Are You Ready for an Internship?

To determine whether an internship would be right for you, you may want to ask yourself some of the following questions.

Rate each statement accordingly:
STRONGLY AGREE: 5, AGREE: 4, UNCERTAIN: 3, DISAGREE: 2, STRONGLY DISAGREE: 1

___ 1. I would like to extend what I am learning/researching beyond what is possible on campus in the classroom.

___ 2. I sometimes wonder how what I have been learning in the classroom applies to the world of work.

___ 3. I have taken courses relevant to my career interests or I plan to do so next semester/term.

___ 4. As I observe others who seemingly have more extensive work experience, I wish there was some way to get experience related to my future career plans.

___ 5. It would be possible to adjust my courses so that I would have time to work at an internship off-campus during a semester or term.

___ 6. It would not be absolutely essential that I be paid for the internship experience.

___ 7. I really have no idea whether I will attend graduate school because I don’t know what I would study.

___ 8. I am experiencing some boredom with my classes and am ready to pursue other extracurricular activities.

___ 9. My parents ask me, “What are you going to do after you graduate?” and I don’t know.

___ 10. This coming summer, I would consider working as an intern without pay.

SCALE:

- Ready for an internship: 30+
- Need to consider potential obstacles before starting an internship: 25-29
- Will take careful planning/re-thinking of priorities to begin internship: 20-24
- May be best to consider other options: under 20
What an Internship is NOT!

"TIME OUT" An internship is usually pursued outside of the college setting and should not be viewed as a "time out" from school to go to work. An internship is a learning experience. Some people learn more effectively through experience and internships can provide that opportunity. Remember, a grade or credit for an internship is based on what you can show or demonstrate you learned during the internship, not solely on the evaluation of your performance.

AN EASY GRADE Most students report working just as hard if not harder on their internships as they do for classes on campus. Remember that you not only will be performing duties and tasks for the employer but will also need to complete possible reports, projects or other assignments as directed by your faculty internship advisor. You will need to plan your time wisely.

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE Regardless of the financial arrangements, an intern is not the same as a volunteer. An intern earns credit or a grade based on what is learned from the internship experience. A volunteer may perform the same tasks equally well but may or may not be self-conscious about the learning derived. As an intern, you must be aware of learning opportunities and strive to meet the identified goals to successfully earn credit or a grade.

RESIDENT EXPERT Student interns bring special skills, knowledge, and fresh ideas to an organization. It is not appropriate, however, for an organization to expect an intern to be the "resident expert" or to fill in a gap in an area in which the staff lacks basic skills or knowledge. You should be supervised by a professional staff person who has some expertise in the areas in which you work.

GO-FER An intern is not supposed to perform all the routine or uninteresting work within an organization. An internship should be a meaningful learning experience. Whether or not it is meaningful is a judgment you must make in conjunction with your faculty advisor. Most positions and projects will involve some routine work, however, it is recommended that it be limited to twenty percent of your time as an intern.

GUARANTEE OF A JOB OFFER Sometimes interns are offered part or full time employment as a result of contacts made during the internships but there is no guarantee that an internship will get you a job in that organization. Many employers do seek out candidates who have had a prior internship experience. The best way to gain a career advantage from the internship is to get to know the people you work with in the organization. Build an information and referral network.

Adapted from Macalester College Internship Program, 1600 Grand Avenue, St. Paul, MN
INTERN CHECKLIST

Prior to Application:
A student interested in an Internship should complete the following items prior to beginning the application process.

☐ Self-Assessment
  ☐ Do I have a clear understanding of my interests, abilities and values and how they relate to the workplace? Have I completed at least one self-assessment to help me determine my interests/abilities?
    (This will be useful as I determine my internship goals/objectives.)

Assessments available at BYU Hawaii:
  ☐ Discover
  ☐ SDS (Self-Directed Search)
  ☐ MBTI (Myers Briggs Temperament Indicator)
  ☐ True Colors
  ☐ MicroSkills
  ☐ Career Key
  ☐ Career Decision Profile
  ☐ The Career Key

☐ Resume and Cover Letter
  ☐ Have I developed a resume and/or CV and a cover letter?
  ☐ Have my documents been reviewed by a career center advisor?

☐ Career Plan
  ☐ Have I met with a career center advisor to develop my personal career plan?
  ☐ Have I developed a list of personal and professional goals?

