

Guide to Creating an Effective Internship Program

**Virginia Tech
Career and Professional Development**



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Dear Employer Partners,

Welcome to Virginia Tech! Thank you for your interest in recruiting our students for *internships/field studies. Early identification of talent is vital to building a productive team, and a well designed internship program can give an organization a way to identify talent. Internships are beneficial to both students and organizations: they give students the chance to apply their classroom work in a “real world” setting; and they provide organizations the opportunity to establish brand awareness on campus and the possibility of creating a pipeline into full-time hires.

The university motto is *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve), and Virginia Tech takes a hands-on, engaging approach to education by preparing scholars to be leaders in their fields and communities. We are proud of our students and our university, and we look forward to helping you recruit and interact with our students.

Whether you are preparing to hire your first intern or you already have an established program, we hope this guide will provide helpful information and tools to foster success for both your interns and your organization.

Please feel welcome to contact us with any questions, suggestions, or concerns. We are sincerely appreciative of the great opportunities you provide to our students!

Virginia Tech Employer Relations Team,

Jim Henderson
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Contact Us

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*Internship and field study are used interchangeably throughout this publication.

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EMPLOYER PARTNERS

We are delighted you are considering bringing a talented Virginia Tech student into your workplace as an intern. The following information is provided to stimulate your thinking about the possibilities and answer questions you may have about developing an internship program and the steps necessary to attract top students for your organization.

Virginia Tech students are widely recognized for demonstrating excellent, discipline-specific education and skills in the workplace. Our faculty partners strive to combine their students' knowledge with appropriate experiences and learning opportunities in real world settings. These efforts increase our students' and graduates' workforce readiness.



What is an Internship?



“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.”

National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). www.nacweb.org/advocacy/position-statements/united-states-internships.aspx

- Ranges from 12-15 weeks, but a typical experience usually lasts from three to six months
- May or may not be a one-time experience
- Part-time or full-time
- Paid or unpaid (if unpaid see refer to page 12 for Department of Labor criteria for unpaid internships)
- May or may not be for academic credit
- Contains a “learning agenda”
- Includes learning objectives, observation, assessment, reflection and evaluation
- Balances the intern’s learning goals and the specific work an organization needs done
- Promotes academic, career, and/or personal development

(Adapted from materials published by the National Society for Experiential Education)

How Do Internships Benefit Employers?

- Year-round source of highly motivated para-professionals
- New perspectives from students to old problems
- Increased visibility on campus for the organization
- Quality candidates for temporary or seasonal positions and projects
- Freedom for professional staff to pursue other projects
- Flexible, cost-effective workforce not requiring a long-term employer commitment
- Proven, cost-effective way to recruit and evaluate potential employees
- Enhanced community image as employers contribute expertise to the educational enterprise

What is my
ROI?

Steps to Beginning an Internship Program

Designing an internship program that meets your needs...

As varied as organizations are in age, size, industry and product, so too are their internship activities. How do you know what kind of program will work best for you? Designing an internship program to meet your needs is as easy as these steps.

Step 1: Set goals

- What does your organization hope to achieve from the program?
- Are you a small organization searching for additional help on a project?
- Is your organization growing quickly and having difficulty finding motivated new employees?
- Are you a nonprofit that does not have a lot of money to pay, but can provide an interesting and rewarding experience?
- Is your organization searching out new employees with management potential?

A careful discussion with management can create a consensus on program goals that can be understood by all involved. The program and internship can be designed to best meet those expectations. As many staffing professionals know, in order for a program to be successful, it will require the commitment of management.

Step 2: Write a plan

Carefully plan and write out your internship program goals. Managers, mentors, interns, and university career centers will read what you write about the internship. Draft a job description that clearly explains the job's duties.

Do you want someone for a specific project? Structure the internship ahead of time so that you can be sure to meet your goals and not find yourself floundering partway through.

Things to Think About...

how much...

Will the intern be paid? If so, how much?

Wages vary widely from field to field; be sure your wages are competitive.

Where will you put the intern?

Do you have adequate workspace for them? Will you help make parking arrangements, living arrangements, etc.?

What academic background and experience should the intern have?

Decide on standards for quality beforehand — it will help you narrow down the choices and find the best candidates.

Who will have the primary responsibility for the intern?

Will that person be a mentor or a supervisor?

