

EMPLOYER INTERNSHIP GUIDE

What makes the internship program at PLU unique?

- The Internship Office at PLU assists employers in creating an internship program, recruiting interested students, and facilitating employer-faculty partnerships.
- Our office advertises internship opportunities to interested students through the Career Connections Opportunities Board, our Facebook page, weekly emails, student meetings, and newsletters.
- Students are encouraged to complete internships for academic credit; certain majors even require it!
- We endeavor to create an individual relationship with each internship provider to understand their organizations' needs and how we can best partner to contribute to student learning.

What is an internship?

An intern position contributes to the organization through meaningful experiences that encourage the student to learn professionalism and obtain skills he/she does not yet possess related to the industry.

For students, internships are invaluable at bridging classroom learning in the professional workplace, exploring career goals, gaining hands-on experience, and meaningfully contributing to a company or organization. For employers, interns bring valuable insight, energy, and ideas to new and existing projects and operations

If the student completes an internship for academic credit, the student is connected to the university through a faculty sponsor and earns a grade based on their performance related to co-created learning outcomes.

CREATING the internship

1. Assess where a student could serve as an asset in the organization.
2. Identify the kind of work the student is expected to complete. Some internships are project-based, where a student will take the lead or work as part of a team on a specific initiative. Other internships are general in nature, where the intern will be completing similar tasks each day to achieve a broad overview of the company or organization.
3. How will you know if the intern is successful at the end of their internship? Think of a culminating project such as a presentation, report, or portfolio that a student can complete to leverage in their future job search.
4. Will the intern require a phone, computer, and desk? Arrange for a workspace and access to resources that will ensure the intern can accomplish their assigned tasks.
5. Work with other employees in the organization to determine how the student can matriculate into the work environment and can be of real benefit to the team.
6. Create an internship description with the specific qualifications you are looking for in a student intern. See **Internship Posting Criteria** in the next section for complete instructions.
7. Determine a desired start and end date (you can also use "summer", "fall" or "spring" semester), so the length of the internship is clear for prospective interns. It is also necessary to create a recruitment timeline to make sure the appropriate staff have time to devote to screening applicants and interviewing.

8. Identify whom the student's direct supervisor and mentor will be. It is important that the intern have the benefit of a mentor-relationship and not simply a work supervisor.
9. Determine compensation.
10. Plan an orientation for the student intern as part of the first-day-of-work routine.
11. Post the internship to the Career Connections Opportunities Board, our online job and internship board. For instructions on how to post positions, visit the Career Connections website at www.plu.edu/career/employer.

INTERNSHIP Posting Criteria

Employer Information

1. Name of organization
2. City, state location
3. Industry

About the Internship

1. Job Duties/Responsibilities:
 - a. Outline the specific assignments that will be given to the intern and what daily tasks they will accomplish.
 - b. If the organization is large, define the particular workgroup or division the student will be under.
 - c. Since internships are learning opportunities, ensure that clerical (copying, filing, fetching coffee, etc.) is not a dominant part of the internship experience.
 - d. Is networking, professional development, mentorship a part of the intern's experience? If so, describe these opportunities. This is an important element when Career Connections distinguishes internships from part-time work experience.

Qualifications

1. State what you are ideally looking for in an intern. Are you looking for someone with a particular skill, academic background, or prior experience? You may even list soft skills, such as strong written or verbal communication, organization, and attention to detail if that is an essential piece of your recruiting priorities.

How to Apply

1. Provide detailed instructions on how you'd like students to apply. Is it through your organization's website? What documents do you require (resume, cover letter, references, writing sample, etc.)? Do you want applicants to email you? And, if so, should they use a particular subject line? Specify these preferences in the "how to apply" section to avoid confusion.

Miscellaneous

1. Application deadline
2. Internship start and end dates
3. Number of hours per week and typical work schedule (e.g. Monday-Friday 8am-5pm)
4. Wage

RECRUITING & SELECTING students

When should internship recruitment begin?

Most companies and organizations begin recruiting 4-7 months before the internship start date to ensure a strong applicant pool. Starting early allows more students to apply and gives employers a chance to fully screen applicants to hire a perfect fit.

What are the best recruiting strategies?

Most students complete internships to build resumes and gain experience with their future career in mind. That said, creating a compelling description that makes the student see the benefit of working for your organization and the skills they will gain is imperative. Imagine that there are a dozen of the same type of position the student can apply for. What sets you apart from the rest?

The best way to meet prospective interns is through attending career events, such as career fairs and networking events. Plan to attend at least one career event at PLU throughout the academic year. For a complete guide to recruiting at PLU, visit www.plu.edu/career/employers.

What goes into selecting an intern?

Believe it or not, you begin crafting a candidate pool as soon as you identify your internship needs and write the internship description. Are you looking for only juniors or seniors? Do you expect the intern to start with knowledge, gained either through a class or with a particular resource? Are you searching for a student with a particular educational background, e.g. only psychology majors? By making these specifications in the “qualifications” section of your posting, you will automatically deter or encourage certain students from applying to your position.