☐ Internship Information Workshop and Referral Request
  ☐ Have I attended an internship information workshop to learn more about the purpose, qualifications, and expectations of the internship?
  ☐ Am I a student in good standing with at least a 2.5 GPA? (Required for internship)
  ☐ Have I obtained and completed an initial internship faculty referral form? (Form must be signed by the academic or faculty internship advisor designated by your specific department.)

Obtaining a Faculty Referral to Pursue an Internship:
  ☐ Have I scheduled an appointment with the academic or faculty internship advisor for my major department?
  ☐ Do I have a signed referral from my department academic or faculty internship advisor which allows me to now pursue an academic internship opportunity?

Searching for an Internship
  ☐ Have I identified resources available to help me search for an internship opportunity?
  ☐ Have I asked my faculty advisor for suggestions of possible internship sites?
  ☐ Have I reviewed the internship listings database on YCAREERS?
  ☐ Have I researched internship sites listed in books and publications available in the career center?
  ☐ Have I explored all possible avenues to search for an internship site?
  ☐ Have I listed the internship sites of interest to me? Did I record the contact and application information?
Have I evaluated which of these sites would be the best fit for me and ranked my preferences?
Do I need more help in locating an internship site? Have I discussed this with a career center advisor or with the academic internship director?

Beginning the Academic Internship Registration Process
- Have I scheduled an appointment with the Academic Internship Director?
- Have I obtained a copy of the academic internship registration packet?
- Do I understand the steps of the registration process and the requirements for participation?

Developing the Learning Agreement
- Have I read the Learning Agreement instructions and tip sheets?
- Have I developed a list of objectives (goals), strategies, and evaluation or measurement tools?
- Have I scheduled an appointment with my faculty internship advisor to review my progress with the Learning Agreement?
- Have I sought assistance from the faculty internship advisor and the employer site supervisor to complete the development of my Learning Agreement?

Completing the Academic Internship Registration Process
- Have I completed the registration forms and obtained all necessary clearances?
- Have I read the intern responsibilities listed in the registration packet?
- Have I officially registered for the class credit and paid my tuition and fees?
- Have I returned a copy of the completed registration form to the Academic Internship Director? Did I retain a copy for my own personal records?

Prior to Departure:
- Have I submitted a completed copy of the Learning Agreement to my faculty advisor and the employer site supervisor? Did I retain a completed copy for my own use?
- Have I attended the mandatory "Pre-Departure Interns Workshop"?
- Have I confirmed my travel arrangements? Have I confirmed my housing and other necessary arrangements at the internship location?
- If I am interning in a country other than one in which I am a citizen, have I obtained the necessary visas and/or work permits/authorizations?
- Have I confirmed with my internship provider (employer) the date and time to report for work?

During the Internship:
- Do I represent myself, my department and the university to the best of my ability?
- Am I dependable? (report for work on assigned days and times, punctual attendance, deliver quality work in timely manner)
- Am I a good employee?
- Have I completed and submitted the assignments or projects required for my course credit?
- Do I report regularly to my faculty internship advisor?
- Do I work closely with my employer site supervisor and seek input on improving my performance?

After the Internship:
- Have I completed the intern self-evaluation?
- Have I submitted the final projects/assignments to my faculty advisor?
- Have I written a thank-you note to the site supervisor and any other appropriate individuals at the internship location?
Eight Steps to Securing an Internship

1. **Start Early!** (Minimum 1 full semester prior to internship)
   - Attend Internship interest meeting. (Held at beginning of each semester/term)
   - Pick up copy of internship interest and referral form. (Distributed at internship interest meetings or available in Career Center or from academic advisors.)
   - Complete internship interest and referral form.

2. **Schedule Appointment with Academic or Faculty Internship Advisor (designated by department).**
   - Bring completed internship interest and referral form to meeting.
   - Come prepared! Know your internship needs, desires, and goals.
   - If academic/faculty advisor signs the referral form, student may then continue to pursue academic internship opportunities.

3. **Start Your Internship Search.**
   - Prepare a resume and cover letter.
   - Tap your resources.
   - Use the YCareers electronic job board and other tools available in the Career Center to search for internship locations.
   - Research organizations.
   - Practice and refine interview skills.