What will the intern be doing?

Be as specific as possible. Interns need structure so they don't become lost, confused, or bored.

Do you want to plan a program for the interns beyond the work you give them?

Will there be special training programs, performance reviews, lunches with executives, social events? Keep in mind that your interns are walking advertisements for your company. If they have a good experience working for you, they are likely to tell their friends-word gets around. A bad internship, by contrast, can only hurt your chances of attracting good students. These are just some questions to consider. Your organization's approach will depend on your specific resources and needs.

a mentor...

A very important part of your plan should be the assignment of a mentor or supervisor...

that is, someone from the intern's department who will be in charge of the intern. This person doesn't have to be a teacher per se, but should be selected because he or she likes to educate or train/guide, and has the experience and resources to do it. If the person you select has never mentored an intern before, give him or her some basic training in mentoring.

Step 3: Recruit an Intern(s)

- Contact the Employer Relations team to learn more about the opportunities available to you.
- Post your jobs on Handshake.
- Come to campus for a visit. Let us know you are visiting and we will arrange appointments for you.
- Attend a career fair or two.
- Participate in our on-campus interviewing program.
- Conduct an after-hours event so students can learn more about your organization and available opportunities.
- Get involved as a Career and Professional Development partner.

Learn the legal implications of hiring interns. Just like other employees, interns are subject to legal protections and regulations. Protect yourself and your intern by knowing the laws. What work can and can't you assign? This is especially important if your company employs international students who need special qualifications to work in the United States. Consult your corporate lawyer or the Virginia Tech Cranwell International Center to avoid possible issues.

Step 4: Manage the Intern(s)

Once you've hired an intern you put him or her to work, right? With an intern, you'll be making an important first impression. The first days of the internship program are often its defining days. As the supervisor or mentor, you will review the job description, discuss intern assignments, and set up regular meetings to give feedback and assistance.



When you assign an intern his or her first tasks you are signaling what will be expected in the future. If you give them very little to do, it sends a message that this job will be easy. The organization of your internship program will be the single most important influence on an intern's impression of your organization, and thus the chances that he or she will come back. So how do you "plan for success"?

Establish learning objectives...

Students who are pursuing a "for credit" internship will need to establish the scope of their work at the beginning of the internship experience. Their objectives will be related to their academic course of study and general skills required to become successful in a work environment. These objectives should also blend with the goals you have set for your internship program.

Orient your intern to the new workplace...

This might take the form of a conventional orientation program to discuss employee safety and expectations or it may be a walk around the office and a conversation, depending on the size of your company. Even though your intern may not be a permanent employee, he or she will be spending a great deal of time in your workplace. Give interns an overview of your organization; some companies provide information about the company's history, vision, and services. Explain who does what and what the intern's duties will be. Introduce the intern to co-workers and give him or her a complete tour of the facility. Making your intern at home in the office is your first step to bringing him or her back. (Note: See the Orientation Checklist beginning on page 9 for more information).

Give your intern the resources he or she needs to do the job...

That may sound obvious, but you'd be surprised how many companies locate their interns in an out-of-the-way room or transfer them from desk to desk. That sends a potent message you don't want to send: "Interns aren't important; we don't want you here." Give the intern a desk and show him or her where to get needed supplies including phone and computer access.

Keep an eye on the intern...

Make sure you know what's happening with his or her daily tasks. Watch for signs that the intern is confused or bored. As often as silence means that an intern is busy, it also could mean that he or she is confused and shy about telling you so. It's easy to be less forthcoming with issues in a workplace full of strangers.

See whether the intern is trying to do anything that requires someone else's input. Make sure that work is taking precedence over web browsing or sending texts. Paying attention early on helps you head off problems and bad habits.

DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE INTERNSHIP JOB DESCRIPTION

During the process of hiring an intern for your organization, an internship job description will be necessary to provide the intern with details related to the position. Each internship position includes a job description that will attract the best candidates, outline the responsibilities of the intern, provide learning objectives and establish clear qualifications for the position. The following information should be included in the internship job description.

