



The Martha and
Spencer Love
School of Business

A Guide to Business Internships and Professional Work Experience

The Martha and Spencer Love School of Business

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A Guide to Internships in the Love School of Business: Introduction

Internships and management education

You know the old adage: *Tell me and I will forget. Show me and I will remember. Involve me and I will learn.* Accordingly, Elon University and the Martha and Spencer Love School of Business are committed to experiential learning. Applying to the world of business and industry the concepts that are learned in the classroom clarifies both. Thus internships are a critical part of a student's education.

The mission of the Martha and Spencer Love School of Business (LSB) is to provide to our students "instruction and experiences so they graduate with the knowledge, skills and character essential for responsible business leadership in the 21st century." Beginning with the class entering in fall 2006, the experiential goal is met through a supervised internship or professional work experience (PWE) for Business Administration and Accounting majors. Supervised internships provide students with a high quality intellectual and pre-professional experience.

In addition, internships are a valuable means toward self-assessment and selecting a career. Students who complete internships learn more about themselves – their skills abilities, and interests. In addition, a student learns more about a potential career and acquires the kind of information critically important to making an informed decision. Ask yourself: "How much do I *really* know about the accounting profession, what is a day in the life of an economist really like, or what do sales and marketing professionals do over a week, month, or year?" A test run can provide a great deal of helpful insight

Purpose of this guidebook

This guidebook is designed to help students, faculty, and the administration of the Love School ensure the highest quality internship experience. The guidebook covers

- 1) Internship credit
 - 2) Student roles and responsibilities
 - 3) Internship coordinator roles and responsibilities
 - 4) Company internship supervisor roles and responsibilities
 - 5) Documenting Professional Work Experience
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Internship credit

In the Love School of Business, internship credit and the PWE count toward the Elon ELR requirement and completion of the major.

Internship credit is awarded on the basis of 1 credit hour per 40 hours worked, for a maximum of up to 16 credit hours of ELR. In order to gain credit, students must complete their internship work to the satisfaction of the internship company and must complete the coursework required for academic credit, as outlined in the next chapter.

Professional Work Experience

Students may wish to complete a business internship for experience, but not obtain academic credit for the course. In that case, the student may complete a professional work experience and record that in his/her student files. Chapter 5 lists the requirements necessary to document professional work experience.

A Guide to Internships in the Love School of Business: Student Roles and Responsibilities

Internships and your business education

A good internship will provide you with a “stretch experience” designed to help you learn and grow. You might be undertaking an internship to gain experience, to build your network of contacts, or to “kick the tires on a career.” Regardless of your purpose,

You should approach your internship as you approach a job: perform with excellence and contribute enthusiastically!

And always keep in mind that the impression you make is a reflection of yourself and of Elon University. Represent both well!

Finding a good internship

Finding a good internship can be a job in itself and may require you to apply your skills in research, networking, digging out new information, conducting company analysis, and marketing yourself and your unique skills and abilities. Allow yourself plenty of time to search for an internship – three months or more prior to the term you wish to enroll. Over that time, you will

- Assess and tap in to your own network (parents, friends, friends of parents, past employers, faculty, others). Networking remains the single most effective tool in the search for an internship or for a permanent job.
- Research available internships through the LSB Internship Coordinator, and printed and electronic resources in the Elon Career Center.
- Contact leads that result from your research (the more, the better. Remember, to a certain extent the search for a good internship is a numbers game, and the more contacts you make, the more likely you are to succeed).
- Interview and make site visits.

The Elon Career Center has experienced advisors and reference material on site to help students with their search for an internship. The career center also keeps a database listing past internships and information about that internship. As you undertake your search for an internship, you might want to begin with the following resources available to assist you (there are many others in the career center library):

- Elon Career Center Internship Database
 - Peterson’s Guide to Internship Programs
 - Career Search Website
 - ELeads Database
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In addition to using the resources in LSB and the Elon Career Center, make an inventory of possible contacts. Who do you know in the geographical region where you want to intern? Who do you know in the field that might provide you with additional contacts? Who does your family know who might provide leads? Who do your friends know?

Be sure to mine all possible resources for leads.

As you conduct your research, keep notes on your strategy and your results and make notes on what works and what doesn't. This information will be very helpful to you later when you undertake your search for a permanent job.

