

## 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

### Definition of “Internship” and Consistent Criteria

Because the parties involved in the internship process—students, colleges and universities, and employers—have differing objectives, it is important to have a definition of “internship” upon which all parties can agree. Currently, the term “internship” is used to describe various experiences. Moreover, there are no guidelines by which employers, educators, and students can consistently define “internships.”

To establish uniformity in the use and application of the term “internship,” NACE recommends the following definition:

*An internship is a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in professional fields they are considering for career paths; and give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent.*

To effectively implement this definition, it is necessary to develop criteria that college career centers and employer recruiters can use to identify workplace experiences that can legitimately be identified as “internships.” The discussion of these criteria is framed by several conditions. These conditions are the legal definitions set by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA); the widely varying guidelines set by individual educational institutions and academic departments within institutions; employer perspectives on and objectives for internships; and the unique experiential learning objectives of students.

Students pursue internships because they want to gain professional experience that links their academic coursework to the disciplines they want to pursue for their careers. To gain this experience, students want to engage in projects and tasks that contribute to the professional work of the organization. This means that the employer *does* benefit from the work of the intern while, at the same time, it provides a meaningful experience that allows for the application of academic knowledge.

To advance this assessment, the ethics must be considered. *At the foundation of such an assessment is the tenet that the internship is a legitimate learning experience benefitting the student and not simply an operational work experience that just happens to be conducted by a student.* The core question then is whether or not work performed by an intern will primarily benefit the employer in a way that does not also advance the education of the student.

In January 2018, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) issued a statement essentially replacing the six-part test it had initially issued in 2010 with its new “primary beneficiary” test to determine if an individual can be classified as an unpaid intern.

The primary beneficiary test does not include a rigid set of requirements; instead, it is a non-exhaustive list of factors to determine who is the primary beneficiary of the internship. These factors include:

- the extent to which the intern and the employer clearly understand that there is no expectation of compensation;
- the extent to which the internship provides training that would be similar to that which would be given in an educational environment, including the clinical and other hands-on training provided by an educational institution;
- the extent to which the internship is tied to the intern's formal education program by integrated coursework or the receipt of academic credit;
- the extent to which the internship accommodates the intern's academic commitments by corresponding to the academic calendar;

- the extent to which the internship's duration is limited to the period in which the internship provides the intern with beneficial learning;
- the extent to which the intern's work complements, rather than displaces, the work of paid employees while providing significant educational benefits to the intern; and
- the extent to which the intern and the employer understand that the internship is conducted without entitlement to a paid job at the conclusion of the internship.

The DOL's fact sheet on unpaid internships ([Fact Sheet #71: Internship Programs Under the Fair Labor Standards Act](#)) explains that this test allows courts to examine the "economic reality" of the intern-employer relationship to determine which party is the primary beneficiary of the relationship. The fact sheet also indicates that courts have described the primary beneficiary test as "flexible" with no single factor being determinative. Therefore, whether an intern or student is an employee under the FLSA depends on the unique circumstances of each case.

The DOL says that if examination of these circumstances reveals that an intern or student is an employee, then he or she is entitled to both minimum wage and overtime pay under the FLSA. However, if the analysis of the circumstances confirms that the intern or student is not an employee, then he or she is not entitled to either minimum wage or overtime pay under the FLSA.

### **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: <http://www.naceweb.org/about-us/advocacy/position-statements/position-statement-us-internships/>, January 2018.

### **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 Greensboro College:

- 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)?

**Appendix A**, the **Internal Needs Assessment Form**, has been provided to assist with answering these and other questions.

### **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.

Refer to **Appendix B, Resource Allocation Checklist** as a guide.

#### **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 on-going 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 Office of Career and Personal Development at Greensboro College at [career@greensboro.edu](mailto:career@greensboro.edu) to post and recruit for your internship positions. Post your position for free on *College Central Network* at <http://collegecentral.com/greensboro>. 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 faculty or staff member from Greensboro College 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***

An electronic evaluation that is to be returned/emailed back to Greensboro College will be sent to site supervisors towards the end of the semester. Regular feedback should be given to the intern throughout his/her internship and should encompass both hard and soft skills learned, areas he/she has grown and developed, and areas for improvement. 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.

### **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?

*\*Greensboro College interns are required to complete an evaluation together with their site supervisors approximately 1 -2 weeks before the end of the semester or summer session.*

### **Legal Issues**

#### **Do you have to pay the intern?**

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) provides limitations on a for-profit employer's ability to employ unpaid interns. It does not limit an employer's ability to hire paid interns.

An employer does not have to pay an intern who is receiving training for the intern's own educational benefit if the training meets certain criteria:

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.

## 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 Greensboro College Sexual Misconduct Policy is located at <https://www.greensboro.edu/couch/uploads/file/sexual-misconduct-policy.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 Emily Scott, Greensboro College Title IX Coordinator at [titleix@greensboro.edu](mailto:titleix@greensboro.edu) or 336-272-7102 ext. 5496.

### Non-Discrimination

Greensboro College 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 Greensboro College Sexual Misconduct Policy or for participating in an investigation of discrimination under this policy is strictly prohibited.

### Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment

Greensboro College adheres to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. The College's sexual misconduct policy applies to our internship program to protect the rights of interns and provide an environment that is free from gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment and sexual misconduct of any kind, expressly including stalking, sexual exploitation, sexual violence, and retaliation.

Sexual misconduct is defined as any act of a sexual nature perpetrated against an individual without effective consent or when an individual is unable to freely give consent. Consent must be informed, voluntary, and mutual, and can be withdrawn at any time.

Sexual harassment is *unwelcome* conduct of a sexual nature, including but not limited to unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; or other verbal or nonverbal conduct of a sexual nature, including *rape, sexual assault and sexual exploitation*.

A hostile environment exists when sex-based harassment is sufficiently serious to deny or limit the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the College's programs or activities.

The more severe the *sex-based harassment*, the less need there is to show a repetitive series of incidents to find a hostile environment. Indeed, a single instance of sexual assault may be sufficient to create a hostile environment.

The College, following guidance from the White House and the Office of Civil Rights, broadly defines sexual misconduct to include:

1. Sexual Harassment
2. Sexual Assault

3. Sexual Intimidation
4. Sexual Exploitation
5. Domestic Violence
6. Dating Violence
7. Stalking or Cyberstalking

**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 Office of Career and Personal Development or the student's academic internship coordinator immediately so that arrangements can be made to ensure the safety of the student.

Thank you for serving as an Internship Site for our students and for helping the Greensboro College 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?