A Student’s Guide to Internships

Huxley College of the Environment
What is a “For Credit” Internship

• Integrated learning opportunity between an employer and Huxley College to provide college-level credits for students performing work related to their area of study
  • More than just “credit for work performed”, it’s a joint-effort involving your faculty advisor, your employer, and yourself to accomplish specific and measurable learning objectives in a workplace environment.

• Provides 10-15 credits of 400-level college credits towards undergraduate degree
  • Your “Learning Objectives” should reflect a vigorous course of study to enable you to learn as much as you would from almost an entire ‘full-time” quarter of senior-level coursework!
Why do an Internship?

- Increased Employment Opportunities
- Higher Starting Salaries
- “Real World” Experience
- College Credits
- Mentoring, Letters of Recommendation
Benefits of Internships

• **Increased Employment Opportunity:**
  • National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) reports that in 2009, 66% of student who performed paid internships were later hired by their company!
  • Helps you distinguish yourself from your peers on Resume.

• **Higher Starting Salaries**
  • WWU’s Employment Survey indicated that students who did internships reported a 20% higher starting salary over those who didn’t perform an internship.
Benefits of Internships

• “Real World” Experience
  • Networking Opportunities with people working “in the business”
  • Translates theoretical classroom knowledge into practical application
  • Opportunity to receive a Letter of Recommendation when seeking future employment

• College Course Credits
  • Internship is worth 10-15 400-level credits towards your degree
  • Learning objectives must be challenging/measurable and linkable to your degree
How do I Find an Internship Opportunity

Viking Career Link (http://www.wwu.edu/careers/viking_careerlink.shtml)
- Jobs from most employers will be posted. You should have an account setup with key-words to match you to your preferences! Career Services Center can help you get this setup.

Huxley College Centralized Student Services
- Emails to listservs with Huxley Students will often have opportunities

Your Professors
- Often will have their own personal contacts that may have opportunities

Professional Networks and Alumni
- You should be members of professional organizations (Example: Young Environmental Professionals). These organizations will often have internal opportunities.
- Ask (Alumi Database) is a great resource to find mentors who might also offer internships
Importance of Networking

How People Get Jobs

Developing Network Skills

How do you become “known”

Communication is the Key!

• Talk with people you know (Teachers, Students, workers)…common interests, esp if they are working in your field!

• Volunteer for projects in your chosen field…even unpaid..and again, talk with them about working in the field!

• Join professional organizations in your field, attend meetings, speak up and be heard…again, volunteer….be active.
So, I Found an Internship I Like….Now What?

Discuss this with your Faculty Advisor

• What do you want to learn from this opportunity?
• Will this internship meet this need?
Applying for an Internship

• **WWU Career Services Center** can assist!
  • Viking Career Link
    • Create search alerts to automatically notify you when appropriate opportunities are posted!
  • Resume Writing
  • Interviewing Skills/Practice Sessions

• Career Fairs
  • WWU Career Fairs
  • Huxley College Internship Fair
  • Professional Organizations and Contacts
  • Professors
  • Networking Opportunities: Young Environmental Professionals, Whatcom Watershed Information Network, Green Drinks
General Interview Tips

• You have one chance to make a first impression
  • Be On-Time
  • Look Professional, both in personal appearance and any documents you are going to show/share.
  • Know your opening monologue. Almost every employer will ask you to take a couple of minutes and tell them about yourself. Practice this a lot and make sure you hit your “best points”!
  • Know your Audience (Research your prospective employers…have some smart questions to ask them about their business/project)
    • Think about your skills? What have you done that relates to this particular employer? Why should they pick you ABOVE other candidates? Think about classes you’ve taken that might relate to the employer…what did you learn from them that might apply? Have some examples in mind.
I Got an Internship!!! What’s Next?

Complete the Huxley Internship Contract

- 3 Signatures: You, Your Employer, Your Faculty Advisor
- Details what you expect to learn from the experience as well as methods of evaluation
- Faculty member can assign additional learning at anytime to supplement
- Bring this signed agreement to the Huxley Internship Coordinator (Ed Weber, ES 545)
How do I Register for the Credits?

- Once Ed Weber has approved your contract, he will update the Registration Override and allow you to sign up for your credits in Web4U as normal.
- You **MUST** have a completed/signed Internship Contract before registering for internship credits or performing the internship.
Performing on the Internship

Remember, You are trying to get something to put on your permanent resume! Treat this as an opportunity (Even if Unpaid!)

• Show up on-time, comply with employers policies, communicate with employer, positive attitude, soak up as much knowledge as possible!

If you have problems with an employer and cannot work it out, please contact Ed Weber immediately.

• He will work with you and your employer to help clear up any misunderstandings.
Completing the Internship

- Review Huxley Internship Contract
  - Make sure you have met all the learning objectives you and your faculty advisor agreed on
- Write your End of Internship Report per instructions on Huxley College website: [https://huxley.wwu.edu/internship-report-instructions](https://huxley.wwu.edu/internship-report-instructions)
  - Submit to your Professor. Re-write as necessary
- When your Faculty Advisor determines that you have successfully met the criteria in the Huxley Internship Contract, they will update your grades.
Questions

• Huxley College Internship Advisor: Ed Weber, Ext 3646
• Career Services Center, Ext 3240