

Guidelines for On-Site Internship Supervisors

York College of Pennsylvania

1. Provide the intern with meaningful work.

The following may help with this:

- Get involved with the initial internship for academic credit learning contract the intern brings. Discuss with the intern what their learning goals are and how these goals may be accomplished through their experiences during the internship. Review the learning contract regularly with the intern.
- Strive to find an on-going balance of challenge and support in the work that the intern is doing. Discuss with the intern what they can do related to prior coursework, skills, knowledge, etc. and structure the work accordingly. Be as specific as possible. Interns, like others in the process of learning, need structure so they don't become overwhelmed, confused or bored.

2. Make the intern feel welcome at the internship.

The following may help with this:

- Orient your intern to their new workplace, physically and/or virtually. This might take the form of a formal orientation program or merely a walk around the office, or something in between depending on the size and structure of your organization. Give interns an overview of your organization. Explain who does what and how it relates to what the intern's role and duties will be.
- Give your intern the resources they need to do the job. Give the intern a desk, point out the supply room, and introduce the appropriate people. If you give the message that the intern is unimportant, you could miss out on valuable contributions to your projects.
- Provide the intern with opportunities to understand the mission, goals, organizational structure, and people in the organization. Encouraging informational interviews throughout the organization can provide helpful context, functional and comparative information which allow the intern to better understand operations and pathways.

3. Establish and maintain clear communication and expectations with the intern.

The following may help with this:

- Have a discussion in which you set clear expectations regarding attire, punctuality, the intern's work schedule, cell phone/office phone use, web/e-mail policies, and any other policies or procedures relevant to your site. In particular, be sure to discuss health & safety policies (ie. the sexual harassment policy, emergency procedures, etc.) so as to reasonably ensure the intern's safety during the internship.
- Set clear beginning and ending dates for the internship and let the intern know about your absentee/vacation policies/expectations. Please note that the student's internship-for-academic-credit will be finished at the end of the semester even if the intern is invited to continue working for your company/organization.
- Provide regular opportunities or scheduled meetings to connect with the intern to discuss projects, learning, progress and goals.
- **Give your intern lots of feedback** Especially if your interns have never done this kind of work before, they'll want to know if their work is measuring up to your expectations. No matter what the level of experience, they need you, as a more experienced professional, to let them know if their work is officially "okay". Periodically, examine what your intern has produced and make suggestions.

4. Assign a mentor or supervisor who will be available for the intern to talk with about the experience.

The following may help with this:

- Choose the internship supervisor carefully. This person doesn't have to be a teacher per se, but should be selected because he or she likes to teach or train and has the time and resources to do it. If the person you select has never mentored an intern before, give them some basic training in mentoring.
- Watch for signs that the intern is confused or bored. As often as silence means that an intern is busy, it also could mean that he or she is confused and shy about telling you so. See whether the intern is trying to do anything that requires someone else's input. Make sure that work is taking precedence over web browsing. Paying attention early helps you head off problems and bad habits early on.

5. Evaluate the intern's progress formally and informally.

- You will receive a copy of the intern evaluation approximately mid-way through the semester to help you provide more effective feedback to the intern, however it is the end of experience evaluation that is required for the student to complete the graded portion of the experience. Toward the end of the semester, we will email you a link to the intern evaluation, which we ask you to complete and share with the intern.. If you should need another copy of the form, or the link, please contact internship@ycp.edu
- Remember those goals you outlined with your intern before the experience began? Please revisit them regularly time to time to see how well you and your intern are meeting those goals. Informal evaluations are an opportunity to give feedback to the intern about his or her performance.

Who's Who in Our Internship for Academic Credit Process

On-Site Supervisor: The individual at your organization who is serving as the student's direct supervisor/mentor for the experience.

Faculty Internship Advisor: The faculty member from York College of Pennsylvania who supervises the student on behalf of the college, determines the academic components of the experience, and assigns the student a grade. This individual varies from internship to internship-if you are unsure of who the faculty supervisor is for this internship, please ask your intern for the name of this person or refer to the initial application that was completed prior to the internship and sent via email.

Career Development Center:

Coordinates internship postings, oversees the overall application process, and facilitates communication between the site and the college.

Adapted from "Starting and Maintaining a Quality Internship Program" by Mike True