



# Internship Bill of Rights and Responsibilities

## The Model Partnership for Students, Employers and Educational Institutions

The Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars (TWC) has been, for nearly 40 years, advancing experiential learning in higher education. TWC, a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit organization, has worked with hundreds of colleges, thousands of students and scores of internship sites to create valuable academic internship programs. For the first time TWC is making its standards public to help inform best practice for all academic internship experiences.

We propose that universities, colleges and educational institutions embrace this Internship Bill of Rights and Responsibilities to create structured learning conditions based on empirical evidence for both interns and internship sites. The chart below explains how the intern, intern supervisor and educational institution can work together effectively.

### Respect and Professionalism

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#### Internship Site

Foster a professional environment free of discrimination, where the intern enjoys the same respect as other team members.

#### Intern

Maintain professionalism in all internship interactions, and respect office policies and project deadlines.

#### Educational Institution\*

Coordinate and implement structured pre-internship advising sessions to set appropriate expectations for success in the workplace environment and guide students to identify an internship site that matches their professional and academic goals.

### Goals

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#### Internship Site

Facilitate goal setting with each intern. Monitor and provide feedback regularly about progress.

#### Intern

Establish individual and professional goals and commit to pursuing them.

#### Educational Institution\*

Provide intern with framework for Individual Development Plan to evaluate current skill set and specific areas for growth, and share directly with the intern supervisor.

### Structured Environment

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#### Internship Site

Allocate resources to prepare for intern. Explain organizational culture and structure.

#### Intern

Understand work environment, organizational structure and culture.

#### Educational Institution\*

Require the intern supervisor and intern to complete an Internship Agreement outlining professional and academic commitments and review with intern supervisor.

### Academic Transfer

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#### Internship Site

Facilitate opportunities for intern to apply academic skills and knowledge to workplace environment.

#### Intern

Actively use workplace experience to enhance academic growth and achievement.

#### Educational Institution\*

Make academic credit available for the internship experience, provided it meets standards predetermined by the credit-awarding institution. Provide supplemental seminars and courses that require the intern to reflect on broader aspects of the experience through an academic lens.

## Self-Reflection

# 5



### Internship Site

Identify intern successes and strengths and offer constructive feedback on progress toward goals.

### Intern

Reflect systematically and deeply on the entire internship and its relevance to future professional and personal development.

### Educational Institution\*

Require interns to document work and accomplishments, reflect on experiences and identify specific leadership skills.

## Impactful Contribution

# 6



### Internship Site

Provide meaningful projects and tasks that foster learning and application.

### Intern

Take initiative, identifying challenging learning opportunities that maximize the internship experience.

### Educational Institution\*

Conduct site visit to discuss intern's initial progress and future expectations in formal setting with intern's supervisor.

## Mentoring

# 7



### Internship Site

Cultivate an environment that promotes mentorship for career planning. Provide advice, counseling and support to intern.

### Intern

Proactively seek and embrace mentoring relationships.

### Educational Institution\*

Provide intern with an educator who serves as facilitator, mentor and evaluator during the experience.

## Skills, knowledge and disposition

# 8



### Internship Site

Provide adequate instruction, resources, opportunities and training.

### Intern

Demonstrate acquisition of predetermined proficiencies and additional skills and competencies.

### Educational Institution\*

Engage intern with activities that complement the internship experience, such as leadership training, civic engagement and professional development workshops.

## Inclusive Work Setting

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### Internship Site

Build an environment that integrates interns into work and social activities.

### Intern

Maximize opportunities to become part of the team.

### Educational Institution\*

Engage intern in a structured process to evaluate potential internship opportunities and determine a match that meets his or her academic and professional goals.

## Active Network

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### Internship Site

Make it possible for the intern to interact with colleagues throughout the organization and within their field of interest.

### Intern

Take full advantage of opportunities to network with professionals and peers.

### Educational Institution\*

Create opportunities for intern to conduct informational interviews with professionals within the internship site, the alumni network of the educational institution or intern's field of interest.

\* More than 400 colleges and universities in the United States and around the world partner with TWC to provide the structure and oversight of their academic internship programs. We fulfill this role through our 80 professional staff, 40 adjunct faculty, 10 resident advisors and active partnerships with hundreds of internship sites. Individual colleges and universities should review their own staffing needs for part- and full-time internship programs they host or sponsor.