



EMPLOYER GUIDE TO UNDERGRADUATE & GRADUATE **INTERNSHIPS & CO-OPS**

UConn

CENTER FOR
CAREER DEVELOPMENT

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INTRODUCTION & EMPLOYER BENEFITS

The University of Connecticut (UConn) supports students, both undergraduates and graduate students, who are engaged in experiential learning opportunities that offer clear supervision, work related to their career interests, and introduce them to networking, mentoring, and career-related activities. Employers offering a quality internship program or co-op opportunity will find a strong candidate pool, as well as University support. This guide is intended to provide employers some structure to the process of starting and running productive internship and co-op programs, primarily in the United States. Though some of the information is universal, much is geared toward US organizations. The Career Center has created this guide to assist employers in navigating the internship and co-op process, from the position's inception to hiring and managing the students.

Given UConn's size and scope, internship courses where students earn credit have been developed by several faculty and staff at multiple campuses. Co-op development is initially coordinated with the Center for Career Development, with select opportunities in Engineering and Accounting referred to respective departments. If your organization wishes to discuss internships and course credit, contact the Career Center at internships@uconn.edu; if you'd like to discuss co-op development, reach out to careercoop@uconn.edu.

The Career Center also maintains an online recruiting system, Handshake, where employers may post opportunities, arrange on-campus interviews, and register for career fairs. Students from all academic programs, at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, and at all campuses are granted access to this database. More information is in the guide on setting up and using the system.

The Center for Career Development look forward to working with you! If you have any questions or concerns regarding our programs, services, or events, as well as any content in this guide, please be sure to contact the Corporate Partner Relations team at 860-486-3013 or recruiting@uconn.edu, unless otherwise noted.

INTRODUCTION & EMPLOYER BENEFITS

How do Employers Benefit from Offering an Internship & Co-op Experience?

One of the most significant advantages to providing internships and co-ops is the opportunity to select, develop, and convert your future talent. You can evaluate and screen potential employees prior to making a full-time position offer, which may lead to financial savings and possible employee retention. In fact, employers have reported converting more than half of eligible interns into full-time hires. If hired into a permanent position, previous interns and co-op students assimilate faster to their new roles and have shorter learning-curves than external hires. Recognizing that not all employers recruit full-time staff from their intern or co-op pool, additional benefits to having a UConn student at your organization may include:

Interns and Co-op participants can...

- Provide freedom for professional staff to pursue creative or more advanced projects;
- Introduce an organization to current strategies and techniques in the field;
- Maintain connections with colleges and increase visibility on campuses;
- Promote community involvement (this may also serve as an excellent public relations tool);
- Recruit other students and generate enthusiasm;
- Create awareness of the field to future hires.

Each individual organization may experience other benefits unique to their organization and/or industry.

DEVELOPING A PROGRAM

DEVELOPING A PROGRAM

DEFINITIONS
& CHECKLIST

Both internships & co-ops are work/learning experiences that provide a hands-on way for students to confirm their choice of major and/or career while gaining practical work experience. Both types of experiences include professional development and opportunities for learning. These may be in person, virtual/remote, or hybrid.

Internships: part-time, paid or unpaid positions, open to undergraduate and graduate students, which may last one semester or longer, and may be for academic credit, during which students also take classes. In the summer, a student may or may not take classes and the intern may work either full- or part-time. May be short term project based micro experiences, or longer where intern is immersed into the organization.

Co-ops: full-time, paid positions, typically for undergraduate students, but becoming more common for graduate students as well, normally lasting 4-6 months, over the course of a semester, during which students do not typically take classes; may be extended or repeated. Co-op student is treated and seen as an employee (benefits not necessarily expected). Co-op may extend into summer months too.

Prior to hiring, every employer must determine how the internship or co-op students will fit within the organization’s goals and culture. As organizations vary in age, industry, culture, and product, so too will internship and co-op activities.

A checklist of questions that may determine what kind of Internship & Co-op Program could work best:

