

A photograph of three students in a computer lab. A young man in a plaid shirt is on the left, looking at a computer monitor. A young woman with blonde hair is in the middle, typing on a keyboard. A young man in a patterned sweater is on the right, also looking at a monitor. The background shows wooden shelves and other computer workstations.

Creating an Internship Program

WESTFIELD STATE UNIVERSITY
CAREER CENTER

DEFINE NEEDS & ESTABLISH GOALS

An important first step in developing an internship program is securing support from all key players and management to ensure that adequate staffing and office resources are provided to support hiring an intern. Next, identify the intern's learning objectives, daily responsibilities, and short- and long-term projects. Make sure that the intern's projects involve industry-related and soft skill development and no more than 20% of their time is spent on busy work (filing, covering phones, etc.). Also, identify an intern supervisor with a desire to help a student grow as a professional. A well-established internship program will result in a strong campus presence and a stronger pool of applicants.

ROLE OF INTERNSHIP SITE SUPERVISOR

The Internship Site Supervisor should be an experienced professional with expertise in the content area of the internship who can train, monitor and evaluate the student's work. Ideally, the supervisor should be someone who has a positive attitude about the company and the profession; is comfortable offering constructive criticism as well as praise; and is able to motivate the student to grow as a professional.

The Site Supervisor will:

- Set up an initial meeting to discuss the job description, internship goals, hours, and start/end dates and complete all necessary paperwork for credit-bearing internships.
- Orient the intern to your workplace, policies, procedures, and guidelines.
- Introduce the intern to coworkers and explain projects he or she may be working on.
- Schedule regular supervision meetings with the intern to discuss expectations and projects, and maintain an open channel of communication.
- Provide training, mentoring and supervision for the intern.

For credit-bearing internships:

- Host a site visit/phone call from the Faculty Internship Supervisor to discuss the students' projects and performance.
- Connect with the Faculty Internship Supervisor to discuss any issues such as absenteeism, lack of motivation, etc.
- Complete a mid-term and final evaluation of the intern's progress. These forms will be provided from the Faculty Internship Supervisor and assist in determining the student's final grade. The Site Supervisor may want to also meet with the intern to review the evaluation as it is an excellent tool for providing feedback to students so they may learn about their strengths, weaknesses, and strategies for improvement.

ORIENTATION

Providing an internship orientation helps to establish clear expectations, communicate organizational priorities and provides your intern with the information needed to be successful in this new role. The orientation will set the tone for the experience and may be a good time to share information about developmental opportunities available to interns to encourage the retention of talent. Here are some sample topics that you may want to address:

- Organizational background & history
- Aspects that set this organization apart from others with similar missions
- Population targeted by the work of this organization
- Common acronyms in day-to-day work
- Organizational culture
- Time and attendance
- Dress code
- Holidays and weather closures
- Lunch and other breaks
- Sick leave policy
- Emergency evacuation protocols
- Payroll procedures
- Codes for building entry or operating machines like copiers
- Confidentiality/security policies
- Policies on sexual harassment, personal calls/emails, appropriate relationships/behaviors
- Tour of the space
- Expectations for interns
- Pertinent dates and events
- Trainings available



The Position Description

POSITION TITLE

YOUR COMPANY NAME

COMPANY LOCATION & WEBSITE

NUMBER OF OPENINGS

DESIRED START & END DATE

COMPENSATION

(can be paid or unpaid, pay ranges from min. wage–\$25/hr.)

Internships can be paid or unpaid, however, the quality and number of applicants significantly increases when compensation is offered. Financial need prevents some of our highly qualified students from pursuing unpaid opportunities, particularly during the summer months. **If a for-profit organization chooses to host unpaid interns, the organization must ensure that interns are considered “trainees” under the Fair Labor Standards Act.** Nonprofit organizations typically offer unpaid internships and students, for the most part, are aware that these experiences will not offer compensation. Flexibility in scheduling will allow students to keep their part-time job so they can earn money while pursuing an unpaid internship. We recommend for intern salaries that you pay 75% of the full-time rate for business and 75-100% of the full-time rate for technical positions.

HOURS/WORK SCHEDULE

Students completing internships for credit are required to complete 120 hours for every three credits they want to receive – this is roughly 8 hours/week during the school year and 20 hours/week during the summer. Most students will complete a three or six credit internship (8-16 hours/week) during the academic year; however, depending on their major, students can receive up to 15 credits for internships (40 hours/week). If a student is interested in receiving academic credit for the internship, the student will be responsible for providing the employer with the necessary paperwork.

The work schedule can be determined by the employer and the student. Students are not allowed to complete their hours during class times, but otherwise the start/end date and work schedule can be set by the two parties.

JOB TITLE & DUTIES

The job description should clearly explain the intern's duties and assignments. Identify daily responsibilities succinctly as well as major projects that the intern will complete. Intern projects should focus on activities related to their academic major and link classroom learning to workplace experience while making contributions to the organization.

*If a confidentiality agreement is required, it must be stated in the job description upon posting.

QUALIFICATIONS & MAJORS DESIRED

Be sure to include the physical and mental requirements of the internship as well as any specific technical or soft skills that the intern must have to perform the essential duties of the position. Also, state if you are seeking students from a particular major, minimum GPA and/or class standing (junior, senior, etc.).

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Include deadline date, required application documents and information on how students should apply.

CONTACT PERSON & CONTACT INFORMATION

(include name, title, address, email, phone)

NACE STANDARDS

We adhere to the NACE Standards for Internships. Experiences that DO NOT qualify as internships:

- Commission-based positions
- Positions that require more than 20% clerical duties
- Positions that require door-to-door canvassing, cold-calling, or petition gathering
- "Independent contractor" relationships that require the intern to set up his/her own business for the purpose of selling products, services and/or recruiting other individuals to set up their own business
- Positions supervised by a family member
- Telemarketing positions
- Positions in which the employer requires the student to pay a fee or fees in order to work at the organization
- Unpaid interns should not be considered "consultants" or be expected to provide a function that your professional staff does not have the skills to perform (e.g. create a company website, write a grant, develop a marketing campaign)

HOW TO POST YOUR OPPORTUNITY

Post Directly Online



Handshake allows you to post jobs and internships, request information session dates, and manage your on-campus recruiting activities at Westfield State. There is no fee to post a job or internship.

Login or create a Handshake account at westfield.joinhandshake.com

Call or Email Us

careers@westfield.ma.edu | Phone: (413) 572-5206 | Fax: (413) 572-5475

RECOMMENDED TIMELINE FOR POSTING YOUR OPPORTUNITY

SEEKING INTERN FOR	POST OPPORTUNITY
Fall Semester	January – April
Spring Semester	September – November
Summer	November – April



A young man with dark hair and a beard, wearing a light blue button-down shirt, is smiling warmly at the camera. He is in an office environment, with a wooden cabinet and a potted plant visible in the background. A blue text box is overlaid at the bottom of the image.

After the Internship

Reflect on the experience to determine ways to improve the program for both the organization and the student. If you are interested in hiring additional students, be sure to update your posting in Handshake and notify the Career Center so we can assist you in promoting your opportunity to our students.

Westfield
STATE UNIVERSITY

CAREER CENTER

westfield.ma.edu/careercenter