Welcome to the beginning of the spring 2013 semester. Many students are starting their culminating field experience this semester, while others are seeking summer internships in order to gain practical skills midway during their program of study. Therefore, this month’s Monday Dose focuses on Internships – what should and shouldn’t be done, myths, and more. Included is an attachment of internship opportunities for this summer and for future semesters. In addition to providing a practice-based experience, internships offer an opportunity for service to the profession and contribution to the community. We have all heard how important internships are in helping to achieve one’s long-term goals; hopefully, this publication will help your internship be everything it could potentially be.

“I was taught that the world had a lot of problems; that I could struggle and change them; that intellectual and material gifts brought the privilege and responsibility of sharing with others less fortunate; and that service is the rent each of us pays for living, the very purpose of life and not something you do in your spare time or after you have reached your personal goals.”

Marian Wright Edelman

“When you cease to make a contribution, you begin to die.”

Eleanor Roosevelt
This article is about how internships are valuable to students, even if they aren’t being monetarily compensated for their time and effort. The article examines the Department of Labor’s concern over unpaid internships and the Fair Labor Standards Act – in order for an internship to be legally considered an unpaid opportunity, it must have an infrastructure similar to that of an educational setting. The article also reviews the benefits of internships to show that an internship is more than just an ‘unpaid job’ or ‘free labor’.

http://chronicle.com/article/Internships-Have-Value/127231/

This article examines the association between internships and consequent job offers. While all internships have a significant positive impact on employment, it was found that 60% of paid internships turn into a job offer, compared to 37% of unpaid internships. This difference was attributed to employer perceptions of the types of tasks completed by paid versus unpaid interns.

http://www.forbes.com/sites/susanadams/2012/07/25/odds-are-your-internship-will-get-you-a-job/

This last article is about the various reasons that make college internships so important for student success. The article emphasizes that professional networking is the most valuable aspect of any internship. This article also advises students to seek work opportunities in their chosen field while attending school.

http://www.collegeview.com/articles/article/college-internships
Internships, whether paid or not, are the best way to apply what you’ve learned in classes to what you will be doing when you enter the workforce. They also let you ‘try on jobs’ — you can see which jobs you may or may not like. Applying for internships is like applying for jobs. Because internships are highly competitive, you need to create a resume specific to the “job description” of the internship, and you need to explain why you would be an asset to the field organization. Be ready for interviews and also for performance evaluations! Below are tips for the best, most productive internship possible.
Internships are a wonderful way to not only gain valuable experience that furthers what we have learned through our education, but they also allow us to network with practicing professionals. We are able to meet potential employers and coworkers and to create professional contacts.

Therefore, it is important to create a positive and lasting impression at your internship site. Here are some things to keep in mind while searching for internships and throughout the road ahead during the internship.

Internship DO’s

- **Ask questions** -- If you don’t understand something, request clarification.
- **Network** -- An internship is about more than just the work you do; it is also about the people you meet.
- **Find ways to make an impression** -- Do more than just what is expected of you.
- **Do what you are asked** — even if that means going to get coffee or making copies. Once you build trust, you will be given additional responsibilities.
- **Set goals** — they give you something tangible to reach for.
- **Find a mentor** — identify a fellow employee who can guide you, give support, and answer questions that you might have.
- **Get a formal evaluation** — Having constructive feedback is always helpful.

**Internships: A Basic Introduction**

Internships allow for an easier conversion from school to work in three ways:

- Realization of professional abilities and work ideals – internships help students to learn about their interests, capability, and morals. Therefore, students know more about what they want and don’t want their career to be.

- Helping to alleviate ‘reality shock’ – students are often eased into internships and learn the workings of the company/vocation more slowly than when a new employee is hired.

- Increasing employment prospects – networking allows students to learn of jobs outside of the usual formal-process. Also, employers tend to view interns in a more positive light and like to hire students who have interned over students who have not.

**Internship DON’Ts**

- **Don’t** get on Facebook or other social media sites at work!

- **Don’t** post about your internship on social media sites.

- **Don’t** dress too casually – dress like those higher-up than you.

- **Don’t** be too casual in your interactions with your coworkers and supervisors. Formal behavior is expected.

- **Don’t** forget to thank those who help you — people want to feel appreciated.

- **Don’t** just focus on your workload, pay attention to everything! While something may not directly involve you, it is still a learning opportunity.

- **Don’t** be negative — don’t complain, arrive late or leave early.

- **Don’t** forget to keep in touch with the contacts you make — networking gives you in’s that will help further your career.

Many of our professors have traveled the same roads as we have and are able to answer some of our questions about internships, how to choose them, and possible experiences to be expected from internships.

**Question:** What are some of your past experiences with internships? How have internships supplemented your university education? What suggestions do you have as to how a student might decide among internship options?

**Answers:** In addition to providing practical skills, the field experience validates the material covered through our public health curriculum. In deciding among internship options, you should consider what grabbed your interest during your public health coursework and/or service learning experiences. Also, what area of public health do you hope to pursue upon graduation? Both of these take focused consideration by our students well in advance of selecting their field internship opportunity. Our field experience course is a unique opportunity and taking an approach of “getting it out of the way” so I can graduate” is a huge mistake.

