

INTERNSHIPS

WHAT IS AN INTERNSHIP?

An internship is a paid or unpaid short-term work experience that allows you to gain insight into specific careers, and better understand how a career matches your various interests. Your internship can be as unique as you are. When selecting an internship experience remember that first priority is your experience and the education it will provide you about the career field you are considering, while assisting you in making important career decisions. While some internships are paid, the salary is never as important as the learning experience. Many students take part in unpaid internships and certainly receive as many or more benefits to their overall development.

WHY ARE INTERNSHIPS IMPORTANT?

Internships provide practical experience in a professional environment that apply the content from your coursework to relevant issues in the workplace. Many employers seek to hire new college graduates who already have on-the-job training.

WHERE WILL I FIND AN INTERNSHIP?

Your most intense focus should be on the skills you will obtain in the internship. These efforts will ultimately contribute to a very positive experience. Check out Handshake @ Illinois, an online job board where employers post jobs and internships. Also, discuss your interests with a Career Counselor who will help determine strategies to search for your ideal internship.

Consider the variety of endless opportunities, and the many types of potential sponsors. For example, investigate both profit and non-profit organizations. Also, consider looking through volunteer organizations.

WHEN DO I PARTICIPATE IN AN INTERNSHIP?

Many students obtain internships during the summer months between academic school years. Other students find internships that take place during the academic semester or year. Your academic advisor or career counselor can help you determine how to balance your internship with your course of study, and whether or not you should take a semester off from school to complete an internship.