

Why Intern Abroad?

International internships provide you with an opportunity to experience another culture in an in-depth and exciting way. Such an experience can give you invaluable preparation for a career in the 21st Century globalized marketplace. International Internships give you the unique opportunity to:

- Find out what it is like to work in a specific field and in a different culture.
- Learn about a country, its culture, its language and how to use this knowledge for your future.
- Make contacts with professionals from other parts of the world in a field of your interest.
- Gain academic credit. Student interns must work with a faculty sponsor and register for the credit to receive academic credit. Check with your department for details.
- Strengthen your resume. In this era it is becoming increasingly important to demonstrate to potential employers your ability to function with many different peoples and cultures.
- Jump-start your full-time job search. Employers often hire their interns for full-time employment after graduation.

The Challenges

Along with these fantastic opportunities, interning abroad brings a host of challenges that must be overcome. It takes longer to find an internship abroad, so start planning 6–12 months in advance. In order to get the most out of your experience, it is important to understand these challenges and make the best of them. Common obstacles include:

- Obtaining visas and work permits. Each country has its own laws and regulations for allowing foreigners to work. It is of the utmost importance that you fully understand and comply with these regulations.
- Cultural differences are exciting and provide many opportunities to learn, but they can also be frustrating and difficult to overcome. You will want to make sure that you're comfortable with the general practices of the

country you want to travel to.

- Language barriers can provide an ample opportunity to learn but can also be a major road block in enjoying your internship. Be certain that you are comfortable with the level of foreign language proficiency that your job requires.
- Finding a place to live can also be a problem. Your employer may be able to assist you in finding residence, but if they are not you will have to research this information on your own.
- Costs of travel will sometimes not be covered by your employer. Luckily, there are many grants and similar opportunities that can assist you in meeting your financial needs.

When To Do an International Internship and When to Start Looking

It is never too early or too late to participate in an internship abroad. Apply for an internship when you feel you are best able to take full advantage of the experience. Some students enter into Hopkins as freshmen having already had internship experiences, while others may wait until their junior year.

Summer is the most popular time of year to participate in an international internship. While there are some programs that would allow you to work over Winter or Spring Break, the bulk of the opportunities will be during the Summer months. If you are studying abroad you may be able to find internship opportunities that coincide with your schoolwork, or follow up your term abroad. If you feel this is right for you, you should first find out if your study-abroad program has an internship component.

You should also have a plan for how an internship fits into your future goals. Keep in mind what you want from working abroad: will an unpaid internship working with Americans in a U.S. embassy do as much for your French as working in an ice cream shop in Paris? Or would the State Department be the best choice if your long-term goal is an international career? Be sure to understand what you want to gain from your experience.

When you decide to intern should make sense in terms of both your academic work and your career plans. The knowledge you gain from your coursework may help you get an internship. If you wish to participate in a competitive internship program as a junior (i.e. the State Department, the investment banking industry, etc.) you may want to gain experience at a smaller organization as a freshman or sophomore to be a stronger candidate. Meet with a career counselor to discuss your internship strategy.

For summer internships abroad, it is best to start early. Because of visa and clearance issues, it will often take many months to process important documents. Therefore, deadlines for these internships will often be earlier than domestic ones. The time before and during Winter Break will often be your best opportunity.

Where to Look

Finding information on international internships can be tricky. Use these resources to help:

- Career Center The library in the Career Center has many publications designed to assist you in finding an internship that's right for you. We also carry the "Transitions Abroad" magazine, which will give you insight into many aspects of working internationally, as well as the State Department Internship guide and the International Internship Directory.
- www.internabroad.com Provides a list of internships and programs currently accepting applications. The search is separated by field as well as by country.
- www.transitionsabroad.com Great resource for information on international jobs and internships.
- www.umich.edu/~icenter In their "work abroad" section, this site gives hints about every aspect of the working abroad process, from links to programs to visa information.
- www.crossculturalsolutions.org Primarily dedicated to volunteer activities abroad.
- www.globalexperiences.com Well-structured programs for specific fields of internships in select European countries
- www.goinglobal.com Information about interviews, resumes, job opportunities and cultural differences in general for a large number of different countries.
- www.travel.state.gov/trips/brochures/brochures_1229.html State Department

information on Visas and
Work Permits to various countries.

