

General Information



UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
OSHKOSH

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Internship Coordinator
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The Department of Journalism Internship program connects companies and students to achieve a meaningful experience for both parties. To facilitate this, we ask organizations and students to understand the following minimum expectations:

For the organization:

- Ensure that the internship position is a meaningful, learning experience for the student
- Provide regular feedback
- Provide an end-of-semester evaluation
- Comply with the Fair Labor Standards Act
- Contact the Department of Journalism internship coordinator if problems arise that cannot be solved internally

For the student:

- Act responsibly, professionally and dependably
- Seek out opportunities to become engaged in the position and organization
- Contact the Department of Journalism internship coordinator if problems arise that cannot be solved internally.

How to Create an Internship

UW Oshkosh students can help your organization with **Advertising, Multimedia Journalism, Public Relations** and **Interactive Web Management (IWM)**. They understand the value of an internship and are eager for real-world experience that allows them to build their portfolio. The steps below will help you build a quality experience and acquire an intern to meet your needs.

1. Develop a Relationship With the Internship Coordinator

First, contact the Department of Journalism Internship Coordinator, Jean Giovanetti at j-internships@uwosh.edu. She can answer your questions and assist you in developing a meaningful experience for both you and your intern.

2. Determine What Type of Internship Suits Your Needs

There are several options available when choosing what type of internship will best suit your needs. Many companies choose to hire interns on an as-needed basis; others prefer to have a consistent internship that is available each semester or during the summer. Your needs should determine what option fits your company the best.

3. Create Some Written Guidelines for Your Program

Some companies create extensive guidelines detailing week by week what they expect the intern to do and who will supervise them. Others have a general guideline of what they want to accomplish. What type of guidelines you create will depend on your company and its structure, but having something in writing helps to assure that you have enough projects for the intern to work on and that you can provide the necessary supervision.

4. Announce Your Internship Opportunity

Once you are ready to announce an internship position, email your job posting to Jean Giovanetti at giovanej@uwosh.edu or j-internships@uwosh.edu. Be sure to include:

- a description of the position
- duties, necessary skills required
- typical hours
- compensation
- timeframe
- application process and deadline.

After your position is posted on the department bulletin boards and online at our website, students are responsible for contacting you. You can then interview and select the applicant who best meets your needs. If the student you select is taking the internship for credit you must fill out the Employer Participation Internship Agreement Form, available from the student or online at uwosh.edu/journalism/internships. Return it to the internship coordinator, preferably before the internship begins.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Professional Journalism Internship class?

The Department of Journalism ensures that all students enrolled in the three-credit Professional Journalism Internship course, 61-427, are prepared in that they must have completed several core classes in their area of emphasis. To qualify for the class, students must work a minimum of 200 hours, be supervised by a mass media professional, and receive regular feedback from their direct supervisor.

The class is meant to prepare the students to enter the job market, with students updating their resume, creating references and business cards, writing cover letters, participating in mock interviews, creating portfolios and more.

Can students accept an internship without taking the class?

Yes, students may accept an internship without enrolling in the Professional Journalism Internship course; however, then students are not required to have completed all of the core classes in their emphases. It is up to each employer to decide if a student has the necessary skills to do the required work. Either option requires the same amount of dedication from the student and company.

Must I pay interns?

Although students can accept paid or non-paid internships, the Department of Journalism strongly encourages employers to pay their interns a competitive wage or stipend. Any wage will increase the number of applicants for an internship opportunity.

What software does the Department of Journalism teach?

Students can take a variety of classes in which they learn the latest social media best practices and software including Adobe Photoshop, InDesign, Illustrator, Flash and Dreamweaver; Microsoft Word and PowerPoint; and others.

Fair Labor Standards Act

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) applies to all companies that have at least two employees directly engaged in interstate commerce and have annual sales of at least \$500,000. It restricts an employer's use of unpaid interns.

Six Prong Test

According to the FLSA "interns are, in most cases, employees of their host organization and therefore as employees they should receive monetary compensation equal to or greater than the federal minimum wage."

There are some circumstances under which individuals who participate in for-profit private sector internships may do so without compensation. The students are not considered employees, if all the following criteria apply:

- The training, even though it includes actual operation of the facilities of the employer, is similar to that which would be given in an educational environment
- The training is for the benefit of the students
- The students do not displace regular employees, but work under their close observation
- The employer that provides the training derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the students, and on occasion operations may be impeded
- The students are not necessarily entitled to a job at the conclusion of the training period
- The employer and the students understand that the students are not entitled to wages for the time spent in training

FAQ on the FLSA

What is a fair wage?

The FLSA defines a fair wage as the federal minimum wage. If an intern works in an area with a state minimum wage, he or she is entitled to the higher wage amount.

Can an employee be required to perform work outside of the employee's job description?

Yes. The FLSA does not limit the type of work an employee can do. However, this should be communicated between the employer and employee to avoid confusion.

Does it matter what other organizations or corporations are paying?

No, according to a recent survey of college students, interns care more about experience rather than pay. But students are time-strained and may have to choose a paid job over an unpaid internship.

For more information check The Department of Labor at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/flsa>

Internship Compensation

When determining whether or not to pay interns, the answer relies on whether the intern is covered by the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the FLSA.

The FLSA covers "any individual employed by an employer." The verb "employ" is defined to mean "to suffer or permit to work." Although the law does not require all interns to be paid, studies have shown benefits, for both the employer and the intern, when the positions offer even a small wage.

Students are aware that most internships are not going to bring in the big bucks, but a modest wage could increase the level of intern applications. According to past studies, students are often attending school fulltime and working at least one part-time job. Consequently, unpaid internships are often not an option for many students.

"We have hired many interns from UW Oshkosh's Journalism Department because we have opportunities for young people who know how to communicate. Several interns have become full-time staff members upon graduation. These interns bring new ideas and fresh thinking."

—Dick Knapinski, Director of Communications, EAA