University of North Texas at Dallas
Employer and Community Partnership Manual

REV 6/16/2017
Introduction

Thank you for your interest in recruiting students from the University of North Texas at Dallas. We hope this partnership will be beneficial for your organization and our student.

UNT Dallas’ mission is to empower students, transform lives, and strengthen communities. One of our strategic themes is to provide quality experiences for lifetime success for all students. We are committed to meeting our mission and strategic theme through experiential learning and community service.

The Experiential Learning Office serves to assist in the placement process, maintain appropriate policies and processes, and provide resources for success. Experiential learning is the process of developing knowledge and skill from direct experience; learning through action. These direct experiences should be an extension of the learning environment and thus tie back to the student’s academic learning in some way. The type of experiential activities we offer are:

- Internships / Practicums
- Student Teaching
- Service Learning
- Active Research
- Community Projects

For specific definitions of these activities, please visit www.untdallas.edu/el.

High Impact Practices

One of our goals is to ensure that the experiential learning activities are “high impact” for our students. UNT Dallas has adopted the National Survey of Student Engagement definition of high impact practices and modified it to fit our campus. High impact practices typically include the following:

- considerable time and effort invested
- facilitate learning outside of the classroom
- require meaningful interactions with faculty and other students
- encourage collaboration with diverse others
- provide frequent and substantive feedback

Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteer opportunities that are not tied to academic learning are not recognized as experiential learning, however employers and community partners are still invited to recruit students in that capacity.

This manual outlines the details and guidelines for our employer and community partnerships. Please keep in mind, the Experiential Learning Office will share employer internship and experiential learning opportunities with faculty and students, however we cannot force students to partake in these opportunities.
University Standards

As a University we have some processes to support the success of experiential learning and volunteerism for our students. The following is a list of categories we expect employers and community partners to be aware of and comply with to meet our institutional needs.

Affiliation Agreements

All entities who receive UNT Dallas students as interns, research students, or volunteers must complete an affiliation agreement, and return to the Experiential Learning Office. This document is a legally binding contract between your agency / company and UNT Dallas that lasts two years, and will automatically renew unless terminated by either party. The agreement details the responsibilities of the entity, university, and student to establish a formal standard and protection.

Student Behavioral Concerns

We endeavor to equip our students to be accountable, ethical, and successful both professionally and personally while in their placements. If you ever experience any behavioral or situational problems with any UNT Dallas students please contact the experiential learning coordinator at Experiential.Learning@untdallas.edu and the case will immediately be handed over to the Assistant Director of Community Standards who handles all student code of conduct.

Tracking

UNT Dallas endeavors to track all experiential and community service activities, and requires the participation of community and employer partners to support in this process. All experiences must be recorded in our online database - College Central Network through the Experiential Learning Module. Students are responsible for inputting the information electronically through their account, and their site supervisor will receive an email where they must review and approve the information. For instructions on how to do this, please see the Employer Guide: College Central Network’s Experiential Learning Module.

Recognition

It is important that we recognize and promote the successes of our students. We are also interested in recognizing our partners who provide and support our students during their engagement. We feature our students on our webpage, across campus, in e-newsletters, through formal ceremonies, and at graduation. Students receive a special honor cord upon graduation for completing a minimum of 100 hours of service and/or internship. Success stories are strongly recommended to be shared with the Experiential Learning office by emailing Experiential.Learning@untdallas.edu.

Assessment

Assessments serve as a tool to measure our desired institutional outcomes that our partners report levels of satisfaction. Toward the end of the academic semester, partners will be prompted to complete Assessment and reflection surveys.
Internships

Specifically for internships, the underlying principle of an internship is “shared value.” An entity provides an extended learning laboratory where students experience the real working world. Under close supervision, students contribute to the agency by performing meaningful projects and assignments that are of continuing value to both parties. The result: a win-win arrangement that has an outstanding record of success. In an internship, the student becomes part of an agency and observes and reflects on what occurs there.

Paid Internships versus Unpaid Internships Requirements

There are stipulations around internships that are paid versus unpaid. Review the DOL policy that UNT Dallas upholds for all internship placement sites: U.S. Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division Fact Sheet #71: Internship Programs Under The Fair Labor Standards Act. Students can participate in paid internships. Jobs that students attain that are directly related to their field of study can be considered a paid internship.

Qualifications for Internship Opportunities

Does your opportunity qualify as an internship? Review these requirements:

Criteria for an Experience to Be Defined as an Internship

To ensure that an experience is educational, and thus eligible to be considered a legitimate internship by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), all the following criteria must be met:

1. The experience must be an extension of the classroom: a learning experience that provides for applying the knowledge gained in the classroom. It must not be simply to advance the operations of the employer or be the work that a regular employee would routinely perform.
2. The skills or knowledge learned must be transferable to other employment settings.
3. The experience has a defined beginning and end, and a job description with desired qualifications.
4. There are clearly defined learning objectives/goals related to the professional goals of the student’s academic coursework.
5. There is supervision by a professional with expertise and educational and/or professional background in the field of the experience.
6. There is routine feedback by the experienced supervisor.
7. There are resources, equipment, and facilities provided by the host employer that support learning objectives/goals.

If these criteria are followed, it is the opinion of NACE that the experience can be considered a legitimate internship. - See more at: http://www.naceweb.org/advocacy/position-statements/united-states-internships.aspx#sthash.0fBfGQ4v.xskzpAnc.dpuf
Resources

Additional resources and information for employers and community partners can be found at: http://www.untdallas.edu/el/employers/res.

For questions or concerns, please contact:

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