Internships

Student Frequently Asked Questions

Samford University Career Development Center

What is an internship and why should I do one?

An internship is typically a one-semester work experience highly related to your major or minor. It has a definite beginning and end, includes real-world work experience, and involves direct supervision by an employer. Internships connect your academic coursework to careers, allow you to gain valuable work experience in a field you may want to pursue, and help make you much more marketable to employers after graduation.

When should I do an internship?

Because employers usually prefer students to have a certain amount of relevant coursework completed before an internship, students are typically the most marketable after completing their junior year, although some employers will host students during their junior year (or earlier) as well.

How do I find an internship?

It sometimes can take as much work to find an internship as to find a full-time position, so you'll want to use all of the resources available to you, including setting up an appointment with a counselor in the Career Development Center for individualized assistance. HireSamford.com, our job posting site, is used by employers to post both full-time and internship positions. Talk with your academic advisor for ideas and, of course, use the internet. Helpful links may also be found on the Find a Job or Internship page of the website. Before you start *applying* for internships, we strongly encourage you to create a resume and have it critiqued by the Career Development Center. Resume examples can be found under Resumes & Interviewing page on the Career Development Center's webpage.

What steps do I need to take to engage in an internship?

1) The semester before you wish to intern, ask a professor in your major if s/he would be willing to be the "Instructor of Record", i.e., the faculty member to oversee the academic components of your internship, including assigning the grade. Some departments have one professor oversee all of the internships, and in some departments any professor can oversee them.
2) Start working to secure an internship, using all resources such as the Career Development Center, faculty, HireSamford.com, networking, etc. Start this process early!
3) In conjunction with the person who will be your supervisor at the internship site, complete all fields of the Internship Learning Agreement or contract required by your department, including securing all signatures.
4) Submit the Internship Learning Agreement or contract to your Internship Instructor of Record BEFORE you begin your internship.
5) Confirm with your Internship Instructor of Record that s/he will be registering you for the internship course.

Are internships paid?

Internships may or may not be paid, depending on the major and the industry. Many are not, but some are. For example, accounting internships are almost always paid, and others are almost never paid. You will want to find this out before you accept an internship. Remember, internships are incredibly valuable in that you are gaining experience relevant to your major while helping confirm you are heading in the right career direction (or not).

What kind of hours or other requirements are involved?
To receive 3 hours of academic credit for an internship, interns typically work between 10-20 hours per week per semester, but this will depend on the requirements set by the academic department. The Instructor of Record will usually assign other academic components to the internship to help you relate your work experience to your major. Some of these might include assigned readings, journals, or reflection papers.

How much academic credit will I receive?
See above.

How are internships graded/ evaluated?
Internship grades are assigned by the Instructor of Record, usually with input from your Site Supervisor.

What if I want to do an out-of-state internship?
The same information as mentioned above applies, but your Instructor of Record MUST also notify Muriel Warren in the Office of Compliance at medward4@samford.edu or (205) 726-4495 in order for Samford to be in compliance with state authorization laws.

What if I want to do an internship overseas?
The same information as mentioned above applies, but you MUST also contact the Global Engagement Office 205-726-2741 to schedule a time to meet with a staff member for important information about traveling overseas for an academic course/internship.

Do I have to pay tuition if I do an internship in the summer when I'm not taking other classes?
Yes, if you are receiving academic credit, you must pay tuition for those hours.

Where can I find out more information?
Contact the Career Development Center and/or your faculty member for additional information.