The students who carefully consider and effectively plan their field internship are self-motivated and will proactively seek every opportunity to get as much out of their field internship as possible. Those students will be highly successful in establishing a portfolio of “work experience” and in developing a network of professional colleagues and mentors. By doing so, they will smoothly progress to their next objective, be it further education or launching their career.
The Field Experience is a wonderful opportunity to marry academic learning with hands-on application in a practice setting. The benefits to the student cannot be overstated as they relate to professional growth/development, networking opportunities, and potential employment. In deciding on a field experience site, students should consider their career goals and what it takes to ultimately get to that desired position. This evaluation should include both research and discussions with professionals in the field in order to guide the student’s decision-making process. Once in the field, students should demonstrate professional behavior and integrity (e.g., arrive to work on time, follow through with what you say you are going to do, and be well-groomed and appropriately dressed). I always encourage students to act like they are employed by the field organization and to give 110%, i.e., to find ways to add value to the organization and preceptor beyond the internship requirements. That type of work ethic gets noticed and can go a long way in securing a position and/or gaining a reference.

Answers:

Choose an internship site where you are potentially interested in working after you graduate or would like to know more about. If you make a good impression during your internship, this may be a gateway into working at that organization and/or building strong professional ties that can help you navigate your career. My own internship experiences during my masters and doctorate programs allowed me to gain a broad public experience at a free clinic, a local health department, a non-profit national organization, and a for-profit company. There were some organizations that I liked more than others and could see myself working there afterwards. There was one organization, however, that was invaluable in showing me what I definitely did not want to do. That being said, every experience is a good experience if you are able to learn from it. For example, from this organization, I learned about corporate culture and the importance of creating a healthy organizational climate.
I completed a one-year internship in hospital administration as part of my MPH degree program. It was an outstanding opportunity to experience first-hand the financial management of an academic medical center, to learn about the complexities of physician-hospital relationships, and to witness the internal politics of the C-suite. Some of the experiences that I will never forget were touring the hospital facilities to observe daily operations, attending high-level meetings where major decisions were made, and scratching my head when I was not exactly sure how to approach a finance project. I also learned how to dress professionally on a very limited student budget and, yes, it can be done! My internship solidified my interest in public health and health services administration, and prepared me to begin my PhD program with competence and confidence.

At a personal level, it was during my internship year when I met this wonderful gentleman with whom I tied the knot years later. So everything considered, my internship was an unparalleled experience, and I hope yours will be too.

Internships give you the opportunity to practice what you’ve learned in class and to synthesize knowledge in a multidisciplinary manner. You will work as part of a group, present, and report findings that are tailored to your audience. Learning how to craft an evidence-based message and how to get it across to different peer groups is a vital skill-set.
### Upcoming Dates & Events

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<tr>
<th>WHEN</th>
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<tr>
<td>FEB 4, 11 AM–2 PM</td>
<td>Black History Month Red, Black and Green Ribbon Giveaway</td>
<td>Culp Center, 2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; Level</td>
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<td>FEB 5, 8:30–9:40 AM</td>
<td>Breakfast with the Expert: Dr. David Magee – Networking for interview opportunities</td>
<td>Lamb 105</td>
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<tr>
<td>FEB 5, 11 AM–2 PM</td>
<td>National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day</td>
<td>Culp Center, 2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; Level</td>
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<td>FEB 6, 6 PM</td>
<td>African and African American Studies Lectures: “The 2012 Presidential Election: Race Relations in the 21&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; Century”</td>
<td>Sherrod Library, Room 309</td>
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<tr>
<td>FEB 6, 11:50 AM</td>
<td>Public Health Journal Club</td>
<td>Lamb Hall Student Lounge</td>
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<td>FEB 11, 7 PM</td>
<td>Eating Alabama – documentary film</td>
<td>Culp Auditorium</td>
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<td>FEB 12, 10 AM–5 PM</td>
<td>Sankofa African American Museum on Wheels</td>
<td>Culp Center Ballroom</td>
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<td>FEB 12, 6:30 PM</td>
<td>African and African American Studies Lectures: “Language and Culture Identity in Modern Africa”</td>
<td>Sherrod Library, Room 309</td>
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<td>FEB 14</td>
<td>Music – An Evening with Frank Vignola</td>
<td>Must buy tickets, $5 with student I.D.</td>
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<td>FEB 19, 6:30 PM</td>
<td>African and African American Studies lectures: “Writing the U.S. Constitution and the Slavery Debate”</td>
<td>Sherrod Library, Room 309</td>
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<td>FEB 19, 6 PM</td>
<td>African and African American Studies lectures: “Men of the African Diaspora: Their Service in the British Royal Navy to End the Slave Trade, 1808-1861”</td>
<td>Sherrod Library, Room 309</td>
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<tr>
<td>FEB 21, 7 PM</td>
<td>Leading Voices in Public Health Lecture with Dr. Robert S. Lawrence, M.D</td>
<td>Millennium Centre, Second Floor Ballroom</td>
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<td>FEB 28</td>
<td>Storytelling – Diane Edgecomb’s ‘Forbidden Stories’</td>
<td>Must buy tickets, $5 with student I.D.</td>
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