When you’ve achieved a strong candidate pool, it’s time to begin selections. Depending on the size of the applicant pool, some employers may interview every application, while others will pick the top candidates. It is an expectation that an interview is a part of your selection process.

How can I appeal to PLU students in particular?

We recommend that internship terms match the semester schedule at PLU:

Fall: September – December

J-Term: January

Spring: February – May

Summer: June – August

Try sticking to a predictable recruiting schedule. Knowing that your organization will recruit an internship each spring, for example, allows Career Connections to prepare students in advance and build awareness of the opportunity year round.

ORIENTING your intern

A successful internship program includes a strong orientation at the beginning of the internship term. Some elements of positive acclimation include:

1. A tour of the work area, including emergency procedures.
2. Introduction of staff members. Be sure to mention how the intern’s work may intersect with individual employees when appropriate.
3. Develop a schedule with the intern that fits around their other responsibilities as a student, ensure that the intern and his/her supervisor have a regular meeting time to discuss progress and learning objectives.

4. Spend some time reviewing office basics – this may be your intern’s first time using a copier, office phone, etc.
5. It’s important to set the tone for the intern regarding office culture. What are the procedures for calling in sick? What is the dress code? Are breaks appropriate?

A Part-Time Job vs. an Internship

Main differences between a part-time job and an internship include:

Part-Time Job	Internship
Completed for monetary gain	Completed for pay/no pay, credit/ no credit (credit and compensation are not synonymous)
Learns job to complete work adequately, not necessarily for learning purposes	Learning objectives reflect the goal of the student, employer outcomes, and academic requirements
Assigned work which may not be professional in nature	Projects assigned are purposeful and professional; college-level appropriateness
No specific start/end date or timeframe that corresponds with academic calendar	Typically part-time during semester or summer months, with occasional extensions
Supervisor is authority figure	Supervisors are mentors and aid in the learning process

Legal Implications

Below are some legal questions to consider before you bring an intern on board.

Will the internship be paid?

The Test for Unpaid Interns and Students Courts have used the “primary beneficiary test” to determine whether an intern or student is, in fact, an employee under the FLSA. In short, this test allows courts to examine the “economic reality” of the intern employer relationship to determine which party is the “primary beneficiary” of the relationship. 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.

How much should I pay the intern?

If your organization is for-profit, you must pay the intern minimum wage or above. By paying the intern, they are considered an employee of your company or organization according to the Department of Labor. Non-profits, government agencies, and educational institutions are except from the FLSA.

Can employees hire an intern fulltime after the duration of the internship?

Yes. Although, we do not encourage the practice of an unpaid internship serving as a long-term interview.

What is the sexual harassment policy? How can interns report a case of misconduct?

You must follow the same guidelines for interns, regardless of compensation, that you do for permanent employees. Share policy and reporting guidelines with students during the orientation. PLU reserves the right to request a written copy of the employer's sexual harassment policy.

Supplemental Funding Options

What is the State Work Study program?

State Work Study is financial aid for low- and middle-income students. Qualifying students get an approved job, or internship, to support their education. Work study builds students' skills, increases their earnings, and reduces reliance on student loans. The state contributes to the wages of work study employees, so participating employers benefit from educated, motivated workers at a lower cost.

How is Work Study employer eligibility determined?

PLU's work study students work with government agencies, for-profit corporations, small businesses, and non-profit organizations. The state bars any business or organization involved in political or religious activity from participating in the State Work Study (SWS) program.

In selecting employer participants, PLU will review the:

- Nature of the position;
- Organization's compatibility with our mission; and
- Work environment to ensure that it promotes a positive learning experience.

In addition, we make sure the position will:

- Not displace regular workers or impair existing contracts;
- Give students the opportunity to explore or gain experience in a career interest; and
- Be adequately supervised.

Are there funding options for students in unpaid internships?

Students who participate in otherwise unpaid summer internships may be able to receive a stipend of up to \$2000. These internship stipends are funded by generous PLU donors and are awarded through a

competitive application process each spring. Students who are interested in securing funding should apply in early May.

Internships and Academic Credit

All internships posted on our Career Connections Opportunities Board and advertised to campus a student can complete for academic credit. The student is responsible for locating a faculty sponsor and drafting a Learning Agreement – which is essentially an informal contract that outlines what the student expects to learn, how their internship experience will support this learning, and how they will be evaluated. There is no additional burden on the employer when hosting an intern for credit. There are, however, a few extra steps to complete:

1. You will be required to complete a Statement of Understanding, which is an agreement between PLU and the employer. You will need to sign and return this document before the student can begin work.
2. You will receive an electronic request, asking you to review and approve the intern's Learning Agreement. Here, you will want to ensure that what the intern expects to learn during their internship matches with the type of experience you are offering.

If a student is doing an internship for credit, do I still have to pay them?

Yes, compensation and academic credit are not mutually exclusive. One does not preclude the other.

Do I give the intern a grade?

Faculty sponsors are responsible for assigning the student a grade. Often, they will solicit feedback from you concerning the intern's performance (in person, over the phone, or through a survey). Please provide feedback about your experience to faculty and Career Connections. It is important to know what skills the intern can improve on so we can better prepare the next intern you host!