Key Components

1. Name of the organization, division, and the department. Include the location of your organization.
2. Job/intern title and be specific rather than general (i.e. Human Resources Intern rather than Intern).
3. Name of the intern's supervisor, their title, and contact information.
4. Short overview of the company history and its mission/goals.
5. Responsibilities/duties of the intern position. Be sure to include specific projects in which the intern will participate.
6. Provide learning outcomes of the internship experience. What will the intern learn during the internship ?
7. Requirements and qualifications of the internship.
8. Type of compensation (hourly, weekly, etc. is housing included?)
9. Application process for the position.

Learning Outcomes

An internship is an extension of the student's classroom learning. To better make the connection between the student's academics and the work experience, the organization will need to provide the intern with clear learning outcomes.

What are Learning Outcomes?

Learning outcomes are specific knowledge, skills, and abilities the student will learn and be able to exhibit following the work experience. Outcomes are measurable goals that the employer can use to determine whether the student has met expectations and helps the intern grow during the work experience. Learning outcomes should align with the goals of the organization.

LEARNING OUTCOME EXAMPLES:

1. The intern will enhance their communication skills including visual, written, digital, and oral through the use of social media, email, in-person meetings, and document preparation
2. The intern will demonstrate specific knowledge of computer systems including operating concepts, software application, hardware, and computer networks
3. The intern will be able to create reading and writing lesson plans for second grade class
4. The intern will be able to manage the specifics of event planning and logistics
5. The intern will be able to prepare plans and maps as well as monitor documents while working closely with the civil engineer to resolve issues

let's talk...

Give your intern lots of feedback!

Especially if your intern has never done this type of work before. Your intern will want to know if his or her work is measuring up to your expectations. No matter what the level of experience, an intern needs you, as the more experienced worker, to let him or her know if the work is acceptable.

Regularly examine what your intern has produced and make suggestions. Well-constructed feedback will be better received and help your intern grow professionally.

Informal Feedback...

Informal feedback is sometimes not perceived by the intern as "feedback." Informal feedback can be verbal comments or a light hearted nudge. When using informal feedback be clear with your intent. The more direct, the more likely the intern is to perceive this to be an area of focus. Positive feedback should be given freely. Areas of growth should be presented in a private setting where the intern will not be embarrassed. Feedback should be given as often as possible to encourage the student to continue developing.

Formal Feedback...

Formal feedback should be prepared and delivered in a private meeting with the intern to discuss the intern's strengths and areas for growth. It should be designed so the manager achieves his/her desired objective. Interns should have clear objectives of what areas of growth need to be addressed. Use specific examples of intern behavior whenever possible so students have clear ideas of what areas need improvement.

evaluate...

Step 5: Evaluate the Intern's Progress

Remember those goals and learning objectives you outlined before? A few weeks after the internship begins, it's time to see how well you and your intern are meeting those goals.



Evaluation processes differ. Yours might be as formal as written evaluations every three weeks or as informal as occasional lunches you have with the intern and the intern's supervisor. Some companies have the intern evaluate the experience and the company. Again, your structure is largely up to your corporate culture and needs. As an added bonus, these evaluations will be handy later if you decide to interview a former intern for full-time work, or to publicize how successful your program has been.

Step 6: Evaluate the Internship Program

Maintaining the program's value will require hard evidence that your organization is getting a return on its investment. Some organizations use a process of formal exit interviews. Through these interviews they determine if interns are leav-



ing the company with a meaningful experience. The exit interview also provides valuable feedback to managers for program planning in the following year.

In addition to qualitative measures, a number of quantitative measures should be adopted. Common measures can be the number of interns that become full-time employees, repeat requests for interns from managers, and growing numbers of intern applicants. To successfully measure your own program outcome, you should return to the stated program goals and address those outcomes.

TEN CONCERNS OF INTERNS

1. Give us real work!

Interns want to work and learn. An internship can help you get a job done that you couldn't complete otherwise. If you've brought on an intern as a recruitment tool, how will you be able to assess his or her abilities? It just makes sense to utilize your interns.

2. Do what you say, and say what you do!

Be honest with your interns about what they can expect during their internship. If the job will require stuffing some envelopes, then make that clear. But if you tell interns they will be researching a project, and they spend 90% of their time doing "grunt work," then bad feelings will develop. Honesty doesn't cost you anything, and it will make the interns feel that much more respected.

3. We like feedback!

Remember that interns are students, and they may not have the business skills and experiences that you take for granted. If your intern makes an oversight, just pull him or her aside and explain how the situation should be handled in the future.

