



OFFICE OF  
CAREER SERVICES

# Student Internship Guide

## Introduction

According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers, by 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.**

A meaningful internship will have the following components:

- Related to the intern's intended career field or coursework.
- Facilitated by an internship site supervisor who provides regular constructive guidance, evaluation, and feedback.
- Targeted toward a learning objective, which the intern engages in and reflects upon throughout the course of the internship.
- A faculty member who assists the intern with the connection between the academic and professional experience through reflection and evaluation.
- The potential to be turned into knowledge and applied directly to real life.

Some internships are paid and some are unpaid, though compensation is certainly something to consider in your decision. It is important to keep in mind that the greatest reward is the learning outcome. In today's job market, employers expect students to have relevant experience when they graduate and an internship is one of the best ways to gain that experience!

Many of the academic departments at The University of Tampa offer the opportunity for you to receive a specified amount of academic credit for your work in a supervised internship experience relating to your major and career goals. Not all internships must be completed for academic credit; however, such experiences can be very valuable. You will learn new skills and competencies, gain experience in the world of work, clarify your career goals, build your resume, and make contacts that might lead to a full-time position upon graduation. To learn more about your department's internship academic credit pre-requisites, visit [www.ut.edu/internships/academiccredit](http://www.ut.edu/internships/academiccredit).

The following pages will provide tips, hints, and helpful resources, which will be valuable in your internship and future career searches. It is important for you to remember that the resources you have at UT: Faculty Internship Coordinators in your department and the staff at the Office of Career Services. This handbook supplements their work in building a successful internship learning experience with you.

## Glossary of Terms

**Experiential Education:** An experience that ensures that students blend and integrate classroom knowledge with practice.

**For-credit Internship:** A focused short-term work experience related to the student's major or career goal, which is completed for academic credit, under the guidance of at least one practicing professional, and at least one faculty member.

**Non-credit Internship:** An experience related to the student's major or career goal, which is not completed for academic credit, under the supervision of at least one practicing professional.

**Practicum:** An academic course that combines classroom activities with supervised practical application.

**Fieldwork:** Activities performed outside the classroom, library, studio, or laboratory for University credit and under the supervision of an instructor.

**Undergraduate Research:** An experiential education activity in which a student conducts research under the guidance and supervision of a faculty mentor. Students may earn credit, based upon meeting eligibility criteria. (UT catalog, 2008)

**Supervision:** A tutorial and mentoring form of instruction in which a supervisor monitors the student's activities in practicum, field work, and internship and facilitates the learning and skill development experiences associated with practicum, field work, and internship. (From the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs [CACREP] Standards)

**Service Learning:** An academic course that links academic training with provision of services to a community constituency.

**Faculty Internship Coordinator:** The departmental designee, often a faculty member who serves to evaluate if an internship meets departmental criteria for credit approval. Often this person also administers the internship class for the department or academic program. There are multiple Faculty Internship Coordinators across campus.

**Faculty Supervisor:** Faculty member responsible for evaluating student work and site supervisor feedback to determine a grade.

**Career Coach and Associate Director:** Career Center employees dedicated to support internships. These positions serve as the point of contact for organizations wishing to post internships and the administrator of Handshake. Additional responsibilities include Internship Prep Workshops, meeting with students, and consulting with academic departments regarding internships.

**Site Supervisor:** The practicing professional designated to provide direct supervision to the intern while s/he is at the Internship Host Site.

**Internship Host Site:** The organization, business, or entity that offers an organized hands-on experience for a student intern. The Host Site will define the Site Supervisor, the learning objectives and projects, determine pay for the experience, and define the duration of the experience.

Roles and Responsibilities.

## Your Role as an Intern

- To properly register and complete all necessary paperwork from the department or University, and complete academic assignments and coursework related to this internship.
- To agree to abide by the rules and regulations of the internship Host Site as well as The University of Tampa Code of Conduct.
- To choose and complete application process to secure an internship. No student will be “placed” in an internship by The Office of Career Services or the Faculty Internship Coordinator.
- Work conscientiously under the direction of the supervisor assigned by the organization.
- To obtain personal health and accident insurance, or the cost of any expense related to lack thereof. The University of Tampa is not responsible for any medical or legal expenses that may result from injury or illness sustained while participating in the internship.
- To seek approval prior to any international travel from the International Programs Office in order to monitor any travel advisories.
- To arrange transportation to and from the Internship Host site.
- Notify someone if you experience a problem including physical, safety, and personnel at your internship;
- If possible, discuss concerns with your immediate supervisor or someone else at the organization
- Contact your Faculty Internship Coordinator if completing internship for academic credit.
- Contact the Office of Career Services (813- 253-6236) if it is a non-credit internship.

