

# Employer Internship Guide



**Massachusetts College of Liberal**

**Career Services**

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## **MISSION:**

Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA) is the Commonwealth's public liberal arts college and a campus of the Massachusetts state university system. MCLA promotes excellence in learning and teaching, innovative scholarship, intellectual creativity, public service, applied knowledge, and active and responsible citizenship. MCLA prepares its graduates to be practical problem solvers and engaged, resilient global citizens.

MCLA Career Services focuses on a multi-step process that will prepare students for meaningful careers in the ever-changing world of work. This includes ensuring student readiness to enter the world of work or graduate studies upon completing an MCLA Degree, along with internships, job shadows, or other professional and/or volunteer experiences. We also encourage students and alumni to consider the changes that will likely occur later on in their respective careers. We aim to educate them regarding confident navigation of these changes and related challenges/opportunities.

## **INTERNSHIPS DEFINED:**

An internship is a short-term, supervised opportunity for students to gain practical experience in a particular field. Some internships are paid, while others are unpaid. Any internship can be either credit bearing or non-credit bearing. MCLA awards one credit for every 45 internship hours completed. It is at the discretion of the supervisor regarding how these hours are to be distributed. If a student requests academic credit for an internship, the student must establish this through an MCLA faculty sponsor with approval from a department chairperson. This process is completed through an online application process.

Before agreeing to accept an intern, identify what specific type of work needs to be completed. To be considered an internship, a position must:

- Provide a clear job description with desired qualifications.
- Have clearly defined learning objectives/goals that are agreed upon by both the supervisor and the intern. This information is to be completed as part of the MCLA Internship Application.
- Provide a learning experience that applies knowledge gained in the classroom directly to the work environment.
- Be supervised by a professional who will offer routine feedback to the intern and will complete formal evaluations at the mid-point and conclusion of the internship. Supervisors may elect to use their own evaluation form or that which is available through the MCLA Career Services Office.
- Maintain a consistent work schedule and have responsibilities similar to that of a staff member.

## CREATING AN EFFECTIVE INTERNSHIP JOB DESCRIPTION:

The creation of a detailed and accurate job description is essential to the internship process. It helps to identify the overall mission of the organization and also ensures that the intern understands their expectations and responsibilities. The following elements should be included in an internship job description:

- **Organization name/department:** Include the name of the organization, the particular department for which the intern will be working, and the location of the organization.
- **Job title:** State the job title. The most effective job titles are those that relate the type of work that is to be performed by the intern.
- **Job objective:** Explain the impact this position will have on the company and how it relates to the overall missions/goals of the organization.
- **Duties and responsibilities:** Please be as specific as possible.
- **Supervision:** Include the title of the intern's supervisor, where the supervisor is located, and the management structure.
- **Required/preferred qualifications:** Focus on specific skill sets rather than just on majors/academic programs.
- **Compensation:** Compensation need not be restricted to hourly pay. Compensation could include a one-time stipend or any other appropriate method. Think creatively in terms of what the intern will be getting out of the experience. Compensation is not required in all cases.
- **How to apply:** Offer clear directions so candidates know how to apply and who to contact.

*\*Please refer to the sample internship job description on page five as a guide to further assist you if necessary.*

## PREPARING FOR AN INTERN:

If you are considering hosting an intern, it is critically important that your organization be fully prepared to do so. A review of the following checklist should help to identify where your company stands. While it is not necessary to meet each criteria, this checklist provides a good starting point.

### Supervision:

- We have someone available to train, supervisor and mentor an intern. Responsibilities may include:
  - Orientation for new interns
  - Outlining learning objectives with the intern. This information is to be completed by the student as part of the MCLA Internship Application.
  - Conducting regularly scheduled meetings with the intern.
  - Completing formal evaluations on behalf of the intern at the midway point and conclusion of the semester. Supervisors may elect to use their own evaluation form or that which can be provided by the MCLA Career Services Office.
- The intern's supervisor will have some degree of expertise in the area in which the intern will be working.

## **Resources:**

- We will collaborate with the student on the completion of the MCLA Internship Application at the start of each internship.
- We have the time to support an intern.
- We have the human resources to support an intern.
- We have the physical resources to support an intern, including a safe and adequate work space.
- We will contact the MCLA Internship Coordinator or faculty sponsor if we have any questions or concerns at any point during the internship process. Contact information for the MCLA Internship Coordinator is listed below:

Anthony Napolitano  
[anthony.napolitano.jr@mcla.edu](mailto:anthony.napolitano.jr@mcla.edu)  
413-662-5332

## **Work/projects:**

- We have quality work assignments for the intern. These may include:
  - Assisting/creating/designing/overseeing specific programs or projects.
  - Participation in staff or team meetings.
  - Ability to shadow upper level leadership.
- Work assignments and goals will be challenging yet attainable.
- An intern will be able to apply the knowledge they have acquired in the classroom and apply it to the workplace.

