



Employer Internship Guide

CR Career Center | careercenter@redwoods.edu | 707 476 4308



Internships 101

Thank you for your interest in College of the Redwoods student interns!

Recruiting great talent can often involve a lot of effort. Creating internship pathways for CR students can provide an ongoing low-cost pipeline for discovering new talent.

Internship experiences involve students in meaningful, productive work while providing employers with fresh perspectives. In this handbook, you will be provided with a broad overview of the development of an internship program and the recommended steps to attract new talent for your organization.

An internship is defined as an opportunity for a student to gain valuable hands-on experience in their field of study/interest. An internship has many valuable benefits for students, while also satisfying the needs of employers. In addition, students have the opportunity to meet and network with professionals in their potential field, which significantly improves their chances of securing permanent employment upon graduation.

Based upon what we have learned from some successful past internship placements, these are the key variables for a successful program:

1. Receiving internship job descriptions from our employer hosts is the most important step because the job descriptions clarify everyone's expectations. We encourage employers to develop internship job descriptions even if the internship position isn't available every semester.
2. Using the job descriptions, we will work with CR faculty to recruit potential student interns. CR Faculty know our students the best and can encourage them to apply for appropriate internship opportunities.
3. Although it's not required, we will encourage employer partners to visit the CR campus and observe classes in action. Employers can better define their internship opportunities if they can see firsthand what students are learning in our classrooms and programs.
4. The CR Career Center will provide professional job readiness coaching to students before, during, and after their internship placements. The Career Center will play a key role in helping students to meet the expectations of their employer internship hosts.
5. Employer hosts will interview applicants before placing an intern. Employers have no obligation to accept a student intern applicant who does not meet their expectations through an interview process.
6. CR will clearly outline and define employer host obligations and requirements regarding liability and workers' compensation insurance, and applicable requirements regarding meeting student learning objectives and hours worked limitations.
7. Once the Career Center receives a job description from an employer host, we will aim for a turnaround time of approximately 3-4 weeks to recruit potential student candidates through our outreach to CR faculty. Turnaround times may vary during summer/winter break and during the beginning and end of the semesters. The number of applicants may fluctuate depending on qualified students from semester to semester.

Before bringing on an intern, it is best to identify the needs of the organization and specify what type of work needs to be completed. This will help you better identify the type of position that is a good internship fit.

Planning and Time Requirements

It is important to take into consideration the academic calendar. College of the Redwoods operates on a 17-week semester, it is important to plan accordingly and accommodate an intern's school schedule.

Organization and planning are critical to making your internship program successful. The first step is to assess the internal needs of your company or organization. Start by reviewing the checklist to see where your organization/department stands.

Supervision

- ☐ Do we have someone to train, supervise, and mentor an intern?
Responsibilities may include:
 - Creating and hosting an orientation for new interns
 - Outlining expectations of intern
 - Outlining learning objectives with the intern
 - Holding one-on-one weekly meetings with the intern
 - Being open and available to answer questions
 - Providing the intern with personal and career development opportunities outside of their duties
 - Evaluating the intern's performance midway and at the conclusion of the experience (if earning academic credit for work-based learning)

Work/Projects

- ☐ Do we have quality work assignments for the intern?
These may include:
 - Assisting/creating/overseeing specific programs or projects
 - Participation in staff, team, or committee meetings
 - Ability to shadow professionals in industry work related to student's field of study

Resources

- ☐ Do we have sufficient infrastructure to support an Intern?
 - We have the time to support an intern.
 - We have the human resources to support an intern.
 - We have the physical resources to support an intern. This may include:
 - ◊ A safe, adequate work space
 - ◊ Telephone and mailbox
 - ◊ Access to computers
 - ◊ Business cards and reference materials

- ◇ Internet access
 - ◇ Parking
 - ◇ Keys
- Do we have the financial resources to support an intern.
Some suggested forms of compensation include:
 - Hourly pay
 - Monthly or semester stipend
 - Scholarship
 - Payment for incidentals (mileage, per diem, etc.)
 - Do we have the technical resources to support an intern.
 - Industry specific software/programs
 - Technical equipment

Internship vs. Part-Time Job vs. Volunteer Position

An internship may also be a part-time job if the student is being paid like other employees. The difference between hiring a student to do a part-time job and making it an internship is the element of education, training, established learning objectives (especially when receiving academic credit), and mentorship/supervision. These help the student connect the world of work to his/her field of study.

