Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), which applies to all companies that have at least two employees directly engaged in interstate commerce and annual sales of at least \$500,000.00 severely restricts an employer’s ability to hire unpaid interns. It does not limit an employer’s ability to hire paid interns.

You do not have to pay interns who qualify as trainees. The U.S Department of Labor has outlined six criteria for determining trainee status:

1. Interns cannot displace regular employees.
2. Interns are not guaranteed a job at the end of the internship (though you may decide to hire them at the conclusion of the experience).
3. Interns are not entitled to wages during the internship.
4. Interns must receive training from your company, even if it somewhat impedes the work of your organization.
5. Interns must get hands-on experience with equipment and processes used in your industry.
6. Interns’ training must primarily benefit them, not the company.

Workers and Unemployment Compensation

Workers’ compensation boards have found that interns contribute enough to a company to make them employees. It’s wise to cover unpaid interns under your worker’s compensation policy even though you may not be required to do so. Interns receiving pay are required by law to be covered under your worker’s compensation insurance. Student interns are not generally eligible for unemployment compensation at the end of the internship.

Policy on Non-Discrimination and Sexual/Unlawful Harassment

In an effort to provide students with a safe and comfortable educational environment in their internship, we require internship site supervisors to review and acknowledge the following standards and policies that apply to our internship program and participants. If you become aware of a student who is being sexually harassed or otherwise discriminated against, you should call the Title IX Coordinator (listed below) immediately. The College of Charleston Policy on Prohibition of Discrimination and Harassment, Including Sexual Harassment and Abuse is located at <http://policy.cofc.edu/documents/9.1.10.pdf>. We expect intern site supervisors to comply with this policy. Discrimination, harassment, and retaliation are prohibited. If you have any questions about your responsibilities or these issues, feel free to contact Kimberly Gartner, Director and Title IX Coordinator at gertnerka@cofc.edu or 843-953-5758.

Non-Discrimination

College of Charleston prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, race, color, religion, national origin, veterans’ status, genetic

information, or disability, as proscribed by law and as further described below. In addition, discrimination against members or potential members of the United States Uniformed Services, as proscribed by the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), is also prohibited. Likewise, an employer is prohibited from discriminating or harassing a student intern or employee on the basis of the above-identified classifications. In addition, retaliation against any person arising from the good faith reporting of a suspected violation of the College of Charleston policy on the Prohibition of Discrimination and Harassment, including Sexual Harassment and Abuse, or for participating in an investigation of discrimination under this policy, is strictly prohibited.

Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment

The College of Charleston adheres to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. The College's unlawful harassment policy applies to our internship program to protect the rights of interns and provide an environment that is free from sexual/gender harassment. Sexual harassment also includes conduct that is directed at an employee or student because of his or her sexual orientation or gender identity or expression.

The following conduct is prohibited: unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either implicitly or explicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, academic status, or participation;
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or academic decisions or decisions concerning educational or other educational benefits affecting such individual; or
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or learning environment.

A single incident of sexual assault may be sufficiently severe or pervasive to interfere unreasonably with one's educational environment and therefore create a hostile environment.

Sexually-related conduct creates a hostile environment if it is sufficiently severe or pervasive to interfere unreasonably with academic, other educational, or employment performance or participation in a College activity or living environment.

Sexual/gender harassment includes in-person acts and/or behavior via computer, telephone or other electronic medium, including text messages, emails, social media and other forms of electronic communication.

Examples of sexual harassment may include the following:

- Unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors based upon gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression;
- Unwanted physical contact, including touching, pinching, or brushing the body;
- Verbal harassment, such as sexual innuendoes, suggestive comments, jokes of a sexual nature, sexual propositions or threats, epithets, slurs, or negative stereotyping;
- Non-verbal conduct, such as display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, leering, whistling, obscene gestures, written or graphic material that defames or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group because of gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression;
- Repeated, unwelcome requests for social engagements;

- Questions about sexual behavior or preference; and
- Acts of physical aggression, intimidation, hostility, or threats
- Stalking;
- Sexual assault;
- Relationship/Dating Violence; and
- Domestic Violence.

Safe Environment

If the internship is located in an area that is unsafe and/or has recently has been the subject of criminal activity, please notify the Career Center immediately so that arrangements can be made to provide safe transportation and/or other safety measures to help protect the student intern.

Thank you for serving as an Internship Site for our students and for helping the College of Charleston maintain a safe and enriching learning environment for all.

Appendix A **Internal Needs Assessment Form**

1. How many interns can we support?
2. What will the intern's title be?
3. To whom will the intern report? If the intern will have a mentor different from the supervisor, who will that be?
4. Will the intern work in several different areas or departments or be assigned solely to one person?
5. What will be the preliminary projects or responsibilities of the intern you select?
6. What other activities will the intern do?
7. Will there be daily tasks that the intern will be assigned to do?
8. How much general support work will the intern do?
9. What are the desired skills and qualifications?
10. Is there a specific major/minor that you require? Is there any specific course work that is essential for doing the internship?
11. What are the desired start and end dates? Are there desired times when your agency needs an intern more?
12. How many hours per week should the intern work?
13. Are there specific hours or shifts required for the intern?
14. Can you pay an intern or provide some type of monetary compensation? If so, how much?
15. If monetary compensation is not possible, are you able to meet the requirements for the intern to receive academic credit?
16. Where will you locate an intern within your facility?
17. Is there any other information needed to consider an intern?

