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CHARLTON COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

## **Employers: Designing a Successful Business Internship**

Internships are a great way to partner with the Charlton College of Business to meet your business needs and offer a junior or a senior business students exposure to a professional work environment and opportunities to apply theory to everyday business challenges. A well structured internship can help both the student and employer. Research shows that employers with established internship programs report higher retention rates among employees who started as interns. Many intern employers use internships as a means to recruit future managers. Students overwhelmingly view internships as critical to their career plan.

The internship employer serves a critical role in helping to assure that the experience is beneficial to the student and worthy of college credit. The internship employer must provide significant opportunities for development, learning, and networking. The internship should be more than a part-time job. It must consist of a curriculum of professional development and on-the-job learning. Internships must be structured in such a way as to help the student to gain real world experience while at the same time applying lessons learned in the classroom to business situations.

Prior to approval, intern employers must demonstrate that the proposed internship involves enough rigor to substantiate course credit. As per college policy, most approved internships are limited to three credits that satisfy a business elective.

### ***Is the Internship Worth College Credit?***

To determine if an internship is worthy of college credit, prospective internship employers must complete the **Internship Employer Data Collection Form**, which is analyzed by the Internship Director. From the review of the data collection form and from information collected by interview and or by a site visit to the prospective employer, the Internship Director will make an accept or reject decision. This analysis must be performed prior to the student enrolling in the required internship course.

The internship experience must provide the student with a professional learning experience and should consist of both supervised training and on the job learning experiences. (The combination of formal and informal training is referred to as the internship curriculum.) Successful internship experiences combine training with:

- The assignment and execution of on-the-job tasks
- Completion of project assignments

- Tours, job shadowing, field trips, and attendance at company training seminars.

**Jobs that merely require the student to perform clerical or routine tasks should not be considered as internships and will not be approved for credit.**

### ***Internship Goals***

Internship employers have a responsibility to the student to help assure that certain basic goals are achieved during the duration of the internship. Internship employers are expected to work with the student to help achieve these basic goals which include:

- Applying theory to actual working situations
- Gaining knowledge by performing tasks, working on projects, and completing other on the job learning experiences related to a business discipline
- Exposure to a professional work environment
- Gaining a greater degree of self-direction in the learning process
- Testing a tentative career choice
- Presenting networking opportunities

Through an internship and by the accomplishment of the basic goals (above), the student will be better prepared for employment and graduate school.

### ***Criteria for Approval of Internship***

An internship-for-credit must be approved by the Internship Director of the Charlton College of Business. The **Internship Employer Data Collection Form** is the primary document used to analyze the proposed internship. The approval process considers the following questions:

- Does the proposed internship have goals that are congruent with the basic goals of a Charlton College of Business Internship?
- Is there evidence of an internship curriculum (which is a combination of formal and informal training and learning opportunities)?
- Does the written job description for the internship position seem to indicate that this a professional level position involving a learning experience substantial enough to justify 3 credits (business elective)?
- Will the internship run concurrent with the semester and the required internship course? The internship course requirements provide tools and techniques to monitor the progression of the internship and an evaluation of the learning experience. Therefore, it is college policy that the internship run concurrent with the semester.

- Does the internship require a minimum of 9 hours per week for 15 weeks for a minimum of 135 hours for the semester?
- Is the existing infrastructure of the prospective internship employer adequate to support an internship program? For example, is there sufficient space to work? Is there a desk, computer etc. for the intern?
- Does the prospective internship employer have the time and resources to make a 15 week (semester) commitment to a student intern? This includes providing an adequate orientation, initial training, ongoing training, support, and supervision.

### ***Internship Course***

Students who are seeking credit for their internship are required to enroll in the Charlton College of Business internship course. The student must have at least a 2.5 GPA and at least junior standing to enroll in the course. The course carries three credits and satisfies business elective credit only. The course meets for one hour per week during the semester. Registration into the internship course is granted by the Internship Director only after a careful analysis of the **Internship Employer Data Collection Form** and the approval of the Business Internship Registration Form. Approval of the internship requires two completed documents:

- Internship Employer Data Collection Form
- Business Internship Registration Form.

### ***Process and Timetable***

Internship employers should be aware of the process and the timetable for internships for credit. The process involves the following steps:

**Approval of the internship.** The process starts with a completed Internship Employer Data Collection Form. Ideally, that form should be completed and submitted to Michael P. Griffin, Assistant Dean ([mgriffin@umassd.edu](mailto:mgriffin@umassd.edu)). Ample time should be given prior to the start of a semester so as to allow for a diligent review of the request. **Ideally, the process should begin prior to the registration period for the next semester. Students generally register for Fall courses in the late spring while Spring registration typically occurs during early November.** Employers who are interested in offering internships should contact Michael P. Griffin (508-910-6947) to begin the process.

**Approval of student registration.** Before the student can enroll in the internship course, approval must be granted by the Assistant Dean/Director of Internship programs. **This must be done no later than the end of the add/drop period which is usually approximately 1 week after the semester begins.**