

Employer Internship Guide

A toolkit for employers



The
Career Center

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; and give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent.”

National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE)



Historically, full-time, entry-level hires converted from an employer's own internship program are more likely to persist with the employing organization than their counterparts who have no experience or who gained it through another organization's program.

75% vs. 50%

At the one-year full-time employment mark, hires converted from an employer's own internship program outpace their inexperienced counterparts

National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE)

Internships are one-time hands-on work or service experiences:

- Related to the student intern's major or career goal
- Paid or unpaid
- Student may or may not receive academic credit
- Involves work in a professional setting
- Supervision provided by practicing professionals in the field
- Guided by predetermined learning outcomes, which the intern engages in and reflects upon throughout the duration of the experience.

INTERNSHIP TYPES:

- Apprenticeship
- Clinical
- Cooperative Education (Co-Op)
- Fellowship
- Field Work
- Practicum
- Research Assistant
- Service Learning
- Student Teaching
- Volunteer

INTERNS PROVIDE:

- Fresh ideas on problems facing the organization
- Assistance with projects or tasks that need completing
- Insight on new approaches and business solutions
- Feedback on your products and services from young consumers
- Ability to screen and work with potential entry-level employees, prior to making a full-time employment commitment

INTERNSHIP LENGTHS:

- Typically, internships last 10-12 weeks and run on the same timeline as academic semesters:
 - Fall (Late August - Early December)
 - Spring (Early January - Late April)
 - Summer (Mid-May - Early August)
- Internship employers typically recognize University Holidays, Breaks and Closures, allowing the Student Intern to put studies first

INTERNSHIP OUTCOMES:

- Increased brand visibility and product knowledge for your organization at FSU
- A training program and talent pipeline for future full-time professionals within your organization
- Management experience and leadership skills growth for your entry-level employees
- Showcase long-term career opportunities within both your organization and your industry

INTERNSHIP COMPENSATION

\$20.82

Current average hourly wage for interns at the bachelor's degree level

National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE)

Interns are typically paid more than minimum wage workers in your State.

The chart below illustrates salary data compiled from internship postings through the FSU Career Center's NoleNetwork system.

JOB FUNCTION	# OF POSTINGS	% UNPAID	% PAID	AVERAGE HOURLY WAGE	COMMISSION ONLY	AVERAGE SEMESTER STIPEND	PAID, WAGE NOT REPORTED
Agriculture/Natural Resources	152	33% (50)	67% (102)	\$14.24 (34)	-	\$2,775+housing/meals (30)	38
Arts/Design/Planning	586	37% (214)	64% (372)	\$13.01 (153)	.3% (2)	\$3,156+housing/meals (9)	308
Communications	713	59% (419)	41% (294)	\$12.45 (109)	1% (8)	\$3,019+housing/meals (28)	149
Computer Science/Information Technology	140	8% (11)	92% (129)	\$16.75 (47)	-	\$1,500+housing/meals (1)	81
Consulting	38	13% (5)	87% (33)	\$14.94 (13)	10% (4)	\$3,000+housing/meals (2)	14
Education/Teaching	58	48% (28)	52% (30)	\$15.24 (9)	-	\$2,998+housing/meals (10)	11
Engineering	180	.5% (1)	99% (179)	\$18.59 (57)	-	\$9,000+housing/meals (1)	121
Financial Services	180	9% (17)	91% (163)	\$15.20 (66)	.5% (1)	\$3,000+housing/meals (1)	95
Healthcare	45	28% (13)	71% (32)	\$13.70 (8)	-	-	24
Hospitality/Travel	66	26% (17)	74% (49)	\$12.00 (15)	-	\$2,660+housing/meals (5)	29
Management/Administration	138	24% (33)	76% (105)	\$14.00 (49)	.7% (1)	\$3,133+housing/meals (6)	49
Marketing/Sales	174	26% (46)	74% (128)	\$13.73 (47)	5% (8)	\$3,560+housing/meals (5)	68
Miscellaneous/Other	412	54% (224)	46% (188)	\$15.00 (87)	-	\$3,913+housing/meals (21)	80
Research	111	29% (32)	71% (79)	\$18.30 (12)	-	\$5,816+housing/meals (38)	29
Social Services	85	78% (66)	22% (19)	\$12.00 (9)	-	-	10
Total	3,078	38% (1,176)	62% (1,902)	\$15.00 (615)		\$3,813+housing/meals (157)	1,106

UNPAID INTERNSHIPS

INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS UNDER THE FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT

U.S. Department of Labor Fact Sheet #71

Learn more: <http://bit.ly/DoLFactSheet71>

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 intern-employer 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.

