

Enhancing Professional and Personal Development

INTERNSHIP GUIDELINES



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CAREER Education. CAREER Experiences. PRE-PROFESSIONAL Advising. ENTREPRENEURSHIP.

Why internships matter

Graduating with a degree is a major achievement—but it's not always enough to land the job you want. Employers are looking for experience, and internships are one of the best ways to get it. Internships give you a chance to apply what you're learning in real-world settings, gain valuable skills, and make connections that can open doors after graduation.

I - Increase your marketability: Students who complete internships are over 60% more likely to have a job lined up at graduation. Many even get hired by the companies they intern with—think of it as a foot in the door.

N - Networking opportunities: You'll meet professionals who can give you career advice, write you recommendations, or help you land your next opportunity. Ask questions, stay curious, and get involved—you never know where a connection might lead.

T - Training to acquire or polish transferable skills: From communication and teamwork to technical or industry-specific skills, internships help you build your resume with the abilities employers are looking for. Plus, you'll have great talking points for future interviews.

E - Explore and clarify career goals: Not sure what you want to do yet? That's okay. Internships help you "test drive" different roles so you can figure out what excites you—and what doesn't—before committing long-term.

R - Recruited to work full-time: A strong internship performance can lead directly to a job offer. You're already trained, already part of the team, and that gives you a competitive edge.

N - Negotiating power: Internship experience doesn't just lead to more job offers—it puts you in a better position to choose the one that fits you best, and even negotiate your starting salary and benefits.

Quick Reality Check:

Yes, some internships might include basic tasks. But most offer real projects and learning experiences, especially if you show up with a positive attitude and a willingness to pitch in. Every experience counts, and how you handle the little things often shows you're ready for the big ones.

Internship Credit

Fall & Spring Terms:

0.5 Credit: 7-13 hours/week for 14 weeks (Total: 98-182 hours)
0.75 Credit: 7-13 hours/week for 14 weeks (Total: 147 hours)
1.0 Credit: 14-17 hours/week for 14 weeks (Total: 196-238 hours)
1.25 Credit: 7-13 hours/week for 14 weeks (Total: 224 hours)
1.5 Credits: 18+ hours/week for 14 weeks (Total 252+ hours)

Summer Term:

0.5 Credit: 13-24 hours/week for 8 weeks (Total: 98-182 hours)
1.0 Credit: 25-31 hours/week for 8 weeks (Total: 196-238 hours)
1.5 Credits: 32+ hours/week for 8 weeks (Total: 252+ hours)

January Term:

0.5 Credit: 17-20 hours/week for 4 weeks (Total: 70 hours)
1.0 Credit: 35-40 hours/week for 4 weeks (Total: 140-160 hours)

Internship timeline

Step 1: Get Informed

- Learn about internship options at elmhurst.edu/internships.
- Consider taking CPP 299: Professional Foundations of Career Development to explore career fields and make valuable connections.
- Join the Mentoring Program to connect with professionals in your area of interest.

Step 2: Activate Your Handshake Account

- Go to elmhurst.joinhandshake.com to access job and internship listings, schedule appointments, and find resources.

Step 3: Meet with a Career Advisor

- Schedule an Internship Info Session 1 through Handshake:
- Career Center → Appointments → Schedule New Appointment → Internship Advising → Internship Info Session

Step 4: Build Your Resume & Cover Letter

- Upload your resume to Handshake for review. Once it's approved, you can start applying!
- Need help? Schedule a Resume Review:
- Career Center → Appointments → Schedule New Appointment → Resume/LinkedIn Assistance

Step 5: Create or Update Your LinkedIn Profile

- Show off your skills, connect with professionals, and grow your network.

Step 6: Start Your Search

- Look for internship sites using:
 - Handshake
 - LinkedIn and your personal network (professors, mentors, friends, and family)
 - Tip: Check Internship Guidelines to make sure your site meets approval criteria.

Step 7: Apply

- Follow each site's application instructions (some may ask for a cover letter or writing sample).
- Follow up to confirm your materials were received and ask about next steps. Don't be afraid to be persistent—follow-up matters!

Step 8: Register for Academic Credit

- Once you've secured your internship:
- Schedule an Academic Internship Registration appointment with the WCCPE internship advisor via Handshake.
- Complete your Consent to Register form and paperwork (requires approval from your faculty advisor and the WCCPE internship advisor).



Getting Started



LinkedIn Account



Handshake



Internship FAQ

How many times can I get credit for an internship?

It depends. Each academic department decides if internship credit is repeatable. Check with your department for specific guidelines.

Can I get credit for staying at the same internship site?

Yes—but your responsibilities must change (e.g., working on a new project, in a different department, or taking on more responsibility). Approval is required from your faculty advisor and the internship advisor.

What GPA must I have to participate in an internship?

You must have a GPA of 2.5 or higher.

Do I have to register for credit to do an internship?

No. You can complete an internship for experience only, but credit is available if you qualify and register.

Are internships paid or unpaid?

Both options exist. But whether paid or unpaid, the real value is in the experience and how it helps your future job search.

Can I earn credit and get paid for an internship?

Yes!

When should I notify the internship advisor if I want credit?

As soon as you secure your internship! Register your internship before the semester begins.

Do I need a resume to apply for internships?

Yes. Treat it like applying for a job—resume, cover letter, and any materials the application requests.

Will there be an interview?

Most likely. You're competing with other students, so employers typically conduct interviews to select their interns.

What if I don't hear back from a site?

Follow up! After applying, check in by phone or email to confirm your materials were received, express interest, and ask about next steps.

Where do I find the Consent to Register form?

It will be emailed to you after meeting with the internship advisor and getting your internship approved. All required paperwork must be completed before it can be approved by your faculty advisor and the internship advisor.

If you're not interested in the position, a polite response about your decision can help maintain a positive and respectful relationship with the recruiter.

Internship Site Resources

- Handshake.com
- LinkedIn.com
- Glassdoor.com
- Indeed.com



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