Once you have identified an internship opportunity, record the details of the position:

- The company, the position description (if available), the location (address), the starting and ending periods of the internship, how many hours per week you will work, whether the internship is paid or unpaid, etc.
- Your supervisor, his/her contact information (phone number and email address), and your location and contact information for the internship period.

Bring that information with you to the LSB Internship Coordinator; you will use it to complete the internship registration form.

Internship coordination

After you have secured an internship position, you will need to meet with the LSB Internship Coordinator. The role of the internship coordinator is to

- Guide your learning
- Ensure the academic quality of the internship
- Monitor and evaluate your work throughout the internship, and
- Provide a final evaluation (grade) of the internship.

Submitting your proposal

After you have met with the LSB Internship Coordinator, you will need to complete and submit an Internship/PWE Proposal (see the form "Internship/PWE Proposal" included in this guide, located on the LSB website, or pick up a copy of the proposal form in the LSB Internship Coordinator's office).

The Internship/PWE Proposal memo is a collaborative effort between you and your supervisor and requires the signature of your supervisor. This memo is due within two weeks after your internship start-date. When submitting your proposal, make clear the who, what, where, when, why, and how of your internship. The form asks you to enter the who, where, and when. You need to provide additional information on the what, why, and how.

- *What* are the objectives of your internship, or what do you expect as outcomes?
 - *Why* will this internship provide you with the educational experience you seek?
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On-the-job performance

An internship is a job. Accordingly, you will need to perform that job with the highest professional standards, including (but not limited to):

- Meeting all deadlines (including arriving at work on time each day)
- Demonstrating a positive attitude (this includes having fun while you work)
- Performing each task to the best of your ability (the more you exceed expectations, the more you will learn and the more you will impress your supervisors)
- Taking initiative (submit an idea, volunteer to complete a task that needs to be done, solve a problem before being asked)

Your company internship supervisor will submit an evaluation of your contribution about 10 days before the completion of your internship (evaluation criteria and procedures are included in this guidebook). Review your Internship/PWE Proposal frequently to remind yourself of your goals; in your weekly journal, address how your week's work relates to your goals. Also, review the evaluation criteria regularly to reassess your performance and your goals.

Staying in touch

You should communicate with the internship coordinator regularly. Internships require the submission of a weekly journal (see "Deliverables"). Be sure to include regular reports on how things are going – any problems you have encountered, how you dealt with them, and your major contributions and victories.

Deliverables

Several deliverables, all outlined in the LSB 381 Internship Syllabus, will be required of you. They include but are not limited to:

- Internship Proposal (see above). Throughout your internship, come back to these objectives and comment in your journal regarding how you are (or are not) progressing on your goals.
- Weekly Journal. A weekly journal (to be submitted on Blackboard under ASSIGNMENTS by the Monday morning of the week following the week described in your journal entry).

Each week you should capture some of the following information in your journal. Write this journal applying the principles of good internal organizational communication skills, and approach it with the expectation that you can look back on your journal at the end of the internship and identify salient elements, happenings, relationships, meetings, frustrations, successes, etc. Comment on:

- ✓ What assignment(s) have you worked on?
 - ✓ What primary knowledge and/or skills did you need to draw upon?
 - ✓ How much guidance, direction, supervision were you given? Was the guidance adequate/effective/helpful? If not, why not?
 - ✓ With whom did you interact? Comment on any strong or weak interactions.
 - ✓ On a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 being highest), how would you rate/assess your performance this week? What is the basis upon which the "grade" is given?
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- ✓ What could have been done (by you or by others) to make this week more productive?
 - ✓ How are you doing vis-à-vis the objectives you established for yourself in your Internship proposal?
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- Internship Experience Report. This report is a complete description of your experience to include such items as industry and company analyses, experiences regarding ethical issues, teamwork, course relevancy and your overall reflection of the internship experience. An outline for the Internship Experience Report is an attachment of the LSB 381 Syllabus which is included in this guidebook. This outline serves as a basic format; however, your particular experience may require alterations and/or additions. There are also formatting requirements which will be posted on Blackboard.

As Pam Kiser writes, “Students often report with excitement that they are learning ‘so much’ from their field experience but when asked specifically what they have learned, they all too often fall silent. This scenario perhaps reflects the fact that, although they might indeed have learned a great deal, they have not thought carefully enough about this learning to be able to put it into words.”

The reflective aspect of this report addresses the guiding question: “What are the major lessons which I can take from the experience?” The lessons learned may have to do with the development of those skills identified in the Internship Proposal, or personal insights gained, or a “deeper understanding acquired of an ethical principle.”

