

Experiential Learning: Spotlight on Internships

Internship:

A form of experiential learning that takes place in a professional environment. It allows undergraduate and graduate students to integrate classroom learning with practical or “hands-on” experience, to develop or refine specific skills, or to explore a career goal or interest. Internships are generally at least one quarter long and can occur at any time during the academic year. In contrast to jobs, internships focus on defined projects and intern learning rather than routine unit operations.

Internships benefit:

- ◆ **Students.** Receive valuable workplace experience, develop new skills, mentorship and networking opportunities, and the potential for financial support.
- ◆ **Faculty.** Use the internship experiences to apply what the students are learning in the classroom and the workplace.
- ◆ **Employers.** Access to high quality talent, a pipeline for future hiring, and expertise on how to reach younger audiences.
- ◆ **Colleges and universities.** Alumni who had an internship or job that allowed them to apply what they were learning in the classroom were 1.5 times more likely to agree that their education was worth the cost.¹

Did you know?

- ◆ College graduates who had an internship or job that allowed that person to apply what they were learning in the classroom were twice as likely to be engaged at work and 1.3 times more likely to experience financial, social, physical, community, and purposeful well-being.¹
- ◆ Seattle ranks among the top 10 in the nation for both the preferred cities for internships and the total number of internships available to students.⁴
- ◆ Nearly one-third of college seniors said that a past internship experience significantly changed what they wanted to do with their careers.⁴
- ◆ When employers were asked how they would choose between two otherwise equally qualified candidates, the two attributes were related to work experience: “Has completed an internship with your organization,” “Has internship experience in your industry.” Each rated above major, GPA, and school attended.²

Employer Perspectives

94% say they are more likely to consider hiring recent college graduates who have completed an internship or apprenticeship³

60% say it would make them much more likely to consider that individual as a job candidate³

Internships and Washington's Public Baccalaureates

- ◆ 2016-2017 UW graduates who participated in an internship were **61%** more likely to be employed six months after graduation than those who did not participate in an internship. Furthermore, among those employed, graduates who participated in an internship were **65%** more likely to be in a career-related position than those without internship experience.
- ◆ **57%** of EWU students had internships, practicums, or field studies before graduation.
- ◆ CWU students participate in **more than 1,000** internship opportunities per year.
- ◆ **91%** of recent Evergreen alumni surveyed were very satisfied or satisfied with their internship experiences while enrolled.
- ◆ **38.7%** of WWU alumni surveyed reported their internship was paid and **nearly one-third** indicated their internship led to a job offer.
- ◆ **Nearly 55%** of WSU's graduating seniors report applying for an internship prior to graduation, with **85%** of them completing one and **10%** completing two or more.



Internship Success Stories



My first quarter with Amy Gould in the program “Politics and the Nature of Leadership” was an excellent way to begin my time at Evergreen, and it prepared me for the legislative internship I did the next quarter. I interned at the Washington State Senate, where I gained substantial insight into political process, decision making, and leadership skills. I interned and then worked at the Writing Center with Sandy Yannone, enabling my current employment.

-- Alum of The Evergreen State College

There is no doubt in my mind that this internship was exactly what I needed to help me prepare and plan for life after UW. Without it, I'm not sure what my first years out of school would have looked like. I thought my career would end up in the political arena, but I had little idea of what I wanted more specifically or even what the options were. This internship has confirmed my desire to enter politics as a career, and has helped clarify what aspects of politics I find interesting and can actually see myself pursuing as a career.

-- UW Social Sciences Student

References

1. Gallup, Inc: 2015 Gallup-Purdue Index Report: <https://www.gallup.com/services/185924/gallup-purdue-index-2015-report.aspx>
2. National Association of Colleges and Employers: Job Outlook 2018 Spring: <http://www.nacweb.org/store/2017/job-outlook-2018/>
3. Hart Research Associates : Falling Short? College Learning and Career Success <https://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/files/LEAP/2015employerstudentsurvey.pdf>
4. Looksharp: State of College Hiring: <https://usatcollege.files.wordpress.com/2015/07/state-of-college-hiring-2015-report.pdf>