**REMINDER:** International students considering an internship must check with the International Programs Office (IPO) prior to acceptance of an internship (paid or unpaid) to determine CPT eligibility and to complete all required government paperwork. All students interning outside of the United States, should notify IPO regarding their location.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### How the Office of Career Services can help:

- Help you identify internships that match your desired career goals.
- Review your internship application materials (resume and cover letter).
- Introduce you to Handshake and additional resources that you can use in your internship search.
- Practice your interviewing skills.
- Answer your internship-related questions.
- Start and facilitate the academic credit approval process.

### How the Faculty Internship Coordinator in your academic department can help:

- Guide you through the academic credit enrollment process.
- Answer your questions related to academic credit.
- Explain your requirements as a student in their internship course.
- Approve internships for academic credit.
- Recommend potential internships to students.

## Expectations

Internships will vary in terms of what they offer and what you can expect. It is entirely appropriate for you to ask for specific assignments that will be expected of an intern. We recommend that you discuss potential learning objectives with the internship site supervisor prior to accepting an offer.

If you have given a good deal of thought to your expectations, you will be ready to discern the fit of the internship. Some employers will use the word “internship” to describe, what is in reality, a part-time job because it seems more glamorous and may be more attractive to students. If the prospect doesn’t meet your expectations — don’t settle, keep looking!

### Getting down to the “true” work

Explore what projects the employer might have in mind for an intern. Will you have the opportunity to be a part of a team? Will you work with clients? In what way will you be a part of the decision making on a process? What new skills will you learn? In what way will you use the skills that you are bringing to the internship experience?

### Expect administrative work

Remember that you are an intern, not the CEO, and that some administrative work is a normal part of most jobs. However, if a position description uses words like “office work,” “data entry,” or “support,” get clarification on the amount of time spent on these tasks. Ask employers to provide you with references of past interns if you would like to find out what their experience was like. For an internship to be approved for academic credit, no more than 20% of your work will be spent on administrative tasks.

### Plan to be proactive

Expect that once you are in the internship experience you will seek out work and projects. Offer to try new things. Volunteer to take on responsibility as long as you feel that you are able to contribute in a positive way and that the work is contributing to your learning. Approach other employees to learn about their work. Ask a lot of questions!

### “You get out what you put in”

The old saying is true. You get out exactly what you put into your internship experience. If it is nothing more than meeting academic requirements, earning easy credit, or just something you feel you should do, it will be of little or no value. If you work hard to set goals and objectives for your internship, your experience will be invaluable!

## Handshake

### Getting Started on Handshake

Login to your account at <https://ut.joinhandshake.com/> and complete your student profile.

### Searching for Posted Jobs and Internships

- Click on the Jobs tab; input your criteria
- Review posted opportunities and follow application instructions

### Networking with Numerous Employers

Handshake lets you search the Employer Directory to identify employer contact information. (Click Jobs, then Employers.) Just because an organization does not have a position posted does not mean that it does not have anything available. Use the contact information under the Employers tab to generate potential opportunities for internships.

## Up-to-date Calendar of Events and Information

View information about upcoming workshops, job fairs, on-campus interviews, and additional career-related events under the “Events” tab.

## Support for Using Handshake

If you have questions about the system, please contact Career Services at 813-253-6236, or [hireut@ut.edu](mailto:hireut@ut.edu).

## Network to Land an Internship

You’ve probably heard the popular saying, “It’s not what you know, it’s who you know.” While this is not entirely the case, it does represent some truth. About 70% of jobs are filled without ever having been advertised. You might miss these opportunities if you are only searching job boards and websites. For this reason, **networking should be a vital part of your internship search**. Many students are turned off by the idea of “networking.” However, if you practice the following tips, you may feel more confident in your networking correspondence.

### Networking Strategies...

#### 1. Develop a Contact List

Think of all the people you already know that might be able to help you. These people may not necessarily be involved in your target industry, however, they might have connections with people who are. Expand your list by attending lectures and conferences in your field, getting involved with professional organizations, conducting informational interviews, and attending on campus employer events (UT After Hours, Internship/Job Fairs, etc.). Don’t forget to utilize the alumni network from your university on LinkedIn ([www.linkedin.com/alumni](http://www.linkedin.com/alumni)).

#### 2. Create Your “Pitch”

Your networking pitch is a 30 second introduction that tells who you are, what you to offer, and what you are looking for. It can be used when you are interacting with employers, family friends, in an interview, or a professional event.

#### 3. Informational Interviews

Email/LinkedIn message the employer or individual and let them know that you are a student interested in career advice, ideas, and information. Mention in your email that you will call them. Follow up with a phone call and introduce yourself using your pitch. Set up a time to meet or talk. After your meeting, send a thank you letter. Need more information on networking check out our [Informational Interviewing PDF](#) .

#### 4. Connect with LinkedIn

Create your LinkedIn profile to represent your professional brand. Utilize LinkedIn to join relevant groups, research companies, and connect with professionals. It is a free self-marketing tool and a way to professionally establish an online footprint.

