



Johnson State College Internship Program Frequently Asked Questions FAQ's

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What is an Internship?

An internship is a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in professional fields they are considering for career paths; and give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent.

CRITERIA FOR AN EXPERIENCE TO BE DEFINED AS AN INTERNSHIP

To ensure that an experience—whether it is a traditional internship or one conducted remotely or virtually—is educational, and thus eligible to be considered a legitimate internship by the NACE definition, 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.

(Article retrieved from <http://www.naceweb.org/about-us/advocacy/position-statements/position-statement-us-internships/>)

Why Intern?

Experience is an excellent teacher, and internships are one way to help you explore possible career paths and to gain valuable experience in your field of study. JSC students have interned at the Union Bank in Morrisville, Laraway Youth and Family Services in Johnson, the Vermont Statehouse, throughout Vermont, all over the country (from Walt Disney World in Florida to Adaptive Sports Center in Colorado to Senator Patrick Leahy's office in Washington, D.C.), as well as internationally (Tanzania, Spain and Costa Rica).

Internships are a great way to learn. They provide a short-term, supervised opportunity to work in a particular field. Some are paid by the hour or offer a stipend; others are unpaid and all offer academic credit. They have structured learning goals, provide you with regular mentorship and can strengthen your resume, giving you a real advantage when you're ready to look for a full-time job.

Many employers use internships as extended tryouts for full-time positions; they are an important pipeline to the most coveted jobs. Securing an internship should be near the top of every undergraduate's plan of action. You can become a competitive internship candidate by taking in-depth courses early in your undergraduate program. Consider your internship opportunities and contact the internship faculty supervisor in your academic department. Students are carefully supervised by on-site professionals in cooperation with a member of the Johnson State College faculty. Variable academic credits may be earned up to the maximum of twelve credit hours per semester (40 hours on-site per academic credit; 80 hours on-site for Hotel Tourism Management internships). Most students tend to pursue 3-6 credits, or 120-240 hours per semester.

Am I Required to Take an Internship?

Most departments require an internship, yet not all. Please see JSC Internships Required at this site:

Even if you are not required to take an internship, consider one as an elective. It's allows you to integrate knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in professional fields they are considering for career paths; and give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent. Internships a resume builders and often leads to jobs.

Where Can I Find Extensive Internship Resources?

Please visit the [JSC Internship Site](#) on the portal.

Can I Take an Internship in the Summer?

Internships can occur during the fall, spring and summer semesters. Fall and spring semester internships are covered under the normal full-time tuition as long as your total credits for the semester do not exceed 18 credits. Additional tuition by the credit (at in-state or out-of-state rates, whichever applies) will be charged for any credits over 18 in these semesters.

Summer internships are the exception to this rule. If you register for an internship during the summer semester, you will be charged for tuition by the credit. The full-time tuition rates that you experience during the fall and spring semesters do not apply to the summer semester.

In addition, there is a \$45 internship fee for all internships, regardless of which semester they occur.

Paid or Unpaid? What Should I Consider?

Internships may be paid or unpaid and you can earn academic credit in relationship to the experience. Explore all of your options before reaching a decision regarding the type of internship best suited to your needs. Some of the best internships are not paid but may provide a rich learning experience. Others may offer a small stipend or an hourly wage. During the 2016-2017 academic year, 31% of interns were paid (offering an average of \$11.66/hour) and another 9% of interns received a stipend (examples include housing, tips, commission or financial awards of \$2,200 for a 280-hour internship).

Earning credits for an internship is dependent upon registering (and paying) for those credits. Credit cannot be awarded for work already completed, so be sure to work out credit arrangements in advance of beginning your internship.

Credit-bearing internships have an academic component, so be sure to budget time for the reading and writing that will be part of a credit-bearing internship.

Can I Create My Own Internship?

Yes! Many of the best internships are those you create yourself through active outreach. Review the Internship Guide for Students to prepare. The Internship Guide for Students can be found on the Portal: Student Links/Internships/.

<https://portal.vsc.edu/sites/JSC/UGInfo/student-services/internships/Pages/default.aspx>

Look on the left hand side for the Internship Guide for Students.

