WELCOME TO THE SMU CAREER VOLUNTEERS EXTERNSHIP PROGRAM!

Hosting a student for a day of job shadowing is a mutually rewarding experience. Alumni volunteers are responsible for providing meaningful experiences for their externs. Volunteers can assist students in developing professional networks and serve as links to the career world. The end goal is to assist their extern in preparing for their roles as successful professionals. Alumni and students will be matched based on the career path of the alumnus and the career interest of the student.

We believe all of these experiences have the potential to be valuable – even if the student ends up learning that they do *not* fit with the career that they’ve chosen to shadow! In fact, this is very valuable knowledge. Discerning the right fit and career path can be a difficult endeavor, and these externships provide the chance for insight into both positives and negatives about jobs they might choose to pursue.

SPRING EXTERNSHIP TIMELINE

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<tr>
<th>IMPORTANT PROGRAM DATES</th>
<th>PROGRAM DETAILS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, March 29 – Tuesday, April 18</td>
<td>SMU Connection Application Open</td>
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<td>Monday, April 17 – Friday, April 28</td>
<td>Mandatory Student Orientations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, May 5th</td>
<td>Match Deadline: All matches completed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, May 3rd – Friday, May 12th</td>
<td>Student Introductions and Outreach to Alumni Host: Set up mutually convenient date</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, May 3rd – Friday, May 12th</td>
<td>Pre-Externship Check-In: Submit date of visit and 1 paragraph of research on host’s employer</td>
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<td>Monday, May 15 – Friday, June 9th</td>
<td>EXTERNSHIPS!</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, June 12th</td>
<td>Reflections Due: Students submit reflection/survey form</td>
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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS BY ALUMNI ABOUT EXTERNSHIPS

I’m not familiar with externships. What are the objectives?
The externship is designed for the student to spend a day with a professional and get a snapshot of a day in the life of the professional. The immersion will give the student a clearer picture of what the career field entails. The goal is to facilitate a prospective career fit for the student.

Will the student be “prepped” before he or she arrives?
Yes, the student is expected to be punctual and wear professional attire. The student will have researched your organization and been coached in conducting an informational interview. Please put the student at ease and create a comfortable atmosphere. This may be his or her first office visit, and he or she will most likely not have any work experience in your career field.

I don’t know what to do with an extern. What does a typical schedule include?
The best activities to do with your extern are those that shed light on the day-to-day workings of your position and organization. With the goal being understanding potential career fit, it is important that your extern understands the glamorous to mundane aspects of your job! Here is a sample schedule:

- Start by visiting with the student and getting to know his or her interests. Find out more about his or her campus and extracurricular activities, including summer jobs or internships.
- Provide a capsule of what employees in your department do. Possibly organize a schedule for the student to have one-on-one informational interviews with people in your department who have different roles in your organization.
- If appropriate, attend a staff meeting.
- Address questions regarding the career field, training programs and suggestions for course studies and degrees.

What is my time commitment?
The student will visit for the day. You may wish to organize a schedule that exposes the student to several people in your organization. The student will be on site during the lunch hour. You may invite a recent college graduate or other members of the organization to host the student during lunch.

What expenses will I incur?
Externs are not paid. The student is responsible for his or her housing and travel. No course credit is offered.
Is this similar to interviewing a job candidate?
No, the externship program is not designed as a recruiting method. The goal is to assist the student in making well-informed career decisions. However, you are welcome to keep in touch with the student and inquire at a later date if he or she is interested in an internship or a job. We have had many success stories of externs going on to internships at their host organization, while others have gained the valuable insight that they may not wish to continue pursuing this career path! Both are important experiences that we support and celebrate.

Contact us with questions:

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