4. We want to be included too!

Is there a staff meeting they can attend? Can they quietly tag along to that next project meeting or office luncheon? Include them in the daily life of your workplace. After all, if you help them gain a broader perspective, it will help everyone involved.



5. Please explain.

When you assign work, make sure you give a detailed explanation. While the work may seem obvious to you, it may not be as clear to someone who has never done it before. Patience and a few extra minutes at the beginning will pay off later when your intern can produce good work independently.



6. I want a mentor!

Make sure that interns have a mentor or supervisor to provide guidance. Provide someone who truly likes to teach, and the experience supervising others will be even better.

7. A minute of your time, please.

The best mentor in the world is useless if he or she can't or won't spend the necessary time working and talking with the student. As newcomers, interns may not speak up if they're feeling ignored, so the burden of making sure they're okay is on the mentor. Mentors should schedule regular times to meet with the intern.

8. Be prepared!

That wonderful day has arrived and the intern goes to start their internship only to learn that no one knew they were coming, and there is no place for them to work. Brief your staff of the student's impending arrival, and help the intern get started on a positive note.

9. Um... I need a chair.

It is amazing how many employers hire interns and don't think about the fact that they will need a desk, chair, phone, and a computer in order to do the task assigned. It isn't fun or efficient to move an intern from desk to desk. If you want to get a job done, you need to supply the intern with the tools they need.

10. Show us the money (as best you can).

While internships differ, and each industry has its own personality, remember that interns have expenses. Your organization may not be in a position to pay much, but anything can help. Maybe you can help pay for their parking and/or transportation, or develop some other creative way to assist them.

Note: Some academic departments require unpaid internships and field studies for academic credit.

ORIENTATION CHECKLIST

Your intern may not be familiar with the structure, organizational policies, and expectations of the professional workplace. Helping the intern to understand what your organization does and how it operates will allow the intern to begin his or her assigned responsibilities sooner and become a productive member of your organization. Does your on-boarding process include the items below?

Explain the Mission of your Organization

- How did the organization begin?
- What is unique about your product or service?
- Who are the users of your product or service?
- What are your organization's objectives?
- How might the intern contribute to the organization's objectives?

Explain the Organization Structure

- Who reports to whom?
- Who, specifically, is the intern's supervisor?
- Does the intern have a mentor?
- What is the intern's department responsible for?
- How are decisions made?
- Which personnel can answer different kinds of questions?

Define the Intern's Responsibilities

- What is the intern's role?
- What projects will be assigned to the intern?
- 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?
- When will meetings with the supervisor be scheduled?

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, computer, and telephone systems work?
- What are the appropriate correspondence forms?
- By what safety regulations must the intern abide?
- Is there a procedure for signing off on completed work?
- What periodic forms or reports need to be completed?
- What local, state, and/or federal guidelines or laws apply to the intern's work?
- Are there security or confidentiality issues of which the intern should be aware?
- What is the dress code?
- How should the intern maintain the premises and work area?

Monitor the Intern's Adjustment

- Make yourself visibly available to the intern.
- Schedule supervisor and intern meetings to provide input, guidance, feedback, and an opportunity to answer questions.
- Assign someone who can periodically "check-in" with the intern.
- Provide feedback and constructive criticism.
- Encourage the intern to ask questions.



DEVELOPING WORK ACTIVITIES & MEASURABLE LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR ACADEMIC/CREDIT BEARING INTERNSHIPS

A large part of producing effective position descriptions involves the development of challenging work assignments



that complement students' academic programs. One way to do this is to design a preliminary list of work activities that will fit the needs of your department.

opportunity...

A detailed description of typical tasks will help the college to promote your internship, and help you to screen the right candidates for the position. Later, when the interns you select join your team, you will have a chance to review the work activities and modify them according to the interns' knowledge and personal work/learning goals.



As part of the educational process, internship work activities should focus on projects specifically related to the academic major and the degree the interns expect to receive. Students who perform menial tasks could quickly become demoralized and will learn nothing about applying their classroom knowledge and prior experience to a business environment.

While many students work (or have worked) at part-time jobs to finance their education, an internship does not fall into this category of a job. The internship is actually part of their academic program and should offer every opportunity to link classroom learning to workplace experience.

