

COLUMBUS STATE

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

EMPLOYER GUIDE – INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

What is an Internship?

An internship is a mentored work experience with an educational focus related to a student's major. Typically, students participate in an internship during the final semester of their plan of study. Internships are completed for credit and most programs require internship completion for graduation.

Students are responsible for securing opportunities. The Internship Coordinator or faculty instructor can assist in identifying available opportunities; however, the student must apply, interview, and be offered employment from the company to ultimately obtain a position. Faculty members have final approval over the internship opportunity and are responsible with ensuring the position is a strong educational experience.

How does an internship program benefit the business community?

Internship programs provide a work force of experienced graduates for business and industry. An internship experience also provides employment screening - the employer has the opportunity to observe students and evaluate their suitability for full-time employment.

According to the NACE Experimental Education Survey, over half of interns are converted to full-time employees. Additionally, more than one-third of employers reported higher retention among those converted from intern to employee within the first year of hire, and nearly half said former interns had higher retention five years after hire.

What should the employer expect of the students in the program?

You will find that students at Columbus State Community College are motivated individuals who are committed to their career goals. State-of-the-art curriculums, which in many instances are taught by practicing professionals, provide our students with a practical education and help prepare them for the work environment.

As an employer, what are my specific responsibilities during the internship period?

An internship employer, referred to as a "mentor", provides our students a needed measure of guidance in applying textbook theories and concepts to real world business situations. Feedback and praise should be provided to the student to help constructively build their professional skills. Ideally, internships should be project-oriented rather than job-oriented.

Will the student understand that they are responsible for adhering to all company policies?

We strongly emphasize to all potential interns the importance of following all company policies and procedures. We also stress the importance of confidentiality. It is important that the employer take the time to explain key policies and procedures at the onset of the internship. The intern should be treated as any permanent employee. Students should be above-average employees. It is expected they will exemplify dependability, enthusiasm, a sense of urgency, drive, maturity, leadership, and be a team player.

What is the duration of the internship and how flexible is the time frame?

The internship program generally follows the academic calendar which is broken into fifteen (15) week semesters. Generally, the Autumn Semester will run from August to December and Spring Semester from January to May. Summer Semester internships will also be offered in an accelerated 10 week session typically running from mid May through early August.

What is the number of hours the student is expected to work?

The student must work a minimum number of hours a week to fulfill the course requirements. This varies based on the degree program, but most average 21 hours per week. There can be flexibility in the hours; please contact the Internship Program Coordinator for more information, wmcwherter@csc.edu. We emphasize to perspective interns the importance of flexibility and the importance of meeting the employer's requirements, however, many of these students may be taking additional courses to work around. Please be sure to discuss the student's availability as well as your acceptable hours when interviewing candidates.

What type of compensation is expected?

Internships are paid hourly, paid a stipend, or unpaid. Considering our students are working their way through college, a competitive wage would be expected, but not required by the school. However, offering a wage will open your candidate pool to a greater number of students. More information on hosting an unpaid intern can be found in the Employers section of Columbus State's Internship website, www.csc.edu/intern.

How will Columbus State Community College screen all potential applicants?

All internship candidates will have completed the necessary technical courses with a minimum GPA. The students should provide a resume to you at the time of the interview giving specifics about their background. Columbus State does not "place" students into internships. The job search is an important part of the internship learning experience. The hiring decision is ultimately between the company and the student but must be approved by the school before the student is allowed to enroll in the courses.

Who will be responsible for the student's overall evaluation and grade for the internship?

A set number of credit hours are allocated for the "Practicum" course, or work portion of the internship. The student's grade for this course will be based on weekly activity reports and the final employer's evaluation. Before the commencement of the internship, you will be provided with an evaluation form to be completed during the final week of the program. Additionally, the student is expected to complete Weekly Activity Reports that are submitted to the course instructor via Blackboard. The student also receives credit for an internship "Seminar" course, which is the academic component of the internship. The completion of course projects and assignments, determine the seminar course grade for the semester.

What is the employer's responsibility regarding any formalized training of the student?

It is recommended that some type of formalized training is available for the student. You should work with interns to define goals and objectives to insure the academic quality of the program. Expectations are that the supervisor maintains close contact with the intern; helping them to maximize their learning opportunities and provide timely counseling.

Who is the contact person at Columbus State Community College should a situation arise?

Each degree program has a faculty instructor that is charged with facilitating the internship during the semester. This instructor should be in contact with the company at the beginning of the semester. If any issues arise, please work with this instructor to resolve problems. Additionally, the Internship Coordinator can be contacted for assistance: Wendy McWherter, wmcwherter@csc.edu or 614-287-5352.

What should the reporting structure be?

The intern should report to an individual who is not only knowledgeable but a strong trainer. The person responsible should have the time and inclination to make regular contact with the intern. Again, regular feedback to the intern is critical to the success of the internship.

Can we retain the student upon completion of the internship?

The ultimate goal of the internship program is to develop work-ready graduates. We encourage all internship companies to consider retaining the student in a permanent position. These arrangements should be made directly with the student and will be outside of the internship program. However, we are always excited to hear about the success stories of our students.

Employer First Step – Create the Intern Position Description

1. **Introduction:** Provide a brief introduction to your company.
2. **Position Description:** Start with intern title (i.e. Marketing Intern), then briefly describe the duties the intern will perform.
3. **Desired Characteristics:** Describe the experience, skills, and behavior that you desire of intern candidates.
4. **Benefits:** Include compensation information, if applicable. Also describe intangible benefits that you will offer your intern.
5. **Contact:** Provide complete contact information for how the student should apply for the position.

Employer Final Steps and Process

1. Submit your Internship Position Description to the Internship Coordinator, wmcwherter@csc.edu or online at www.csc.edu/intern.
2. Your opportunity will be posted on Columbus State's Student Internship Job Board.
3. Potential interns will apply directly to your organization.
4. Select the best student for your opportunity and complete the Internship Agreement Form the student will provide to you.
5. The student will then submit the Internship Agreement Form to the college. Once approved, the student will be enrolled in the courses and cleared to begin work as an intern.

Thank you for your interest in engaging an Intern from Columbus State Community College. Please feel free to contact me at any time.

Wendy

Wendy McWherter, Internship Coordinator

Business, Engineering & Tech Programs

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www.csc.edu/intern