



# WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

## Career Services

# INTERNSHIP GUIDE



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**CAREER  
SERVICES**

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# **CAREER SERVICES INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Internship program allows students to gain work experience in their career fields. These opportunities allow students to learn what type of work culture they prefer and if they're in the right field. Internships provide temporary work opportunities related to the student's interest, academic major, and/or career goals. These opportunities may be part-time, or full-time and may include repeated work semesters. Typically, assignments involve paid/unpaid, meaningful work, provide hands-on experiential learning, and can potentially lead to future career opportunities.

The program is primarily an undergraduate program open to the following disciplines:

College of Education  
College of Fine, Performing and Communication Arts  
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences  
College of Nursing  
College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences  
School of Social Work

Mike Ilitch School of Business Career Planning & Placement Services handles all internship opportunities for Business students.

College of Engineering Career Resource Center handles all internship opportunities for Engineering and Computer Science students.

The internship program work assignments are in business, industry, government, and private agencies and organizations and are closely related to the student's fields of study or career goals. This guide describes the program and explains how to successfully pursue its many advantages.

## **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 NACE definition, all 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 defined 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 the 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.

<https://www.naceweb.org/about-us/advocacy/position-statements/position-statement-us-internships/>

## **BENEFITS OF THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**

### **To the Student:**

- Practical application of classroom studies
- Accumulation of related professional experience
- Help in determining general and specific career goals
- Improved prospects of career employment and higher earnings potential upon graduation
- Development of interpersonal skills and professional growth
- Potential earnings to help defray educational expenses

### **To the Employer:**

- An opportunity to utilize students to productively contribute to either short or long-term projects, thus helping other employees
- An opportunity to select and test talented, professional personnel in advance of a permanent commitment
- An opportunity to preview prospective full-time and part-time employees over an extended period with an expected reduction in professional staff turnover
- Combined recruiting and training at large savings in cost
- An opportunity to enhance the company's image on campus through the intern student
- An opportunity to have input into the college's educational framework

### **To the University:**

- Feedback on current practices in the working community
- An opportunity for professional development of the faculty through contact with practitioners in their fields
- Valuable input into developing progressive, accountable academic programs
- Enhanced relationships with employers and alumni resulting in improved prospects

for financial and personal involvement in the affairs of the University

## **PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

The Internship Program's objective is to provide students with real-life experiences in preparation for their careers. Related objectives include the continuous improvement of the intern work assignments and the expansion of internship placement opportunities. The long-term goal is to prepare students fully for a positive career match upon graduation, allowing them to be successful in their chosen field.

## **ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Students are evaluated during each work semester by their employer's supervisors. Students also complete evaluations of their assignments. The student and school Internship Coordinator discuss both evaluations at the post-work semester Progress Review. Evaluation forms measure outcomes from the students' work assignments. These forms target both employers and students, including the Supervisor's Evaluation of the Intern Student and Survey of the Intern Student.

At the conclusion of each work term, the student's Internship Coordinator reviews the evaluations to ascertain the level of success achieved during that work term. The coordinator uses this information during the one-on-one Progress Review when the work semester ends to discuss future assignments if applicable. Specific questions concerning upcoming assignments help the coordinator determine if the employer is providing adequate progression toward greater responsibility, which is commensurate with the student's interests and abilities. If concerns exist, the coordinator will contact the employer coordinator to explore alternative opportunities. Feedback is also encouraged from students while they are at their work sites. Should any serious concerns arise while a student is working, the Internship Coordinator meets personally with the student and employer to investigate the situation and make recommendations for appropriate action.

The Supervisor's Evaluation of the intern serves not only as a review of the student's performance but also doubles as a means of monitoring the employer by asking the supervisor to describe in detail the nature of the student's current work assignment, as well as the specific training the student received during that time.

Both the Supervisor's Evaluation of the Intern and Survey of the Intern Student also serve as a means of evaluating the academic program. Copies of both evaluations are available to academic departments. The Supervisor's Evaluation of the Intern and Survey of the Intern Student are the current tools used to assess student learning and achievement.

Employers should demonstrate a solid commitment to integrating Wayne State Internship students' academic pursuits and practical work experience through strong administrative support, well-monitored, quality work assignments, a desire to remain current on current internship practices, and strive for continuous improvement of their program.

# **OVERVIEW OF THE INTERNSHIP WORK ASSIGNMENTS**

## **Objectives of an Internship Work Assignment**

In order to achieve the specific goals of the Internship Program, the University maintains that certain conditions must be met. The most important of these is that career and training objectives must come first and take precedence over student earnings and convenience of work assignment location.

The training assignment should encompass predominantly professional-level work and ideally should increase in responsibility each successive work term when applicable. Some organizations assign the student to a particular department or project and then retain them in that same activity throughout the entire program. Other organizations rotate the student through several different departments or functions before a final assignment is made. Either situation can be very rewarding. However, the employer ultimately makes the final decision as to the full nature of the internship assignment and the job tasks involved. These duties will be supervised by the employer. It is necessary to keep in mind that every organization has its share of repetitive and routine tasks as well as the more important ones, both of which the student will be expected to participate in, the same as other employees in the organization.