CHECKLIST

- What does your organization hope to gain from the program?
- What are the logistics of the internship or co-op: time frame, location (virtual/in-person), and hours?
- Has your organization thought about insurance liabilities when hiring internship or co-op students?
- Is your organization seeking to fulfill a need on a specific project? Will the internship(s) or co-op(s) encompass one major project, or entail a variety of small projects?
- Have members of the team been trained on interviewing, hiring, and managing student staff?
 - This note is especially relevant if any students are going to be exposed to situations where alcohol will be served. Students should not be put in any inappropriate situations.
- What talents, academic background and experience do you want in an internship or co-op student?
 - Decide on qualifications early in the process, to help you recruit and select the best candidate.
- Who will be primarily responsible for the orientation and supervision of the internship and co-op students? Will that person be a mentor, supervisor, or both? What organic and organized support systems are in place for your new staff, such as resource groups, mentors, professional activities, etc.?
- How many internship or co-op students does the company need? If there are several students, will they work in a team, independently, or could they connect and share their experiences?
- How often will the supervisor meet with the student(s)? Is the supervisor able to create goals and discuss opportunities for learning?
 - Learning opportunities should be a benefit to the student and go beyond their daily duties. Examples provided further in the guide.
- If the intern or co-op student is not local, will the organization be providing housing? If there is no housing, can the organization offer support, resources, information, etc. on relocating and finding safe, affordable housing for a short-term experience?
- If the student is being paid, are the hours and pay competitive?
- If an internship is unpaid, is the company aware of the Fair Labor Standards Act and other legal statutes and how these relate to unpaid internships? (FLSA is not directed toward non-profits, education, or government internship opportunities.)
- If an internship, will the supervisor be willing to work with the student’s academic advisor/internship coordinator to facilitate the student earning academic credit? (Please note that academic credit is awarded by the University, not an employer, and that students pay tuition for internship credit.)

In order to have a successful intern or co-op student, it is essential to develop a program with clear expectations and objectives. Several issues to be considered and addressed when creating a program are listed on the following pages.

DEVELOPING A PROGRAM

A PART-TIME JOB VS. AN
INTERNSHIP OR CO-OP

A crucial part of an internship or co-op student’s experience is contributing to the organization through meaningful work, such as career-related tasks that encourage and allow the student to learn professionalism and obtain skills they do not yet possess. While part-time jobs can contribute to an individual’s personal and professional growth, they do not generally contribute to their academic growth. Here are some distinctions:

Differences Between a Part-Time Job, Internship, and Co-op

	Part-time job	Internship	UConn Co-op
Purpose	Completed primarily for monetary purposes	Completed for several possible reasons, which may include gaining experience, academic credit, and/or compensation	Completed for experience and compensation
Learning	Tasks of job must be learned for the work to be adequately completed	Learning reflects the goals of the student, the outcomes expected by the employer, and the requirements of a faculty member/internship coordinator (if for academic credit)	Learning reflects the goals of the student and the outcomes expected by the employer
Type of Work	Work is assigned which needs to be completed; may or may not be directly related to an academic pursuit	Involves projects or ongoing work that is purposeful and of a professional nature, often related to an academic pursuit	Completes assigned work and projects that are purposeful and of a professional nature
Compensation	Always	Sometimes, employer determines; credit decided by the university and is not synonymous or a substitute for compensation	Always
Student Fees and/or Costs	None	If earning credit, ranges from hundreds to low thousands of dollars, based on number of credits and term interning (fall, spring, summer)	Low fee to remain registered as a UConn student
Supervisor	Supervisor serves as an authority figure to whom the employee reports	Supervisor serves as the main point of contact for assignments and projects; supervisor is also expected to ensure that mentoring occurs, either by doing it him/herself or by arranging for another valued member of the organization to take on the role	Supervisor serves as the main point of contact for assignments and projects; supervisor is also expected to ensure that mentoring occurs, either by doing it him/herself or by arranging for another valued member of the organization to take on the role
Duration	It is anticipated that employee will stay through their graduation, the end of a project or need, or until terminated, depending on the position	A set period, either a semester, year or summer; can be extended if the role continues to evolve	Lasts between four to six months; can be extended one additional consecutive cycle. Ex – January-May; January-August; June-December; August-December
Hours	May range anywhere from 5–20+ hours per week, depending on employer need and student availability	May be 5-20 hours per week during the semester, and up to 40 hours per week during the summer	May range depending on employer need and student availability Minimum: 35 hours per week Maximum: 50 hours per week
Eligibility	Undergraduate & graduate students	Undergraduate & graduate students	Undergraduate students; in certain circumstances, graduate students

What are the goals that both you and the intern or co-op student hope to fulfill?

Having a program that has a specific description allows each employer to clearly state the expectations of the intern or co-op student; this effort will increase the number of qualified applications for the position being offered. Outline goals and expectations for all, using Expectations Documents and Learning Agreements (see appendix).

The attainment and demonstration of the following competencies are key components which help prepare students for a successful transition into the workplace and help define the development of your program, as defined by National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). NACE is the primary professional association for both educators and employers. Consider utilizing this alphabetized list of the competencies in establishing goals for your program and student(s).

- **Career & Self-Development:** Proactively develop oneself and one’s career through continual personal and professional learning, awareness of one’s strengths and weaknesses, navigation of career opportunities, and networking to build relationships within and without one’s organization.
- **Communication:** Clearly and effectively exchange information, ideas, facts, and perspectives with people inside and outside of an organization.
- **Critical Thinking:** Identify and respond to needs based upon an understanding of situational context and logical analysis of relevant information.
- **Equity & Inclusion:** Demonstrate the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills required to equitably engage and include people from different local and global cultures. Engage in anti-racist practices that actively challenge the systems, structures, and policies of racism.
- **Leadership:** Recognize and capitalize on personal and team strengths to achieve organizational goals.
- **Professionalism:** Knowing work environments differ greatly, understand and demonstrate effective work habits, and act in the interest of the larger community and workplace.

