CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER

INTERNSHIPS: A QUICK GUIDE

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Education is about more than books and lectures—it’s about enriching what you learn in the classroom with real-world experience. Suffolk offers you a host of hands-on learning experiences. The University has connections to the city’s business, legal, government, arts, and nonprofit communities built over decades, and the Career Development Center can guide you in connecting to existing internships and creating your own opportunities locally, out of state, and abroad.

WHAT IS AN INTERNSHIP?

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; and give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent.*

*National Association of Colleges and Employers

FIVE GREAT REASONS TO DO AN INTERNSHIP DURING YOUR SUFFOLK CAREER:

1. **Test-drive your major**: This is your chance to apply classroom theory to the real world and explore a field of interest hands-on to see how it fits.

2. **Gain an edge in future employment**: A May 2015 US News and World Report article stated that internships serve as a critical recruiting tool for 80% of employers. Plus, according to a 2012 Chronicle for Higher Education study, internships are the most important factor employers consider when reviewing job candidates.

3. **Networking!**: The Federal Bureau of Labor found that 70% of people land jobs through networking. An internship is the perfect opportunity to connect with professionals in your field.

4. **Enrich your resume and portfolio**: Immersed in the workplace, you will gain professional and interpersonal skills, and may work on projects that you can add to your portfolio.

5. **Gain personal growth and confidence**: The professional workplace will challenge you in ways the classroom won’t, pushing you beyond your comfort zone.

WHO CAN DO AN INTERNSHIP?

- **Currently-enrolled full-time undergraduate and graduate students in all majors**: Some majors require an internship. You and/or your employer may have to complete assignments, evaluations, etc. for you to get the credit.*
• **International students** with F-1 visas qualify for Curricular Practical Training (CPT). Graduates are eligible for Optional Practical Training (OPT). The International Student Services Office (ISSO) offers regular CPT/OPT trainings throughout the semester and provides additional information here: [http://www.suffolk.edu/academics/24491.php](http://www.suffolk.edu/academics/24491.php). If you have a J-1 visa, speak to the ISSO to see if you qualify for an internship.

*Even if you are not doing an internship for a class you may still get credit for it. Discuss this with your academic advisor.*

**WHEN CAN YOU DO AN INTERNSHIP?**

• Students typically do internships during junior and/or senior year and at any time during graduate school, but some sophomores and even freshmen participate.

• Most internships are part-time during the fall and spring and full-time during the summer, but this can vary. Some students combine summer with fall or spring internships.

• Occasionally employers offer a co-op, a full-time 6-month position from January to June or July to December. Talk to your department and academic advisor about whether this can fit into your academic schedule.

**WHERE CAN YOU DO AN INTERNSHIP?**

Since Suffolk is in the heart of Boston, most opportunities are close to campus, accessible by foot, public transportation or company shuttle. Some require you to have a car. A number of interns venture out of state and even abroad.

**THE NEXT STEPS...**

**PREPARATION:**

✓ **Self-assessment:** Think about your personal and academic interests, professional or graduate school goals, work values, skills and abilities, and personal and professional success stories. The CDC can provide hard copies of the Strong Interest Explorer and Self-Directed Search (SDS) to help you to define a career direction, select classes or activities and choose a major. You may also use the online tool FOCUS, available here: [http://www.suffolk.edu/academics/3570.php](http://www.suffolk.edu/academics/3570.php).


LinkedIn/online branding: Creating a profile on LinkedIn for networking and to expand beyond your resume. Use this link to get started: [https://students.linkedin.com/](https://students.linkedin.com/). Consider all of your online presence when establishing your online branding, including Facebook, Instagram, and other social media.


**EXPLORATION:**
There are a number of ways to find an internship, from using the Suffolk’s own internship and job portal Ram Recruiter to creating your own opportunity through research and networking. For additional information and resources, refer to the CDC’s *Job Search Strategies Handbook*: [http://www.suffolk.edu/documents/CareerServices/final_job_search_handboook.pdf](http://www.suffolk.edu/documents/CareerServices/final_job_search_handboook.pdf)

**Networking:** Learn about your field, get the word out that you’re doing a job search, and uncover employment opportunities by connecting to:
- Faculty and staff from Suffolk and, if applicable, another university you’ve attended
- Former and present employers.
- Friends, acquaintances, family, family friends, and mentors.
- Your connections’ connections.
- Students and professional groups and alumni associations.
- Networking events on and off campus.

