

SUPPORTING YOUR GOUCHER INTERN

Thank you for hosting a Goucher College Intern. We appreciate your support of the career education of our students.

In a 2021 report, National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) defines internships as "one-time work or service experiences related to the student's major or career goal. The internship generally involved students working in professional settings under the supervision and monitoring of practicing professionals." ¹

Additionally, in the Position Statement: US Internships, NACE states "the experience must be an extension of the classroom: a learning experience that provides for applying the knowledge gained in the classroom. It must not simply be to advance the operations of the employer or be the work that a regular employee would routinely perform." ²

Below are suggestions to support your Goucher intern and ensure a positive learning experience for all involved:

DUTIES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROJECTS

- Identify the duties your intern will assume. In addition to daily or ongoing tasks, you may want to consider a longer-term project that the intern will lead themselves.
- Ensure the intern's responsibilities are meaningful and a valuable learning experience, ideally with no more than 25% of their time on clerical duties.
- Develop a written work plan that outlines those responsibilities and goals for the internship. This will give you a clear structure to evaluate your intern but will also help students who are used to syllabi in their classes.
- Explain to your intern how the projects you are assigning them fit into the work of the organization and more broadly into real-life context of your industry.
 - While we know you have interns complete work that may directly positively impact your organization, the learning that takes place should be broader to be transferrable to other work settings.
- Consider ways the intern can document or offer evidence of completion, such as a final report or presentation.

ORIENTATION

- Meet with your intern on their first day to give an overview, including the mission, goals, and culture of your organization and department.
- Share your written sexual harassment and discrimination policies and discuss as needed.
 - Goucher College is committed to fostering a safe living and learning environment (which include internships) for all students, which includes freedom from any form of discrimination.
- Give them a tour of the office and their assigned workspace. Introduce them to co-workers.
- Review the work plan for their tasks and responsibilities and clearly define your expectations.
- Understand their learning style, skills or interests, and their career goals. Ask what they are hoping to get out of or accomplish in this internship. Try to assign tasks that align with their skills, interests, and goals.
- Make your intern feel comfortable. Let them they are a valuable member of your team, and you are excited to have them.

SUPERVISION

- Ensure you have adequate time in your schedule to be available to your intern, especially during the first few days. For many students this may be their first time in a formal workplace, so they could have a big learning curve. Students may feel hesitant to ask questions so letting them know that you welcome them will help them feel confident to approach you.

- Explain your supervision style to your intern and your expectations. This should include how you like to be updated and preferred communication mode (email, IM programs, like Slack or Teams, formal meetings, or informal chat). Set the stage early for the level of formality in communication.
- Schedule regular check-ins. While interns should be treated with the same respect as other employees, they may need more guidance and support. A 30-minute weekly meeting is ideal to get an update on projects, ensuring your intern understands and has the information they need to be successful. It's also where you'll have time for conversation about their learning and connection to their academic major.
- Consider setting weekly quantifiable goals, which includes due dates, priority level, review process, and the organization/industry context. For larger projects, students may need periodic deadlines for tasks or drafts.

MENTOR

- Strive to be someone from whom your intern can learn. What are things you wished you had known at the internship stage of your career? Are there resources you can share or trainings that would have been helpful?
- Encourage your intern to learn beyond the specific work you have asked them to do. Schedule meetings with upper-level management and colleagues in other departments and allow them to observe client interactions and staff meetings.
- Invite your interns to industry networking events, conferences, or trainings, as appropriate.

VIRTUAL INTERNSHIPS – if the intern is not working at the organization's physical location

- Schedule weekly supervisor meetings via a video call to provide more personalized feedback to the student and address any issues. Please note that students may not be able to turn on their camera for any number of reasons.
- Offer the intern access to the company's virtual workspace on the server, an online project management or document-sharing tool, such as Office 365 or Google Docs.
- Request a regular email report in which the student updates the site supervisor and faculty internship sponsor, about challenges encountered, progress toward learning objectives, and any questions they may have.
- Consider opportunities where the intern can engage virtually, such as department meetings or client visits.
- Some additional resources for virtual internships:
 - <https://info.parkerdewey.com/remote-internships-101>
 - https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/remote-internships-experiential-learning/supervise_remotely/index.php

Again, we thank you for your willingness to support the career education of a Goucher student and providing a quality experience at your organization. One last suggestion is to remember what it was like to be a student. This may be your intern's first professional work experience, so they may not be aware of workplace norms or have industry-specific knowledge.

If you have any questions or need support from the Career Education Office, please call 410-337-6191 or email career@goucher.edu.

RESOURCES

Citations:

1. <https://www.nacweb.org/uploadedfiles/files/2021/publication/executive-summary/2021-nace-internship-and-co-op-survey-executive-summary.pdf>
2. <https://www.nacweb.org/about-us/advocacy/position-statements/position-statement-us-internships/>

Adapted from:

- <https://www.nacweb.org/talent-acquisition/internships/15-best-practices-for-internship-programs/>
- <https://www.nsee.org/8-principles>