



Internships: Planning, Searching and Applying

Before you start your search

Identify your goals for your internship. Some students wish to explore a particular field, type of work or workplace as a potential career options. Other students want to gain experience and skills within a specific field. Some students need to meet shadowing hours or related experience requirements for graduate school. Check out resources like O*Net to help you clarify the type of experiences, skills and education necessary for your field.

Determine your logistics and administrative procedures. First, consider the location. Some students need to be close to campus or your hometown. Identify the available housing and transportation options. Additionally, consider the best time to complete an internship. Work with your advisor to determine whether you will complete during the fall or spring semester or over summer break.

Compensation Considerations. Students may choose to complete the internship *to earn credit or not for credit*. You may want to receive credit towards graduation or because your major requires internship. Talk with your advisor about paperwork, requirements, and the registration process ahead of time. Understand the requirements of the internship site. Some employers may require that you are earning credit while others require that you are just enrolled in a college or university. Internships can also *be paid or unpaid*. This does not impact your ability to earn credit.

Where to find possible internships

- Meet with Career Services and check the Pierce Portfolio.
- Check with faculty. They may have contacts or lists of potential internship sites.
- Connect with Franklin Pierce alumni. Your fellow Ravens love to help students.
- Network with fellow students, family members, former employers, etc. to identify potential leads or sites.
- Call or email employers to ask if they currently offer internships or would consider offering one.
- Search on-line job sites or employer home pages for actual internship listings.
- Check the career pages for state and city governments since many offer internships in a wide range of fields.
- Check out federal government internships and summer jobs.
- Use social media sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter to identify leads and network.
- Use on-line resources such as professional associations, Chambers of Commerce to identify employers in your field or geographic region.
- Consider on-campus internship opportunities.

Contacting employers who you are not sure offer internships

- Research the company before you contact them.
- Call or email the company or organization to inquire whether they offer internships.
- Contact either their Human Resources Department or their Internship Coordinator.
- Introduce yourself and explain that you are currently a student at FPU and are looking to complete an internship as part of your major and wondered if they offered internships and if so what is the application process. Follow whatever procedures they have in place.

- Impress them in this initial contact with your interest, enthusiasm and professionalism. Always be polite, even if they are not.
- If they don't offer internships, thank them for their time and move on to the next organization.

Applying to internship postings

- Take the process seriously. Treat your internship search as seriously as you would a search for a full-time job and always present a professional image to potential employers.
- Start your search early. Most internships have an application deadline several months prior to the internship, but some competitive internships recruit earlier. Internships with federal agencies may require a background check that could take as long as six to twelve months.
- Research the company and/or internship so that you can create a targeted cover letter. Work with the Career Services Office to develop professional documents to market yourself to in the internship site.
- Follow whatever application procedures the employer outlines in their posting or on-line. Some fields may require a portfolio or samples of your work.
- Practice your interviewing skills in advance. Some employers may require an in-person interview and others may offer to conduct an interview by phone or Skype.
- Develop a professional presence. Make sure you have a professional email and greeting to your voice mail. Create a professional profile on LinkedIn. Make sure you have a professional presence on social media sites.
- Use professional business etiquette. Always call back an employer who contacts you, even if you have accepted another internship.
- Connect with prospective references. Arrange for 2-3 people to serve as references. These should be faculty members, college administrators, supervisors or individuals who can speak directly about your skills, work ethic, career goals, etc. Most employers do phone reference checks for internships, but some may require written references.
- Work with your faculty advisor on final approval for the internship, completing paperwork, etc.

Employers FAQs

Questions that employers will need you to answer:

- What kinds of paperwork and supervision are required of the employer?
- When do you want to complete the internship? (Summer break, Fall or Spring semesters)
- How many hours do you need to complete?
- Are you doing this for credit? Some companies will only offer credit-based internships.
- What hours are you available, and will this match their needs?

Student Tips:

- Have a positive attitude and show initiative.
- Always dress and act professionally during the interview process or internship.
- Send thank you notes after any interviews.
- Keep any confidential information confidential.
- If you are having problems, work with your faculty advisor. Don't burn any bridges and never badmouth your co-workers, boss or the company.
- Obtain letters of reference at the conclusion on the internship.
- Remember, you can learn a lot from an internship, even if it isn't the perfect experience.

Career Services is available to help in preparing resumes or cover letters, locating internship leads and interview preparation.