

GAINING EXPERIENCE

Join Campus Organizations

Statistics show that during freshman year, students who are involved with at least one organization have higher GPAs, are more likely to graduate, and have a more enjoyable college experience. Many skills can be developed through campus involvement, including:

- Communication
- Analytical/critical thinking
- Organizational skills
- Leadership

These skills are transferable and make you a stronger candidate for employment or admission into graduate or professional school. Ideally, you should join at least two organizations during your college career:

1. One that is related to your major, so that you can grow professionally and stay abreast of your future industry.
2. One that is committed to serving the community in some capacity.

Volunteer

Why Volunteer?

- It gives you a chance to interact in a real work environment—valuable experience that will improve your chances of future success.
- It allows you to test your vocational skills in the workplace.
- It adds experience to your resume. Employers prize experience in the world of work.
- It gives civic-minded students a way to donate skills and services to organizations within their communities.

Pursue an Internship

An internship (also known as a co-op, practicum, or fieldwork) is an opportunity for you to gain hands-on experience in a field of professional work that interests you. Benefits include:

- Gaining valuable work experience that increases your employment marketability
- Developing new skills while refining others
- Reinforcing classroom learning to workplace setting
- Exploring potential career options
- Meeting and working with professionals
- Building your professional network
- Adding experience to your resume
- Can lead to full-time job offers

Internship Requirements

- Non-Credit Internships: The only qualifications are those set by the employer.
- Academic Department Credit Internships: Internship opportunities and requirements, as well as student eligibility, varies greatly by academic department. Check with your advisor for more details.

During the Internship, You Should:

- Bring new ideas to the table. You were hired for a reason and the company could benefit from a new perspective.
- Show them that you care by dressing for the job that you want, acting professionally, and being punctual.
- Branch out from other interns and network with co-workers.
- Try to schedule regular meeting with your internship supervisor where you can go over your goals, expectations, and performance.
- Do as much as you can since you are only there for a limited time.
- Try to find a mentor within the company who you can use for support or as a reference or letter of recommendation in the future.

Questions to Ask Yourself:

- Do I plan on interning full-time or part-time? If full-time, am I okay with taking all online classes or graduating a semester later?
- Would I be willing to work for academic credit or for payment? Does the payment cover travel, housing, or other expenditures I may incur?
- If I find an unpaid internship, will I be willing to fund my own travel or housing expenses?
- Would I want to intern in the Fall, Spring, or Summer semester?
- Do I want to intern locally, in my hometown, in another state, or internationally?
- Does my program require me to have completed an internship in order to graduate?
- Do I want to intern in a field relevant to my major/minor or gain experience in something else I may be interested in?

- What am I looking to gain from this experience?

GAINING EXPERIENCE: INTERNSHIPS

*MOST APPLICATIONS ARE DUE THE SEMESTER PRIOR TO THE ONE FOR WHICH

YOU ARE
PLANNING TO
INTERN

SEPTEMBER

Ask yourself what you are looking for in an internship.

Begin working on your resume and cover letter.

Create LinkedIn and CareerShift Profiles.

DECEMBER

Spend Winter Break doing research. Keep track of everything you are interested in or have applied for on a spreadsheet or chart.

CareerShift is a great place to

MARCH

Set up interviews: be sure to send thank-you notes. You may receive offers at this point. Ask how much time you have to respond in case you are waiting to hear back from other internships. It is okay to ask if you can wait on accepting.

OCTOBER

Get your resume and cover letter critiqued by Career Development (Mon-Fri 8 am – 4:30 pm, 2nd floor of the library).

JANUARY

Update your CareerShift and LinkedIn profiles. Continue applying to internships.

APRIL

Offers can still be made. If you can't decide between offers, try to read intern reviews online - especially through Vault.

NOVEMBER

Meet with the Career Development Director to learn how to begin the internship search process. (More competitive summer internships may have as early of a deadline as Nov or Dec)

FEBRUARY

Finish applying to your final internships. Schedule a mock interview at Career Development to practice your interviewing skills. Begin looking for housing. Will you need to sublease your apartment?

MAY

Finalize any extra paperwork (HR, housing lease, forms to have credits transfer back to CN).

SUM MER INT ERN SHIP TIME LINE