4. **Meet with Academic Internship Director.**
   - Obtain the academic internship registration packet and discuss registration process with the internship director.
   - Complete the registration form with required clearance signatures and turn in to registrar’s office. Pay fees.
   - Take copy of completed registration form to academic internship director.

5. **Finalize Internship Site (if not already done).**
   - Apply for selected internship opportunities and interview for positions (if required).
   - Obtain the following information from the provider site: starting dates, job description, outline of responsibilities, number of hours required, name of site supervisor.
   - Obtain offer letter from experience provider. Provide copies of offer letter to the academic internship director and the faculty advisor. Retain one copy for personal record-keeping.

6. **Prepare Learning Agreement.**
   - Schedule appointment with faculty internship advisor.
   - Prior to meeting:
     - Brainstorm a list of personal learning goals and objectives.
     - Review past courses and consider specific skills and theories which can be applied and observed during the internship.
   - Bring brainstorm list to the meeting and discuss with the advisor.
   - Write the learning agreement, type and send a copy to the site supervisor at the internship location. Ask for input or other ideas and approval of supervisor.
   - Finalize the document and issue copies to faculty advisor and site supervisor. Retain a copy for personal record-keeping.
7. **During Internship, Complete Learning Tasks and Assignments.**
   - Attend the mandatory pre-departure seminar on workplace behavior.
   - Complete assignments and tasks for internship as outlined.
   - Demonstrate initiative and self-starter skills on the job.
   - Perform assigned duties to the best of your ability.
   - Submit a self-evaluation at conclusion of internship.
   - Remind site supervisor of need to complete the supervisor's evaluation document and copy to the faculty advisor and/or internship director.

8. **After Internship, Communicate with the Site Supervisor.**
   - Remember to write a thank-you letter to the site supervisor and other appropriate individuals at the internship location.
   - Submit final reports/projects and other designated assignments to the faculty advisor.
PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR: DOS AND DON'TS

1. Dress and Grooming. DO take cues from those around you. What is your boss wearing? What are the staff members wearing? How do they groom? You should use that as your standard.

2. Cell phones. DON'T use cell phones during work for personal business. What is the office policy on cell phones? In almost every office, personal business should be conducted on personal time.

3. Internet usage. DON'T use the internet for personal business during work time. What is the office policy on internet use? Again, you should never use office time to communicate with friends. Sometimes your job will require an upgrade in your skills (such as computer skills). It is best that you try to do that on your own time.

4. “Early to work.” DO come on time and leave on/after the time. In fact, it is not a bad idea to try to be the first one there and the last one to leave.

5. Positive Attitude. DO have a positive attitude at all times. As an intern, you are a guest in the office. You should conduct your assignments efficiently and cheerfully. When your opinion is needed, you will be asked.

6. Adjusting personal schedules. DO adjust your personal life to accommodate your new work schedule. It’s important that you are ready and alert at all times in the workplace especially if you’re an intern. "All eyes will be on you." If you have to commute, you may need to adjust your sleep schedule so that you can arrive ready to work.

7. Assignments. DO what is asked of you. Not every assignment is fun. That is why it is called "work." As an intern you may likely be assigned the most menial, boring, disgusting tasks in the office. Do it professionally and with a smile. When you are done, return, report, and be ready to do more. This is called "paying your dues." It is a test of your attitude. Your aptitude will not be tested until you pass the attitude test. It may take weeks or months to pass the attitude test.

8. Lifetime Experience. DO remember that you are not just putting in hours for graduation, but are learning skills that will benefit you all your lives. If you are not paid, you are still being paid with experience.

9. BYUH Representative. DO represent your university with high characteristics. You are representing BYU Hawaii every minute of the day. Your behavior will influence how successfully we will be able to place future interns.

10. “Downtime.” DON'T use "downtime" to read magazines or personal things. Take the initiative to ask for assignment and/or duty during slow period.

11. Confidentiality. DO treat all information that you receive in the office with confidentiality unless specifically asked to share it.

12. Asking Questions. DO ask if you have a question. You are interns in the work field where you could possibly jump start your careers. It is important that questions are asked so the lingo and professional terms are put into your vocabulary.

13. Attending Meetings. DON'T hesitate to go to meetings, take notes, and network. You have a great opportunity to meet people. Don’t be afraid to ask to go to the meetings or to special events. It is a great thing to network because it’s all about the people you know. (It would also be a great idea to write where you met the person on their business card.)