



# Developing an Internship Program To Draw Top Student Talent



## INTERNSHIP PROGRAM PLANNING MATERIALS

Developed by Deborah Schummer, Career Advancement & Internship Coordinator at Northwood University  
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# Welcome to Northwood University (NU)

Thank you for your interest in hiring a NU student for an internship with the organization. The Career Services Team at NU, in conjunction with the academic and executive departments, are committed to ensuring students have access to internships that provide meaningful, career-related work experiences. Employers, like you, play an important role in this endeavor.

## Northwood University Mission Statement

We develop free-enterprise leaders who drive global economic and social progress.

## Northwood University Vision Statement

We inspire human potential through immersive learning to advance economic freedom, for everyone, everywhere.

## Why Northwood University Student Talent?

Northwood University is a private, nonprofit and accredited institution that specializes in managerial and entrepreneurial education. We do this by teaching and promoting critical thinking skills, personal effectiveness, and the importance of ethics, individual freedom and responsibility.

Few degrees say “versatility” like a bachelor’s in business administration (BBA) from NU. Whether from the traditional campus or Adult Learner Program (ADP), Northwood students are:

- introduced to degree major curriculum in their freshman year, making them well-rounded with a solid understanding of the business industry and able to add value immediately;
- exposed to courses in strategic management, business finance, accounting, economic theory of the free-market, marketing, communications, ethics, operations and supply chain, business law, and org behavior to name a few;
- required to complete a 150/hour, 3-credit internship experience as part of their undergrad degree major and/or accelerated DeVos BBA/MBA program;
- proven adaptable, resilient, and quick to learn business productivity tools and management information systems;
- keenly aware of the importance to use data and facts to identify and solve problems;
- innovative and driven to add value in an organization, a local community, and around the globe;
- taught a code of ethics that includes the tenants of Freedom, Respect, Empathy, Spirituality, Honesty, Achievement, Integrity, Responsibility (FRESHAIR)
- a key component to any succession plan.

# How Internships Benefit Employers

- Cost-effective way to recruit, evaluate, and train long-term employees.
- Provides a source of highly motivated pre-professionals for a company's succession plan.
- Students bring new perspectives into the mix, spurring innovation.
- Organization's visibility is increased on campus and by word-of-mouth by returning interns.
- Interns are technologically savvy and quick to learn new operating and information systems
- Contribute to the society by teaching and mentoring the future work force.



According to Career Vision, an internship is considered the new entry-level job. Employers want experience and an internship is a way to develop new talent. An internship can be full time or part time and vary in length and number of hours required per week. It can be required as part of an academic curriculum or an elective course, be completed for academic credit or no credit, and add experience to a resume.

## The Term “Internship” Defined

Northwood University adopts the definition of an internship as, “***An extension of the classroom with an emphasis in on-the-job-training that leads to experiential learning and skill development.***”

Typically,

- interns work 10-20 hours a week during the academic semester, and as much as 40 hours a week during the summer months;
- internships are flexible in terms of a work schedule to accommodate student coursework;
- internships are supervised learning directly within a real-world experience;
- internships can lead to further training and employment.

An Internship ***is not***,

- free labor or meant to replace or displace a full-time employee;
- busy work or personal service errands.

## Cooperative Education (Co-op)

Just like an internship, co-ops are an extension of the classroom. They provide students an extensive learning experience that requires a proven level of academic success *before* consideration. Generally speaking, a student co-op must:

- be currently enrolled at the university full-time with at least one year of full-time coursework remaining prior to graduation;
- have earned a minimum GPA of 3.2 or higher;
- be able to work year-round and as much as 40 hours a week.

# Becoming an Employer of Choice – The NU Intern Pipeline

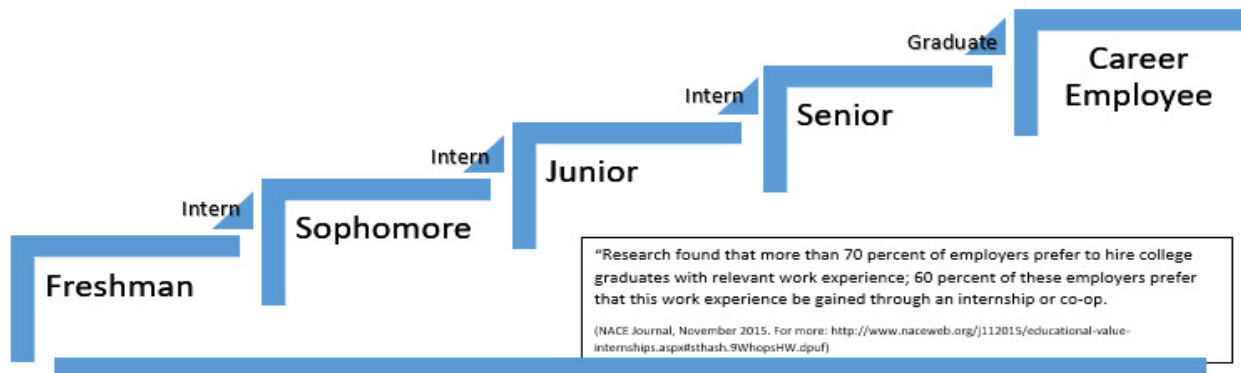
To attract the best and brightest students, consider the following onboarding model.



