Internships

CENTER FOR CAREER AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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What is an internship?
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; and give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent.

Criteria for an experience to be defined as an internship:
1. The experience must be an extension of the classroom: a learning experience that provides application of the knowledge gained in the classroom. It must not be simply to advance the operations of the employer or be the work that a regular employee would routinely perform.
2. The skills or knowledge learned must be transferable to other employment settings.
3. The experience has a defined beginning and end, and a job description with desired qualifications.
4. There are clearly defined learning objectives/goals related to the professional goals of the student’s academic coursework.
5. There is supervision by a professional with expertise and educational and/or professional background in the field of the experience.
6. There is routine feedback by the experienced supervisor.
7. There are resources, equipment, and facilities provided by the host employer that support learning objectives/goals.

Benefits of hiring interns
Undeniably, students benefit a great deal from the internship experience in today’s increasingly competitive job market. For the majority of graduating college students, real-world experience in the form of internships has become a prerequisite when applying for full-time positions. What does this mean for the employer? Bottom line, an increased demand among students for internship positions which create a pool of high-value, cost effective talent for employers to recruit! Check out these other benefits and begin to see the real value in hiring an intern!

- Gain year-round source of highly motivated pre-professionals
- Student interns bring new perspectives to old problems
- Meet peak or seasonal needs without long-term commitment
- Freedom for professional staff to pursue more creative projects
- Generates pipeline of qualified candidates to meet future recruiting needs
- Increase visibility and branding of your organization on SFA campus
- Enhancement of staff supervisory skills
- Fulfill a civic and professional responsibility
- Help to keep college-educated talent in our region

Internships at SFA
At Stephen F. Austin it is important to know that each academic department handles internships differently. Each academic department determines if an internship will be mandatory, optional, or not an offered component of their degree plan. For academic departments who do offer course credit for internships, it in most cases is the chair of the department who determines if the experience constitutes an approved internship opportunity and eligible for course credit towards a student’s degree.
If you want an internship and do not know where to start, here are some helpful suggestions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Online Resources</th>
<th>Other Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Handshake:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ Go to <a href="http://www.sfasu.edu/handshake">www.sfasu.edu/handshake</a></td>
<td>➢ Set up an Internship Search Career Coaching appointment with the CCPD!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Click on “Login With SFA Credentials”</td>
<td>➢ Internship Coordinator in your department</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ Login using your mySFA credentials</td>
<td>➢ Faculty members in the field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Click on “Jobs” and select the “Internship” filter</td>
<td>➢ Contact your local Chamber of Commerce or visit their website!</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Job &amp; Internship Websites:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="https://www.careeronestop.org/">https://www.careeronestop.org/</a></td>
<td>➢ Moving and Relocating sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="https://www.careerbuilder.com/">https://www.careerbuilder.com/</a></td>
<td>➢ Contacting organizations you admire and wish to work for one day</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="https://collegegrad.com/">https://collegegrad.com/</a></td>
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<td><a href="https://www.collegerecruiter.com">https://www.collegerecruiter.com</a></td>
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**CCPD** does not and cannot guarantee the completeness or accuracy of sites listed. Information is subject to change and users should therefore confirm all information related to programs and resources with the appropriate contact. These external websites are provided for convenience only. **CCPD** has no control over their content. The suggestion of any site does not imply endorsement by **CCPD** and users are advised to exercise the same caution they would normally apply in visiting any unknown website.
Now that you have obtained an internship, you will want to make the most of this special learning experience. Here are a few pointers to help get you started!

1. **Get properly oriented** by obtaining a copy of the organization’s policies/procedures, seeking an introduction to the staff and requesting a tour of the workplace.

2. **Ask questions** if you do not understand something. Your supervisor is there to teach while supervising.

3. **Contribute** your suggestions and ideas whenever an opportunity arises.

4. **Assume responsibility** by showing an interest in a project that has yet to be completed. Interns offer employers a fresh perspective.

5. **Make sure you have everything you need** to complete the projects you are assigned. Being able to produce results is of the utmost importance to an employer.

6. **Seek out projects** and training opportunities that will enable you to learn, develop, and utilize your transferable skill set.

7. **Take detailed notes** in staff meetings, meetings with your supervisor, and when working on new projects. These notes will prove helpful as your responsibilities grow, and when seeking future employment.

8. **Keep organized records** of your work by creating a journal of your internship activities including tasks, strengths and weaknesses, difficulties, and evaluations. This will help in future employment opportunities.

9. **Learn what other professionals do within your company** to become aware of other possible careers and learn about the organization’s other aspects.

10. **Pay attention to the corporate culture** of your internship site. Notice cues such as how professionals communicate; the reliance on team or individual work; the decision-making process; the reward system; appropriate dress, etc.