For an unpaid internship program to meet regulations, interns must be gaining experience directly correlated their major or academic coursework and provide ongoing professional development and mentorship.

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.

Organizations that choose to provide unpaid interns typically provide alternative forms of compensation, such as:

- A monthly, semester or project-based stipend
- Provided housing or a housing allowance
- Meal provision or reimbursement
- Parking/transportation reimbursement
- Sponsored membership to a professional development organization
- Attendance at local, regional or national professional development trainings or conferences
- Academic scholarships

INTERNSHIPS & ACADEMIC CREDIT

FSU supports the fact that academic credit is not the same as compensation.



Enrolling in an academic course during an internship means the student will be paying tuition. For 2023-2024, the in-state charge per credit hour is **\$215.55 + fees**.

A typical three-credit course is **\$646.65 + fees**.

Florida State University Registrar

Students do not have to be receiving academic credit from FSU in order to engage in an internship.

Stipulations and guidelines impacting financial compensation policies and preventing students from being paid for their work if they are receiving college credit are discriminatory.

At FSU, academic credit is always at the discretion of the Academic Department/Program (e.g. Political Science Department or Professional Sales Program) or College/School (e.g. College of Business or School of Hospitality).

Not all majors at FSU offer an academic internship course. If they do:

- Eligibility requirements for academic internship courses can vary depending on year in school, degree level and major.
- Most for-credit academic internship courses are limited to upper level students.

After a student secures an internship, the responsibility lies with the student, not the employer, to explore the potential to earn academic course credit.

As Universities grant academic credit, an organization should **avoid** promising that their internship will qualify for academic credit.

Organizations hiring interns should design their internship program around their own needs, not academic course requirements.

In recruiting for your internship program, you can emphasize your organization's willingness to complete any needed forms to facilitate a student earning academic credit, such as including a statement in your internship position description:

Can I use this internship/co-op for academic course credit at FSU?

Contact your major's internship coordinator to get the appropriate paperwork. If our internship fits your academic program's requirements, we're happy to work with you to fulfill requirements and complete paperwork, when possible.

Alternatives to Academic Credit

While the FSU Career Center does not grant academic credit for internships, we do offer ways FSU students can elect to earn recognition from FSU for their completion of an internship:

- **Experiential Recognition Program**
career.fsu.edu/ERP

ERP facilitate students' professional development and growth through goal-setting, reflection, and self-evaluation.

BEFORE YOU LAUNCH AN INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

72.7%

The average full-time job offer rate to interns is the highest it has been since the peak of the pre-recession market.

National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE)



Converting students who have taken part in your internship program into full-time employees is a primary goal for most organizations.

As you think about hosting an intern, it is important to make sure your organization is ready.

Hosting a successful intern requires:

- Time – someone to train, supervise and mentor
- Physical/financial resources – work space, computer/internet access, telephone/voicemail, etc.

The best-laid plans actually do make for the best internships – and create the most value for both the employer and the intern. So, it is worth the extra work in the beginning:

ASSESS YOUR ORGANIZATIONAL NEED:

- Are there back-burner projects that you would like to see completed?
- Is there a big project or peak season when your organization needs extra help?
- Do you have a specific employee that would benefit from extra short-term assistance?
- Do you have any preexisting resources or programs that need an update?
- Do you have a great idea that your organization needs help launching?

ASSESS YOUR ORGANIZATIONAL READINESS:

- Does your organization have both the time and resources needed to develop and mentor an intern throughout the entire experience?
- Is there a physical space for the intern to complete work equipped with the necessary technology?
- Can you develop a clear plan of how the intern can effectively contribute to your goals?
- Do you have a supervisor with some degree of expertise in the area in which the intern will be working?
- Who will be responsible for planning and executing your intern's on-boarding and off boarding process?
- Does your organization have the supervision structure to ensure the intern is meeting organization standards?

Overall, employers begin recruiting interns **eight months** before their start date.