Undergraduate students expect and appreciate clear direction regarding what is expected of them and want frequent feedback concerning what and how they have done. Remember, in their academic environment, clear direction and periodic feedback is the way of life. It is also very important that interns perceive their work is making useful contributions to your organization.

challenging...

A particular concern at the undergraduate level is that work assignments provide interns with a variety of tasks while accommodating the needs of the organization. Of course, some of the intern's responsibilities will involve repetition, because all work involves some repeated activity. The program should be designed to maximize the scope of the intern's organizational experience.

Developing challenging work assignments relative to the students' abilities should be a major focus. The internship position description should incorporate the needs of your organization as well as the abilities and academic goals of the students you employ.

Key Points

- Describe challenging but realistic tasks students can accomplish within a three-month period.
- Work with students to establish specific learning objectives to meet academic requirements.
- Identify outcomes or expected products.
- Be willing to incorporate the students' particular strengths.
- Show how this work relates to the overall efforts of the department or organization.

SUPERVISING THE INTERN

As an intern supervisor, you will use all of these skills for an effective supervisory relationship:

- Leadership
- Motivation
- Delegating
- Communication
- Developing and training
- Evaluating

Additionally, interns will look to you as a mentor who will assist in their transition from the classroom to the work environment. We suggest that you meet with your interns regularly to provide feedback concerning their performance. During these meetings, the intern can:

- Report on the status of a project.
- Ask questions.
- Learn how their work is contributing to the organization.
- Participate in an evaluation of their strengths.
- Discuss areas needing growth and development.
- Get a sense of what kind of work lies ahead.

attitudes...

At the same time you will have an opportunity to coach, counsel, and reinforce positive attitude and performance. If the intern is enrolled in an internship for credit at Virginia Tech, you should anticipate that you will have some interaction with the internship coordinator. The internship coordinator will help you find a solution if difficulties occur with an intern's performance.

You should also get in touch with the internship coordinator if the internship conditions must be altered – such as a change in supervisor, delays in availability of data needed by the intern to complete an assignment, a strike by unionized employees, transfer or termination of the employee involved in the interns' work, or other unanticipated changes.

portfolio...

Encourage your interns to keep a portfolio of work accomplished during the experience. Let them know which items are confidential/proprietary and should not be included. This will help fulfill their academic requirements and provide them with a sense of accomplishment. In addition, it will give you a basis to discuss their professional growth.



Specific work documents to include in a portfolio might be:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| • Job Descriptions | • Correspondence |
| • Legislation | • Press releases |
| • Proposals | • Certificates |
| • Manuals | • Financial reports |
| • Citations & awards | • References |
| • Contracts | • Survey reports |
| • Program outlines | • Cost analyses |
| • Charts/graphs | • Marketing plans |
| • Performance appraisals | • Displays & exhibits |
| • Company newsletters | • Research reports |

In addition to spontaneous and informal meetings, you can use the sample evaluation form provided in this manual to evaluate the intern's performance. You should consider the quality and timeliness of the work produced to date, ability to take and follow direction, work habits, and areas needing growth and development. This will serve as a reference point for the intern's subsequent performance.

Summary

- Maintain an open channel of communication with formal and informal meetings.
- Keep the interns busy and directed toward their learning objectives. Students rarely complain of overwork, but they do complain if they are not challenged.
- Provide opportunities for increasing responsibility.
- Encourage professionalism by assisting the interns in developing human relations skills, decision-making abilities, and managing office politics.
- Remember that you are a role model.

INTERNSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND CONSULTATION RESOURCES

Virginia Tech

Career and Professional Development
Smith Career Center
870 Washington Street, SW
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061
www.career.vt.edu
540-231-6776

For information regarding international students:
Virginia Tech Cranwell International Center
540-231-6527

Professional Organizations

The following national organizations, and their regional and/or statewide affiliates, can be consulted.

National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE)
62 Highland Avenue
Bethlehem, PA 18017
Phone: 800-544-5272
Web: www.nacweb.org

National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE)
19 Mantua Road
Mt. Royal, NJ 08096
Phone: 856-423-3427
Web: www.nsee.org

Cooperative Education and Internship Association (CEIA)
P. O. Box 42506
Cincinnati, OH 45242
Phone: 513-793-CEIA (2342)
Web: www.ceiainc.org

Department of Labor Criteria for Unpaid Internships

The Department of Labor has developed a seven-factor test for determining whether workers are to be considered “trainees” (e.g., unpaid interns) or “employees” (hourly or salaried interns) that must be paid at least minimum wage under the Fair Labor Standard Act (FLSA). Review page 16 for additional information on the Department of Labor criteria for internship programs.

