Internship Guidelines for Employers

Internships provide students the opportunity to learn and gain practical experience in a hands-on environment. Individuals seeking internships are looking to gain new skills, add to their work experience, or change fields. Students may also seek an internship in order to transfer to a four-year institution to continue their education.

Offering student internships also offers many Benefits for the Employer, such as cost effectiveness, increased capacity and other intangible benefits.

What constitutes an internship?

An internship is generally for a set period of time, rather than indefinitely. An intern may or may not be working for pay. The focus of an internship is on the experience gained and skills learned, while performing real tasks and completing actual projects.

Internships are a potential winning situation for employers and students, creating a more competent and prepared work force.

General Guidelines

In offering internships at SBCC, we assume your organization agrees to the following:

• Balance the amount of clerical work (i.e., no more than 50% data entry/filing) with pre-professional tasks and projects that enrich the intern's knowledge by orienting him or her to the particular occupational field; work setting and conditions relating to the industry in general.
• Offer periodic consultations of training and feedback regarding intern's progress.
• Provide the intern with appropriate resources to carry out responsibilities in a professional manner.
• Abide by the nondiscrimination policy of Santa Barbara City College and in accordance with applicable Federal and State law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, medical condition, ancestry, marital status, citizenship, sexual orientation, or status as a Vietnam-era veteran or special disabled veteran.
• Abide by the Santa Barbara City College policy against sexual harassment that follows Federal and State Laws.

Promote Your Internship

• Post your internship, it's easy and free! Go to The Job Connection – Employers: https://sbcc-csm.symplicity.com/employers/ If you are not already registered to post on The Job Connection, click on register and post a job. In the position type field, choose internship.
• **Timing is key!** SBCC is on a 16 week semester system and students typically begin looking for internships at the beginning of each semester – August and January, and in May for summer positions.

• **Think “marketing”**. Writing an enticing description, choose an internship job title that is both descriptive and appealing. Highlight the skills to be developed which will make this an attractive learning opportunity.

• **Attend an SBCC Career Center Event**: On-Campus Fairs in fall and spring as well as individual opportunities to recruit on campus.

• Place an ad in our student newspaper, The Channels. Call (805) 965-0581 ext. 1100 for the advertising manager.

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**Academic Credit, Compensation and Liabilities**

**Academic Credit**

While students are generally interested in getting school credit for internships, **academic credit is not a legal requirement for internships**. Some workplaces may stipulate that in order to have a student intern, the student must be registered for an internship or work experience course with an accredited educational institution. SBCC student can do this through the academic departments or by taking General Work Experience administered through Career Center.

It is the student’s are responsibility for meeting the coursework requirements and furnishing the employer with the relevant paperwork.

**Compensation**

As a general rule, intern sponsors are not subject to the US Department of Labor’s minimum wage laws if their internship meets department guidelines. The position must primarily be for the educational benefit of the student. There must be supervision, training and feedback.

For more information on pay parameters see the “Must We Pay Our Interns” excerpt at the end of the guidelines.

**Liabilities**

SBCC Worker’s Compensation and liability coverage does not extend to student interns who are employed by you and working on your premises. Your existing Worker’s Compensation insurance covers paid employees, and may be extended to volunteer interns for a nominal fee. We recommend that you address any questions to your legal counsel.

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**Internet Resources for Employers**

The US Department of Labor’s General Information on the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) page, which supplies information on pay of student interns.

http://www.dol.gov/esa/regs/compliance/whd/mwposter_PF.htm
Benefits for Employers

Cost Effective:

1. **Productivity.** Interns supply resources which allow you to increase overall productivity. Interns can work on special projects or can help your employees complete time consuming tasks, which will allow them to focus on other, more specialized work.

2. **Recruiting and Training.** Hiring interns into permanent positions provides significant savings to you in recruiting and training dollars. Because the intern has experience working in your organization, you have some assurance that the individual is the right fit.

Increase Capacities:

3. **Broaden Skills.** Interns often possess skills that your existing staff may lack, such as higher-level computer and internet based proficiencies, knowledge about the latest technologies and trends.

4. **Managerial Experience.** Although a qualified manager of interns is critical for success, organizations can allow less-seasoned employees to gain supervisory experience by assigning a new supervisor this responsibility.

Qualitative Intangibles:

5. **Social Enterprise.** Your business will distinguish itself as leader in social enterprise, giving back to our community by helping to train the future work force.

6. **Add Enthusiasm.** Student interns add vibrancy to a workplace by providing fresh ideas and positive energy that can become contagious and serve to recharge an organization’s environment and culture.

**Must we pay our interns?** Excerpt from NACE report on Common Questions About Internships by Rochelle Kaplan, Esquire Winter 2005)

Although there are reasons beyond the legalities that you’ll want to consider when you are deciding whether to pay an interns, the answer to whether you must pay an intern for his or her work relates to the Fair Labor Standards Act, and lies in an analysis of the on-the-job experience the intern will have in relation to the standards set forth by that act.

Pursuant to that law, the US department of Labor (DOL) has developed six criteria for identifying a learner/trainee who may be unpaid. (Note: Neither the law not the regulatory guidance uses the terms “intern”.)

The DOL criteria are:

- The training, even though it includes actual operation of the employer’s facilities is similar to training that would be given in a vocational school.
- The training is for the benefit of the student.
- The student does not displace a regular employee, but works under the close observation of a regular employee.
• The employer provides the training and derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the student. Occasionally, the operations may actually be impeded by the training.
• The student is not necessarily entitled to a job at the conclusion of the training period.
• The employer and the student understand that the student is not entitled to wages for the time spent training

Although not all six factors have to be present for an individual to be considered a trainee, the experience should ultimately look more like training/learning experience than a job.