Try It!

Getting Internships & Career-Related Experience

Why should you gain experience?
You can gain career-related experience through a number of avenues, which will have a direct impact on your professional development and make you marketable to employers. More than 80% of employers state that candidate experience is a factor in hiring decisions.

These experiences help you confirm, or deny, career interests, develop skills that enhance your employability, develop professional contacts, and possibly gain a full-time job.

How can you get this experience?
- Internships
- Volunteering
- Job Shadowing
- Part-time/Seasonal Jobs
- Research (in your major) – on-campus or off-campus
- Student Activities/Clubs

Do you want to pursue any of the above experiences, but not sure how to get started? Schedule an appointment with a Career Coach to get going!

What is an Internship?
Internships are structured and supervised professional experiences in a workplace in which the student will gain professional work experience and skills, and are a great way to explore potential careers. They can be paid or unpaid, for credit or not, in the Virginia area or half way around the world.

Why have an Internship?
Internships will help you explore potential careers and apply your academic knowledge in a work setting. Some students will leave their internship excited about a career field, while others may be ready to explore other options. If you are able to intern early in your college experience, you will have more time to explore your career options while ruling out others.

Benefits of Completing an Internship:
- Increase communication skills in a work environment
- Clarify career interests and goals
- Connect your classroom learning with the work environment
- Learn and develop personal responsibility and commitment
- Gain confidence by learning about personal strengths and weaknesses
- Test career choices early and graduate with a better sense of your interests
- Gain a competitive edge in the job-market
- Establish a network of professional contacts

Completing an internship is like test driving a car for your career. You would not buy a car without testing it out, so why commit to a career without experiencing it first?

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Before you Search, Ask yourself…

✓ What are your skills, values, and interests? Figuring these out will help you determine the companies/industries you target in your search.
✓ Does your resume reflect your skills and interests? If not, it is time for a review with a Career Coach!
✓ Where do you want to intern? Hometowns, out-of-state, abroad are all possibilities!
✓ What time of year? Most students intern the summer(s) between JR and SR year, but you can have more than one.
✓ What career field do you want to explore?
✓ Do you need to get paid?
✓ How many hours per week can you work? 15-20, or more?
✓ How much time are you ready to devote to your internship search?

Did You Know?…

An internship can take at least a few months to find, so plan to begin early! Some industries, such as the federal government and business, begin applications and interviews as early as October.

Do Your Homework!

TigerConnections – Check often as new opportunities are added daily by employers throughout the country. (www.tigerconnections.com; download the app – search ‘Careers by Symplicity’)

Career Education Resource Library & Website – Here you will find dozens of resources including guides helping you search for opportunities in a particular career field, location or company. http://www.hsc.edu/Career-Education.html

Contact Your Department of Study – Meet with your advisor or one of your professors to obtain leads in your specific program of study.

Network, Network, Network! – Find an alumnus or professional in your field of interest who can provide you with invaluable leads. Family, friends, former coaches, teachers, supervisors, and family of your friends also make great potential contacts. Schedule an appointment with a Career Coach and let us help you get started.

Campus E-mail & Social Media – Career Education and Vocational Reflection sends periodic updates regarding new internships that have been listed. Connect with us on Twitter @hsccareers and H-SC Career Education Office on Facebook.

Career Fairs & Employer Visits – Stay tuned to Career Education for local and regional career fairs, and employers/recruiters who visit Hampden-Sydney. This is the easiest way to get yourself talking with a recruiter and company you are interested in!

Meet with a Career Coach – The best way to begin your internship search and devise a plan!

MAKE YOUR Appointment TODAY (434) 223-6106 OR Stop by Bagby 209 Ask about our walk-in hours