For additional information regarding compliance provisions of the FLSA, please visit:

- United States Department of Labor: Wage and Hour Division
- United States Department of Labor: Fair Labor Standards Act Advisor

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AT VIRGINIA TECH

Cooperative education has a long history in the United States as an educational experience in technical fields. At Virginia Tech the history of cooperative education can be traced back to 1952 when Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University joined with the then 40 other schools that had validated the importance of hands on experience in technical fields.

Virginia Tech places great value and importance on experiential learning opportunities for students where they can learn and develop in authentic work settings. Guided learning, reflection, and mentoring are essential elements to a successful experiential learning program. Our employer partners find co-ops and interns invaluable for meeting short-term employment needs and building a cost effective, productive system of recruiting future graduates. Both cooperative education and internships involve a partnership between the academic institution and the employer to insure that the education of the student and professional preparation are paramount to the experience.

Cooperative Education and Internships

Although the terms co-op and internship are often used interchangeably, there is some notable difference between both of these very valuable learning experiences for students. The primary difference between a co-op and an internship is the duration of the experience and often the level of planning that is required.

Cooperative Education is an academic program that is meant to complement the student's education through hands-on application in their field of study. It is a long-term plan that can start as early as their freshman year and can last the duration of the student's academic career. Co-op involves multi-term work assignments with increased tasks and responsibilities as the student progresses through classes, obtaining in-depth work experience. Students will often remain with the same employer for the duration of their co-op experience for a scaffolding learning process. Virginia Tech offers an alternating model where students will alternate semesters at work with semesters of academic study.

Internships are typically project-based and last one semester or a short term. Internships often occur in the summer and will not interfere with academic classes, but some students will take advantage of the opportunity to intern full-time or part-time during the academic year as well. An internship becomes valuable experiential learning when learning, reflection, and connection to academic studies and future career goals are applied.

Both co-op and intern opportunities move students beyond theory to the realm of "learning by doing", at Virginia Tech we call that "hands on, minds on". These opportunities provide students with first-hand experience applying classroom theory to real-world experiences and creating realistic career expectations.

Cooperative Education and Internship Program (CEIP)

CEIP is an experiential learning program where students gain practical, career-related experience taking classroom knowledge and applying it to a job while gaining professional and technical skills necessary for career success. Students enroll in a zero credit course where they establish learning objectives, assess and develop professional competencies, and reflect on their experience. Students may choose from full-time or part-time work options and pay a \$75 enrollment fee to participate in the program and note their experience on their academic transcript.

Student and Employer Participation

Career and Professional Development welcomes your participation in the Cooperative Education & Internship Program, and encourages employers to hire students, and have them enroll either as an intern or co-op. Simply have the students you hire contact Career and Professional Development and indicate their desire to enroll in the CEIP program. Students will then:

- Attend an Orientation to the Cooperative Education & Internship Program that includes a session on business etiquette and preparation for the workplace.

- Obtain academic department approval on their work / school schedule and Cranwell International Center if applicable.
- Student will be enrolled in a zero credit internship course that is 100% virtual.
- Employers will provide an offer letter and job description, assist students in developing learning objectives, and provide written performance feedback at the end of the experience.

Professional Competencies for Career Readiness

Career and Professional Development has identified seven professional competencies for career readiness that students will develop and reflect on throughout their co-op or internship experience. These competencies are an integral part of the student's professional development and performance evaluation.

Career readiness is defined as the awareness and development of the skills students need to confidently and successfully meet employer expectations and transition into the workplace.

COMMUNICATION: Articulate thoughts and express ideas effectively using oral, written, visual and non-verbal communication skills, as well as listening to gain understanding. The ability to deliver information in person, in writing, and in a digital world.

TEAMWORK AND INTERPERSONAL: Build and maintain collaborative relationships to work effectively with others in a team setting through shared responsibility, empathy and respect. The ability to manage one's emotions and conflict with others while contributing towards a common goal.

LEADERSHIP: Leverage strengths to motivate, collaborate and guide. The ability to use a positive attitude to influence and empower others to reach a shared goal through strategic thinking and effective decision-making.

