

# CAREER & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## Internship Resource Guide

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An internship is a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in professional fields they are considering for career paths.

Internships provide an opportunity for employers to evaluate and develop talent, develop a recruiting pipeline to their organizations, benefit from hard-working students with fresh perspectives, and reduce the risk of turnover by evaluating potential hires in actual work situations.

## WHAT MAKES A GREAT INTERNSHIP?

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- 1. Established Learning Outcomes and Expectations** - Establishing well-defined learning goals and providing the requisite resources to achieve them is an essential step for ensuring a successful internship for interns and employers alike. An engaged supervisor or mentor to oversee the process should be there to provide feedback, advice, and relevant information when needed.
- 2. Meaningful Work** - Interns should be assigned meaningful work that represents their potential career field. While we recognize that it sometimes isn't possible to always provide interns with directly applicable industry related tasks, the majority of their work should serve as an opportunity for exposure and development in their field of study or potential career.
- 3. Assigned Projects** - Interns should be assigned and have the opportunity to complete a project from "start to finish" that is directly applicable to industry work. A culminating summary report and/or presentation should be shared with their internship supervisor and potentially faculty partner(s) from the University (if they are receiving academic credit).
- 4. Professional Development Opportunities** - Be sure to provide opportunities for students to meet and network with employees across your company. The connections made during internships help students build a professional network to utilize as they begin their post-academic career.
- 5. Mentorship and Feedback** - Provide feedback to your interns highlighting not only their strengths and accomplishments, but also opportunities for improvement and growth.

## STEPS FOR EMPLOYERS

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- 1. Assess Your Organization's Needs**
  - What does your organization hope to achieve by hiring an intern?
  - Are you a small or expanding organization searching for additional help on a project?
  - Is your organization searching for new employees with management potential?
  - Are you a non-profit organization with limited financial resources, but can provide an impactful and rewarding internship experience?
- 2. Create a Hiring Plan**
  - Draft an internship description that clearly explains duties, expectations, and responsibilities of the position.
  - Be sure to clearly define compensation and hours.
  - List the specific majors and skills you seek.
  - Identify the internship supervisor/mentor who will oversee the program.
- 3. Use ZagsIgnite to Post Your Internship Opportunities**
  - If your organization doesn't already have a ZagsIgnite account, create one at [www.gonzaga.edu/ZagsIgnite](http://www.gonzaga.edu/ZagsIgnite).

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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## **How long should the internship last?**

Internships vary in length. Depending on the needs of the employer, a student can generally spend several weeks up to six months in an internship. Gonzaga's summer break is a great time to hire interns. Those positions usually start after the second week of May, and conclude before the last week of August (though the academic calendar is subject to occasional change).

## **How advanced will an intern be in his or her program of study?**

Employers can determine the educational level they seek. Students actively seek internships throughout all four of their college years. Many students view their junior year and the following summer as favorable, as by then they have taken coursework related to their major(s) or potential careers.

## **What is the distinction between an academic, credit-bearing and co-curricular internship?**

Certain programs require a credit-bearing (academic) internship as a requirement of degree completion. A majority, however, are not taken for credit (co-curricular). Internships earning credit will need to be approved through the student's academic department. A faculty advisor will generally be involved in credit-based internships and help define and evaluate internship objectives.

## **What is an acceptable wage or compensation?**

A majority of the internships offered to Gonzaga students are paid. Hourly wages for interns vary according to the student's experience, academic level, and the particular field or discipline of the internship. Currently the average hourly wage is between \$14.00 (state minimum) and \$18.00. Technology, engineering, accounting, and finance internships will often pay higher hourly wages.

## **Are there costs or fees involved with recruiting Gonzaga University students?**

Employers can post job and internship opportunities on our recruitment platform, ZagsIgnite, free of charge. However, there are registration fees for attending our various on-and off-campus career fairs. These fees range between \$100 (off-campus/Trek career fairs) to \$300 (on-campus fairs). Non-profit and government organizations can attend these events at a reduced rate.

**Specific questions about internship development for Gonzaga University students can be directed to Career & Professional Development at [careers@gonzaga.edu](mailto:careers@gonzaga.edu).**