**Informational interviews:** Set up short (30-minute) meetings with contacts to learn about their careers and the field in general, and ask for career advice. Follow up with a *thank you note* within 24 hours! For more information on landing and acing informational interviews, follow the link below: [http://www.forbes.com/sites/jacquelynsmith/2013/12/11/how-to-land-and-ace-an-informational-interview/](http://www.forbes.com/sites/jacquelynsmith/2013/12/11/how-to-land-and-ace-an-informational-interview/)

**Suffolk University resources:** Available at [http://www.suffolk.edu/academics/3281.php](http://www.suffolk.edu/academics/3281.php):
- *Ram Recruiter*, Suffolk’s job and internship search portal.
- *Career Shift*, for internships and jobs in the US, UK, Australia and Canada.
- *GoinGlobal*, for international internship and job listings, and country guides.*
- *Vault Career Library*, for rankings and reviews of top companies and schools, employee ratings and reviews, career guides, and internship and job postings.

**Academic department:** Your department may have its own job board, especially if it has an internship requirement.
*GoinGlobal's Country Guides are invaluable resources for any student applying to and doing an internship in the US or abroad. Use them for tips on country-specific resume and cover letter writing, interview advice, workplace culture, and more.

**ONCE YOU ARE READY TO APPLY:**


**THE INTERVIEW PROCESS:**


- **Interview:** Meet the employers in person to showcase how you can benefit them, they can determine if you are a good fit, and you can learn more about the position. To prepare, here are sample interview questions: [http://career-advice.monster.com/job-interview/interview-questions/100-potential-interview-questions/article.aspx](http://career-advice.monster.com/job-interview/interview-questions/100-potential-interview-questions/article.aspx).

- **Thank you notes:** Email or hand-written, within 24 hours of the interview. For samples, follow the link attached: [http://www.businessnewsdaily.com/5578-sample-thank-you-letters.html](http://www.businessnewsdaily.com/5578-sample-thank-you-letters.html).

**WHEN YOU HAVE AN OFFER:**

- **Negotiation:** agree on mutually beneficial terms.

- **Determining the terms of the internship:** Does your department or the employer require an internship agreement outlining educational and professional goals? Are you and/or your supervisor required to provide feedback/evaluations?

- **CPT paperwork:** Required for international students. Find forms and information at this link: [http://www.suffolk.edu/academics/28335.php](http://www.suffolk.edu/academics/28335.php).

- **Internship paperwork:** You may have to complete paperwork that is required by the employer and/or your department.
DURING YOUR INTERNSHIP:

- **Professional behavior**: Remember that you aren’t just an employee, you represent Suffolk University. The better you respect workplace etiquette, the more successful your experience will be and the more likely the employer will be to hire one of your classmates in the future. See *Making the Most of Your Internship and Building Your Professional Image: Office Etiquette* and (Appendices B and C) for details.

WHAT SERVICES CAN THE CDC PROVIDE?

- Help you to conduct a self-assessment and determine a plan of action.
- Review your resume, cover letter, LinkedIn profile, 30-second elevator pitch, etc.
- Discuss networking strategies.
- Mock interviews, with CDC staff or professional partners.
- Employer panels, job and internship fairs, and networking events.
- A library with career guides, resources and periodicals.

WHEN DO I BEGIN LOOKING FOR AN INTERNSHIP?????

**NOW!** Your future begins today. Set up your profile on Ram Recruiter and get started.

- Visit the Career Development Center homepage at [www.suffolk.edu/careers](http://www.suffolk.edu/careers) → scroll half-way down and click on “RAM RECRUITER” → create an account using your Suffolk email

...or skip right to [http://suffolk.joinhandshake.com/](http://suffolk.joinhandshake.com/) → create an account using your Suffolk email
APPENDIX A:

Online internship search resources

- [www.internships.com](http://www.internships.com), a comprehensive listing of internship and job opportunities.