## Northwood University Intern Pipeline Traditional & Non-Traditional Students

Best Practices For Developing Career Employees

1. Hire interns at the end of the freshman year
2. Ask interns to return each year thereafter (if warranted)
3. Rotate interns through different business units of the company
4. Offer a fair wage and, if able, an academic stipend to offset the cost of the internship course, transportation and living expenses during the experience. Financial support is critical for today's student.



**Traditional student** = learners on-campus for nine months, typically fall—spring with summers off.

**Internship** = an extension of the classroom with an emphasis on on-the-job training that leads to experiential learning and skill development.

**Non-traditional student** = learners attending class online, at in a classroom on the main campus or a satellite campus

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Created by Deborah Schummer, Career Services & Internship Coordinator

## Best Practices for Converting Interns to Career Employees

- Hire interns beginning in their freshman year and if a good fit, ask them to return each year thereafter, increasing conversion to full-time.

**51.8%**

Average percent of eligible interns converted to FTE  
2022 Internship & Co-op Survey Report

- Compensate the intern with a fair market wage.

**\$20.82\***

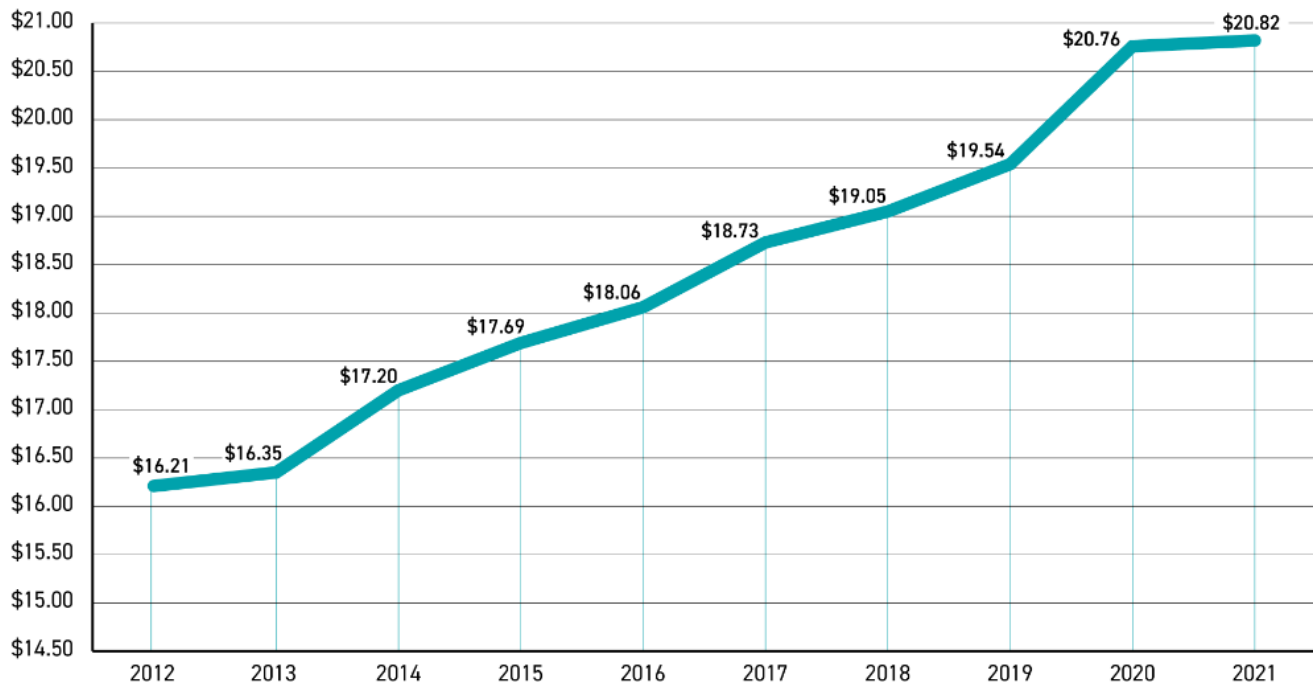
Mean hourly wage rate for bachelor's-level interns  
2022 Internship & Co-op Survey Report

\*Rate includes STEM occupations which drive up the prevailing wage.

