

**Department of Computer Science
William Paterson University**

Guidelines for Students Considering and Conducting an Internship

1. Finding an internship opportunity is the responsibility of the student. Faculty members often know of several opportunities and corporate contacts. The department secretary will post flyers of openings on departmental bulletin boards. The career services office also keeps records of positions available. Finding a faculty sponsor first may help facilitate matters.
2. Read all the internship documentation provided and complete all forms and procedures in a timely manner for approval at all levels.
3. Read the position description carefully. Be sure your background, attributes (such as maturity, diligence, ...) and skills match those expected. Verify that you actually know and have ability in the specific areas cited. Even so, read and practice in advance as much as possible. Prior textbook knowledge may prove insufficient alone; read manuals, trade-books, web pages, library texts, and any other reliable professional source available. Ask faculty for titles of references.
4. Become familiar (in advance) with the company or institution in which you shall be interning. Know their mission, goals, or products. Know their history, background information, location/directions, and the organizational hierarchy. Good sources are the web and reference section of the library.
5. Prepare to communicate confidently, as a professional with command, competence, courtesy, and candor. COMM 110 is a great course to hone verbal communication skills. Breathe deeply to reduce stress or anxiety prior to speech. Avoid “shallow” speech, mumbling, avoiding eye contact, and other bad habits. The career services office can help refine your interview skills with videos and practice sessions.
6. Once the an internship is approved, when you contact the designated field supervisor, introduce yourself as a student seeking internship, including name, CS department, university/college, background, and the particular position/ assignment sought. Ask for specifics such as when to report, the expected hours, exactly where (building/room number), to whom to report, parking arrangements, and other pragmatics. To demonstrate greater confidence, study in advance directions to get there and confirm them verbally; otherwise, ask.
7. Find out about any uniforms or dress codes. Adhere to them explicitly. While students dress by personal preference, an intern, as a working professional, is a representative of their respective institution and must dress accordingly. Avoid bad personal habits (nail biting, disheveled clothes/appearance, gum/candy, eating/drinking in inappropriate areas, ...) It reflects poorly on the company.

8. Know and follow your schedule of working hours. Be punctual. Don't exceed allotted times for breaks and lunch. To that effect, consider internal cafeterias as opposed to external restaurants, with the added benefit of familiarizing with fellow employees and managers. During breaks, where appropriate, socialize and be amiable, following social cues and norms that will become evident.
9. Follow the specification of your job position. Be an asset to your institution of internship. Learn as much as possible. Be excellent! Apply all your knowledge, skills, and energy towards solving problems and contributing value to your institution. Be always helpful, alert, and professional. Where group work is expected, be a team-player and carry at least your load. Become technically expert without stereotypic behaviors such as the recluse asocial technicians or the prideful boasting hacker.
10. Follow the ACM's or IEEE's Code of Ethics. Honesty, reliability, diligence, and integrity are as necessary as technical expertise. No prospective employer wants or should tolerate anyone deficient in those attributes.
11. Maintain regular contact with your faculty sponsor. Keep records of your work/ work-hours, projects, and any other progress reports, within the scope of permitted confidentiality constraints. Update your resume with the internship and the experience/skills developed therein.
12. Demonstrate consistently zeal, dedication, expertise, hard work, and team-spirit. Exceed all expectations. A well executed internship often results in a permanent job upon completion and promotion thereafter. Become that indispensable stellar employee, a person others depend upon, one worthy of investment.