Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q. When should I start looking for an internship?
A. Start early! For summer internships, start searching in the fall and continue throughout the spring. During school breaks (Thanksgiving, Christmas, fall and spring breaks). For fall and spring internships, apply immediately to meet deadlines.

Q. Who and where are the internship employers?
A. A wide variety of employers seek VSU students for internships (local, national, and international levels). Many, many resources are available to assist you in searching. Visit the Career Services website. Also, various internship directories are available within Career Services. Take the initiative and conduct internship searches independently as well.

Q. Are internships paid or unpaid?
A. Internships can be paid or unpaid; however, this depends on employers’ preferences, the career field, and the financial conditions that exist.

Q. What if I don’t have any experience related to my major or career goals?
A. That’s okay, and somewhat typical for college students. On your resume, include employment not related to your career goals because this tells potential employers several things which are relevant: you’ve had the responsibility of having a job and (hopefully) know what it means to show up on time, get along with others, follow directions, take initiative, etc. Include college activities, honors, and volunteer work.

Q. Am I guaranteed a position?
A. No, applying for internships is competitive. Employers evaluate your resume and compare you to your peers at VSU and other colleges. Students with higher GPAs and appropriate extracurricular experience are more likely to receive job offers.

Steps to Take Upon Accepting An Internship Offer

1. Inform the Internship Program Coordinator
2. Fill out the Internship Offer Survey
3. Complete and sign the Student Internship Agreement
4. Notify your Academic Advisor and adhere to your academic department’s requirements and procedures for obtaining course credit, if desired.

CONGRATULATIONS!
PARTICIPATE SUCCESSFULLY IN YOUR INTERNSHIP!

The Internship Program
“Learning in Action”

Career Services

P.O. Box 9410
Memorial Hall, 2nd Floor
Petersburg, VA 23806
Telephone: 804-524-5211
Fax: 804-524-5212
E-mail: dbeaton@vsu.edu

For more information, contact:
Ms. Darrell Mallory Beaton
Career Counselor/Internship Program Coordinator
The mission of The Internship Program is to assist and prepare students in securing hands-on work experience related to their major and career goals. The ultimate goal is to assure that students acquire the experience and skills needed to gain the competitive edge when entering the global workforce.

What is an Internship?
An internship is usually a highly structured and supervised work experience that is well-defined, for which a student usually earns course credit.

Advantages of Student Participation
Today, it takes more than a fancy degree from an institution of higher learning for students to land a position in their career of choice. Yes, employers are very impressed with individuals who demonstrate higher levels of scholastic and academic excellence. However, experience or lack of experience plays a major role when hiring decisions are made. Employers want to know what prospective workers can bring to the table. An internship gives students the experience and skills they will need to be marketable in today’s workforce.

Benefits of Interning
1. Allows students the opportunity to gain hands-on experience, preferably related to their major or career interests and goals.
2. Gives students the experience, skills, and confidence they will need to become more marketable when entering the workforce.
3. Offers students the chance to establish a professional network.

4. Offers students the chance to explore career options.
5. Gives students the chance to enrich their college curriculum and earn course credit.
6. Gives students the opportunity to defray a substantial portion of their college expenses.

Requirements for applying
1. Must be a VSU student who is currently enrolled.
2. Students enrolled in any major, undergraduate and graduate, may apply.
3. Must have a 2.0 minimum Grade Point Average (GPA).

Process for Prospective Interns
1. Meet with your Career Counselor and fill out the Internship Interest form.
2. Schedule an appointment with your Career Counselor to develop your resume.
3. Before you begin searching for internships, consult with your Academic Advisor in your department to learn about their requirements and procedures.
4. Schedule an appointment with your Career Counselor to develop an Individual Career Action Plan (ICAP) to assist you in the job search process.

How to Find Internships?
Employers use a variety of methods to advertise and recruit for internship positions, so you will need to use a variety of job search strategies to locate them. To assist you in getting started, schedule a counseling session with your Career Counselor who will help you design an Individual Career Action Plan (ICAP), which is a personalized career plan to meet your needs.

Salary
Varies among employers and geographic locations and is primarily at the discretion of the employer. Internships may be paid or non-paid. Be aware that in some career fields, unpaid internships are common. Remember, however, that even though an internship may be unpaid, it may be the best way to obtain career-related experience. Pay rates are often based on the number of credit hours you have completed.

Housing
Interns, aided by suggestions from employers and former participants, find their own lodging in company housing, apartments, dormitories or private homes.

Supervision and Monitoring
Supervision and monitoring are essential parts of the formal internship learning experience. An on-site supervisor will be appointed to guide, direct, and mentor the intern. The employer should formulate a learning agreement to attain the best possible learning experience. The contract should entail clear expectations of the experience and what the final results should be. The intern’s progress will be monitored through written correspondence, site visits, phone calls, and evaluations. Truly effective supervision and monitoring entail active participation by the employer, intern, Advisor, and Internship Program Coordinator.

Evaluation of the Internship
The Supervisor, Internship Program Coordinator and Advisor will assess the student intern’s progress through written final evaluations. Students will also be given the opportunity to evaluate their experience and employer.

Course Credit
The authority to grant course credit is determined by, and is at the discretion of, the academic departments. Consult with your department regarding specific guidelines or requirements.