

INTERNSHIP GUIDE

Build Relevant Experience.



SCHOOL OF
PUBLIC HEALTH
Office of Career Services

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.

The Indiana University School of Public Health-Bloomington Office of Career Services looks to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) for internship defining criteria. naceweb.org/about-us/advocacy/position-statements/position-statement-us-internships/

To ensure that an experience—whether it is a traditional internship or one conducted remotely or virtually—is educational, and thus eligible to be considered a legitimate internship by the NACE definition, all the following criteria must be met:

1. The experience must be an extension of the classroom: a learning experience that provides for applying 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.

If these criteria are followed, it is the opinion of NACE that the experience can be considered a legitimate internship.

STUDENT COMPENSATION

It is strongly encouraged by NACE that organizations pay interns for their work through an hourly rate of pay, weekly or monthly stipend, or by providing tuition assistance. Parking and job-related incidentals should always be paid for by the internship provider, even if the internship is unpaid.

If the internship provider is unable to pay interns, see the U.S. Department of Labor guidelines to determine if an individual can be classified as an unpaid intern. We recommend limiting unpaid intern work to a maximum of 8-10 hours per week during the academic year and less than 20 hours per week during the summer. Unpaid interns should never be treated as or considered “free labor”. They should be given clear and challenging tasks with training, support, guidance, and feedback from the employer to ensure a successful learning experience.

If you are interested in providing an internship for academic credit, contact the department internship coordinator or the Career Services Office for requirements.

DEVELOPING AN INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The best internships are well-planned. If you're interested in developing an internship program, we would be glad to help you get started. Please contact Trudy McConnell at hiresph@indiana.edu.