What is an Internship?
An internship is an opportunity for students to gain supervised, practical work experience while putting their classroom academic knowledge to work. Internships can be part-time or full-time, paid or unpaid, and are offered by a wide variety of businesses and organizations.

Why do an Internship?
An internship can provide you with an opportunity to apply some of your skills learned inside the classroom to hands-on experience. It is also a great way to learn more about a particular career field, job type, or work environment. Internships are also an excellent way to boost your resume.

When should I start looking?
Some internship programs that are more formalized begin their application process months in advance, while others do not need that much notice. It is important to try and start your search in a timely manner so you can get the internship you desire.

When in my college career is it the best time to do an internship?
This is entirely up to you. It is recommended you do NOT do an internship during your first semester. You should also not wait until your graduating semester to complete one. If you need internship experience as a graduation requirement, this will also be an indicator as to when you should start one. Remember, the more experience you have on your resume, the more potential you will have for employment after graduation, so intern as much as you can!

How do I get academic credit for my internship?
Here at NSU you can get academic credit for your internship so make sure to check with your college for their specific guidelines. Basically, when getting class credit for an internship at NSU you must be signed up for a particular course and usually the internship must be in your area of study.

How many hours is an internship usually?
Internships can range in the amount of hours they require. Usually an internship consists of 10-20 hours a week during the academic year and full-time over the summer. Before taking the job, make sure to discuss with your supervisor how many hours you will be working.

Converting Your Internship into a Full-Time Job
Before you start—Plan for a successful experience
- Do your research. Find out what trade papers, websites and journals are specific to your industry. Take some time to catch up with current trends.
- Set specific expectations for the internship. Schedule a formal appointment with your supervisor on the first day of work to establish goals for your projects.
- Spend time reviewing any information you have on the policies and procedures of the organization.
- Check your ego at the door. A sense of humility is important so that you can be open to learn from other people around you.

First day—Establish your professional identity
- Approach the internship as an extended interview, because that’s essentially what it is.
- Exhibit your professionalism by being punctual, efficient, and dedicated.
- Ask questions. Clarify assignments upfront rather than getting them wrong.
- Introduce yourself to colleagues including other interns.
- Learn everything you can about the workplace.
- Pay attention to details! Ensure accuracy and quality in the work you produce.

First month—Master your skills
- Go above and beyond what you are expected to do. Ask for more work once you complete an assignment.
- Stay motivated and excited about what you are doing. Leave your personal drama at home.
- Be flexible and respond positively to change. Continually show you are eager to learn.
- Be willing to step outside the box and apply your resourcefulness and creativity to problem solving.
- Check your list of expectations. What do you still want to accomplish? Who do you want to meet?
- Find a mentor and use them as a resource. Talk to them about concerns and problems you may be having, but also get advice about future paths for your career.
- Be professional and treat everyone you meet with respect and professionalism. Build relationships and network with everyone you can.

Office of Career Development
Alvin Sherman Library, fourth floor, room 4036—main office
Carl DeSantis Building, first floor, room 1042—satellite office
A month before your last day—Plan your exit and re-entry

- Sometimes the most important learning experience in an internship is finding out this is not what you want to do.
- If you don’t want to continue in a particular field, it does not mean the colleagues who you have worked with will not help you. If you have decided to change directions, thank them for helping you to come to this decision and find out if they have contacts in your new area of interest.
- Schedule a formal appointment with your supervisor to discuss your career plans. If you have not already talked about the possibility of a full-time position in the future, now is the time.

After Your Internship—Learn from Your Experience

Although you are a busy NSU student, it is important to take the time to reflect on your internship experience. This reflection is a critical piece of the career development process and will ultimately support your career decision-making, as well as allow you to better market and position yourself for future opportunities.

Looking back on your experience:

- What did you learn about the industry, the organization, and yourself?
- How did you grow in terms of academic, career, and personal growth?
- Evaluate what you liked and what you would like to change.
- Do you feel differently now about your interest in this career than you did when you began the internship?
- What networking contacts did you make? What are your plans for organizing their contact information and staying in touch?

Looking to the future:

- Would you want to work at your internship site full-time after graduation?
- Would you want to work in the same industry? Why or why not?
- What skills and knowledge do you want most to remember and use in the future?
- How has your internship influenced your academic pursuits?

Market Your Experience

- Identify what you are selling, specifically your primary accomplishments from your recent experience, the skills used, and the impact of those accomplishments. Now is the time to implement your sales campaign, which can be done in a variety of ways.
- Consider sharing what you learned during your internship with your favorite professors. This interaction fosters a relationship with someone who may be a helpful reference in the future as you prepare for other internship opportunities or the full-time job search.
- Also, your resume is an important piece of marketing collateral. It is important not only include your internship experience, but also to clearly identify your value in a “real” work environment. Specifically, write action-oriented descriptions that convey your skills and are relevant to the position for which you are applying. It also makes a positive impression with employers if your descriptions highlight the results of your efforts and demonstrate the value you bring to the work environment.
- Lastly, interviews provide the opportunity to share your experiences in a more in-depth manner. Leverage your past internship experience by connecting it to the job for which you are interviewing. This includes addressing skills you gained that will be helpful to your future employer, rather than the ones most helpful to your last employer.

Additional Steps to Take

- Write a Thank You Note—After completing your internship, take the time to write a personalized message to your supervisor and/or other team members who provided support during your internship experience. This small gesture will set you apart from others and will also open a line of future correspondence.
- Stay Connected by Networking—During your internship, you had the opportunity to connect with many professionals in your field of interest. It is important that you continue to nurture these relationships. This can be done by occasionally corresponding by email, phone, or even meeting for lunch. Remember that networking is about building relationships. By maintaining the relationships that you formed during your internship, you will have additional support as you pursue continued career exploration and/or job searching.