- **Teamwork:** Build and maintain collaborative relationships to work effectively toward common goals, while appreciating diverse viewpoints and shared responsibilities.
 - **Technology:** Understand and leverage technologies ethically to enhance efficiencies, complete tasks, and accomplish goals.
- Plan on integrating as many core competencies as possible into tasks, seminars, projects and other learning opportunities for the internship or co-op students’ continued education and development.**

Employers should, to the best of their abilities, ensure that students have quality internship and co-op experiences. When developing a program at your organization, be sure to safeguard against the following potential pitfalls:

- While it may take time to compile a complete portfolio of projects for an internship or co-op student, it is imperative that the student engage in related activities from the start. The Career Center recommends creating a structured environment for students during their first few weeks with an organization. This will allow their comfort level to increase and will ensure that they feel valued.
- It is reasonable that it may take time to build trust in any new employee, including internship or co-op students. We encourage employers to be strategic when assigning tasks and show students that their quality work helps build trust and autonomy.
- Recognizing that roles may shift at any organization, it can be uncomfortable for a student when their supervisor leaves the company during their internship or co-op experience. Ensure that there is a secondary supervisor available to serve during such instances, illnesses, or emergencies.
- Internship or co-op students may, at times, engage in administrative tasks. Students are seeking experiential learning opportunities to gain greater insight into organizations and industries; clerical work may not provide the context students are seeking and are not typically appropriate to assign students. In addition, students should not be serving as personal assistants or engaging in activities such as getting coffee for a team or running errands, on a regular basis.

WRITING A STRONG INTERNSHIP OR CO-OP POSTING

WRITING A STRONG INTERNSHIP OR CO-OP POSTING

It is time to write a position description. To ensure all categories are fully completed, consider utilizing the sample information when writing a description for your internship or co-op opening. The Career Center’s Internship Co-op Coordinator is happy to review postings too. An example is in the Appendix.

Indicate the following information when drafting an internship or co-op posting:

Full Organization Information

- Contact Information for general questions (name, title, telephone number, email)
- Location - clarify if a satellite office/branch v. headquarters or virtual/remote
- Organization’s website and company profile
- The organization’s purpose and population being served
- Include information on the department hosting the internship or co-op
- Mention points not clearly or easily found on the website
- Describe the organization’s overall culture and environment
- Introduce an Inclusivity initiatives in the organization and/or department
- Mention if there are Employee Resource Groups

Roles and Responsibilities/Duties/Position Title

- Outlines a general overview of the internship and the company profile as it relates to the internship
- Identifies what tasks and projects intern will complete directly related to the organization
- Indicates the department where the student will intern
- Include hours, work schedule if known, location, etc.
- Indicates quality learning experiences* that benefit the student
- NOTE: Responsibilities not to include more than 25% clerical or similar type/level of work
- NOTE: Student would not report, directly or indirectly, to a family member
- NOTE: Internship may be virtual when specific language regarding supervision, mentoring, and structured activities are clearly outlined

Experience and Qualifications

- Required & preferred items: GPA, skills, academic status, major, transportation available, etc.

Application Specifics

- Provide contact information for application elements
- Outline what is needed for a complete application (résumé, cover letter, writing sample, references, etc.)
- Identify the application submission dates and process
- Note experience duration (weeks), start/end dates, and average hours per week
- Identify compensation (hourly wage, stipend, etc.); if not offering a wage, review pages 11 and 12 of this guide, wherein legal considerations are addressed (remember credit is not compensation; students pay for credit)

Quality Learning Experiences

- These educational elements distinguish the role between a part-time job and an internship or co-op and are not connected to assigned tasks. It is suggested to offer at least three distinct options not connected to the position (ideally expressed in the position posting but certainly part of the program).
- Select examples include:
 - Established time(s) to meet other interns and discuss topics of interest in the organization, industry, professionalism, etc.
 - Designated time(s) to meet and interact with organization administrators – to network, listen to research, discover trends in the industry, etc.
 - Suggested readings related to the industry, with time set up to discuss it with supervisor, mentor, intern coordinator, etc.
 - Lunch and Learn types of seminars: guest speakers from industry or company
 - A project that will only benefit the intern and possibly time for the intern to present on the findings or the internship experience to members of the organization and/or other interns, if applicable
 - Opportunities to sit in on meetings or decision-making events unrelated to the direct tasks at hand

When should internship or co-op recruitment begin?

Once an employer has outlined the internship or co-op goals for their company, it is time to begin recruiting for the position(s). Many companies begin the search about three to six months before the internship or co-op start date. For example, when an employer begins looking for summer interns in the late fall and takes applications through early spring, they have about five to six months to search for an ideal candidate. Starting the search early gives students more time to apply, allows the employer more time to decide, and provides the employer with a potentially wider variety of applicants.

