

Internship Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):

What is an Internship?

An internship is a practical work experience that is offered by an individual organization. Structure, responsibilities and policies will vary from employer to employer. Internships may be offered during the summer months or the academic year and may last anywhere from a few weeks to a complete semester. They may be full or part-time assignments and they may be paid or volunteer positions. Some organizations/industries do require that a student receive academic credit for the internship.

How will an employer benefit?

Hiring an intern allows you to complete work assignments in a short-term, cost-effective and efficient manner. It also provides you with a way to test the potential of the intern: evaluate first-hand what a student has to offer, both in observing their work ethic and seeing the level of talent and skill they bring to the position. Determine if they are the right fit for your organization on a full time basis. Finally, it is a wonderful pre-recruiting tool that brings recognition and awareness of your organization to Bucknell's campus.

How will a student benefit?

Most employers prefer to hire students into full-time positions who have already had extensive work experience. Students who are knowledgeable about the work place definitely have an advantage in their job search. The Career Development Center regards an internship as educational experience designed to enhance a student's academic and personal development in preparation for a chosen career path. We highly recommend that all Bucknellians do a bit of "reality-testing" before pursuing their chosen career paths. Lifelong decisions are sometimes made by simply spending time with an individual whose career a student may be contemplating. A student may be able to confirm their interest in pursuing a similar career or that individual may instead realize that they need to re-evaluate their career plans and explore a different direction while they still have time to do so before graduation.

Is academic credit available to students?

Two options are available at Bucknell to earn credit for internship experiences: Non-Traditional Study (NTS) credit or Partial Credit for Non-Paying Internship Experiences (PNIE). It is possible for sophomores, juniors and seniors to register to receive this credit and it usually counts as an elective. Most NTS experiences are for one credit and occur during the summer semester. The PNIE option is for ¼ credit. Costs are determined on a yearly basis.

Bucknell Public Interest Program (BPIP) Internship Fund

This fund is open to underclass students who have secured and accepted an unpaid, full-time summer internship with a public interest, non-profit organization, or government office. Through the Internship Fund, it is hoped that students who might not otherwise be able to participate in summer public interest, non-profit or government internships will have an opportunity to gain valuable experience in a field of interest. Interns must apply for the funding by Monday, March 16, 2009; the number of students selected and the amount of support provided will ultimately depend upon the applicant pool and the funding available each year. Students are encouraged to search for internship opportunities which coincide with their passions and interests.

Next Steps

Connect with your HR department to see if an established internship program exists. If so, learn what guidelines may already be in place for seeking an intern and who the point of contact is within your organization. Share that information with Bucknell's Career Development Center.

If there is not a formal program in place and you'd like to create an internship, here is a recommended checklist to follow:

- Create a job description
- Identify the academic background, experience and skills required/preferred
- Develop a training and supervision plan
- Determine the length of the internship
- Determine the salary range and weekly time commitment
- Establish the timeline for hiring
- Contact the CDC to list the internship
- Interview students
- Hire an intern!