- [www.getthatgig.com](http://www.getthatgig.com), an online source for exploring career paths in your field of interest and browsing internship and job listings.

- [www.joinkoru.com](http://www.joinkoru.com), find meaningful internships and jobs through Koru’s partnerships with over 60 high-growth companies.

- [https://students.linkedin.com/](https://students.linkedin.com/), create a LinkedIn profile, get internship and job-search tips, and links to opportunities.

- [http://college.monster.com/](http://college.monster.com/), Monster.com’s website for students offers advice on beginning the job search and internship listings.

- [www.idealist.org](http://www.idealist.org), the go-to website for internships at non-profit organizations in the US and worldwide.

- [www.internhub.com](http://www.internhub.com), the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce’s internship portal for opportunities in the Greater Boston area.

- [www.usajobs.gov/StudentsAndGrads](http://www.usajobs.gov/StudentsAndGrads), the US government’s official site for internships and jobs.

- [www.collegerecruiter.com](http://www.collegerecruiter.com), a comprehensive site for finding internships and continuing education information, and job search advice and resources.

- [www.themuse.com](http://www.themuse.com), a job/internship search site that has excellent articles with advice on networking, interviewing, etc.

- [www.hireculture.org](http://www.hireculture.org), highlights “creative employment in Massachusetts” from museums to theaters
APPENDIX B: Making the Most of Your Internship

- **Set Goals and Expectations:** In the process of setting up the internship, agree on clear goals, tasks and learning objectives for the internship. Talk about your skills and how you can contribute, as well as the skills you’d like to develop. Make sure that you and your supervisor are in agreement. Putting this in writing is advisable. Ask questions to determine whether the organization is organized in their approach to using interns.

- **Have a Positive Attitude:** Be positive and enthusiastic about your work. Be a team player and build rapport with your work group. Most internships involve a certain amount of “grunt work.” Perform your tasks with a good attitude and look for opportunities to further your skills.

- **Demonstrate Professionalism:** Demonstrate professionalism in your work habits, communication and in your attire. Keep in mind that you may be considered for a future fulltime position, so dress and act the part. Be on time and keep to your work schedule. Keep in mind that your internship supervisor can be an important reference for you in the future.

- **Get Feedback:** Especially when getting to know a new supervisor, be sure to ask questions and get clarification regarding your responsibilities. Ask for feedback to uncover areas for improvement. It’s also recommended that you schedule a more formal performance review at the middle and end of your internship. Your academic department or the Career Development Center may have a form for your supervisor to complete.

- **Take initiative:** Be willing to do what’s needed. Keep a record of your projects and accomplishments and begin adding these to your resume. Look for opportunities to make a contribution. Perhaps you see an opportunity, have an idea to implement or see ways to improve a process. Organizations appreciate that interns may bring fresh ideas and perspectives. Talk with your supervisor if you’d like to work on projects beyond your assigned task. As you prove your skills, your supervisor will be willing to give you more advanced assignments.

- **Network:** Look for opportunities to get to know your colleagues. You may want to arrange for informational interviews as well. Attend company meetings and events and learn as much as you can about the organization. Look for opportunities to have lunch with others rather than sitting alone. It’s also helpful to get to know other interns in your office. Some companies have regular informational or social meetings for their interns; if not, consider helping to start these gatherings.

- **Complete the Process:** Complete a final evaluation with your supervisor. Ask for references and also inquire about full-time opportunities. Maintain your connections and continue to develop relationships once you leave.
APPENDIX C: Building Your Professional Image: Office Etiquette

Office etiquette is an established manner of personal behavior by employees in an office to promote positive interaction between co-workers and between employees and clients. Organizations have their own unique cultures and etiquette. If you are new to an organization, don’t assume the protocol you followed at a former company or classroom is the same in your new organization. Spend some time with veteran employees to get a sense of how things are done.

