

## What is an Internship?

An internship is your opportunity to apply the knowledge you've gained from your academic studies in a practical, workplace setting. Internships may be part of a formal internship program, but many students create their own internships. Research and volunteer positions can both be a form of internships. All internship experiences should provide exposure to an occupation, industry or career field, have a clear purpose/focus, and a specific project for you to complete. They can be for pay, for academic credit (coordinated through your department) or done on a volunteer basis. You can complete an internship in the summer, fall, and spring or during winter break.

## Why Intern?

Each year, Johns Hopkins students take advantage of internships to explore careers, to gain professional experience, and to earn academic credit. Internships give you an opportunity to:

- Find out what it is like to work in a specific field.
- Make contacts with professionals in the field.
- Gain academic credit. Student must work with a faculty sponsor and register in advance to receive academic credit. Check with your department for details.
- Strengthen your resume. Related experience is often necessary before an employer/graduate program will consider your application.
- Jump-start your full-time job search. Employers often hire their interns for full-time employment after graduation

## When to Do an Internship?

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

Summer is the most popular time of year to participate in an internship, as most students have more time to devote to the job. Internships are also available during the school year and winter break. You need to determine when to intern. If your course load is light, you may be able to devote 10–12 hours per week to an internship.

You should also have a plan for how an internship fits into your future goals. Plan your internship to give you experience in a field you would like to work in after graduation. Your first internship may simply provide exposure to a field to help you make a more informed decision about a major or career path.

As a junior or senior, an internship may be a stepping stone to full-time employment. While as a sophomore, internships should provide you with exposure to a career field or job function.

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 sophomore to be a stronger candidate. Meet with a career counselor to discuss your internship strategy.

## The Internship Process

1. Get Started – Create an account in J-Connect
2. Determine the Right Internship for You – Self-Assessment and Exploration.
3. Preparation and Search.
4. Determine if the Internship is Eligible for Credit.
5. Research Additional Funding.
6. Decide on a Position.
7. Make the Most of Your Internship Experience.
8. Evaluate the Experience.
9. Follow Up With the Career Center.

### **1. Get Started**

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

### **2. Determine the Right Internship for You**

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

- Use assessment tools such as the Myers–Briggs Type Indicator and the 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.*

- Look at resources on the Career Center website, including Explore Careers and Majors pages, to identify an industry and list of possible places to work.
- Review library resources.

*Participate in activities that connect you to professionals in the field.*

- Attend general and targeted Career Fairs to learn about companies and organizations.
- Attend company presentations to learn more about employers.
- Do research for academic credit or pay. Join professional associations.
- Register for an experiential class during Intersession.
- Gather information from people in careers that interest you -- seek out your friends' parents, your parents' friends, and JHU alumni.

*Conduct informational interviews to learn more about 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. [www.alumni.jhu.edu](http://www.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 Résumé Writing Handout available in the Career Center or on our website.
- Attend a Résumés and Cover Letter workshop to learn the basics of résumé writing.
- Utilize the Career Center Library. There are many books on résumé and cover letter writing.
- 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 J-Connect account.

*Develop a plan of attack.*

- Use a variety of resources to research employers and identify internship openings.
- Attend career center workshops on internships in the Fall and Spring semesters
- 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 J-Connect account regularly. The Job and Internship Database lists

approximately 5,000 internship opportunities. You have access to internships nationwide through a

consortium of colleges. Some employers choose to collect resumes and interview students for internships

through the Jobs section of your J-Connect account.

*Research JHU Special Internship Programs.*

- 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. The deadline to apply for summer 2009 is early February.

- Engineering Students are eligible for Vredenburg Summer Engineering Travel Scholarships. Applications are

available from the Office of Academic Affairs in February. Contact Steph Schreckinger at [stephs@jhu.edu](mailto:stephs@jhu.edu) for

details.

*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 a 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/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 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. Research Additional Funding (if needed).**

There are additional sources of funding for internships. 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.

#### **6. Decide on a Position**

*Taking the job offer.*

When you are offered a position, you may accept then or delay accepting 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.

#### **7. 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.

## 8. 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?

## 9. 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.

# INTERNSHIP CHECKLIST

### Get Started

- Create a J-Connect account (<http://www.jhu.edu/careers>) to access the Internship Database.
- Determine the right internship for you.
- Identify potential areas of interest using the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and the Strong Interest Inventory.

### Explore Your Options

- Research to learn more about careers. Participate in activities that connect you to professionals in the field.
- Attend Career Fairs and company presentations to learn more about employers.
- Do research for academic credit or pay.
- Join professional associations and student groups.
- Develop a list of contacts to begin networking.
- Connect with alumni – use InCircle at [www.alumni.jhu.edu](http://www.alumni.jhu.edu).

### Preparation and Searching

- Develop an Internship Search Strategy – Meet with a Career Counselor to help you plan your strategy.
- Determine what types of employers you will target and how you will contact them.
- Research JHU Special Internship Programs and Grants – Check the Career Center website for information.

- Attend career courses on internships
- Prepare a résumé and have it critiqued.
- Attend the Career Center's Résumés and Cover Letters workshop to learn the basics of résumé writing.

### **Enhance your Interview Skills**

- Attend the Career Center's Interview Workshop to learn the essentials of interviewing.
- Practice interviewing – Sign up for a mock interview in the fall with an employer or schedule a mock interview with a career counselor at any time of year.

### **Decide on a Position**

- When offered a position, you may accept right away or ask for time to consider the offer.