**Student Internship Guidelines, Responsibilities, and Expectations**

**What is an internship?**

The ETSU Honors College subscribes to the definition provided by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). According to NACE, an internship:

* Must be a learning experience that applies knowledge gained in the classroom.
* Teaches skills or knowledge that can be transferred to other employment settings.
* Has a defined beginning and end, and a job description with desired qualifications.
* Has clearly defined learning goals related to the professional goals of the student’s academic coursework.
* Provides supervision by and routine feedback from a professional with expertise in the field.
* Includes resources, equipment, and facilities provided by the internship provider to support learning goals.

Additionally, the Honors College provides a staff liaison, the Manager for Student & Alumni Programs, who works with both the student intern and the internship site supervisor to address any problems that may arise and to ensure that the internship experience is mutually beneficial.

**Are you ready to Complete an Internship?**

We expect ETSU Honors College student interns to commit to the following:

* Act in a professional and ethical manner.
* Dress professionally; if you are unsure, ask your site supervisor or Ms. Leybold.
* Follow through on commitments.
* Do not conduct personal business during work hours unless necessary and with your supervisor’s approval.
* Be prompt when reporting to work and complete assignments on or before the deadline.
* Give your work your best effort. Treat your internship as both a job and a course. Remember, you will receive academic credit and a grade.
* Maintain a positive and professional attitude. Your job description may not say so in many words, but it should go without saying that you need to be nice.
* Keep an open mind.
* Exercise humility; you are there to learn, and no one expects you to know it all.
* Avoid jumping to conclusions; develop informed and well-reasoned opinions.
* Be observant; follow the lead of other employees and your supervisor.
* Be fair, considerate, honest, trustworthy, and cooperative when dealing with co-workers and clients or customers.
* Maintain confidentiality about employer, employee, and customer or client information.
* Assert yourself and your ideas in an appropriate and tactful manner.
* Seek feedback from your supervisor/mentor, accept suggestions for corrective changes in behavior or work habits graciously, and work to improve your performance as noted. Remember, you are here to learn. There is no shame in not being “perfect.”
* Address any workplace problems, concerns, or conflicts as soon as they arise with both your supervisor **and** with Ms. Leybold.

**Finding Your Internship**

This can happen one of two ways:

1. If you have an internship site in mind, let Ms. Leybold know and provide her with contact information if you have already spoken with someone at the potential internship site.
2. Ms. Leybold is working on an Internship Database. Contact her to see whether the ETSU Honors College has an existing opportunity that might be a good match for your skills and knowledge.

**Setting up Your Internship**

You will receive academic credit, granted by the ETSU Honors College, for this experience. Credits earned are related to hours worked as follows:

• One credit: 40 hours

• Two credits: 80 hours

• Three credits: 120 hours

• Four credits: 160 hours

Student interns participating during the regular fall and spring semester who are enrolled in other courses as well should, of course, not plan to work full-time at the internship site. You and your internship site supervisor, in consultation with Ms. Leybold, will determine the appropriate number of credit hours for the experience based on the scope of the projects planned for you, your credit hour needs, and your availability.

Since internships are attached to course registration that occurs during a semester or summer term, keep in mind the following:

• Fall semester begins in late August and ends in early December, so all Fall internship hours should be completed within this time frame.

• Spring semester begins in late January and ends in early May, so all Spring internship hours should be completed within this time frame.

• Summer term begins in the middle of May and ends in the middle of August, so all Summer internship hours should be completed within this time frame.

Generally, we do not recommend Winter term internships because the term is too short to allow for meaningful workplace participation. However, on a case by case basis and in consultation with Ms. Leybold, this can be considered for certain opportunities.

**The Internship Experience**

We ask that our internship provider partners commit to the following best practices for hosting student interns:

* Work with the ETSU Honors College Student & Alumni Programs Manager and the student on the development of learning objectives, resulting in an Internship Learning Agreement.
* Assign your intern duties that are progressive, challenging, and related to the student’s area of interest.
* Designate a professional staff person to serve as a supervisor and mentor for your intern. He or she should help orient the student to the organization and its culture and meet regularly (ideally once a week) with the student to monitor progress.
* Make available the equipment, supplies, and space necessary for the student to perform his or her duties.
* Provide a comprehensive evaluation of the student’s performance at the end of the internship.

As a student intern, please know that you cannot displace a regular, paid employee. You may complete similar work as a regular employee (again, your experience should be meaningful and substantive, as noted above), but your internship provider **cannot** replace an employee with an intern.

Internship providers are not required to provide payment to you, but they are not prohibited from doing so. As a student intern, you are registered for an internship course and receive academic credit for your participation in the internship, making it **primarily** an academic training experience, but this does not preclude payment.

We strongly recommend that you, as a student, **not** be expected to incur substantial direct costs as a result of participation in your internship. For example, parking costs should be waived or reimbursed, and you should not be expected to attend functions at which you might incur significant costs, unless these are covered by the internship provider. Talk to Ms. Leybold if you need help negotiating this aspect of your internship, please.

**Assessment**

You will receive academic credit and a grade for your internship experience. Your grade will be based on completion of weekly reflective assignments provided by Ms. Leybold, completion of the number of work hours per academic credit (as noted above), and a final assessment by your internship site supervisor. That assessment comprises a two-part form provided by Ms. Leybold, as detailed below:

* Part I provides the opportunity to rate you on several core competencies that signify career readiness.
* In Part II, your supervisor will assess your starting and ending points (i.e., your growth and development) during the experience and provide qualitative feedback.
* Ms. Leybold, as the instructor of record, will assign your final grade for the internship course.

**Ready to Get Started?**

We would love to help you ***Create Your Remarkable Internship Story*!**

Contact Karla Leybold, Student & Alumni Programs Manager, at [leybold@etsu.edu](mailto:leybold@etsu.edu) or 423.439.6075.

