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INTRODUCTION

If you are a student thinking about an international internship, congratulations! You’ve already started down the path to setting yourself apart and gaining great skills to enter our increasingly globalized world.

Study abroad and internships are two of the high impact educational practices identified nationally and endorsed by our campus community. International internships are the intersection of these two lead to global competence as well as other student outcomes you need in order to remain competitive such as the ability to adapt and work effectively in a variety of cultures; effectively communicate across cultural and linguistic boundaries; creativity, flexibility, agility, and resilience.

What is an internship? It is a limited-term work experience that gives you exposure to occupations within your field(s) of study and hands-on application of your education. They can be paid or unpaid, often depending on the nature of the work, the type of organization, and/or the laws of the country in which the internship takes place. There must be an internship supervisor and specific learning goals in addition to the description of the work to be carried out.

We have an additional handbook targeted at students who have accepted an internship and are planning to go abroad. This one will focus on searching for and coordinating an internship.

FIRST STEPS

There are several resources on campus that you should start with as you begin your search for an internship abroad. See the Resources section below for links.

1. Decide what type of internship you’re interested in
   • Talk to Career Services or the Career Exploration Center to help define internship goals, articulate your skills & get your resume in shape
   • Speak with your academic advisor about careers suited to your academic plan and how an internship fits
2. Determine where you want to live and work
   • Check out GoinGlobal through BuckyNet or myECS for country-specific employment guides and visa information
   • Be realistic about your ability to live in different environments (language, climate, food, housing, culture, etc.)
3. Research and apply for internships that match your goals and areas of interest
   • Check out IIP postings listed in our database. Visit us for advising on opportunities and applications.
   • Look into internship programs through the IAP, CALS, or Business study abroad offices – we cross list these in our database.
   • Talk to faculty members, family and friends to network
• Search online, including through GoinGlobal & Bucky Net/myECS, pages on our External Search list for openings

4. When you have the internship
• Sign up for the Worldwide Internship Program (WIP) to get credit
• Make sure you have the appropriate visa
• Sign up for health insurance, if not doing WIP
• Talk to IIP for additional considerations about interning abroad and to be included in our pre-departure orientation and re-entry!

INTERNSHIP TYPES

There are several ways to find internships which will affect your process and costs involved.

POSITION POSTINGS TO WHICH YOU DIRECTLY APPLY

Most internships are available through a typical job search process where you respond to a specific position description by submitting a resume and cover letter outlining your qualifications for the specified internship. The internship posting should have estimated start and end dates, a description, and a list of desired qualifications and skills. Some positions are paid and some are unpaid, but you do not need to pay a fee to apply or participate.

The International Internship Program (IIP) lists positions we’ve cultivated specifically for UW-Madison students to which you can apply in this manner; they can be found in our database and posted on BuckyNet and myECS. BuckyNet and myECS similarly list other positions to which you can apply directly, although they are often open to students from UW as well as other schools. You can conduct web searches on any number of open job search databases, including GoinGlobal through the BuckyNet portal.

If there are specific organizations you are interested in check their employment websites and talk to them at career fairs about international internships. You can network through professors and acquaintances to get introduced to potential hosts. You need to ask about visa support, financial support, and details of what you would be able to do with a potential host.

Students on most of the IIP-cultivated internships will need to enroll in the Worldwide Internship Program (WIP) course for credit and insurance. WIP is a strongly recommended option for students who find their own internship though other searches. See below under “Getting Credit” for more information on enrolling in WIP.

PLACEMENT AGENCIES / PROGRAM PROVIDERS

Some companies will—for a fee—create or find a customized internship for you in another company or organization abroad based on your interests. These positions are almost always unpaid, but there are exceptions and sometimes you can recoup the initial fee paid to the agency. The provider fee can be simply to cover the cost of finding an appropriate position and placing you (which takes time, and therefore is a cost), or may include additional services such
as housing, excursions and sometimes a local academic program (credit) tied to the internship opportunity.

UW-Madison International Academic Programs (IAP) offers internship programs through providers that have been vetted to work with UW-Madison to place students in internships. IAP can advise you on these opportunities and you would apply and pay for these programs through IAP. Any internship program through IAP includes academic credit and insurance for the fee.

There are hundreds of providers out there not yet vetted by IAP that you can explore yourself. GoAbroad.com is one resource for searching for providers. You should look at these critically and determine the fees, what is included, and what kinds of opportunities are available for providers we have not vetted. You CAN get UW credit for these programs even if they have not been offered through IAP. You would pay the provider fee directly, and if you would like to receive credit for a provider internship you can apply to WIP to do this (see below). PLEASE check with us before you pay a fee to a provider if you want credit, so we can confirm whether the internship program you’ve selected meets the criteria for credit at UW-Madison.