Appendix B Resource Allocation Checklist

Financial Resources

- Will your intern be paid? If so, at what hourly rate/stipend?
- Will your intern need a parking pass, or will he/she be reimbursed for parking costs?
- Will your intern be reimbursed for mileage or housing?
- Will your intern receive a housing allowance, if applicable?

Material Resources

(check all that apply)

- Computer
- Software package: _____
- Organizational email account
- Telephone extension/Dial Code
- Voice mailbox
- Parking pass
- Office supplies: _____
- Workspace

Appendix C **Sample Interview Questions**

1. Tell me briefly about your qualifications.
2. Why did you choose your current major?
3. Are you familiar with (particular software)?
4. Tell me about an experience you have in (marketing, public relations, graphic design...)
5. In what extracurricular or community activities are you involved?
6. What do you hope to gain in an internship?
7. Why are you interested in an internship with our company or organization?
8. Do you hope to obtain academic credit for your internship?
9. When are you available to start an internship, and for how long?
10. How many hours per week are you available for an internship?
11. What days of the week are you available for an internship?
12. Do you have any questions?

If you have the internship position description, share it with the student. Ask the student to describe his/her skills and experience related to the position.

Appendix D

Orientation Checklist

Experience shows that employers/internship sites who take adequate time at the beginning of the internship to orient the student reap productivity and effectiveness more quickly than those who do not. To help acclimate interns, take time to initially:

- ***Explain the Mission of the Organization***
 - How did the organization start? Why?
 - What is unique about your product or service?
 - Who benefits from your product or service?
 - What are the organization's current objectives?
 - How may the intern contribute to those objectives?
- ***Explain the Organizational Structure***
 - Who reports to whom?
 - Who, specifically, is the intern's supervisor?
 - What is the intern's department responsible for?
 - How are decisions made?
 - Which personnel can answer different kinds of questions?
- ***Outline Organizational Rules, Policies, Decorum, and Expectations***
 - Is there special industry jargon?
 - What are the specific work standards and procedures?
 - What access to the supervisor (days, times, and duration) does the intern have?
 - How should the intern process requests?
 - How do the mail and telephone systems work?
 - What are the approved forms of correspondence?
 - What are specific safety regulations?
 - Is there a procedure for signing off complete work?
 - What periodic forms or reports need to be completed?
 - Are there security or confidentiality issues the intern should be aware of?
 - What is acceptable with regard to dress and appearance?
 - How should an intern maintain the work area?
- ***Define the Intern's Responsibilities***
 - What is the intern's role?
 - What projects will be assigned?
 - What resources are available to the intern?
 - What training is necessary?
 - How does the organization want the intern to deal with clients and vendors?
 - What tasks can be completed without supervisory approval?
 - Do other employees understand the intern's role?

Appendix E

Final Assessment and Student Performance SAMPLE

Name of Intern _____ Date _____

Name of Supervisor _____

Please provide your evaluation of this student's performance or skill level in each of the following areas. The evaluation is not confidential, and you are encouraged to share it with the student.

Skills Assessment – On a scale of 1-5, please evaluate the intern's performance and skill level in each of the following areas.

5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Exceptional	Above Average	Average	Limited	Lacks this skill	Not applicable

Communication Skills

- Demonstrates oral communication skills required for the job
- Writes clearly and concisely
- Is willing to speak up, communicate information, and ask questions
- Listens to feedback and works to improve

Problem Solving/Decision Making Skills

- Analyzes situations and takes appropriate action
- Offers creative solutions to problems
- Collects and analyzes information relevant to completing a task and establishes a course of action within the given timeframe
- Resolves problems in an appropriate timeframe

Teamwork

- Establishes rapport and credibility among team members
- Shares information and resources with others
- Assists and cooperates with co-workers; is reliable
- Demonstrates willingness to put forth extra time and effort
- Assumes appropriate leadership role(s)

Self-management

- Produces high-quality, accurate work
- Seeks new strategies when current approach is not effective
- Displays good judgment and establishes priorities
- Uses time effectively
- Demonstrates ethical behavior
- Arrives on time and maintains agreed hours

Initiative

- Seeks opportunities to learn
- Takes initiative to get a job done, even if not specifically told to do so
- Acts decisively on critical issues
- Overcomes obstacles and problems
- Sets and communicates goals; follows up with results

Technical Skills

- Possesses the technical skills required for this position
- Is willing to learn new skills and enhance existing technical skills
- Uses appropriate technology for tasks
- Uses technology to perform effectively

Please discuss whether this student successfully completed the learning objectives/goals.

Rate how prepared the student was with coursework.

- very prepared
- somewhat prepared
- not at all prepared

How would you assess the overall value of this intern to your agency?

- very valuable
- somewhat valuable
- very limited value
- no value

How would you assess the intern's overall performance?

- outstanding
- above average
- satisfactory
- below average
- unsatisfactory

How did the intern most improve his/her skills? In what areas did you notice the most learning?

In what areas does the intern still need to improve?