To draw top talent, we recommend employers offer a wage based on ability to pay and industry expectations.

**FIGURE 1**

**Mean hourly wage rates for bachelor's-level interns: 2011-12 – 2020-21**



Source: 2022 Internship & Co-op Survey Report, National Association of Colleges and Employers

- Rotate interns through different business units in the organization, exposing them to the entire operation to connect with others and learn how the team works.
- Offer other forms of payment and/or reimbursement to help offset out-of-pocket expenses that prohibit many students from applying. Expenses such as housing allowance, relocation costs, paid industry training, etc.

It cannot be emphasized enough that compensating interns for their time, talents, and innovative thinking is not only fair but proven to draw top talent. Try to avoid unpaid internships.

### Plan Ahead

We recommend that you begin recruiting interns **at least six months prior** to the expected start date. This allows sufficient time for the candidate to obtain academic approvals, and gives you time to complete the onboarding process at your organization.

### Outcomes of an Internship?

- Employers position their company to become an employer of choice on campus, therefore, creating a pipeline of future career employees ready to hit the ground running upon graduation.
- Employers convert interns to full time employees over 50% of the time!
- Students gain valuable experience while honing their professional skills and a working knowledge of an industry, including developing soft skills essential to contribute to an organizations future growth.
- Employers ultimately improve society by producing workers who add great value to the economy.

## Next Steps?

1. **Create** an employer profile in [Handshake](#), and post your internship position(s) on the platform.
2. **Attend** Career Services events on campus and virtual to network with developing student talent.
3. **Evaluate** candidates. The Career Services team is able to help facilitate the evaluation process by facilitating on-campus interview sessions.
4. **Hire** a student, and begin a mentoring relationship.
5. **Report** the hire to [Deborah Schummer](#) for data collection and reporting.
6. **Provide** feedback for continual improvement of the process.

## Contact Information

For more information about NU and how to connect with their students, contact [Deborah Schummer](#), Career Services & Internship Coordinator | 989-837-4430 | [LinkedIn](#)

# Safeguarding Against Legal Disputes

## Paid/Unpaid Internships

According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), the leading source of information and guidance on the employment of the college educated, “The decision whether or not to compensate interns is a big issue today considering a recent heightened scrutiny of internships and employers. In May 2010, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) issued a six-part test to determine if an employer is required to provide payment for an internship.”

### **If the following criteria are met, an employer is not legally required to pay an intern:**

1. The internship, even though it includes actual operation of the facilities of the employer, is similar to training that would be given in the educational environment;
2. The internship experience is for the benefit of the intern;
3. The intern does not displace regular employees;
4. The employer that provides the training derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the intern, and on occasion its operations may be impeded;
5. The intern is not necessarily entitled to a job at the conclusion of the internship; and
6. The employer and the intern understand that the intern is not entitled to wages. (NACE: <http://www.naceweb.org/j022015/internship-legal-issues.aspx>)

### **Criteria for Internships According to NACE**

If the above criteria are met/followed, it is the opinion of NACE, that the educational experience can be considered a legitimate internship.

To protect your company from legal retaliation, NU recommends your internship framework meet these guidelines:

- The experience must be an extension of the classroom: a learning experience that provides for applying the knowledge gained in the classroom. It must not be simply to advance the operations of the employer or be the work that a regular employee would routinely perform.
- The skills or knowledge learned must be transferable to other employment settings.
- The experience has a defined beginning and end, and a job description with desired qualifications.
- There are clearly defined learning objectives/goals related to the professional goals of the student’s academic coursework.
- There is supervision by a professional with expertise and educational and/or professional background in the field of the experience.
- There is routine feedback by the experienced supervisor.
- There are resources, equipment, and facilities provided by the host employer that support learning objectives/goals.

## Resources for Employers

“15 Best Practices for Internship Programs” <http://www.naceweb.org/internships/15-best-practices.aspx>

Employer Guide to Structuring a Successful Internship Program. <http://web.uri.edu/experience/files/RI-Employer-Guide-Good-Internships-are-Good-Business.pdf>

Guidelines regarding the legal issues of Internships: <http://www.naceweb.org/j022015/internship-legal-issues.aspx>

NACE, National Association of Colleges and Employers, is an excellent resource for helping employers design and develop an effective internship program. Here is their main website:

[www.naceweb.org](http://www.naceweb.org)

“Tips for Developing an Internship Program Schedule”

<http://www.naceweb.org/s12102014/develop-internship-program-schedule.aspx>

“Tips for Maintaining Ties with Interns”

<http://www.naceweb.org/s07232014/maintaining-relationship-with-interns.aspx>



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