CREATIVITY AND PROBLEM-SOLVING: Exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues, synthesize information, make decisions and solve problems. The ability to think critically and strategically to develop original ideas and innovative solutions.

PROFESSIONALISM AND PRODUCTIVITY: Demonstrate integrity, resilience, accountability and ethical behavior. The ability to take initiative, maintain effective work habits (prioritize, plan and manage work) to produce high quality results and project a professional presence.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE: Respect the viewpoints of those from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, religions and lifestyles to build collaborative relationships and communicate effectively. The ability to appreciate, value, and learn from other cultures and perspectives.

DIGITAL FLUENCY: Maximize new and emerging technologies in order to work, learn and live in a digital society. The ability to apply digital technology to enhance quality, improve productivity and communication, solve problems, and streamline processes.

For more information about CEIP or other internship programs please contact:

Cooperative Education and Internship Program
 Career and Professional Development at Virginia Tech
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U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division

Fact Sheet #71: Internship Programs Under The Fair Labor Standards Act

This fact sheet provides general information to help determine whether interns and students working for “for-profit” employers are entitled to minimum wages and overtime pay under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).¹

Background

The FLSA requires “for-profit” employers to pay employees for their work. Interns and students, however, may not be “employees” under the FLSA—in which case the FLSA does not require compensation for their work.

The Test for Unpaid Interns and Students

Courts have used the “primary beneficiary test” to determine whether an intern or student is, in fact, an employee under the FLSA.² In short, this test allows courts to examine the “economic reality” of the internemployer relationship to determine which party is the “primary beneficiary” of the relationship. Courts have identified the following seven factors as part of the test:

1. The extent to which the intern and the employer clearly understand that there is no expectation of compensation. Any promise of compensation, express or implied, suggests that the intern is an employee—and vice versa.
2. 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 educational institutions.
3. The extent to which the internship is tied to the intern’s formal education program by integrated coursework or the receipt of academic credit.
4. The extent to which the internship accommodates the intern’s academic commitments by corresponding to the academic calendar.
5. The extent to which the internship’s duration is limited to the period in which the internship provides the intern with beneficial learning.
6. 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.
7. 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.

¹ The FLSA exempts certain people who volunteer to perform services for a state or local government agency or who volunteer for humanitarian purposes or non-profit food banks. WHD also recognizes an exception for individuals who volunteer their time, freely and without anticipation of compensation, for religious, charitable, civic, or humanitarian purposes to non-profit organizations. Unpaid internships for public sector and non-profit charitable organizations, where the intern volunteers without expectation of compensation, are generally permissible.

² E.g., *Benjamin v. B & H Educ., Inc.*, --- F.3d ---, 2017 WL 6460087, at *4-5 (9th Cir. Dec. 19, 2017); *Glatt v. Fox Searchlight Pictures, Inc.*, 811 F.3d 528, 536-37 (2d Cir. 2016); *Schumann v. Collier Anesthesia, P.A.*, 803 F.3d 1199, 1211-12 (11th Cir. 2015); see also *Walling v. Portland Terminal Co.*, 330 U.S. 148, 152-53 (1947); *Solis v. Laurelbrook Sanitarium & Sch., Inc.*, 642 F.3d 518, 529 (6th Cir. 2011).

Courts have described the “primary beneficiary test” as a flexible test, and no single factor is determinative. Accordingly, whether an intern or student is an employee under the FLSA necessarily depends on the unique circumstances of each case.

If analysis of these circumstances reveals that an intern or student is actually an employee, then he or she is entitled to both minimum wage and overtime pay under the FLSA. On the other hand, if the analysis 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.

Where to Obtain Additional Information

This publication is for general information and is not a regulation. For additional information, visit our Wage and Hour Division Website: <http://www.wagehour.dol.gov> and/or call our toll-free information and helpline, available 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. in your time zone, 1-866-4USWAGE (1-866-487-9243).

NOTES

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

This image shows a full-page view of a blank sheet of lined notebook paper. At the top, there is a solid teal-colored horizontal band. Inside this band, the word "NOTES" is written in a white, bold, sans-serif font, positioned towards the left side. Below the teal band, the rest of the page is white and filled with evenly spaced, thin black horizontal lines that run across the entire width of the page.

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