Consider the type of work you are seeking and identify the organizations that might perform that type of work. Contact them to explore the possibility of setting up an internship.

What is the Internship Process?

Check with your academic advisor to see if an internship makes sense in terms of your overall degree plan and what course requirements, if any, are needed. Clearly it takes time to locate an internship site, negotiate a contract and secure all signatures, so please take action determining and securing a site well in advance. All signatures must be obtained before a student can begin an internship; please plan accordingly.

- Prepare a Resume. Visit Beth Walsh, Director of Career Development for support Beth.walsh@NorthernVermont.edu. Employers often ask for a resume and it's good to have this ready before you start your search so you can send them out quickly. Advice for creating or enhancing your resume can be found in the Career + Internship Center's [Career Guide](#).
- Attend [Career & Internship Center workshops](#) on Resumes, Internships 101, and Job or Internship Search workshops or stop in the Career & Internship Center (Dewey 131) for Pop-In Hours.
- Search [Internship Opportunities](#).
- Apply for Internships.
- Prepare for an Interview. Attend the "Mastering the Interview" workshop (you can even do a mock interview with Beth Walsh, Director of Career Development). Contact her at beth.walsh@NorthernVermont.edu
- Choose Your Site. Students explore options for internship sites and determine the "best match" in regards to organization mission/programs/services/mentoring potential and the student's desired learning outcomes. This document **How to Determine Where to Intern** can help you determine what sites you might want to explore. <https://portal.vsc.edu/sites/JSC/UGInfo/student-services/internships/Pages/Additional-Internship-Resources.aspx>

Detailed Process for Completion & Submission of Internship Contract

1. Develop Internship Objectives

- a. What do you want to experience, with what population do you want to engage?
- b. What issues are you passionate about or are you curious to learn more about?
- c. What do you want to learn? (skills, knowledge, attitudes)

2. The Internship Search

Use your "network" of family, friends, classmates, faculty, former employers, and others to help you with ideas for possible internships. Meet with Career + Internship Center staff (located in Dewey Campus Center) to develop a strategy for identifying and applying for potential internships.

Attend Career + Internship Fairs on and off campus (JSC hosts Career and Internship Fairs each semester in the SHAPE Center). Each semester other Vermont colleges and universities host Internship and Job Fairs that are open to all students.

Meet with your academic advisor to discuss your interest in finding an internship. Many departments post internships specific to their majors. Check to see if your department does this. The student investigates, with a faculty member or on his/her own, possible internship sites. Numerous resources can be found on the Portal:

<https://portal.vsc.edu/sites/JSC/UGInfo/student-services/internships/Pages/default.aspx>

Check Out Past JSC internships:

<https://portal.vsc.edu/sites/JSC/UGInfo/student-services/internships/pastsites/Pages/default.aspx>

3. Create the Internship Contract

Once a site has agreed to provide an internship opportunity, the student takes the lead to create an [Internship Contract](#). Fill out page one (Student Information, Faculty Information, Site Information, and Contract Information).

Complete Job Description Specifics

The student should meet with the site supervisor to complete the **Job Description Specifics** of the Internship Contract. Also, review the Cooperative Education Agreement section of the contract together. All parties will sign the Cooperative Educational Agreement. The site supervisor signs the contract and takes responsibility for ensuring that a copy of the agency's certificate of liability insurance will be sent to the JSC Academic Dean's Office, 337 College Hill, Johnson, VT 05656 or to Jo Ann Lamore, Assistant Academic Dean @ Jo.Lamore@NorthernVermont.edu

Create Learning Objectives

The student can create draft language of the **Learning Objectives** and electronically send the contract (in a word.doc so edits can be made) to his/her faculty supervisor. The student and the faculty supervisor will edit and complete the learning objectives and academic requirements section of the contract and review the Cooperative Education Agreement. The student and faculty supervisor sign the contract.

Students must have an approved internship contract on file with the Registrar's Office before beginning their internship and to be registered for the internship credits.