What about interviewing logistics?

When it is time for the interview, employers have the option to interview on-site and virtually, as well as take advantage of the Career Center's on-campus interview program, which allows employers to interview students in one of UConn's Career Center locations at no cost.

Anyone who conducts interviews should be trained on proper interviewing techniques, as well as on avoiding illegal or inappropriate questions.

For more information about recruiting UConn students, including on-campus interviewing, please feel free to contact the Career Center's Corporate Partner Relations team at 860-486-6165 or recruiting@uconn.edu.

What are successful ways to search and recruit?

The Center for Career Development offers an online recruiting program, Handshake, through which undergraduate and graduate students can post their résumés and apply to positions that employers have listed.

Employers may search for internship or co-op students by attending events throughout the academic year, such as career fairs, tabling information sessions/ offering meet & greets, and hosting campus workshops. The employer can have more personal experiences with potential candidates and learn more about their character by speaking with them face-to-face.

The more advertising and promoting that is done for the position being offered, the greater the variety and number of applicant résumés the company may receive. When applicable, considering a variety of majors, year in school, background, GPA, life experience, etc., as well broadly advertising in multiple venues and systems, can yield a strong and diverse pool of candidates.

What needs to be done once an intern or co-op student is selected?

- A formal offer. Just like full-time offers, an internship or co-op offer should be in writing. Many companies will first share a position offer over the phone, yet the offer is not considered "official" until they have sent it in writing. This is very important to make sure the terms are clear to both parties involved. Encourage dialogue if the applicant has questions or needs to talk to HR.
 - If you do not provide your offer in writing, it is perfectly acceptable for the candidate to request you send an official letter (usually via email-texting is not recommended).
- An offer letter should include the following:
 - Standard Information
 - Internship/co-op title
 - Start date and end date, which may include training schedule
 - Supervisor's name (optional)
 - Duties (optional)
 - Deadline for responding (offer at least a week and avoid pressuring the student to decide right away or in less than 24 hours)
 - Format (virtual, in-person, or hybrid)
 - Compensation/Benefits (as applicable)
 - Rate of pay and basis (hourly wage, stipend, or salary)
 - Housing/relocation assistance provided, if applicable
 - Conditions (optional; examples below)
 - Maintaining a certain GPA prior to the start date
 - Successful completion of a drug test, medical exam, or background check
 - Legal Agreements (optional; examples below)
 - Non-disclosure: employees, including interns, may need to agree to keep company's intellectual property private to maintain the company's competitive advantage
- After acceptance:
 - Share details about the internship or co-op with the student once accepted and at least one week prior to the first day, such as what to bring or wear the first day, food options, ID, arrival time, etc.
 - Do all you can to help the student feel welcome that first week and beyond. The student will want to make a good impression, so do what you can to alleviate any nerves.

Internships

There are over 70 undergraduate courses throughout the University of Connecticut system which allow undergraduate students to earn academic credit for their internships. Each academic department has its own policies for eligibility. It is the student's responsibility to determine which department's course is best suited for their internship. Students or the department with the course may ask for additional information or clarification regarding the intern's role and responsibilities to demonstrate how the internship meets credit eligibility. Graduate students may also have the option to pursue academic credit due to departmental curriculum rules; if they ask you about it, please refer them to the Internship Coordinator at internships@uconn.edu.

Per the Department of Labor legal guidelines, employers may not mandate that a student earn academic credit while interning (earning credit is not a form of compensation, and students must pay for academic credit, including those associated with an off-campus internship). More information can be found on pages 18 and 19 this guide, wherein legal considerations are addressed.

If an employer would like to collaborate with an academic department to create a seamless referral system or to offer opportunities just for UConn students, the hiring organization can find course contacts on the [Center's Internship Credit page](#).

Co-ops

Though they retain full-time student status, students do not generally take courses when participating in a co-op, nor do they earn credit for the co-op itself.

If they do wish to take classes, they may receive permission from the University to take up to six credits/two courses, either in person or online. In addition, the student must discuss the course(s) with the co-op employer or supervisor, to determine that the class time does not interfere with the students' work schedule. Should a class that conflict with their co-op schedule, written permission from their supervisor and an adapted work schedule that verifies the minimum 35 hours, must be shown to the Career Center Co-op Coordinator during their co-op registration.

Occasionally, undergraduates will arrange for internship credit for the experience, and these courses shouldn't impede their work schedule. Graduate students typically do not take any courses and arrange for credit or transcript documentation with the UConn Graduate School Office.

BEST PRACTICES FOR INTERNSHIPS AND CO-OPS

What is an expectations agreement?

This formal document outlines, in writing, expectations between the employer and the student. This includes a learning agreement which serves as a professional roadmap for the student’s time with your organization, helping to clearly identify the learning objectives associated with their experience and how the intern(s) or co-op students plan to accomplish them.