- Informational Interviews. You should conduct two to three informational interviews with management personnel at the company. In a structured setting, interview two to three executives at the firm. Ask them about their average day, what qualifications are required to perform the work they do, what they like least, what they dread most, what advice they would give to someone just setting out on their career, and other questions that would help you evaluate her/his job as a career option.
 - Evaluations. Internships and PWEs require participation in the web-based LSB Internship Evaluations designed for supervisors and students. These evaluations will be e-mailed near the end of your experience. You will be required to submit your evaluation and supply contact information to ensure your supervisor receives his/her evaluation. Please refer to your syllabus for additional information regarding evaluations.
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A Guide to Internships in the Love School of Business: Internship Coordinator Roles and Responsibilities

Supervising Your Interns

The role of the LSB Internship Coordinator is to oversee the student's learning.

The LSB Internship Coordinator will guide the learning process of the intern, monitor the students' deliverables to ensure that he/she is on track to achieve the learning objectives set out in the Internship Proposal, and evaluate the deliverables required of each intern.

The LSB Internship Coordinator will stay in contact with the student as needed throughout the duration of the internship, and will contact the company supervisor as often as deemed appropriate to be sure that the partnership is working out as planned.

The LSB Internship Coordinator will evaluate the performance of the intern on several primary deliverables:

- Internship proposal and journal
- Internship Experience Report
- Informational interviews
- Evaluations
- Individualized assignments

When all work for the internship is completed, the LSB Internship Coordinator will submit a grade based on criteria established in the internship syllabus.

A Guide to Internships in the Love School of Business: Company Internship Supervisor Roles and Responsibilities

Supervising an Elon Intern

An internship provides the company supervisor with a unique opportunity to mentor a developing professional. Company supervisors give students challenging assignments, guide their work, and provide helpful feedback along the way. The internship also provides the sponsoring organization with another mind and set of skills to contribute to the organization.

Company supervisors should give interns challenging tasks to complete and hold them to the same standards as they hold organization employees. Interns should

- Meet deadlines
- Perform work at or above organizational standards
- Maintain professional habits regarding dress, punctuality, attitude, interactions with others

To ensure the best results, the faculty sponsor may call the company supervisor during the internship to check on the status of the internship and to make sure that things are going well. The company supervisor should also feel free to contact the faculty supervisor as needed.

Before termination of the internship, the agency supervisor should complete a web-based LSB Internship Evaluation. This evaluation will be accessed through an e-mailed link sent to the supervisor from the LSB Internship Coordinator.

Documenting Professional Work Experience

An Alternative to Internships for Academic Credit

Students may complete an internship experience without completing the academic requirements necessary to obtain academic credit. Such an internship is referred to as a Professional Work Experience.

Business Administration majors may fulfill the internship requirement through "Professional Work Experience" (PWE). The PWE may be taken by students at all class levels. The objective of the PWE is to provide students the opportunity to learn more about organizational life and about themselves and their responsibilities to an organization, while requiring some, though a minimum, academic or reflective work. A PWE could be completed during any term in the year (fall, winter, spring, summer) and would require a minimum of 40 hours of on-the-job work. Students would arrange their own work experience, and the program would be managed and monitored by the LSB internship coordinator. This requirement would be graded as either Satisfactory (S) or Unsatisfactory (U).

Requirements of the PWE are:

- Internship/PWE Proposal form which includes the following: The Internship/PWE Proposal memo is a collaborative effort between you and your supervisor and requires the signature of your supervisor. This memo is due within two weeks after your internship start-date.
- A 5 page PWE report detailing the experience and explaining what the student learned from the experience, submitted upon completion of the PWE.
- At least one contact by the internship coordinator, via phone call or site visit.
- Evaluations. Internships and PWEs require participation in the web-based LSB Internship Evaluations designed for supervisors and students. These evaluations will be e-mailed near the end of your experience. You will be required to submit your evaluation and supply contact information to ensure your supervisor receives his/her evaluation. Please refer to your syllabus for additional information regarding evaluations.

The Academic Advisor will place the proposal form(s) and the evaluation forms in the student's advising folder. This paperwork will serve as a record of the Professional Work Experience.

Appendices

1. LSB 381 Internship Syllabus
 2. PWE Syllabus
 3. Internship/PWE Proposal Form
 4. Supervisor - Internship Evaluation Criteria
 5. Student - Internship Evaluation Criteria
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