4. Seek Signatures

The faculty supervisor or the student electronically submits the Internship Contract to the Department Chair for approval. Finally, the Internship Contract is submitted to the Academic Dean's Office for final approval and signature by the Assistant Academic Dean. Once approved, the contract is forwarded to the Registrar's Office and the student is registered for the academic internship credits. These credits are added to the student's schedule. Scanned PDF copies of the contract (with a PDF version of the Internship Guide for Employers) are emailed to the student, the site supervisor, the faculty supervisor, and the Academic Dean's Office.

The **Internship Guide for Employers** is found here: <https://portal.vsc.edu/sites/JSC/UGInfo/student-services/internships/Pages/JSC-Internship-Guide-for-Employers.aspx>

This is done so that all parties are aware of the job description specifics, the learning objectives and the academic requirements.

5. Start Your Internship

- Students are responsible for all academic components as agreed upon in the internship contract. All academic work is given to the faculty supervisor as agreed upon in the contract.
- Do not start your internship before the contract has been approved by the Academic Dean's Office. Occasionally contracts are denied; if you have spent time on site, those hours may be "lost".
- Students must keep a timesheet that is signed off by the site supervisor. Hand this timesheet into your faculty supervisor.
- Students and the site supervisor must complete evaluations at mid-term and end of term.
- The faculty supervisor meets with the students over the course of the semester, via email, telephone calls, meetings, and a potential site visit.

See the [JSC Internship Guide for Students](#) to learn more.

How Can I Assess What Internship Would be a Good Fit for Me?

It is recommended that more than one site is considered for an internship site. Do not pursue the 'easy' internship site; challenge yourself to seek sites that align with desired learning objectives and allow you to network with a professional network that will advance your career search. 52% of Johnson State interns are offered a job by the site and 38% report working at their internship site. Make the choice to find a site where you could see yourself employed. Use these [additional internship resources](#) to support the search.

Ultimately, you'd like to have two, three or four options for a good internship site. Conduct informational interviews to determine what site is the best site. Please see page 6 of the [JSC Career Guide](#) for information.

Is There a Deadline for The Internship Contract?

Contracts are due by the last day of classes of the preceding semester. Extensions may be given and the student is responsible for requesting the extension to the internship faculty supervisor.

Who Is My Internship Faculty Supervisor?

Most academic departments have internship coordinators, and all departments have faculty internship supervisors. You can ask your department's administrative assistant what faculty can supervise your internship.

Internship Faculty Supervisors

Behavioral Sciences:

- Criminal Justice: David Plazek
- Sociology: Susan Green
- Psychology: Ellen Hill
- Sociology: Susan Green
- Wellness & Alternative Medicine: Susan Green

Business & Economics:

- Accounting: Henrique Cezar
- Business: Jim Black
- Hospitality & Tourism Management: Todd Comen
- Sports Management: Andrew Lafrenz

Education:

- David McGough

Environmental and Health Sciences:

- Biology: Liz Dolci
- Environmental Sciences: Tania Bacchus
- Health Sciences: Hans Haverkamp or Amy Welch
- Outdoor Education: Brad Moskowitz or Karen Uhlendorf

Fine & Performing Arts:

- Art: Mary Martin
- Fine Arts: Ken Leslie
- Technical Theatre: Sara Nelson

Humanities:

- Political Science: David Plazek

Mathematics

- Julie Theoret or Greg Petrics

Writing & Literature:

- Green Mountains Review and Pamphlet: Elizabeth Powell
- Communications: Tyrone Shaw

What Makes a Strong Job Title in My Contract?

With your supervisor, create a job title that is reflective of your work. The title 'INTERN' doesn't tell a prospective employer what you did. For example, did you facilitate programs? If so, "co-facilitator" or "facilitator" may be fitting. Did you engage in any type of teaching? Then perhaps, "educator" or "trainer" could be appropriate. The point is that you want a job title that gives your reader of your resume an idea of what type of work you engaged in as an intern, rather than that you were an intern.

How Do I Create Strong Learning Objectives?

Learning objectives provide the foundation and framework for learning during an internship experience. The learning objectives should be able to answer the question "what will I be able to do as a result of this internship?"