Employers find these agreements helpful, whether a student earns academic credit for the internship or not, as it allows employers to strategically connect with students and ensure their goals are met.

What is the importance of establishing a learning agreement?

Developing a learning agreement will ensure that the employer and the intern have clear expectations. The student is involved in completing the learning agreement with the supervisor so that the experience is mutually beneficial and contributes to overall accountability. A learning agreement is often a course requirement for interns earning credit. Please see appendix for sample expectation and learning agreements.

STUDENT ORIENTATION & TRAINING

Warmly welcome and introduce your internship and co-op students throughout your organization, just as you would welcome a new full-time employee. Not only are internship and co-op students new to your organization, in some cases, they may be new to the field or the professional world of work.

Students will likely be unfamiliar with the activities, environment, and objectives of your organization. Though they may have worked to support their education, these experiences might not have exposed them to organizational politics, the need for confidentiality, the importance of teamwork, or the market-driven culture of most businesses. These issues should be candidly addressed during the students’ training and orientation.

Expectations can vary, depending upon the size of your organization, but in general we suggest reviewing the following items during orientation and training:

- Tour of organization and facilities (where applicable)
- History of organization
- Department descriptions (where applicable)
- On-site workspace: sharing between individuals on alternate days is often an acceptable practice
- Overall responsibilities, including schedule and meeting times for the student and supervisor
- Potential projects and how feedback will be provided regarding projects
- Introduction in staff meetings (where applicable)
- Acceptable and unacceptable behavior; dress code/attire; avoiding micro-aggressions, misgendering, and other DEI expectations; cell phone use; music being played; etc.
 - The UConn Center for Career Development has DEI resources should the employer have uncertainty regarding this topic
- Instructions on how to use office technology (do not assume they know the systems or machines)
 - Rules regulating the technology, personal use, taking equipment off site
- Hours and procedures for calling out when ill, requesting time off, consequences of absenteeism
- Safety regulations and requirements
- All material concerning wages and the pay schedule (where applicable)

What are the benefits of providing mentorship and supervision?

An organized and planned internship and co-op training program with a dedicated supervisor are critical to the program’s success for both the student and your organization. Mentors add to the experience and often can increase a student’s interest in staying with an organization, due to their stewardship.

What role does the supervisor have in the internship or co-op students’ work?

Identify the supervisor for your internship or co-op student(s) who will familiarize them with the organization, provide assignments and feedback, and serve as a “contact” person for questions. The supervisor may also be a mentor, though having another person in the role is ideal. An internship or co-op supervisor’s responsibilities should include:

- Taking part in the internship or co-op students’ applications, screenings, and interview process, as well as mid and final evaluations; (see appendix)
- Conducting an internship and co-op student orientation (if HR hasn’t) and training session;
- Developing learning goals and a learning agreement, in cooperation with the student(s) (and academic instructor(s) when applicable);
- Meeting with student(s) weekly or bi-weekly, to evaluate performance, whether key needs and goals are being met, and to assess the program’s success;
- Being attentive to the students’ learning styles, while also educating them about department, organization, and industry norms, as this is critical to their development.

What role does the mentor play in the internship or co-op students’ work?

- Mentors are readily available to answer questions related to personal professional growth, to share their knowledge, and to support the internship or co-op student in developing a professional network in the field.
- Mentors may be found organically or as part of a structured program. In either scenario, consider providing guidelines, resources, and expectations to all involved, as this may help to ensure no boundaries are blurred.
- In addition to a supervisor, a mentor may assist in the transition to this new learning environment. Mentors are often professionals within the department whose approachability and interpersonal skills provide internship or co-op students with frequent and valuable advice regarding the work context, the organization’s culture, and ways to overcome problems and challenges. If there are UConn alumni in the organization, they may be a good mentoring option.

Joining Employee Resource or Affinity Groups

- If your organization has [Employee Resource Groups](#) (ERGs), determine if an intern or co-op student may participate in them. ERG’s can be an excellent informal way for the students to find mentors or build community based on a common identity, as they provide support while also allow for greater organizational and personal development. If your organization does not offer them, this [blog](#) provides further details on their benefits to the organization and the participants.

Communicating with your student intern or co-op participant

- Students cite a lack of communication with their recruiters, hiring managers, and/or supervisors as a significant problem that leads to poor assumptions, missed deadlines, or worse. Stay in touch frequently (and inform your student how often they can expect to connect with you, as well as your preferred method), with relevant content related to interviewing and onboarding, and continue to connect once hired, through their entire experience.
- Don’t make assumptions about the student’s learning curve. Reinforce that the student may ask questions and in fact should, to avoid problems later.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Paying Internship & Co-op Students

Quality internship experiences can be paid or unpaid, though all organizations are encouraged to offer a base hourly wage. If an intern is to receive a stipend (a fixed sum of money paid periodically to defray expenses, housing, gas card, etc.), the stipend amount and date of pay should be stated in the position description and written into a contract of agreement upon hire. Paid interns and co-op students are to be viewed as an employee; all co-ops are full-time and are therefore eligible for select benefits.