- **COMMUNICATION**
  - Respond to e-mails and phone calls in a timely manner, usually within 24 hours.
  - Change your voicemail outgoing message and set e-mail auto-responders when you are out of the office.
  - Give a firm handshake when being introduced to a colleague or client.
  - Make eye contact when communicating with others.

- **E-MAIL**
  - E-mail communication is business communication and the rules are different than when communicating with friends. Use full sentences that are grammatically correct and spell checked. Avoid sending informal messages.
  - Use discretion when deciding whether to communicate in person or by e-mail.
  - Limit use of personal email or web searches to break times, and to your personal devices.
  - Remember that e-mail and websites do not just go away when you hit the delete button. It can be retrieved and traced. The written word is binding; you never know whether your message will be forwarded to others (purposely or in error).
  - In addition, the company/organization owns the computer and is free to examine any function you perform or any material you download. Find out the organization’s policies regarding e-mail and internet use.

- **PHONE/CELL PHONE**
  - Limit personal calls and texting to break or lunch times. Do not make personal calls on the company phone.
  - Be polite, pleasant and courteous on the phone - regardless of what the caller has to say.
  - Take careful messages, and if possible and appropriate put someone through to voice mail. If you are leaving a message, know what you are going to say and speak clearly.
  - Be prepared to be out of touch in certain situations (meetings, appointments, business meals, etc.). Turn phone to vibrate if necessary or better yet off, let voicemail take the call.
- **MEETINGS**
  - Show up on time or early; late arrival indicates the participants’ time is not important or that you are disorganized
  - Turn off cell phones.
  - Think about body language: use posture that will make you look alert and attentive
  - Maintain high energy and involvement.

- **ATTIRE**: Dressing professionally builds your credibility at work and helps ensure that people take you seriously. It’s recommended that you dress as though you were in the job you aspire to. When in doubt of what to wear take your clues from the people who are running the company, or ask an employee or someone in HR about appropriate attire. Even on casual dress days, dress in a business casual style. Revealing clothes, such as short skirts, are not recommended. Looking for more examples? Follow the address attached: [http://humanresources.about.com/od/glossaryb/g/what-is-business-attire.htm](http://humanresources.about.com/od/glossaryb/g/what-is-business-attire.htm)

- **BEING PUNCTUAL**: Be punctual at the beginning of the work day, after breaks, and after lunch. Call ahead if you are going to be late and always call if you are out sick.

- **ATTITUDE**: Always avoid expressing negative attitudes, using inappropriate language, criticizing others in public, gossiping, making people wait or giving them the runaround - provide a definite and accurate answer or get back to them. Take initiative and be a team player.

- **CONFIDENTIALITY**: Do not leave confidential material on your desk or computer screen. If a fax or other correspondence isn’t addressed to you, don’t read it. Maintain the highest standards of confidentiality regarding client information and employee.

- **WORKSPACES**: How you organize your workspace can affect how you are perceived. If you meet with others in your office, creating order and minimizing clutter can enhance your professional image. Be aware of how your behavior impacts others. Clean up after yourself when using shared workspaces and office kitchens.

- **PERSONAL INFORMATION**: Offices vary as to how much people share personal information about themselves and their outside of work activities. Observe the culture of your organization to decide how much to share. Be aware of the potential problems of dating co-workers. Some companies have policies that forbid it. Avoid discussion of potentially controversial subjects, such as religion and politics. In the extreme, inappropriate behaviors can be considered sexual harassment. Avoid speech and behavior that does not support a diverse and inclusive environment.
If you have to attend to personal matters, do so on your break times. Avoid personal (in person, on the phone, cell phone or by email) conversations when a client is waiting. Discourage personal office visitors unless it is an emergency or at the very end of the work day or shift.

- **CULTURAL DIFFERENCES:** There is variation in workplace customs, behaviors, and expectations in different countries. For information on workplace customs across the globe, check out GoinGlobal’s Country Guides, which you can access at [http://www.suffolk.edu/academics/59422.php](http://www.suffolk.edu/academics/59422.php). This information can help you whether you are an international student doing an internship in the US or a third country, a US student abroad, or any student at a company that is culturally diverse or works closely with international partners.