## **Length of Work Assignments**

All internship work assignments are four months in length (one semester). Beginning and ending dates for each assignment typically correspond with Wayne State University's academic semesters. These assignments take place during the fall, winter, or spring/summer semesters.

## **Part-time Assignment**

Students work part-time (10 - 25 hours per week) and must carry a course load of at least 6 credit hours per semester for undergraduate students; 4 credit hours for graduate students. F-1 Visa Students working 20 hours or fewer (part-time) must register for at least 12 credits.

Note: Students receiving financial aid or scholarships may be required to enroll full-time (12 credits) while working 10 - 25 hours per week. Students should contact the Office of Student Financial Aid for details.

## **Full-time Assignment**

Students who work full-time (26 hours or more per week) may simultaneously carry a class load relevant to their ability to successfully advance in their academics and complete their internship assignments.

Note: F-1 Visa students working 21 hours or more per week are considered to be working

full-time, according to the WSU Office of International Students & Scholars (OISS).

### **Acceptance of Work Assignments**

Students must notify the Internship Coordinator as soon as they accept an internship work assignment. At that time, they will schedule an appointment with the Internship Coordinator to complete their required Report of Hiring paperwork, including registration for the required internship course.

### **Continuity of Work Assignments**

Once a student accepts a position, the student is not allowed to accept any other interviews. Therefore, it is important that the student understands what the position entails before accepting the work assignment. Employers are reluctant to maintain an internship program in which a frequent turnover of students results in high recruiting costs, low productivity, and low student retention after graduation.

### **Commitment to Work Assignments**

Internships may require one or more semesters of work. Students are required to complete the entire work semester. If the internship requires multiple semesters of work, the students must then give appropriate notice to their supervisor indicating that they will not return for a second term. A student who abandons a work assignment, or whose conduct is such that it purposely causes discharge, will receive an unsatisfactory grade and will not be allowed to remain in the program.

### **Location of Work Assignments**

The selection of work locations will be based upon a student's personal career interests, course of studies, individual capabilities, and the availability of suitable assignments. Although the majority of internship assignments are located in the greater metropolitan Detroit area and out-state Michigan, assignments are also available in other areas of the country. Generally, students report out-of-town assignments to be both professionally and personally rewarding.

### **Out-of-Town Housing and Personal Needs**

While students are encouraged to gain valuable experience by arranging their housing and other personal affairs to suit their own needs and financial situations, University and employer coordinators are always available for assistance.

### **Student-Employee Status While on Work Assignments**

Students, while on work assignments, are considered to be full-time students, upon registering for the internship course through Career Services. Thus, they are representatives of the University and must keep in mind the responsibilities that such a position requires.

Students are also employees of the business, industry, or government agency in which they intern, and, therefore, they are also subject to all of the employer's employment and personnel policies. Students must expect to receive no more consideration in their positions than do regular employees.

## **Compensation and Fringe Benefits**

Wage scales, salaries, fringe benefits, and vacations for interns are set by the individual employers. The career and educational benefits of the training assignments are the principal concern of the program, and the earnings of the students are considered an attractive by-product. Students can consult with their coordinator to receive current information regarding the salaries of interns.

Wayne State University internship students are not typically eligible for unemployment compensation in Michigan. Although internship employment is a formal and accredited part of the regular curriculum of the University, internship work assignments are not permanent positions.

In case of sickness or emergency necessitating a student's absence from a work assignment for any significant length of time, both the employer and the Internship Coordinator should be notified by the student as soon as possible.

## **MECHANICS OF THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**

To qualify for the Internship Program, students must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Students must be enrolled in a WSU degree program and make satisfactory progress towards that degree.
- Students must possess at least a 2.0-grade point average. However, employers, when making selections, emphasize academic achievement.
- Students should have successfully completed 12 credit hours from an accredited school or program.
- F-1 Visa students must complete two academic semesters at a U.S. educational institution before being eligible to participate in the Internship Program.
- F-1 Visa students should check with OISS to verify their eligibility status.
- F-1 Visa students must acquire work authorization through OISS before starting an assignment.
- Graduate F-1 Visa students are not eligible to participate in the Internship Program due to OISS regulations.

## **Application Process**

Eligible students are encouraged to attend informational workshops to build their confidence in job searching, resume writing, and interviewing. A list of current workshops is available at [www.careerservices.wayne.edu](http://www.careerservices.wayne.edu) and on Handshake.

## **Acceptance Criteria**

Once a student receives an offer letter and accepts an internship assignment, the student must contact the WSU Internship Coordinator immediately to process the report of hire paperwork. Upon acceptance of an assignment, the student must withdraw from active consideration by any other employer and is expected to remain with the chosen employer through the completion of the agreed work term.