When formulating your learning objectives, think about these questions:

Do I want to connect this internship experience to certain course content and theories?

What skill do I want to develop or enhance? Be aware that work assignments and the internship site will determine the type of skills you want to develop.

How would you like to personally benefit from the internship? Make special observations on site to learn as much as possible from the experience. See the [JSC Internship Guide](#) for reflection questions that can support this.

Learning objectives could include:

- focus on the technical aspects and skills related to the discipline
- attentive to business-related issues and/or organizational functions
- emphasis on communication skills (internal and external lines of business communications and interpersonal communications)

Hints for developing objective statements:

Start each with an active verb such as:

- Develop
- Enhance
- Expand
- Gain
- Demonstrate
- Strengthen
- Participate
- Create

Click here for a list of [strong action verbs by skills category](#).

Then describe what it is you want to learn or experience. The following are often helpful in describing objectives:

- Experience

- Ability
- Knowledge
- Understand
- Insight (specific skills)

Examples of internship learning objectives:

- Gain experience in creating website designs for clientele.
- Enhance my ability to support youth who have experienced trauma and gain knowledge of local resources.
- Analyze political theories used in campaign planning.
- Develop training facilitation skills for youth development programs.
- Expand my plant identification skills.
- Enhance effective communication skills and strategies (listening, open ended questions, room for discussion, etc.)
- Develop strategies for self-care and decompression.
- Gain an understanding of the inventory control process.
- Strengthen my interpersonal communication skills with customers.

How Do I Determine a Research Paper Topic?

The research paper topic/s should mirror one of your desired learning objectives. Which of the learning objectives is most important to you? The research paper is an opportunity to step away from your internship site, conduct research that will enhance your understanding of a theory, current topic in your field, and enhance your efficacy in the field. What research topic would help to support your learning in the field? Choose a topic that interests you and challenges you. Take a look at your learning objectives that you have created and determine which one would be a good topic to delve into. What could you research that would allow you to further understand what you are doing at your internship? It could be about a particular concept or theory that you learned in a course and that is ‘coming to life’ at your internship site. It could be about best practices, or specific research that brings together your learning objective and the tasks you are performing on-site, or it could be a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis.

The best research paper is a topic that is focused on a narrow issue and allows you to dive into the topic and increases your understanding and efficacy as an intern. Consider asking your site supervisor or workplace colleagues for research suggestions or best practices that align with your internship. Work in consultation with your faculty supervisor to determine a topic that will enhance the overall internship experience.

A few weeks into your internship you may discover something that really excites you that you want to research further. Your topic of the paper can change, with approval from your faculty supervisor. This is the power of an internship; the student is taking the lead on creating and pursuing desired learning objectives, with support from both site and faculty supervisors.

Where Do I Find the Internship Forms (contract, timesheet, evaluation, reflection guidelines, etc.)?

One-stop-shopping can be found on the [portal for all things Internships](#).

I Am Having Challenges On My Internship Site. What Should I Do?

Many obstacles can present themselves during the internship. Remember, this is a testing ground for you and will allow you to learn to navigate the workplace. Often, you can address the issue at hand by adjusting behaviors or being direct with your new colleagues. Sometimes, the issues can be more challenging and extreme professional tact must be used. Internships are great, yet challenges can arise.

Issues can vary from 'not what you expected' to you feel you are 'not learning as much as you thought you would'. The response is not clearly defined, yet ideas to rectify are abundant. For example:

What if My Internship is Not What I Expected?

1. Assess the Situation

As soon as you realize that your internship is not going in the right direction, take a step back and think about what is happening. Why did you expect it to be different? Were you promised a lot more than you are being given? Are you not getting the hourly pay or stipend that was listed on the job posting? Did you think you were going to get hands-on public relations experience, but you actually spend most of your time cleaning and taking out the garbage?

Make a list of what you feel is wrong. Writing it on paper will help you organize your thoughts and concerns. You might realize that some of those "problems" aren't as bad as you originally thought, or maybe there really is something suspicious going on here.