Workers' Compensation

Workers' compensation is provided to replace wages and medical care programs for an employee whose injuries or illnesses are work-related. For more information regarding the employer's regulations for intern and co-op students, review guidelines posted by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Workers' Compensation.

Unemployment Compensation

Typically, internship and co-op students are not eligible to receive unemployment compensation, as they are hired for an end-date position. Note: the Department of Labor's Unemployment Insurance (UI) programs provide unemployment benefits to eligible workers who become unemployed through no fault of their own and meet certain other eligibility requirements.

Independent Contractors & Interns

Interns cannot be referred to or classified as "independent contractors," as interns need onsite supervision and an independent contractor does not. Companies should not use this category for tax purposes either.

Sexual Harassment Policy

The sexual harassment policy follows the same guidelines as the policy provided for permanent employees, regardless of the student's compensation package. The policy and steps for reporting an incident should be shared with the intern during the orientation and explained in the company's employee manual. When an intern is receiving credit, the university may ask for a written copy of the employer's sexual harassment policy. Please note that many states have passed individual laws ensuring that harassment policies are extended to all employees, including unpaid interns. Review your state's policy to guarantee all laws are being followed.

Conduct

When a UConn student participates in an internship or co-op, while enrolled at UConn, student conduct rules and regulations apply. If a student violates company policy or the law, notify the UConn Career Center.

Time Off

An intern or co-op student may request time off, even though they are working for a shorter period of time than a full-time employee. Awarding interns paid time off is a company-specific decision. Most interns will not accrue paid sick or vacation time; if an intern is working with your organization for more than one semester, this may be a benefit to consider offering. Co-op students should be treated as full-time staff and may be awarded the corresponding benefits. During training or during a student's first few days, be sure to share information regarding expectations during academic breaks (Spring Break, Winter Break, etc.), and the inclement weather policy.

International and Undocumented Students

Does your company allow non-U.S. citizens to participate in internships or co-ops? The company must determine if it can hire international students who have different residency or visa credentials. Consult with your human resources and/or legal departments to learn if there are specific hiring criteria for international students. Encourage international students you are considering to work with the University's International Student Scholar Services office, to learn of the proper process and/or paperwork needed. Undocumented students have unique circumstances; discuss with your HR and/or reach out to the Career Center.

Considerations Regarding Unpaid Internships

When hiring unpaid interns, employers must keep in mind the legal ramifications.

Unpaid internships in the U.S. are subject to scrutiny by the Department of Labor and the Courts. When offering an unpaid internship, employers are to review the guidelines in the US Department of Labor, [Fair Labor Standards Act \(FLSA\)](#), and/or the [2nd Appeals Court](#) (applicable to CT, NY, and VT), to ensure liability compliance. Regardless of the employer or type of work, it is imperative that the intern is the primary beneficiary of the role. For additional information regarding these guidelines and how employers may be impacted, or to have an internship description reviewed before recruiting, contact the Internship Coordinator at internships@uconn.edu or 860-486-3013. SHRM, the Society for Human Resource Management, has also documentation on this subject.

Non-profits, government agencies, and educational institutions are exempt from the FLSA, though all organizations are encouraged to offer a base hourly wage to the intern.

When can the internship be unpaid?

Background

[Fact Sheet #71](#), through The U.S. Department of Labor (U.S. DOL) Wage and Hour Division specifies through the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), that an internship can legally be unpaid ONLY if the criteria stated in the Test below, are met. The FLSA requires "for-profit" employers to pay employees for their work. Interns and students, however, may or may not be "employees" under the FLSA's guidelines.

The Test for Unpaid Interns and Students

Courts have identified the following seven factors as part of the test:

1. The extent to which the intern and the employer clearly understand that there is no expectation of compensation. Any promise of compensation, express or implied, suggests that the intern is an employee—and vice versa.
2. The extent to which the internship provides training that would be similar to that which would be given in an educational environment, including the clinical and other hands-on training provided by educational institutions.
3. The extent to which the internship is tied to the intern's formal education program by integrated coursework or the receipt of academic credit.
4. The extent to which the internship accommodates the intern's academic commitments by corresponding to the academic calendar.
5. The extent to which the internship's duration is limited to the period in which the internship provides the intern with beneficial learning.
6. The extent to which the intern's work complements, rather than displaces, the work of paid employees while providing significant educational benefits to the intern.
7. The extent to which the intern and the employer understand that the internship is conducted without entitlement to a paid job at the conclusion of the internship.