Remember to nurture your network and be respectful of people’s time. Also be realistic about what your contact can and cannot do for you. Networking is a two way street, so be willing to return the favor to your network!

## Earning Academic Credit

Each major has specific guidelines and requirements that students must meet in order to obtain academic credit for an internship experience. Consult with career services and your faculty internship coordinator to confirm prerequisites.

<http://www.ut.edu/internships/academiccredit/>

Typically, an intern will need **40- 56(depending on major) hours over the course of the semester = 1 credit**

*Your department may have a different requirement, so be sure to confirm with your Faculty Internship Coordinator.*

**That boils down to roughly...**

- 3-5 hr/wk = 1 credit
- 6-10 hr/wk = 2 credits
- 9-15 hr/wk = 3 credits
- 12-20 hr/wk = 4 credits

**Typical length of Internship during each semester...**

- Summer – 12 weeks
- Fall – 14 weeks
- Spring – 14 weeks

## International Students

If you are an International student considering an internship, you must check with the International Programs Office prior to acceptance of a position to determine your eligibility and to complete all required government paperwork. Check the [CPT Website](#) for more information.

**Your CPT must fall into one of these categories:**

### Optional Part of Degree Program

If employment in your field of study is not a required part of your degree program, you may participate as long as it is registered for academic credit and is supervised by a faculty member.

### Required Part of Degree Program

If your degree program requires employment in your field of study to graduate, you may participate in CPT as long as you meet the other requirements of lawful status.

**You are eligible for CPT if you meet the following criteria:**

- Meet the departmental academic internship criteria
- Have held legal student status for **one academic year** except when early participation is mandated by the program
- Have a job offer that is related to your major field of study and is an integral part of your degree program
- You must maintain your student status throughout your CPT. While school is in session, you are only authorized to work a total of 20 hours per week in all combined employment unless academic requirements mandate otherwise. You may work up to 40 hours during a summer internship.

## Professionalism

Professionalism is much more than wearing business professional attire. It is a combination of the way you behave and present yourself in professional situations/environments. Your internship might be your initial opportunity to make a positive first impression. Follow the tips below to make sure that people will remember you as a conscientious and hard-working professional long after your internship ends.

- Make sure that you are dressed and groomed appropriately for the organization in which you are interning.
- Use language that is appropriate for the workplace. How you talk to your friends is probably not acceptable when conversing with your new colleagues. Practice professional communication in your emails as well.
- Respect office culture and property. Spend some time observing how things work in the organization. Keen observation can help you understand the unwritten rules of the organization and allow you to fit in a lot faster. And by the way, those post-it notes are not for your own personal use. Office supplies stay at the office.
- Maximize your time at your internship. Ask questions, meet as many people as you can, and learn about the history of the organization.

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## If you are completing an internship for academic credit, but something doesn't work out during the semester, please notify the Office of Career Services and your Faculty Internship Coordinator ASAP!

- Students who are unable to complete the internship due to no fault of their own (e.g. sexual harassment, injury, etc.) should discuss their options with their faculty internship coordinator. The faculty member will work with you to make alternative arrangements so that you are not penalized.
- *The University of Tampa is committed to providing a work and educational environment that is free from unlawful harassment, discrimination, and mistreatment.*

## Internship Success

1. **Don't be afraid to talk to people.** Be respectful of people's time, but don't be intimidated because you are a student. Take advantage of your time and build your network. Your co-workers and supervisor can be valuable learning tools.
2. **Ask for things to do.** One thing that aggravates any employer is paying someone to do nothing. Take the initiative and ask for additional work if you find yourself lacking in things to do.
3. **Be a SPONGE!** Learn all you can about the industry. Talk with a variety of people in the organization to get an overall picture of the industry and the company.
4. **Read everything you can get your hands on.** This will help you get as informed as possible about the company and the industry.
5. **Don't gripe about the grunt work.** Everything has a purpose, so learn how the small tasks fit into the big picture.
6. **Take advantage of the fact that you are a student.** As a student, you are not as threatening to fellow employees, and most people will be happy to help/teach you.
7. **Seek out the best.** Find the most successful performers (potential mentors) in the company, and find out how they have achieved success. Gain valuable career information from these people.
8. **Get in the information loop.** Decisions are not just made in meetings. Learn where people talk and exchange business information. A word of caution: do not participate in company gossip. That is a sure recipe for future problems.
9. **Ask to attend meetings and events.** This will allow you to observe how things really get done.
10. **BUILD bridges; don't burn bridges.** As a new employee, you are not in the position to be able to tell who can or cannot help you in your future career experience.

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## Questions?

Schedule an appointment to meet with a career coach in the Office of Career Services to discuss internships at [www.ut.edu/career/appointment](http://www.ut.edu/career/appointment).