## **WELCOMING YOUR NEW INTERN:**

Helping an intern feel welcomed and comfortable within your organization is of the utmost importance. It is of benefit to both the supervisor and the intern to discuss expectations prior to the start of the internship. Doing so helps the intern become settled in his/her role within your organization. It also helps the supervisor identify what it is that the intern is hoping to learn from this experience. The following is a list of steps that will help you to welcome your new intern and ensure that the process goes smoothly.

- Collaborate with the student on the completion of the MCLA Internship Application.
- Have the intern complete any orientation procedures that are currently in place for company employees. Such procedures should address important company policies such as:
  - Attendance and punctuality
  - Confidentiality
  - Dress code
  - Parking
  - Telephone use (both personal and company)
  - Use of office equipment and internet
  - Work calendar times and dates
- Identify and discuss:
  - Job description

- Main projects
  - Expected outcomes for both parties
  - Action plan
- Set a regular schedule for evaluation meetings
  - Inform the intern of departmental/staff meetings
  - Identify a back-up supervisor who can answer the intern's questions
  - Provide a tour of the facility and introduction to staff members

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:**

#### **When should I start looking for an intern?**

Typically internship descriptions are posted at least two months prior to the proposed start date with at least a one-month window allowed for application submission. Students typically need to have secured an internship by the last week of August for fall semester, the second week of January for spring semester, and the first week of May for summer in order to receive academic credit.

#### **How many hours can a student work?**

This depends upon the department requirements for academic internships and labor laws. The intern can be part-time and work less than 20 hours per week or full-time and work 40 hours or more per week. If a student is in school full-time, 10-15 hours per week is recommended.

#### **How does a student obtain academic credit for an internship experience?**

Credit requirements for internships vary by academic program. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure academic requirements are being met.

#### **What if I want to hire the student at the conclusion of the internship?**

Make an offer to the student at the end of the internship before they begin interviewing with other employers.

## **SAMPLE INTERNSHIP DESCRIPTION**

**Company Name:** Ace Company

**Job Title:** Business Development Intern

**Reports to:** Vice President of Business Development, Jane Smith

### **Opportunities and experience for the intern:**

The business development intern will be an integral part of a quickly evolving start-up, Ace Company, as well as an established and continually expanding non-profit, 501(c) (3) registered philanthropic foundation. This position will provide an opportunity to transfer knowledge obtained in the classroom into relevant business development activities. Daily interaction with a number of knowledgeable professionals will provide the intern with valuable insight into the entrepreneurial experience. At the same time, the intern will always be encouraged to contribute new information and a fresh perspective.

### **Duties and responsibilities:**

The intern will assist and collaborate with the company/foundation president and the vice-president of business development, as well as the board chair, business consultants, and contractors in all aspects of the department including but not limited to:

- Product and market research
- Non-profit fundraising activities
- Proposal and grant writing
- Networking with prospective clients, business associates, and fellow entrepreneurs
- Overseeing and continuing to develop the donation/gift database

### **Required skills and attributes:**

- Desire to comprehend marketing and sales strategies
- Highly focused on providing top quality customer service
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Open-minded and sensitive to the cultural, ethnic, religious, and daily activity norms from around the world
- Ability to organize and maintain a large database
- Ability to communicate with those for whom English is a second language

**Compensation:** \$12/hour

**How to apply:** Email, resume, cover letter, and writing samples to [Jane.Smith@acecompany.com](mailto:Jane.Smith@acecompany.com)

## Internship Contract

The following contract is designed to assist in providing a high-quality internship experience for both the intern and the employer. This form should be completed together by the intern and the immediate supervisor. Both parties should provide input into the completion of this form and agree to its terms. Students receiving academic credit for the internship may have a separate academic contract to complete. Please note that this is not a legal contract.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Phone/Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Internship Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Internship Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer/Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Phone/Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Internship Begins: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Internship Ends: \_\_\_\_\_

Goals to be accomplished during the Internship:

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

4) \_\_\_\_\_

5) \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby agree to participate in the Internship Program as outlined for the dates indicated above.

Employer/Supervisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_