



INFORMATION FOR INTERNSHIP SITES

INTERNSHIP FOR CREDIT

Sierra College Internships

Internships are supervised experiential learning that integrate knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skill development in a professional setting. They are a student-focused learning experience, with regular supervision, that exists primarily for the benefit of students.

Academic Credit

Internships for credit are a partnership between internship sites, students, and the college. An internship must provide new and expanded learning related to a student's education or career goal to be eligible for academic credit. Additionally, internship sites are required to designate a site supervisor who can provide regular training and supervision. Students need to be 18 years or older and enroll in an internship course to earn credit. Sierra College has 35 discipline-specific internship courses, some of which fulfill degree or certificate requirements. Trained internship instructors serve as a liaison between site supervisors and students while providing college oversight.

Internship Course Requirements

Internship courses are created for each student and require signed agreements between the student, site supervisor, and instructor. Timelines are based on the semester and follow the academic calendar. Every student sets learning objectives, in consultation with their site supervisor and approved by the internship instructor, to ensure new and expanding learning related to their major or education. Students in unpaid (volunteer) internships receive Workers Compensation Coverage through Sierra College. Paid interns are required to be covered by the internship site's Workers Compensation insurance. Internship instructors visit sites to consult with site supervisors on students' progress toward learning objectives and overall performance at least once during the semester. Internship course credit is earned by successful completion of learning objectives and hours.

Internship Activities

Interns' tasks should be directly related to completing their learning objectives. Clerical or non-professional tasks must be limited to 25% or less. Projects that benefit the internship site and help students develop professional skills are encouraged. Interns cannot replace or supplant an employee or position.

Hours and Pay

One unit of academic credit requires a minimum of 75 hours of paid experience or 60 hours of unpaid experience per semester. Students may earn up to four units per semester. Hours and units are determined prior to the start of the internship. Students submit a time sheet, signed by their site supervisor, at the end of the semester verifying completed hours. Internships may be paid or unpaid; however, most students prefer paid positions.



Guide to a Successful Internship Program

Companies with organized internship programs experience significant benefits. Below are guidelines for a successful experience.

Conduct internal assessment

- Verify there are meaningful work assignments
- Ensure staff can invest time teaching and training interns
- Identify a staff member for whom an intern will primarily work and learn under
- Make sure there is sufficient office space and workspace for an intern

Select site supervisor

- Confirm the person can develop people
- Make certain the person has professional expertise necessary to effectively mentor students in the content area
- Verify the person has time to work with interns

Develop work and learning activities

- Identify activities appropriate for a college student at the freshman or sophomore level or those with technical skills not yet at entry-level
- Create projects and tasks that will benefit the organization and provide students with professional skill development

Create position description(s)

- Provide an overview of the internship position including work assignments, time frame, and application procedures
- Identify any necessary occupational or academic background or qualifications
- Outline expected outcomes
- Use [College Central Network](#) to recruit and hire talented Sierra College students

Select interns and prepare for arrival

- Interview candidates for fit and select intern(s)
- Ask student(s) to contact Sierra College to set up an internship for credit
- Determine start and end dates as well as hours
- Provide interns with information regarding work attire
- Notify company employees that interns are joining the team
- Set up the workspace

Supervise intern(s)

- Introduce interns to staff and give an orientation on the first day
- Review projects and provide necessary training or access to technology such as computer systems, equipment or specific procedures
- Orient students to projects and work assignments
- Meet with interns on a regular basis to provide feedback and ensure projects are on track
- Share progress updates periodically with the college

Evaluate and assess intern(s)

- Ask interns to evaluate their experience
- Evaluate interns' performance and discuss with them
- Write a letter of recommendation, if appropriate
- Identify internship program improvements