2. Ask Around to Other Interns

If there are other interns in your office or building, you should definitely reach out to them or observe what they're up to. If they seem to be having the same experience as you, maybe you can go through the rest of these steps together.

However, if they are having a positive experience, you should find out what they are doing differently. Maybe they are taking more initiative or being more social. If you change those little things while you're on the job, there is a good chance that your experience might change for the better. Your fellow interns can help make your internship better, and now you might have a new friend too!

3. Make the Most Out of Your Time

Everyone hates hearing this, but maybe it's you that needs to change, not the internship. If you act like you're not happy to be there, then you will probably never be truly happy. Try your best to be motivated, and act like you want this job. Staying on top of your assignments is so important, but interns are often left with extra

time. Ask for extra work (most supervisors would love to have more help!), and request time to take employees to coffee to learn more about them, their roles, and their career paths.

4. Talk to Your Supervisor

If you feel that you are not learning the skills that you had hoped, your supervisor might be able help. While you might not want to flat-out say that you aren't happy with your internship, talk to him or her about what you were expecting to learn. Your boss might be able to find responsibilities that are in line with what you're looking for.

If you have any other questions or concerns, make sure to bring them up! If your boss isn't open to allowing you to do other work, at least you will realize what kind of internship you want (and don't want).

5. Network with Employees

Networking is a huge part of getting new jobs and opportunities. At every internship you get, make sure to stop in and say hello to all of the employees. Since they have actual positions at the company, find out how they got there. They might even have suggestions for you. Even if your experience at the internship is not the greatest, at least you will leave knowing that you made as many connections as possible.

While it is definitely unfortunate if your internship is not what you expected, following these five steps will help you make the most of it.

Amina A. (July 24, 2017). *5 Steps You Can Take if Your Internship Isn't What You Expected*. Retrieved from <https://www.wayup.com/guide/community/contributor-5-steps-you-can-take-if-your-internship-isnt-what-you-expected/>

Note that the value of a well written internship contract is that it provides clarity for the student intern, the site supervisor and the faculty supervisor. If you are being told to do a lot of tasks that seem "off task" and not a part of the contract, ask to meet with your site supervisor and review the contract and ask if tasks can be modified to reflect the contract. If you are still having concerns, contact your faculty supervisor for support.

What if I'm Not Getting Enough Direction?

Ask your supervisor for weekly supervisory meetings. Interns should be treated with the same respect as other employees and in fact, interns require more guidance and check-ins. Ask to create project goals and benchmarks. Use the [JSC Internship Progress Report](#) -- this form can be used to track progress, set goals, identify challenges, assess learning, and describe professional development opportunities.

How Do I Keep Track of My Internship Hours?

Use the [Internship Timesheet](#) to log all hours. Hours that can be included are orientation, trainings, conferences, direct service work, supervisory meetings, and travel IF your internship includes transporting people. Your supervisor will be initialing these timesheets, so it's best to place both the hours of the day, i.e. 9-1 and the total, 4 hours. PLEASE total your timesheet before you send to your faculty supervisor at the end of the semester. You are to be tracking your hours and monitoring that you are in the "right amount of time" for this time into the semester. For example, if we are entering the 5th week of the semester, you should be

approximately 1/3 of the way to your target hours. A 3 credit, 120-hour internship should be at ~ 33% complete, or ~ 40 hours. Plan accordingly with your site supervisor. Note re. supervisor signature--have them simply initial the page for verification of hours (they don't need to initial every time entry).

The JSC Internship Timesheet has a PROJECT section, what am I supposed to put there?

Please detail what you worked on during those hours; it may be direct service, a training, conference, etc. If you are basically doing the same tasks every week, simply leave PROJECT section blank.

Does the time I spend researching my topic for the paper count as internship hours? NO

How Can I Capture the Internship on My Resume?

When using a chronological resume, you will list your internship experiences with other Relevant Experiences (if it is relevant to the position to which you are applying) or with Additional Experience. Wherever it is located, you will include some descriptive lines that elaborate on the responsibilities, accomplishments and/or skills used during this experience. Thinking about the transferable skills that you learned and used, the descriptive lines should be concise, with enough detail to paint a clear picture of how your experience makes you uniquely qualified for the position to which you are applying. See the JSC [Career Guide](#) to help you write these lines and meet with Beth Walsh, Director of Career Development, to review your resume.

