

WHAT ARE INTERNSHIPS?

INTERNSHIP OVERVIEW

Internships give students an opportunity for applying what they've learned in a professional setting. Students make connections in professional fields they are considering for career paths; and employers have the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent. **Internships are carefully monitored and students have learning goals to help them make the connection between theory and practice.**

BENEFITS TO EMPLOYERS

- Reduce recruiting costs by evaluating prospective employees while they are working for you as interns.²
- Interns supplement your current staff's depth of industry knowledge and history with current technological skills and ideas from the classroom, as well as provide a fresh perspective and new ideas.^{1,2}
- Student interns are highly motivated and eager to learn all they can about your field.²
- Taking on interns to handle entry-level concerns can free up your staff to pursue advanced projects.⁴
- It's relatively inexpensive; even paid interns typically have salaries that are significantly lower than employees.¹
- You're also not obligated to pay unemployment or a severance package, if you decide against employing them full-time at the end of their term.¹
- You can create management opportunities for mid-level employees.⁵
- Internship programs can create/strengthen connection to education to ensure that supply and demand of skill sets are properly aligned.⁵

INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE CRITERIA

To qualify as an internship, all criteria must be met:

1. The experience must be an extension of the classroom: **a learning experience that provides for applying the knowledge gained in the classroom.**
2. The skills or knowledge learned **must be transferable to other employment settings.**
3. The experience has a **defined beginning and end**, and a job description with desired qualifications.
Internships have a typical duration of 3 to 12 months (semester, academic year, full year).
4. There are **clearly defined learning objectives/goals** related to the professional goals of the student's academic coursework.
5. There is **supervision by a professional** with expertise and educational and/or professional background in the field of the experience.
6. There is **routine feedback by the experienced supervisor.**
7. There are **resources, equipment, and facilities provided by the host employer** that support learning objectives/goals.

NMU WORK EXPERIENCE TYPES

1. **NMU-arranged, non-paid, credit-earning.*** These are usually called a "practicum," "clinical," or "student teaching," and occur most often in Education, Health Services or Social Work disciplines with multiple students at an agency.
2. **Individual student-arranged, non-paid, credit-earning experiences.***
3. **Individual student-arranged, paid, credit-earning experiences.**
 - The key factor in types 2 and 3 is that students assume an active role in obtaining the placement. Students pursue these most often through job postings or opportunities through existing NMU agency relationships.
 - Different majors/departments have varying requirements regarding pay, but ultimately, an internship *must* be academically relevant, especially if it is unpaid. Please visit our webpage for a listing of major requirements.
4. **Individual student-arranged non-credit earning experiences, paid or unpaid.** These are experiences where students do not need credit or do not desire to pay for credit, but want the formal work experience. These may outwardly appear to be exactly like Types 2 or 3; the difference is students do not earn credit.

* Be certain to read sections on Legal & Liability concerns