



Employer Internship Guidelines



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MEMPHIS®

Department of Journalism
and Strategic Media



Thanks for hosting an intern. Here's how to be successful!

The internship program is designed to provide students an opportunity to gain practical experience in a professional work setting as part of their academic program in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media at the University of Memphis.

Employers interested in offering internships should create job descriptions and email them to the internship coordinator, Dr. Robby Byrd (rdbyrd@memphis.edu). Only internships that offer students professional-level experience and that do not discriminate based on race, gender or religion will be considered for academic credit.

Employers are expected to:

- Complete the Employer Internship Agreement form on the Journalism and Strategic Media website. The form sets the terms of the internship, including work schedule and pay for a specific intern.
- Provide work that is meaningful to the student's training as a journalist or media professional. Interns are viewed as professionals in training and should be assigned duties similar to those given to entry-level employees. Although it is expected that some interns may be assigned clerical-level work, this should not make up more than 20 percent of a student's responsibilities.
- Provide the intern with a supervisor who has professional experience in that specific area of a student's internship and who is responsible for monitoring the student's work and training.
- Guarantee that the student works at least 150 hours in order to earn 3 credits.
- At the end of the internships, complete the Evaluation of Intern survey for each intern. The survey will be provided electronically by the internship coordinator.
- Communicate immediately with the internship coordinator if the student is failing in their performance in any way.

**Department of Journalism
and Strategic Media**
300 Meeman Journalism Building
The University of Memphis
Memphis, TN 38152-3290
www.memphis.edu/jrsm
901.678.2401



Four steps to hiring an intern

Step 1: Set goals

- What does your company hope to achieve from the program?
- Is your company growing quickly and having difficulty finding motivated new employees?
- Are you a nonprofit that can provide an interesting and rewarding experience?
- Is your organization searching out new employees with management potential?

Step 2: Write a plan

- Carefully plan and write out your internship program and goals.
- Draft a job description that clearly explains the job's duties. Structure the internship ahead of time so that you can be sure you meet your goals.
- Will you pay the intern? If so, how much? Wages vary widely from field to field, so be sure yours are competitive or offer competitive incentives. Remember that federal laws mandate that interns be paid if they are expected to work independently. Unpaid interns are expected to get instruction at the level of a college course.
- Where will you put the intern? Do you have adequate workspace for them?
- What sort of skills and experience do you want in an intern? Decide on standards for quality beforehand – it'll help you narrow down the choices and find the best candidate.
- Who will be responsible for the intern? Will that person be a mentor or merely a supervisor?
- What will the intern be doing? Be as specific as possible.
- Do you want to plan a program beyond the work you give your interns? Will there be special training programs, performance reviews, lunches with executives, social events?

Step 3: Recruit an intern

- Start early. Begin searching three to four months before you need a student to begin.
- Be competitive. Students usually work full- or part-time jobs in addition to serving internships. Offer appropriate compensation if feasible.
- Choose your interns just as carefully as you'd choose permanent employees.

Step 4: Manage the intern

- The beginning days of the internship program set the standard. When you give them their first tasks, you're signaling what can be expected in the future.
- Consider the goals of your program. The nature of the program and the activities that you choose to undertake should directly relate to your program goals.
- Orient your intern to his or her new workplace. Give interns an overview of your organization; some companies give talks or hand out 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 them a complete tour of the facility.
- Keep an eye on the intern. That doesn't mean watch their every move, but do make sure you know what's happening with their daily tasks.
- Provide lots of feedback to your interns. No matter what level of experience, they need you, as a more experienced worker, to let them know if their work is officially OK.
- Evaluate the intern's progress frequently.

Top concerns for interns

- **Give us real work!** Interns want to work and learn. Use your interns well.
- **Do what you say, and say what you do!** Be honest with your interns about what they can expect during the internship.
- **We like feedback!** Remember that interns are students, and they may not have the business skills and experiences that you do.
- **We want to be included, too!** Is there a staff meeting they can attend? Can they tag along to the next project meeting? Include them in the daily life of your workplace.
- **Please explain.** When you assign work, make sure you give a detailed explanation.
- **I want a mentor!** Make sure that interns have a mentor or supervisor to provide guidance.
- **A minute of your time, please.** Spend time mentoring and teaching your intern.
- **Be prepared!** Supervisors should have goals for the intern to meet.
- **Do I have the right tools and equipment?** Make sure you supply your intern with the necessary space or tools for completing the job requirements.
- **Pay me.** Although every internship is different, money is always nice, especially for students.

Requirements

Internship site/supervisor agrees to the job responsibilities described in the Employer Internship Agreement and will provide training and consultation in order to achieve the desired learning objectives. Consistent with the learning objectives, the internship site/ supervisor will provide an orientation concerning organization policies and procedures, meet with the student intern regularly and, using forms provided by the University of Memphis at the end of the term, provide an evaluation of the student intern.

In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the internship site/ supervisor understands that the student intern has rights to privacy. In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the employer agrees to comply with all sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, and discrimination laws. Further, the employer agrees to report any violation or accusation of a violation of these laws immediately upon knowledge of their occurrence to the Internship Coordinator, and acknowledges their status as a mandatory reporter of said violations and accusation of violations.

Ready to start?

Send your job ad to the Journalism and Strategic Media Internship and Career Services Coordinator Robby Byrd at rdbyrd@memphis.edu.