Courts have described the "primary beneficiary test" as a flexible test, and no single factor is determinative. Accordingly, whether an intern or student is an employee under the FLSA necessarily depends on the unique circumstances of each case. Reach out to the Career Center Internship & Co-op staff for assistance as needed.

CENTER FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT Center for Career Development

A recent University directive requires the Career Center to obtain a signed non-discrimination statement from each employer who recruits on the UConn campus. More information is shared via the Career Center’s online recruiting system, Handshake.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

In accordance with the provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Federal and State laws and executive orders pertaining to civil rights, the University of Connecticut Center for Career Development prohibits discrimination in education, employment, and in the provision of services on account of race, ethnicity, religion, sex, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, disabled veteran status, physical or mental disability, and other specifically covered disabilities. University policy also prohibits discrimination in employment based on criminal records that are not related to the position being sought, and complies with all state and federal civil rights statutes, whether specifically cited within this statement or not. The Center for Career Development assumes that prospective employers utilizing the services of the Career Center, including attendance at career fairs and participation in on-campus recruiting activities, acknowledge the principle of equal opportunity for all students and alumni. It is expected also that their employment policies comply with the letter and the spirit of the law affording equal employment opportunities.

APPENDIX

SAMPLE INTERNSHIP POSTING

Marketing Intern

Company Profile: Well-established environmental engineering firm that has been in business for over 30 years. We are a positive, friendly, inclusive staff of 12 looking for someone who wants to be part of a strong team, with an emphasis on quality work that is ecofriendly. This internship can be repeated or extended, based on the intern’s performance and company needs.

Position Summary: Under the general direction of the Associate Marketing Coordinator at XYZ Organization, the Marketing Intern independently coordinates and provides program support, utilizing social media for promotion/research and blog content. The ideal candidate will serve as an important component in promoting our business with existing and new clients. It is essential that applicants to this position have exceptional written and oral communication skills, demonstrate creativity, and understand the importance of being well organized. A background in engineering is not necessary, though an interest in the work being done is.

Responsibilities:

- Write press releases and other materials
- Write content for newsletters and blogs
- Compile contact lists for events
- Conduct research and benchmark comparable organizations, compile data into spreadsheets
- Brainstorm social media promotions, staying current with trends and industry knowledge
- Schedule and coordinate speaking engagements, appearances, photo shoots, and other special events

Requirements:

- Familiarity with software applications (such as: InDesign, Microsoft Word & Excel, Photoshop)
- Familiarity with managing social media (company uses Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok)
- Experience with video editing
- Strong oral and written communications and skills
- Effective interpersonal skills
- Research and analytical skills
- Majors: Business-related field (marketing, business administration, etc.), English or Communications; or someone in an environmentally related major with marketing and social media platform experience
- Demonstrated commitment to diversity, social impact, and environmental issues
- Must be able to work a flexible schedule to include some evenings and weekends

Learning Experiences: Interns will participate in three structured learning experiences: attending all bi-weekly company strategy meetings, reading trade journals and articles and discussing content during meetings with alumni mentor, and attending one statewide conference with leadership team (all expenses covered). The company will work with the student’s academic institution if the student is earning credit.

Hourly Wage: This position has a pay range of \$XX.00-\$XX.00 per hour

Class Year: Juniors, Seniors, and Graduate Students are welcome to apply

Application Specifics: Provide cover letter, résumé, and writing sample to: career@xyzcorp.com, attention First Name, Last Name. Position will remain open until filled.

Internship dates: 8/22/20XX – 12/14/20XX, potential for full-time

SAMPLE LEARNING AGREEMENT

Name: Student Name

Internship or Co-op Dates: Month/Year to Month/Year

Internship or Co-op Position: Position Title

Internship or Co-op Site: Organization’s Name

Directions: Students complete all three columns and at least two rows/objectives, for each section with their supervisor at the start of the internship or co-op experience. Student/supervisor review half-way through the experience and adjust as needed.

What are your learning goals?	How will you work toward meeting your goals?	How will you prove you have met your goals?
TRANSFERABLE SKILL OBJECTIVES – List transferable skills you hope to gain through your experience. These can be soft skills, personal skills, or specific professional skills.		
Skill objective, ex: Writing, computer, public speaking, etc.	Activities to support learning or enhancing the identified skill set in the first column	Anticipated manner of evaluation, could involve the supervisor’s participation
Example: Improve my technological skills – Microsoft Excel and other computer programs used by my internship team	Example: Participate in office trainings, set meeting times with my mentor to learn Excel tricks and formulas	Example: Will regularly use at least three new Excel formulas and can easily navigate specific programs for my role
PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES – Think about goals that will further your personal growth. These could be work-related or academic and should related to your professional aspirations.		
Goal to help personally, but in the context of work	Techniques to achieve the objective in the timeframe	Set a method of demonstrating competence
Example: Become more comfortable answering challenging customer questions	Example: Practice answering questions and techniques through role plays with a supervisor	Example: Be able to successfully address customer problems without having to forward them to supervisors
CAREER DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES – It is important to learn more about the field you are potentially interested in pursuing. Think about what you need to improve to be successful in that field in the future.		
Career related ideas beyond tasks in the position	Specific ideas and steps that support the idea/objective	Ways to verify that the ideas and steps are occurring
Example: Keep track of current important topics in my field, every day	Example: Set aside 30 minutes each day to read relevant journals, articles, and news sources, each day and synthesize topics or articles for myself	Example: Discuss regularly with classmates, co-workers, or other professionals while incorporating own thoughts; apply learned ideas into role