What Are Some Strong Examples of Internships on Resumes?

Research Intern, JSC Social Interactions Space Lab, Johnson, VT Aug 2017 – Present

- Recruit participants, manage compensation, and analyze data
- Monitor participation data for abnormalities
- Prepare conditions for upcoming experimental study

Assistant Manager Intern, Morrisville Tree Farm, Morrisville, VT August 2016-Present

- Plant, cultivate, irrigate and spray over 300 evergreens for ornamental/Christmas trees
- Properly maintain seedling stock to ensure future supplies
- Supervise 20 employees and create additional training opportunities
- Commended for providing a positive work atmosphere, increasing employee motivation and output

Clinical Intern, Maple Leaf Treatment Center, Underhill, VT Aug. – Dec. 2015

- Observation of clinical sessions, psychoeducational and process groups, MAT Bridge Program, and admissions
- Engagement in assessment, screening, treatment planning, aftercare referrals, and relapse prevention planning
- Co-facilitation of women's process groups and psychoeducational skills groups

Substitute Care Mentor Intern December 2012- July 2013

Laraway Youth and Family Services, Johnson VT

- Strengthened leadership skills in group and one-on-one dynamics
- Handled crisis situations with a calm and composed manner
- Authored detailed daily logs of student behavior and action plans for the days proceeding

Assistant Poetry Editor Intern

Green Mountains Review, Johnson State College, Johnson, VT

Jan. 2015 – Present

- Read through submissions and decide which pieces will appear in the Green Mountains Review
- Send rejection, thank you, and sponsor letters to authors and supporters of Green Mountains Review
- Flew to Seattle, WA to represent and sell Green Mountains Review books at the AWP Conference and Book Fair
- Collaborate with fellow interns to edit upcoming issues of Green Mountains Review Books
- Create an Excel Spreadsheet to document all published authors in Green Mountains Review

Family Support Programs Coordinator Intern,

Prevent Child Abuse Vermont, St. Johnsbury and Morrisville, VT

Sept. 2013 – March, 2014

- Promoted and established Nurturing Parenting Programs
- Responded to diverse needs of participants including locating information, supports, and community resources
- Facilitated workshops on relevant family topics
- Planned programs and worked effectively with co-facilitators

Therapeutic Mileu Intern, East Meadow School, Morrisville, VT

2016-Present

- Provide support to students and classroom personnel in classrooms
- Participate and engage in classroom activities with students
- Plan and set up activities for students as needed

Do Internships Lead to Jobs?

Internships allow students to explore career opportunities, develop new skills, and establish a professional network. Many students report internships as a highlight of their academic experience. For the 2017- 2018 spring academic year, there were 173 JSC students interning for 853 credits and offering 36,650 hours of work in numerous businesses, nonprofits, community initiatives, and in the governmental sector. These numbers are impressive, and vitally important to these experiential education opportunities is the learning, the networking, and the career exploration.

According to the 2016 JSC Graduate Survey:

- 38% of the students who interned are currently employed at the internship/practicum site
- 14% of the students received a job offer at their internship site to continue but declined
- 21% report being hired elsewhere because of internship experience

Clearly, internships matter! Seventy-three percent of our graduates who interned feel their internships were crucial in their job search success. We are thankful to the employers who are opening their doors and supporting high-impact learning for interns. We are also impressed and proud of the way our students at Johnson State College contribute to Vermont organizations, as quoted Cindy Wells, a supervisor at Prevent Child Abuse Vermont, “I have worked with a number of students and individuals in various kinds of training programs. Some of them have been wonderful and shown much promise, while some unfortunately have not. Certainly at this point I would put my JSC intern in the top 10% of those that I have worked with. We need more like her.”

Who Do I Contact for More Information on Internships?

For more information on
internships, please contact:
Ellen Hill, M.Ed.
Internship Coordinator
802-635-1439