11. **Attend professional association meetings** in which your organization belongs. Professional associations offer opportunities to network, provide up-to-date information about your profession, and offer trainings in specific areas related to your field.

12. **Start a network list** with names, titles, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses. You will want to refer to this information in the future, whether using the contact as a reference or for networking purposes.

13. **Set up periodic evaluative meetings** to address questions about projects or assignments. Use these meetings as a forum for feedback and progress.

“Take full advantage of your internship experience by learning and doing.”
Transferable skills are skills that can be acquired in a wide variety of settings – life, work, classroom – and applied to a job position for which you are applying.

Using transferable skills
How portable is your skill set? To be successful in the job search, you must be able to apply your transferable skill set to the job description. Incorporate transferable skills (and examples of them)
- Within your cover letter
- On your résumé, within Objective, Skills and/or job duties
- In your interview
- During your two minute commercial

Transferable skills examples
The following are common transferable skills and questions to help you begin to think about the transferable skills you possess.

Communication skills include writing, speaking, and interpersonal skills.
How often have you presented to a group or class? Can you persuade and engage others?

Problem solving/Analytical skills highlight research experience and decision-making skills.
Think of a problem that you encountered at SFA or in the workplace. How did you arrive at a solution?
**Teamwork** demonstrates effectiveness and results as a member of a functional team (e.g. classroom group projects, sports teams, internships, student organizations, etc.).
What role have you played on teams? What are the elements that contributed to team success? What did you learn when you failed as a team? Why do some teams succeed and others fail?

**Initiative** demonstrates ways you have taken initiative and achieved positive results.
Did you address a problem that was causing a loss in productivity? What have you done to go beyond the job description?

**Leadership skills** are demonstrated by being a student leader, founding an organization, or leading a project team. The result of your leadership is what is important.
What did your group/team accomplish during your tenure as the leader?

**Flexibility** means that you thrive on change, are not paralyzed by it, and can adapt to new rules quickly. What situations demonstrate your ability to adapt to change?

**Creativity** is your ability to think outside of the box and be original.
How original is your approach to a challenge? Did you color outside the lines? Can you give a specific example of innovation?

**Willingness to learn** expresses your interest in learning more about a field.
Can you provide past experiences that illustrate your willingness to learn?

Now that you’ve learned more about transferable skills, it’s your turn to identify and capitalize on your own! Use the worksheets on the following pages to determine your strongest transferable skills.
Identify your transferable skills

This exercise will help you identify your transferable skills. This will be particularly useful for marketing yourself to employers in interviews, cover letters, and on your résumé.

Instructions

1. Place a check mark next to each skill you possess. Consider all settings in which you demonstrated each skill (ex. coursework, extracurricular activities, organizations/clubs, volunteer work, etc.)
2. Review the items you have checked and narrow your list to your 10 strongest skills
3. For each of the 10 skills selected, complete the following page, expanding on specific examples of how you demonstrated this skill in the past

Analytical

__ Analyzed
__ Assessed
__ Compared
__ Conceptualized
__ Critiqued
__ Devised
__ Diagnosed
__ Estimated
__ Evaluated
__ Identified
__ Inspected
__ Interpreted data
__ Investigated
__ Made decisions
__ Observed
__ Predicted
__ Projected
__ Proved
__ Reflected
__ Researched
__ Reviewed
__ Screened
__ Solved problems
__ Studied
__ Surveyed
__ Tested
__ Thought critically
__ Validated

Communication

__ Communicated
__ Conveyed
__ Debated
__ Defined

Financial

__ Appraised

Helping

__ Advised
__ Assisted
__ Coached
__ Collaborated
__ Counseled
__ Directed
__ Facilitated
__ Founded
__ Initiated
__ Hired
__ Implemented
__ Managed change
__ Managed a crisis
__ Managed people
__ Managed resources
__ Managed time
__ Managed a project
__ Mentored
__ Recommended
__ Supervised

Leadership

__ Assigned
__ Authorized
__ Chaired
__ Directed
__ Delegated
__ Enforced
__ Facilitated
__ Founded
__ Initiated
__ Hired
__ Implemented
__ Managed change
__ Managed a crisis
__ Managed people
__ Managed resources
__ Managed time
__ Managed a project
__ Mentored
__ Recommended
__ Supervised

Organizational

__ Administered
__ Categorized
__ Collected
__ Compiled
__ Consolidated
__ Coordinated
__ Directed
__ Delegated
__ Enforced
__ Facilitated
__ Founded
__ Initiated
__ Hired
__ Implemented
__ Managed change
__ Managed a crisis
__ Managed people
__ Managed resources
__ Managed time
__ Managed a project
__ Mentored
__ Recommended
__ Supervised
__ Planned
__ Performed data entry
__ Prioritized
__ Processed
__ Recorded
__ Ran reports
__ Scheduled