- Alumni: Don't hesitate to contact Alumni living and working abroad. Even if they are unable to assist you in your current search, networking may help you gain insight into your field of interest as well as provide you with opportunities for the future.

The Internship Process

1. *Get Started – Create a J-Connect account.*
2. *Determine the Right Internship and Country for You*
– Self-Assessment and Exploration.
3. *Preparation and Search.*
– Overcome Cultural Differences.
4. *Determine if the Internship is Eligible for Credit.*
5. *Decide on a Position.*
6. *Procure Visas and Work Permits.*
7. *Make Sure You Have a Place to Live.*
8. *Make the Most of Your Internship Experience.*
9. *Evaluate the Experience.*
10. *Follow Up With the Career Center.*

1. Get Started

- Create a J-Connect account (<http://www.jhu.edu/careers>) to access the Internship Database.

2. Determine the Right Internship and Country for You

Do some self-assessment to determine the type and location of internship that appeals to you.

- Take special care to ascertain what you want to get out of your internship: language skills, cultural and work experience, etc.
- Use assessment tools such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and Strong Interest Inventory to identify

potential areas of interest.

- Meet with a career counselor to discuss how an internship fits into your future plans.

Research to learn more about careers and cultures.

- Look at resources to identify an industry and list of possible places to work.
- Review information on what cultural differences to expect wherever you wish to go.
- Review library and online resources.

Participate in activities that connect you to professionals in the field and country of interest.

- Attend career fairs and company presentations to learn more about employers, especially their international arms.
- Do research for academic credit or pay.
- Join professional associations and cultural groups.
- Gather information from people in careers and in places that interest you -- seek out your friends' parents, your parents' friends, and JHU alumni.

Conduct informational interviews to learn more about international careers.

- Meet with a career counselor to discuss how to network and gather information to effectively fine-tune your networking skills.
- Review the Career Center's Networking Skills handout.
- Connect with alumni – use InCircle, the JHU online alumni directory, for names of alumni who have volunteered to give career advice to JHU students. <http://alumni.jhu.edu>
- Develop a list of contacts to begin networking.
- Discuss career and internship interests with professors, friends, or anybody that may lead to a contact.

3. Preparation and Search

Prepare a résumé.

- Review the Career Center's Résumés handout available in the Career Center or on our website.
- Use available resources to make sure that your résumés are culturally acceptable to your potential employer.
Goinglobal is a great resource for this type of information online at www.goinglobal.com.
- Attend a Résumés and Cover Letters workshop to learn the basics of résumé writing.
- Utilize the Career Center Library. There are many books on résumé and cover letter

writing. “Transitions

Abroad” magazine often has information on what employers expect in certain regions on a resume.

- Create a draft and bring it to the Career Center to be critiqued by a peer assistant or a career counselor.
- Upload your critiqued résumé to your Career Center Account.

Develop a plan of attack.

- Use a variety of resources to research employers and identify internship openings.
- Attend Internship Week and other career center programs on internships.
- Determine what types of employers you will target and how you will contact them.
- Meet with a career counselor to help you plan your strategy.
- Review Career Center online and library resources.
- Check the Internship Listings in your Career Center Account regularly.
- Check the web sites listed in the “Where to Look” section of this handout and the International Internships Links handout for opportunities that may be of interest to you.

Research JHU Special Internship Grants.

• Arts and Sciences Students are eligible for Second Decade Society Internship Grants, and the Charles Robins Internship Grants to receive funding up to \$5,000 for internships. Check the Career Center website for program details and deadline information. Attend career center programs in the fall to learn more about these programs and to meet past recipients. The deadline to apply for summer 2008 is early February.