Additional Considerations:

- Paid internships are highly recommended for attracting top talent, and overall the experience should align with the career and/or educational goals of the intern.
- Internship positions should not supplant the work that a regular employee would routinely perform.
- The experience has clear expectations including a job description with desired qualifications.
- There is supervision by a professional with expertise and educational and/or professional background related to intern's educational and/or career goals
- There are resources, equipment, and facilities provided by the employer that support on-the-job learning.
- The experience does not take place in a private home.

In some cases, internships may be unpaid, volunteer experiences. This may reduce the number of interested candidates.

Short term volunteering would NOT be considered an internship.

A student volunteer who works 5-10 hours per week over the course of a semester, has regular work hours, is provided ongoing duties and responsibilities in a job description, could be considered an intern. It is the learning objectives and supervision/mentorship that take a volunteer position to the internship level.



If a part-time employee would be a better fit than an intern, you can post the position on Handshake, a student-focused employment site: **bit.ly/3sW6uHd** or scan the QR code to get started.

Jobs on Handshake will be seen by CR students and can also be made available to students on any campus in the Handshake network, including Cal Poly Humboldt, CSU Chico, and more.

To best determine what type of student/position would best suit your needs, you may contact the CR Career Center at 707-476-4308 or careercenter@redwoods.edu

Developing an Effective Internship Job Description

Every internship needs a good job description that will attract the best candidates, outline responsibilities of both intern and employer, provide learning objectives, and establish clear qualifications for the position.

The following components should be included in an internship job description.

1. Organization/Company/Department name: Include the name of the organization, division, and department as well as the location of the organization.
2. Job/Intern Title: It is best to list the intern title and ensure it relates to the type of work being performed (Business Development Intern is better than just intern).
3. Company Overview: It is best to provide a short overview of the company history and its overall mission/goals.
4. Responsibilities: Describe the principle duties and responsibilities of the intern. Be sure to detail specific projects that the intern will take part in.
5. Learning Outcomes: (optional) Learning outcomes are a priority for students and faculty. In developing your internships, it is best to detail what learning outcomes will be provided in the internship experience even if they are not included in the text of the job description.
6. Requirements/Qualifications: Are you looking for a specific major? Specific skill sets? Particular classification of student (first or second year student, junior, senior)?

7. Compensation: It is best to list the type of compensation the intern will be provided with. Compensation may include an hourly wage, stipend, mileage, etc. The internship may also be unpaid as long as it is paired with educational credit, however we encourage employers to include at least minimal compensation.

8. How to apply: Students should work with the Career Center to prepare their application materials before applying through the Handshake job portal or other preferred application method

Sample: Internship Job Description

Position Information:

Company Name

Job Title: Marketing Intern

Part-time. 15-20 hours per week. Flexible hours, 5 days/week

Internship Duration:

of positions available:

Compensation: \$17.00/hr

Company Profile:

Insert short company profile. 3-5 sentences.

Job Description:

Our marketing department produces quality work for major companies in the area, and seeks an intern who can participate in various stages of print and online marketing campaigns. This intern should be prepared to work in a fast-paced team environment, and will finish the internship having gained broad experience in various aspects of marketing.

Responsibilities:

- Assist in the creation of signage, circulars, mock ups, e-mail campaigns, on line promotion, etc.
- Perform analysis of marketing and sales data
- Seek and analyze competitor marketing and sales materials both on and offline
- Prepare presentations
- Enter contact information into contact management systems
- Provide support to social media efforts

Learning Outcomes: (optional)

- Identify and define the common business terminology used at the worksite
- Apply marketing concepts to problems and issues within the industry
- Demonstrate multi-channel communication skills including oral, written, audio/visual and digital

Candidate Qualifications:

Seeking undergraduate students who are majoring in Sales, Marketing or Advertising or similar degree

Skills Requirements:

- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Knowledge of Web and social media.
- Prefer experience with PowerPoint, Word and Excel

Application Instructions:

Students must meet with a CR Career Center staff member before submitting Resume and Cover Letter.

Internship Learning Outcomes

What are Learning Outcomes?