DEVELOPING A COMPELLING POSITION DESCRIPTION

Your internship position description is often the first impression a student has of your organization!

Well-developed internship position descriptions always garner the most interest and applications from student candidates.

When crafting your position description, we recommend including the following:

1. Why should a student choose your internship opportunity?

Incorporate a compelling (short) description of your organization.

FSU students may not be familiar with your organization, so adding details builds interest and excitement about your mission and community impact.

Example: “Our solutions allow our clients to increase productivity and profits. We’re no strangers to the IT industry; we’ve been in business for 30+ years.”

Lead with a concise overall statement describing the internship opportunity.

Example: “The Event Management Intern will work directly with the Event Planner to plan and execute a flawless annual conference welcoming 5,000 professionals for a weeklong continuing education programming.”

Use adjectives that accurately describe the work environment and culture (team-oriented, fast-paced, etc.).

Example: “We’re a big company that feels like family, with offices across the U.S. and the globe. We take our work seriously, but we take our play-time seriously too. What does that mean? Holiday decorating contests, company-sponsored events, and so much more. When you become our colleague, you join a family of innovators dedicated to making big things happen every day. We put people direct by nurturing a culture that makes it easy to love what we do.”

2. What will the Intern gain from choosing your opportunity?

Provide a description of what the intern will learn from this opportunity.

Example: “Experience will be gained in event planning, volunteer management, B2C communications, community grassroots marketing, and vendor management.”

Brag on the Supervisor – students want to know who will mentor them!

Example: “The intern will work under a supervisor, with the opportunity for mentorship, that has 20+ years of experience running multimodal communication strategies for Fortune 500, large non-profits and lobbying organizations.”

Provide a description of any professional development opportunities available to students.

Example: “Perks of working with our office includes networking with a world-class team, attending meetings with high level leadership, your own office, and an occasional ice cream or coffee outing (maybe even lunch!). And, we have an on-site fitness center.”

3. What skills are needed for an Intern to succeed in your internship program?

Articulate the specific qualifications and skills. Avoid being vague.

Example: “Excellent quantitative problem-solving and analytic skills. Ability to communicate financial and economic concepts in both verbal and written forms. Self-starter who is capable of managing multiple projects and meeting deadlines. Experience doing empirical research with large data sets.”

HOW TO RECRUIT INTERNS AT FSU

The first step in recruiting interns from Florida State University is to advertise your opportunity through NoleNetwork, FSU's online jobs database connecting students and employers.

POSTING INTERNSHIP POSITIONS IN NoleNetwork

1. Visit career.fsu.edu/nolenetwork
2. Click the "Employer Login" button
Have questions? Need support?
hireanole@fsu.edu or (850) 644-9775

#HIREANOLE

The Career Center allows you to tailor your involvement with FSU in a variety of ways. You can attend a career fair, hold interviews on-campus, host an information session, serve as an

FSUshadow Host or Professionle Mentor, serve as an Employer-In-Residence...and more! Learn about recruiting options at career.fsu.edu/employers.

MAKING AN INTERNSHIP OFFER

Making an internship offer is similar to making a permanent, full-time offer. Student candidates are often considering, applying to, and interviewing for many other internships.

When you feel you have found an ideal candidate, make your internship offer as soon as possible. Give a deadline for their final decision, but provide time for the Candidate to assess your offer.

Extend your formal internship offer in writing, detailing your total professional development and compensation package in addition to work performance, dress code and work schedule expectations, specifically any required in-office dates.

Some employers attempt to mitigate the effects of market competition for their top candidates by requiring students to accept an offer within a short time frame. However, this practice may lead to candidates continuing their internship search and renege on accepting an offer if they find "something better." To avoid this situation, we recommend providing the most amount of information and transparency, without pressure.

Once your internship offer has been accepted, remove the posting from any job boards and have your intern start completing any hiring paperwork.



SETTING YOUR INTERN UP FOR SUCCESS

Don't expect your Intern to arrive knowing all the skills necessary to get the job done – provide initial and ongoing training and support!

Make the intern feel like part of the team.



ORIENTATION

Intern orientation should be held on or before the first day of work.

In preparation for their arrival, you can make them feel valued by pre-ordering any nametags, branded shirts, door plaques, business cards, etc.

