

**Bucknell University's Center for Career Advancement** stands ready to work closely with alumni, parents and employers to create quality internship experiences and short-term project-based Microinternships. During this unconventional year we are all experiencing, virtual internships provide meaningful ways for Bucknell students to gain vital work experience and make important industry connections. It is our goal that these experiences provide a mutually beneficial experience to students and employer organizations.

Perhaps you have a project you need to complete? Or are interested in some help with an initiative you plan to launch soon? This guide is designed to answer your questions and provide an outline of how to best develop a virtual internship at your organization for a Bucknell student. Please consider joining us in this effort!

### **A Virtual/Microinternship should provide:**

- Exposure to a career path, an organization and an industry.
- A practical work experience, project or series of projects to complete within a designated period of time.
- An opportunity to observe, contribute and rotate through a department/division or organization.
- Resources, training and guidance required to complete assignments.
- A supervisor/mentor who will work to ensure the intern feels supported and provides a mechanism for periodic check-ins, questions and feedback.

### **Typical Virtual/Microinternship characteristics to consider:**

- Length
- Hours
- Compensation

### **How can the CCA be of help?**

- Handshake and Zoom assistance
- Bucknell Dates and Timelines (finals period, winter break, start of spring semester, etc.)

### **Here are some best practices to consider when creating a virtual internship program:**

#### **Set Goals**

- Assess your organization's needs and develop a virtual internship that meets a need and offers a learning opportunity for the student intern.
- Create a position description that includes an outline of responsibilities, tasks and/or projects, a list of required skills and qualifications and a minimum number of hours required per week.
- Set clear expectations at the onset so both parties understand the work to be completed and learning that will occur.
- Here are some things to consider:
  - What is the work schedule of the internship?
  - What happens if the intern is located in a different time zone?
  - What technology will be required?
  - How does an intern document their hours?
  - What does success look like?
  - How will the intern be evaluated and measured?

#### **Virtually Recruit, Interview & Hire**

- If you are creating a new experience, speak with your college recruiting or human resources department about the experience you have in mind and any guidelines or required documentation you may need.
- Complete the qualtrics survey [https://bucknell.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_e5qezvpiG8g5GNn](https://bucknell.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_e5qezvpiG8g5GNn) Information will then be added to Bucknell's Handshake platform, advertising to students and compile applications that will be sent to you.

- Review students' applications and select students to virtually interview. Share information about your organization, outline the expectations of the internship, and assess if the intern meets the requirements needed to successfully complete the virtual experience.
- Once you've made an offer to a student, provide a document for the intern that outlines expectations, any required paperwork or documentation needed and next steps for how to deliver that information by an established deadline.
- Email the CCA to share information on who you selected for your internship [employers@bucknell.edu](mailto:employers@bucknell.edu)

### Host Onboarding & Training Online

- Create a framework of what the intern needs to know and how training will proceed virtually.
- Conduct an audit of what technology the intern will need to be successful in the internship. Discuss with the intern what will and will not be provided, such as:
  - Computer (desktop, laptop, webcam, tablet, phone, etc.)
  - Software or access to specific platforms and apps that require a license
  - Security software
  - Project management software
- Think about workplace norms and etiquette that the intern will need to know to be successful within the culture of your organization.
- If you hire more than one virtual intern, take time to introduce them to help establish a connection early on.
- Set up a virtual meeting with your team members. Set expectations that the intern will schedule time with the team members regularly to meet with them and discuss any projects.
- Engage with your interns. Invite them to virtual coffee chats. Introduce them to people they should meet within your organization.

### Supervise & Mentor

- Consistency is important. Set expectations about work hours, suggest blocking out time for lunch, activities and assignments on the intern's calendar.
- Provide oversight and mentorship for your intern. Ensure the intern is aware of their work responsibilities and objectives. Consider things like:
  - Regular, consistent one-on-one meetings. Spend time focusing on what is going well, what is needed, what has been achieved and offering constructive feedback.
  - Outline how to best contact a supervisor for unexpected/immediate questions that need to be addressed to continue their work.

### Provide Opportunities for Online Professional Development

- Facilitate virtual networking opportunities that allow the interns to meet people. Encourage informational interviews with team/staff members.
- Provide access to organization-specific professional development courses or training or online professional development tools (i.e. LinkedIn Learning).

### Wrap Up the Internship in a Positive Way

- Complete a final evaluation and facilitate a formalized exit interview process. This allows interns to receive important feedback. This step also provides a way to help you assess the effectiveness of the program and consider changes that may enhance the experience for future interns.
- Offer to be a reference for the intern, provide contact information that they can include on future applications.
- Connect with your intern on LinkedIn. Encourage your intern to post a review of your company and their internship experience on Handshake.
- Provide copies or files that link the projects interns worked on for their portfolio.

### Helpful Resources/Links

FLSA Standards: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/flsa>

Ivy Research Council's Virtual Internship Tips:

<https://view.publitas.com/ivy-research-council/irc-covonavirus-summit-running-a-virtual-internship/page/1>

Handshake: <https://bucknell.joinhandshake.com>