## **Employer's Evaluation and Exit Interviews**

After each work assignment, a rating of the student's performance is obtained from the immediate supervisor. Students are encouraged to have an interview with their immediate supervisor before they leave their work assignment. During the interviews, the Supervisor's Evaluation of internship students should be discussed with the student to provide individual feedback regarding performance and progress. Employers and students are encouraged to also discuss the value of the work assignments and training opportunities available on the next assignment if applicable. If it is the last assignment, the availability of permanent opportunities should be explored.

## **Progress Review**

Students must meet with the Internship Coordinator by appointment for a Progress Review at the end of each work semester. The purpose is to review the student's progress during the assignment, evaluate the assignment in terms of the student's career objectives, and review or make plans for any remaining assignments. Also, both the Survey of the Intern Student and Supervisor's Evaluation are discussed and used by the coordinator to provide guidance and counseling for the student. Students who do not complete the Progress Review requirement will be awarded an unsatisfactory grade for the Internship Course.

## **Internship Course Registration**

Education	ID 0995
Fine, Performing and Communication Arts	ID 0995
Liberal Arts and Sciences	ID 0995
Nursing	ID 0995
Pharmacy and Health Sciences	ID 0995

This enrollment assures students that they are considered full-time students at the University while they are on their work assignments. There is no academic credit granted. However, a grade of S/U (Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory) is assigned each work term. To obtain a satisfactory grade, the student must complete the work assignment and complete the requirements for the Progress Review.

Please note that the Registration Office will not process the internship registration form if the student has a hold of any sort, thus jeopardizing the internship work assignment.

## **SPECIAL NEEDS**

### **Merit Scholars Program**

All Merit Scholar interns should consult the Office of Student Financial Aid regarding:

- Fulfilling your academic semester when working full-time
- Choosing to take a class while working full-time and payment for that class including the registration fee
- The required number of credit hours you must complete for the academic year

### **Financial Aid**

It is the responsibility of students to meet with a Financial Aid Officer to determine how an internship may affect their financial aid awards. In addition, eligibility for financial aid, as well as social security benefits, may be affected by earnings received as an internship student employee.

### **Dropping Classes**

The dropping of classes, upon acceptance of an intern work assignment, must be handled in compliance with the rules of the Office of the Registrar. Students are advised to pay close attention to the deadline for dropping classes to receive any tuition refunds.

## **SUMMARY OF RESPONSIBILITIES**

### ***Students***

- Students must be enrolled in a degree program and show academic progress towards the degree.
- Students must maintain a 2.0 overall grade point average to satisfy WSU policies.
- Students must notify the internship coordinator upon acceptance of an internship position and schedule an appointment to complete the Report of Hiring Form.
- Students working full-time may take classes during their work term provided it does not conflict with their work hours.
- Students on a part-time work assignment schedule must work at least 10 hours, but not more than 25 hours, per week, and register for a minimum of 6 credit hours.
- Students are required to meet with their Internship Coordinator for a Progress

Review at the end of the work semester.

- Students must confer with the Internship Coordinator first on all matters about adjustments in their employment assignment. Any employment difficulty, lay-off, or serious misunderstanding must be reported immediately to the Internship Coordinator.
- Students must work the entire semester to receive an S grade on WSU transcripts. Students who abandon a training assignment will not be allowed to remain in the program.

## **Employers**

- The employer is expected to notify the WSU Internship Coordinator of all new hires.
- The employer will provide the student with an offer letter outlining the terms of the internship.
- It is the responsibility of the employer to provide professional, career-related work assignments that increase in complexity and challenge so that the students can increase their skill base and become more productive as they gain additional background.
- Under normal circumstances, employers are expected to employ students for at least sixteen weeks (one semester) per work assignment.
- Part-time students must work a minimum of 10 hours but not more than 25 hours per week.
- Employers should not dismiss Wayne State University intern students before notifying the Internship Coordinator.
- Supervisors of interns will be expected to complete a performance evaluation each work term. The University provides an evaluation form for this purpose. However, the employer should feel free to use the organization's evaluation form if they so choose. It is important that this evaluation be discussed with the students so that the student receives performance feedback regarding their assignment.
- Employers should inform the Internship Coordinator of any concerns that they may have regarding a student during the work assignment.
- It is expected that students will be paid for the work they perform for a paid internship and that they should receive any employee benefits to which they are entitled.
- Employers are under no obligation to permanently hire an intern upon graduation, and the intern is not obligated to accept permanent positions with their internship employer. However, both employers and students should give serious consideration to the exploration of possible permanent employment.

## **Career Services**

- Career Services is responsible for the overall development and administration of the Internship Program.
- Career Services maintains records of placed students, registers them for the internship course, and assigns grades.
- Career Services serves as a coordinating agent between students, faculty, and employer, and as a clearinghouse for problems and concerns.

## **CONCLUSION**

The details presented here are guidelines to be followed in the constant interaction between the University, employers, and students to ensure the success of the Career Services Internship Program at Wayne State University.

The University will assist students with securing a suitable work assignment. In turn, employers must assume the responsibility for providing the appropriate training. However, how students make use of this opportunity has a favorable or adverse effect on the University, the employer, and especially on the students themselves. The students are the keystone of the program—the reason for its existence and the final determiner of its success.