Before they arrive, set-up their assigned work area including telephone, computer, internet, voicemail, etc. and stocking with office supplies.

And remember, this may be your Intern's first professional experience, so you may need to have a more detailed orientation than with a full-time hire. Consider including the following:

Describe the Organization's History:

- Where did it begin?
- How has the organization changed? What triggered those changes?
- What are the organization's future goals?

Explain the Organizational Structure:

- Provide a copy of your organizational chart. Explain how the team/departmental groupings were created.
- Take time to explain the specific reporting structure for the team the Intern works on.

- Provide the intern with personnel resources – who can and should answer future questions on the organization structure?

Outline Organizational Rules, Policies, Decorum, and Expectations:

- Is there special company or industry jargon the intern needs to know?
- Reiterate specific work standards and procedures, including dress code and office norms.
- Detail any policies around using technology, printing, or using work phones for personal business.
- Explain any security or confidentiality policies.
- Explain protocol and use of break rooms (including refrigerators, microwave, communal coffee pots, etc.).
- Provide initial (and ongoing) training on mail, telephone, email, etc. systems that will be utilized for work.
- What local, state and/or federal guidelines or law apply to the intern's work?
- What safety regulations must the intern abide?
- How should they order or request needed office supplies.

SUPERVISION



If there are any **FSU Alumni** or recent hires, take time to specifically introduce them or have that employee spend time with the Intern on their first day to create an informal mentor relationship.

In the future, your Intern may feel comfortable approaching them with questions they may be too embarrassed to ask their Supervisor!

DEVELOPING LEARNING GOALS:

Develop learning goals with your Intern to identify outcomes and desired experiences. Learning goals should be SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound). To ensure time is spent productively, collaborate your Intern in creating these goals. Learning goals may relate to:

Job Skills (“Hard Skills”)

- Concrete skills the intern hopes to obtain or build, such as learning to follow or perform appropriate procedures, utilize special equipment/technology, and execute specific methods or job-related tasks.

Personal/Professional Skills (“Soft Skills”)

- Less tangible skills and competencies the intern hopes to cultivate, such as self-confidence, working effectively with others, professional etiquette, networking, time management, organization, and decision-making.

Career Field/Industry Knowledge

- New information regarding the company, industry, occupation, or job duties.

DETAIL YOUR SUPERVISION STYLE & EXPECTATIONS:

- How much access to you does the intern have?
- What is your preferred communication style?
- Is there a procedure you want to follow for reviewing completed work?
- What periodic forms or reports do you want the Intern to complete?
- What tasks can be completed without your approval?

PROVIDE ON-GOING FEEDBACK:

Interns will look to their supervisors for guidance in navigating their transition to the professional world. Meet with the intern regularly.

Make sure to reinforce positive attitudes, and encourage the intern to keep a portfolio of work throughout the experience.

This will help the intern reflect when the internship has been completed and will provide a sense of accomplishment and professional growth.

PROVIDE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

- When possible allowing your intern to shadow you and other organizational leaders during meetings, presentations, conference calls, sales pitches, etc.
- Take the intern to any local professional development sessions/trainings or trade shows.
- Set-up intra-organizational job shadow opportunities to provide a full picture into your organizations.
- Schedule informational interviews with your peers and mentors to provide a deeper look into career paths and advancement opportunities in your career field or industry.

EVALUATING THE INTERN

When providing an evaluation to the intern, be sure to include feedback on the intern's timeliness and ability to take and follow direction. Mention areas that need growth and development, as well as areas in which the intern excelled.

Internships are experiential learning opportunities designed to enhance the academic coursework, it is recommended that intern evaluations mimic the rhythm of an academic semester:

The First Evaluation

- When: 1-3 weeks after orientation, onboarding and training is complete
- Goal: Ensure everyone's initial expectations are being met

The Second Evaluation

- When: Mid-point of the internship
- Goal: Assess progress made towards agreed upon learning goals and determine if additional resources are necessary to complete assignments. Provide constructive feedback on areas of professional growth

The Final Evaluation

- When: Last week of the internship
- Goal: Both Supervisor and Intern can reflect on the experience, celebrate successes, assess professional growth as well as discuss constructively areas of improvement for both the Intern professionally and the Internship Program



**QUESTIONS? CONTACT:
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