Internship learning outcomes are learning targets for students. They provide interns a clear expectation of the skills and knowledge they should be able to learn by the end of the internship.

For-credit work-based learning internship opportunities (Work Experience Education) are an extension of classroom learning, and in order to make the connection between academics and hands-on learning, the internship should provide the intern with clearly defined learning outcomes.

Sample Learning Outcomes

Learning Objective 1

Enhance multi-channel communication skills including oral, written, audio/visual and digital media

Possible Related Task

Research development methods, assist in drafting product marketing content, contribute to public service announcements (PSAs), and provide support to social media content.

Learning Objective 2

Demonstrate specific knowledge of computer information systems, including computer hardware and operating system concepts, application software use and development, database systems and networks.

Task/Assignment 2

Assist senior IT specialist in the development of a mobile operating software for smartphones. Student will begin with research and data analysis of competitors, contribute to the design and coding of application software, as well as contribute to the problem-solving of technical challenges of distributed systems, optimization, scalability, and security.

Managing Your Intern

An internship should provide the student with clear expectations. All interns should be on the same page. A formal intern orientation, mentoring system and evaluation process are integral parts of an internship. Before hiring your intern, plans for these should be in place.

Formal Orientation

A well-structured internship program will begin with an orientation. An orientation is a necessary step to ensure a meaningful and successful internship and will provide the opportunity for:

- The employer to reinforce expectations
- The employer to detail the organizational structure
- The employer to review organizational and employee policies
- The employer to review internship and complete Internship Contract
- The employer to provide interns with a tour of the facility
- The intern to ask questions
- The goals of the internship to be clearly established
- The methods for intern evaluation to be defined

Mentoring, Project Teams, and Networking

Internship supervisors or hiring managers should emphasize the importance of real work assignments during a manager/mentor orientation and communicate with the student interns frequently throughout the entire internship term. The use of mentors or a project team can provide the structure and guidance that an intern requires particularly in the early stages of the internship.

Mentors can help train, evaluate, correct or redirect inappropriate actions and be a resource for the intern. A mentor provides encouragement, and will monitor growth and development.

Opportunity to Observe Professionals in Action

Interns should be given the opportunity to observe working professionals in their particular field of study in order to gain an understanding of the type of work the occupation involves. When appropriate, interns should be allowed the opportunity to sit in meetings, attend presentations, and meet with clients. Additionally, interns benefit from speaking with professionals inside and outside their department to learn about other occupations and career paths.

Evaluating Your Intern

Effective supervision throughout the entire internship process makes for a more satisfactory experience for the student and company. At the end of the semester the final evaluation completed by the company is the most significant aspect to the intern's grade (if for Academic Credit) and/or experience. Providing an intern with feedback about his or her performance and skill set provides a great learning opportunity for the student.

Evaluation is not always necessary if the student chooses not to receive academic credit, however, establishing the framework for communication throughout the process is important for a successful internship.

Performance Evaluation

For most employers, this is an informal process and is rooted in good communication. Feedback begins on the first day and continues throughout the entire internship. Evaluations are a positive way to conclude the internship for the student. The supervisor, mentor, or project team should review what is working and what changes or improvements need to be made. The following areas should be considered.

- The intern's performance based on the job description
- If additional training is required for the intern
- Expectations were met
- Positive feedback on what is working and what needs correction

For Intern

- What were the intern's best skills?
- What areas need improvement?
- Did the intern adapt to employer culture?

Intern Evaluation of Employer

The exit interview or final evaluation provides important feedback to the employer and intern. Feedback can help determine ways to improve internship procedures.

Interns may be asked:

- What new skills did you learn?
- Did you receive consistent feedback throughout the internship?
- Was the mentor or project team of help during your internship?
- Do you view the company as a potential employer upon graduation?
- Would you recommend this experience to your friends or peers?
- What would you add or change to improve the experience?

Employer Evaluation of Internship

Following the conclusion of an internship, the team involved with the internship program should meet to review "exit surveys" and evaluate the internship. Did the internship benefit the

company or organization? What changes will improve the internship experience? Were sufficient resources available for the intern (work space, equipment, compensation and supervision)?

Human Resource Concerns

Compensation

As part of the planning process for your internship program, compensation must be considered. In some industries, unpaid internships are quite common. In others, internships can be very well-paid. An employer should consider what is appropriate or standard for the particular industry.

