



## ACADEMIC INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

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# Internships

## Information for Faculty & Advisers

Internships are vitally important for today's college students. Nine out of ten employers indicate that they are more likely to hire a recent college graduate if they have had a successful internship; more than 40 percent of new college hires come directly from an employer's internship pool.

### ACADEMIC INTERNSHIPS

Academic internships are academic courses. They are taken for academic credit; they differ fundamentally from "work" or employment in this instructional aspect. Students put together a Learning Network, which includes an instructor from the college and a workplace supervisor from the internship host site.

*Your primary responsibility as internship instructor is to regularly pose questions or otherwise offer feedback to help students understand the internship experience through the lens of their academic studies.*

- Academic internships are a *three-way partnership* among the college, the employer or host site, and the student. Student-interns work on meaningful, professional projects of significance to the host site.
- Assigned tasks and responsibilities should enable students to draw upon, apply, and expand the knowledge/skills they are developing in their coursework.
- Interns work a *minimum* of 40 hours on-site per academic credit and typically work a minimum of eight weeks.
- Academic credit is granted not for hours at the work site nor for work *per se*, but rather for successful completion of assignments that showcase discipline-based knowledge and/or skills connected to the experience.

### EXPECTATIONS

- Assist the student in preparing his or her Internship Proposal.
- Clearly articulate academic expectations.
- Communicate regularly (weekly) with the student-intern throughout the semester.
- Carefully review student and host supervisor evaluations as they are sent to you. Follow up with your student(s) as indicated.
- Evaluate the student's performance.

*The purpose of the Internship Proposal is to help a student frame the internship in disciplinary or academic terms. It is designed to spark and guide a conversation with you about the academic focus of a proposed internship.*

### Questions to consider when reviewing an internship proposal

- What connections with the student's degree program are evident? What discipline-based knowledge or questions, theories, skills or perspectives could inform the roles and responsibilities of the internship?
- Can the proposal be customized to better fit the interests, academic background, and/or experience of the student?
- How might concepts or theories that ground your discipline be explored or tested during this field experience? How might research methods or creative techniques be used?
- How will a student's observations, interactions, etc., be recorded and organized to shed light on these theories, concepts, and/or problems?
- How will you and the student gauge whether she or he is making progress toward achieving the objectives?