• Engineering Students are eligible for Vredenburg Summer Engineering Travel Scholarships. Applications are available from the WSE Office of Academic Affairs in February. Contact Steph Schreckinger at stephs@jhu.edu for details.

• Additional sources of funding for internships are available, but require advanced planning to access. Students can look for funding in the Harvard College Guide to Grants, found in the Career Resource Library. You can also find more information on funding available campus-wide for internships and research on the Career Center’s website.

Be organized.

- Keep records of who you contact, their responses, when you should follow-up, etc.
- Make sure you research the company.

Practice interview skills.

- Attend an Interviewing workshop to learn the essentials of interviewing.

- Review the Interviewing handout available at the Career Center and on our website.
- Practice interviewing – Sign up for an Mock Interview with an employer or schedule a mock interview with a career counselor.
- Review books and handouts on interviewing available in the Career Center Library.
- To get the most out of interviews, research the company thoroughly, and prepare for your interview by thinking about how you can contribute to the organization.
- Send follow-up letters or make follow-up calls and write thank you notes after your interviews.

4. Determine if the internship is eligible for credit.

To find out what you need to do to get academic credit contact the appropriate office:

- Arts and Sciences Students – Contact the Office of Academic Advising, Garland Hall, 410-516-8216.
- Engineering Students – Contact the Office of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, 114 New Engineering Building, 410-516-7395.

5. Decide on a Position

When you are offered a position, you may accept then or delay it by asking them when they need an answer. If you need some time to consider all options, do not hesitate to ask. You may want to discuss this matter with a career counselor. Remember that it is unethical to continue your internship search once you have accepted a position with a company.

6. Make the Most of Your Internship

- What do you want to accomplish? Set goals and make sure your supervisor is aware of them. Seek out opportunities to reach these goals.
- Clarify expectations between you and your supervisor/work team.
- Be open-minded and observant.
- Meet people who might serve as mentors.
- Develop good work habits and make a good impression. You may want to work for this company upon graduation or need a good recommendation.
- Learn all you can about the industry and occupation.

7. Evaluate the Experience

- What did you like about the job? What did you dislike about the job?
- How did you feel about the work environment?
- What did you learn from the internship experience?
- How will you follow-up? (A similar internship or one in a completely different field)
- What did you learn about yourself? What were your strengths in the position?

Weaknesses?

8. Follow Up with the Career Center

When you complete your internship, make an appointment with a career counselor to discuss your experience and how it fits into your future plans. If you find your internship outside the Career Center, we would still like to talk with you about your experience.

INTERNATIONAL INTERNSHIP CHECKLIST

Get Started

- Create a J-Connect account to access the JHU Job and Internship Database.

Explore Your Options to Find the Right Experience for You

- Ascertain what you want to get out of your international experience.
- Identify potential areas of interest using the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and Strong Interest Inventory.
- Research to learn more about careers and cultures.
- Attend career fairs and information sessions to learn more about employers
- Join professional associations and student groups.
- Develop a list of contacts to begin networking and connect with JHU alumni using InCircle.

Develop and Execute an Internship Strategy

- Meet with a career counselor to help you plan.
- Talk with faculty and others in your department to find out about opportunities and procedures.
- Determine what types of employers you will target.
- Research JHU special internship programs and grants for funding.
- Attend Internship Week and Career Center workshops on internships.
- Attend resume workshops and have your resume critiqued.
- Use mock interviews and interview workshops to enhance your interview skills.

Determine if the Internship is Eligible for Academic Credit

- Arts & Sciences students, contact the Office of Academic Advising.
- Engineering students, contact the Office of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

Make the Most of Your Internship

- Determine what you want to accomplish. Set goals and make sure your supervisor is aware of them. Seek out opportunities to reach these goals.

- Clarify expectations between you and your supervisor/work team.
- Meet people who might serve as mentors.
- Develop good work habits and make a good impression. You may want to work for this company upon graduation or need a good recommendation.

Evaluate Your Experience

- What did you like about the internship? What did you dislike about the position?
- What did you learn from the internship experience?
- What do you want to do next?