We encourage the internship to be a paid experience. There are several benefits with that kind of arrangement. Paid internships become an excellent way for employers to observe an intern's potential first-hand, provide a long-term orientation, and identify top recruits for full-time positions. Additionally, paid internships can motivate interns and ensure higher productivity and performance. Some are motivated by financial compensation. Some want experience. Others want the opportunity for advancement or academic credit. The two most important questions an employer will face are:

- 1. Paid or unpaid?**
- 2. Academic credit or non-credit?**

In the process of developing an internship program, your company or organization should evaluate whether or not an employment relationship will be created between your company and the intern. It is critical to properly classifying individuals as interns or employees. An employer that incorrectly classifies an individual as an intern rather than an employee may face serious consequences, including liability for discrimination, harassment, back taxes, interest, penalties, benefits and workers' compensation premiums.

Human Resources role concerning internship programs depends on the situation. If your company or organization has no formal internship program, then Human Resources' first task is to make communication with upper management of organizational needs and the importance of establishing one. Making that case will further entail coming up with specifics on organizational needs, wages, hours, policies and legal issues. The specifics of a new internship program will mostly focus on how it would benefit the employer in the short term.

Paid vs. Unpaid

As previously mentioned, the compensation you offer to an intern is influenced by many factors, such as your industry, your workforce needs and other company-specific factors. It is important to look at the federal and state regulations related to interns. Your decision on how to handle compensation should be discussed with a human resources or legal professional. The principal legal issue with internships is whether the company or organization must pay the intern anything at all.

For private-sector employers in the United States, the answer is almost always yes. Generally, the intern should be paid at least minimum wage as well as overtime, if applicable. The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) recognizes very narrow exceptions to the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) for private-sector internships in for-profit organizations. Public-sector employers and non-profit organizations, however, are given greater extent in determining whether to pay interns anything at all. Included in this packet is a brief overview of the federal guidelines.

Academic Credit?

Academic credit may be available for interns whether or not they are being paid for their service. The Work Experience Education (WEE) program utilizes faculty and employer guidance to develop learning objectives aligned with student educational and/or career goals. These work-based learning objectives should be mutually beneficial and provide valuable opportunities to apply skills and knowledge in real-world situations. Contact the Career Center to learn more.

Dismissal of an Intern

In many cases, the period of the internship is brief, making dismissal unnecessary. However, it is best to be prepared should a situation arise in which steps must be taken to dismiss an intern. It is important that an employer takes steps that are consistent with your company or organization's employment policies.

Interns for the most part, are young people who may not have the same level of maturity and judgement as those in your regular workforce. Accordingly, there should be a high level of patience for their adjustments to the workplace during the internship. Because internships are a brief period of time (summer, fall, spring), students should be given a fair opportunity to become part of your organizational culture. At the conclusion of the internship, there is no obligation to return the student for another internship or extend an offer of regular employment.

Should dismissal of an intern be considered, it is recommended that the supervisor clearly articulate for dismissal. (Internship is an opportunity for growth/learning.)

The staff at College of the Redwoods are also equipped to intervene in an attempt to course correct, if you feel that you need guidance with your intern please reach out to

CR Career Center: 707-476-4308

What's Next?

Contact the CR Career Center- careercenter@redwoods.edu | 707 476 4308

We can help with finding the right internship arrangement for your organization. We will work with CR Faculty and Staff to promote the position, assist candidates with their application materials, and help them understand the benefits and responsibilities that an internship opportunity presents.

Internship Employer Check List

Step 1:

- ☐ Meet with CR Career Center Staff to express interest and discuss Internship needs
- ☐ Employer creates detailed job description for each internship position (including hourly wage)

Step 2:

- ☐ Employer provides:
 - Detailed job description
- ☐ CR Career Center uses job description to market internship to CR Faculty and students
- ☐ Internship Candidates submit resume and cover letter to CR Career Center
- ☐ Career Center passes candidates' application materials to Employer makes hiring decision(s)

U.S. Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division

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

(Updated January 2018)

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.

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).

Background

The FLSA exempts certain people who volunteer to perform services for a state or local government agency or who volunteer for humanitarian purposes for 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.

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. 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.

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.

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).