Persuasion

__ Encouraged
__ Influenced
__ Mediated
Motivated
Persuaded
Negotiated
Recruited
Sold

Technical
Assembled
Constructed
Compiled
Engineered
Installed
Integrated
Operated
Measured
Programmed
Repaired
Upgraded

Added value
Adapted
Enhanced
Improved
Maximized
Minimized
Shaped
Streamlined
Strengthened
Supplemented
Updated
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transferable Skill</th>
<th>Work Experience, Internship(s)</th>
<th>Course Projects, Research</th>
<th>Extracurricular Activities, Volunteer Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E.g. Delegated</td>
<td>Team leader at chain restaurant. Oversaw 10 other servers per shift.</td>
<td>Marketing Team Project: initiated leadership for team of 4 to complete marketing campaign.</td>
<td>President of social fraternity. Delegated to 5 other executive board members.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Transferable Skills

What are your strengths? What could you improve? What are your proficiencies? What skills could be developed additionally? This chart will help you determine these and guide in your career decision-making.

### Planning and Organizational Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Already Possess</th>
<th>Must Develop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ ☐ Develop goals for an organization</td>
<td>☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ ☐ Identify tasks to be accomplished</td>
<td>☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ ☐ Prioritize and delegate tasks</td>
<td>☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ ☐ Facilitate brainstorming and discussions on program planning process</td>
<td>☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ ☐ Conduct meetings</td>
<td>☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ ☐ Coordinate organization members’ activities</td>
<td>☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ ☐ Motivate others on group projects</td>
<td>☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ ☐ Follow up with other members to evaluate progress, give constructive feedback, and praise to others for work well done</td>
<td>☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Critical Thinking, Problem-Solving, & Conflict Resolution Skills

| ☐ ☐ Understand the steps involved with effective decision-making | ☐ ☐ |
| ☐ ☐ Implement sound decisions | ☐ ☐ |
| ☐ ☐ Facilitate group participation in the decision-making process | ☐ ☐ |
| ☐ ☐ Take responsibility for decisions | ☐ ☐ |
| ☐ ☐ Evaluate the effects of a decision | ☐ ☐ |
| ☐ ☐ Be able to evaluate all options and make decisions without feeling pressured | ☐ ☐ |
| ☐ ☐ Explain unpopular decisions to others | ☐ ☐ |
| ☐ ☐ Motivate others toward common goals | ☐ ☐ |
| ☐ ☐ Use appropriate management and mentoring skills with peers and/or subordinates | ☐ ☐ |

### Interpersonal/Teamwork and Teambuilding Skills

| ☐ ☐ Collaborate on projects | ☐ ☐ |
| ☐ ☐ Motivate team members toward common goals | ☐ ☐ |
| ☐ ☐ Understand strengths and weaknesses of members, using strengths to build team development | ☐ ☐ |
| ☐ ☐ Support and praise members for reaching goals and accomplishments | ☐ ☐ |

### Verbal and Written Communication Skills

| ☐ ☐ Organize and present ideas effectively in formal and informal speeches and writing | ☐ ☐ |
| ☐ ☐ Effectively participate in group discussions | ☐ ☐ |
| ☐ ☐ Prepare concise and logically written materials | ☐ ☐ |
| ☐ ☐ Listen carefully and respond to verbal and non-verbal messages | ☐ ☐ |
| ☐ ☐ Respond appropriately to positive and negative feedback | ☐ ☐ |
| ☐ ☐ Debate issues without being perceived as abrasive to others | ☐ ☐ |
## Transferable Skills

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### Research and Investigation Skills
- Utilize a variety of sources for information
- Apply a variety of methods to test the validity of data
- Identify problems and needs
- Formulate questions to clarify problems, topics, or issues
- Identify appropriate information sources for problem solving

### Decision-Making, Supervisory, Management & Leadership Skills
- Understand the steps involved with critical thinking
- Anticipate problems before they occur
- Recognize if a problem needs to be addressed
- Define the problem and identify possible causes
- Facilitate group members in identifying and evaluating possible solutions
- Identify range of solutions and select most appropriate ones
- Develop plans to implement solutions
- Be capable of handling more than one problem at a time

### Financial Management Skills
- Develop an accurate budget, estimating expenses, and income
- Justify the organization’s budget to others
- Work within a budget
- Keep accurate and complete financial records
- Ensure timeliness of payments
- Determine necessity of fund-raising events; strategize and organize as needed