INTERNSHIP OR CO-OP STUDENT/EMPLOYER CONVERSATION CHECKLIST

Discuss during an orientation and/or a first meeting between the student and the site supervisor.

- Provide the intern with an office manual and/or access to company intranet, if one exists, and offer appropriate training for all potential work responsibilities (including virtual options).
- Address office etiquette and policies, including missed workdays, inclement weather policies, dress code, and general behavior and consequences.
 - This includes any holidays and/or breaks that may occur during the term.
- Review company sexual harassment and discrimination policies.
- Discuss Insurance/Worker’s compensation policy in case of injury, if applicable in a virtual environment.
- Establish a routine for intern/supervisor meetings-discussions-feedback, supervisor’s role, and discuss the intern’s learning style.
- Provide the chance for work in a supportive environment conducive to learning, including structured, planned opportunities to interact with full time employees, mentors, and if applicable, other interns.
- Create an opportunity to work on a project, either independently or with a team, which if possible, will be presented to top management.
- The work experience will not include more than 25% of clerical functions, running errands, or other tasks that are not career related/needing a bachelor’s degree to complete.
- The site will provide a dedicated work space for the intern, including access to necessary tools to complete assigned tasks, including but not limited to a desk, telephone, computer, fax machine, etc. (when applicable)
- The site can expect that the student will perform at optimal level and do the job as assigned.
- The site may ask the intern to sign confidentiality agreements per the organization’s needs.
- The student will not be expected to participate in situations that revolve around alcoholic beverages or an atmosphere that encourages inappropriate behaviors. The student is a member of the UConn community and is expected to follow University conduct rules; the student could be referred to the Office of Community Standards for inappropriate behaviors.
- Either party may contact the UConn Internship and Co-op Team should need arise.
- The internship supervisor will participate in a check-in phone call with a representative from the UConn Career Center midway through the internship experience.

We have reviewed the above stated terms for both parties:

Intern/Co-op Staff Signature and Date

Supervisor Signature and Date

Expectations Document

Interns/Co-op students and supervisors are to discuss and respond to the following questions together. Neatly print or type responses below, sign, and keep a copy. Revisit at half-way point in experience.

Supervisor:

Date:

Description of work activities (What projects will the student be doing? How will the individual learn?):

Supervisor expectations (What skills, qualities, and/or habits does the supervisor expect from the student?):

Supervisor goals (What does the supervisor want the student to accomplish?):

State how the intern will be integrated into the organization:

State how the supervisor will ensure mentoring occurs:

Describe the planned and organic ways how the supervisor will support the student’ learning, for both daily tasks and additional educational opportunities:

Intern/Co-op Staff Signature and Date

Supervisor Signature and Date

RESOURCES

Membership based organizations can offer excellent assistance. The following national groups, and their regional and/or statewide affiliates, are available and should be consulted as you navigate this process.

Cooperative Education and Internship Association (CEIA)

CEIA remains the leader in providing professional development and resources to practitioners in the fields of cooperative education and internship program management.

Phone: 513-793-2342

Web: www.ceiainc.org

National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE)

NACE is the leading source of information on the employment of the college educated, and forecasts hiring and trends in the job market; tracks starting salaries, recruiting and hiring practices, and student attitudes and outcomes; and identifies best practices and benchmarks.

Phone: 800-544-5272

Web: www.naceweb.org

World Association for Cooperative & World-Integrated Education (WACE)

The organization's vision is to be the premier international organization linking the world's leading higher education institutions, employers and public authorities, all of whom share a profound commitment to preparing new generations for a lifetime of learning and professional success in today's global & diverse workplace.

Web: <http://www.waceinc.org>

SOCIETY FOR HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROFESSIONALS (SHRM)

By joining SHRM, you gain access to member-exclusive sample policies, legal and compliance resources, HR news, free webcasts, HR Magazine, Ask an HR Advisor service and more.

Web: <https://shrm.org>

Web: <https://ct.shrm.org/> (CT chapter)

UConn Center for Career Development

Reach out with questions or thoughts regarding internships and co-ops from the development stage through hiring.

Web: <https://career.uconn.edu/employers/>

Phone: 860-486-3013

Email: recruiting@uconn.edu; Internships@uconn.edu; careercoop@uconn.edu