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School of Professional Studies

INTERNSHIP HANDBOOK

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Revised: July 2024



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SPS Internships

The Internship Experience

Effective September 2023 all SPS graduate students are required to complete a mandatory internship to fulfill their degree requirements. Internships must be completed prior to the student's graduation date. Students cannot complete the 120-hour internship requirement after their graduation date.

Internships offer valuable work experience aligned with a student's chosen major or field of study. They enable students to bridge the gap between theoretical learning and practical application, acquiring essential skills in the process. For those already in the workforce, internships serve as a means to explore alternative career paths. Additionally, international students particularly benefit from a comprehensive immersion into U.S. organizational culture and work dynamics.

In the today's job market, many employers expect entry-level applicants to have completed internships during their undergraduate and graduate education, viewing them as fundamental credentials.

Internships enable students to:

- Establish a bridge between classroom theory and practical workplace applications.
- Encounter the normal flow of communication in a professional organization.
- Gain exposure to, and test their 'fit' with their chosen career path.
- Build proficiencies which can be of value for later employment.
- Network with professionals in the field.
- Develop appropriate work habits, attitudes, and standards, and gather samples of work suitable for a professional portfolio.

Internship Guidelines and Requirements:

- All interns are required to complete a minimum of 120 hours during their internship.
- Internships must be relevant to the interns' field of study.
- Internships can be on-site, hybrid, or virtual. However, for students working in on-site or hybrid positions the internship site may be no more



than 50 miles from campus. Internships with commuting distance longer than 50 miles will automatically be denied.

- Students can only work up to 20 hours per week except during summer and winter break when not attending classes then student can work up to 40 hours per week.

Securing Your Internship Experience

We encourage students looking to secure an internship to meet with a career coach to outline your career objectives and strategize your internship search plan. You can schedule an appointment with a career coach through Handshake by following the steps below:

1. Log in to Handshake with your Clark email and password.
2. In the upper right-hand corner, select Career Center, and then Appointments.
3. Click the blue button that says Schedule a New Appointment.
4. From the options, select School of Professional Studies.
5. From the options, select your desired topic, for example, Resume Review.
6. Select your preferred date/time.
7. Complete the required question and click the green Request button.

An internship is a mutual agreement involving you, the sponsoring organization, and the School of Professional Studies. You are responsible for taking ownership of your internship search by submitting applications, networking with alumni and professionals in your field, and honing your interview abilities.

While the SPS career and experiential learning team is dedicated to assisting you throughout this process, it's important to understand that we do not directly place or assign students to internship opportunities.

Internship Approval Process Placement

To initiate the internship approval process, please complete the internship form and submit your offer letter for approval using the following link:

<https://bit.ly/internshipoffersubmission>. The Director of Experiential Learning will review your offer and approve or deny your internship. Please ensure all offers are on official company letterhead and contain the following information:



- Start Date and End Date
- Number of Hours You Will Be Working Per Week
- List of Internship Responsibilities
- Supervisor Contact Name and Email
- Compensation

F-1 and H-1 International Students

All off-campus internships, whether paid or unpaid, require approval from both the School of Professional Studies Career Development and Experiential Learning team and Clark's International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO). Once the internship receives approval from a School of Professional Studies Career Development and Experiential Learning team member, F-1 and H-1 students need to apply for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) through the ISSO portal. SPS students will receive an email specifying which staff member to designate as the approver. The ISSO office evaluates all CPT applications and issues the Curricular Practical Training (CPT) certificate for each student.

It's essential to note that working without proper authorization carries severe immigration consequences. For further guidance, please reach out to your ISSO advisor.

Performance Standards and Evaluation

Interns are expected to complete a learning agreement to reinforce the goals of the internship and the work experience they would like to gain. This should be completed with their supervisor and returned to spscareers@clarku.edu within the first 2 weeks of their internship.

Interns are expected to meet all requirements. Timeliness, professional preparation, and professional attitude are all important. To maximize the internship experience, it's recommended to approach tasks positively, pay attention to details, and seek opportunities to contribute. Observing and respecting the work culture is also advised.

A successful internship experience will help reinforce, or re-shape, your career aspirations while broadening your skills, expanding your professional network, and enhancing your resume.

Internship Alternatives

Online Job Simulations- Forage

For students unable to secure an internship, an alternative option is available to fulfill the internship requirement. You can complete 5 online simulations through Forage, a platform aimed at developing professional skills. To satisfy the degree requirement, submit the five completed certificates to the Director of Experiential Learning using the following directions below:

Here are the steps required to fulfill the internship requirement through Forage:

- Visit Forage at (theforage.com) and register for an account using your Clark University email. Note: There is no fees associated with using Forage.
- Successfully complete 5 online simulations aligned with your field of study and career objectives.
- Obtain completion certificates for each simulation.
- Complete a reflection on completing the Forage certifications by responding to the questions:
 - How has your academic coursework prepared you for the job you would like to pursue?
 - How does completing these 5 Forage simulations align with your career goals?
 - How do the 5 simulations you chose to complete align with your target function or target industry?
- Submit all five certifications and the reflection using the provided link: <https://bit.ly/foragesubmission>.

Internship Waiver

Students with 5+ years of experience in the field of study as their degree program, may petition for a waiver. To request the waiver, students will need to meet with a career coach to discuss their reasoning for waiving the internship and the impact it could have on their future employment prospects, submit a written statement outlining the rationale for the request accompanied by a copy of their resume. All waiver requests should be submitted using this link: <https://bit.ly/internshipwaiverapplication>.

This application should contain the following information:

- A 2-page statement detailing the reasons for seeking the waiver.



- An account of how your professional and academic coursework has prepared you for your field of study.
- Information on any relevant certifications, workshops, or additional training you've completed.
- A commitment statement regarding your ongoing education and engagement in the field post-graduation.

Waiver approval requires 5 years of work experience in your field of study post-graduation. Requests from students with less than 5 years of experience will not be approved.

Internship Policies

I. Completing Multiple Internships or a Second Internship at Same Internship Site

Students have the option to either pursue a second internship or extend their current internship at the same site. To seek an extension, students must follow the same approval process by submitting a new offer letter to the Director of Experiential Learning via the link provided:

<https://bit.ly/internshipoffersubmission>.

II. Completing Internships in Full Time Paid Positions

Students are eligible for full-time, 40-hour per week internships during summer break or winter break or if they are in their last semester and have one course remaining to graduate. Approval requires authorization from the Director of Experiential Learning and the ISSO (for international students). Outside of these circumstances, students can only work up to 20 hours per week.

III. Completing Internships at Sites where Student already has a Full Time Position

Students are not eligible to complete an internship at the same site where they hold a current full-time position.



IV. On-Site, Hybrid, & Remote Internships

Students are allowed to work in on-site, hybrid, or remote positions. However, for on-site and hybrid roles, the internship site must be within a 50-mile radius of the campus. Internship applications involving a commuting distance exceeding 50 miles will be automatically declined.

V. Changing Sites and Termination of Internships

Changing internship sites after starting your internship is permitted only under exceptional and unusual circumstances. The Director of Experiential Learning will assess the Internship Agreement in consultation with you and the on-site supervisor to arrive at a suitable decision. If a change is deemed justified, an alternative internship location must be mutually agreed upon by the Director of Experiential Learning and the student. However, if the change is not deemed justified, completion of the internship at the initial site will be expected

7/20/24