GETTING CREDIT

Doing a course for credit with your internship is a great way to get the most out of the experience. Credit is offered for the academic reflection done along with the internship, not the internship work itself. By doing a course you get the benefit of reflection plus the notation of your internship experience on your transcript.

WHY?

- Lets you reflect on the internship experience and new skills and knowledge acquired in a cross-cultural work environment.
- Get international health insurance & 24/7 emergency support from UW-Madison IAP.
- Retain student status and financial aid eligibility, registration and housing status, and keep your WiscMail account active.
- You may need it to get a visa! Many countries require that internships be credit-bearing or have university approval for visa applications.
- Have the internship experience recorded on your permanent transcript to verify the experience to future employers or schools.

WORLDWIDE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM (WIP)

If you applied for one of the IIP internship opportunities or found one on your own that is at least four weeks and 96 hours in duration then you can apply to receive credit through the Worldwide Internship Program. This is an online seminar in which participants doing internships all over the world come together to reflect on their diverse experiences.

This program is offered by IIP and the International Studies major and is administered by International Academic Programs (IAP). It allows you to earn three credits and provides you with
international health insurance coverage and 24/7 emergency support. Please visit the IAP website for cost information.

If your major or certificate requires fieldwork or an internship you may want to discuss if your experience applies for that as well. If your department has an internship course for which this is equivalent you can request that notation on your transcript. We are happy to work with you and your department.

If you have found an internship abroad submit your online application and internship questionnaire without delay! Even if you don’t have all the details, but have started the process, you need to get the initial application in by the deadline so we can start working with you. Deadlines for summer or fall internships are the first Friday in March and in October for spring.

In addition, some students do an internationally-focused but U.S.-based internship. We encourage you to do academic work with these internships as well and each school or college offers an internship course.

**CAN’T BE CONVINCED?**

If you decide to do an internship without a course component there are several details you will want to consider:

- **International health insurance:** You need to be insured while abroad. You can purchase the CISI insurance inexpensively yourself as a UW-Madison student. If selected for an IIP-cultivated internship we will enroll you in this insurance if credit is optional and you elect not to seek it.

- **Reentry Admission to UW:** If you are a continuing student and you leave for fall or spring semester you will need to be readmitted. More information on how to do this: [https://www.admissions.wisc.edu/enrolled/sa_reentry.php](https://www.admissions.wisc.edu/enrolled/sa_reentry.php) (Summer internships do not require this step.)

- **Financial aid:** If you lose your student status on a semester internship your loans may go into repayment in six months or sooner from the date you end enrollment. Visit the Financial Aid website: [http://finaid.wisc.edu/index.htm](http://finaid.wisc.edu/index.htm)

- **Safety:** Be sure to visit the State Department website to learn about the location you are going to and register with the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program at [http://www.travel.state.gov/](http://www.travel.state.gov/) Also visit [http://studentsabroad.state.gov/](http://studentsabroad.state.gov/) (U.S. citizens only)

- **Inform us:** We would love to hear about your internship – tell IIP where you are going and how it goes. We are always looking for students to feature and would love to work with your host or provider to develop the opportunity for future students. E-mail us: [internships@international.wisc.edu](mailto:internships@international.wisc.edu)
FINANCIAL AID & FUNDING

Some internships abroad are paid or offer a stipend to offset your living costs (depending on the country, a stipend may be required for interns) but many are unpaid and there are many costs to consider such as airfare, visas, housing, and commuting. It is important to think about budgeting and financial aid before committing to an internship abroad.

FINANCIAL AID

As noted above in the “Getting Credit” section, receiving academic credit for internships is an important piece for financial aid eligibility. For summer students, if you receive three credits for four-eight weeks of interning you will be eligible for financial aid. If you are not eligible for summer aid you may want to consider maximizing your spring aid and saving some to help cover your summer expenses. For semester students, you need to receive six credits to be eligible for half-time financial aid. You can reach the six-credit mark by doing the WIP course for three credits and a Directed Study for another three credits. There is no additional tuition fee for adding a three credit Directed Study to your WIP course participation.

DEFERRING REPAYMENT

If you are receiving credit for your near-full-time internship you will retain student status and your loans will not go into repayment, even if you are not eligible to receive additional aid. If you take a fall or spring semester away from UW to do an internship independently you need to be aware that your loans will go into repayment status after 6 months from the end of your enrollment, or sooner for some types of loans. You should talk to Financial Aid and make sure you understand how this will affect you.

SCHOLARSHIPS & FUNDING

Students in the Worldwide Internship Program (WIP) are eligible for a need-based travel grant, as well as scholarships through IAP study abroad, to help with their cost of participation.

Your host may provide some funding for you, but if you are looking for additional sources you may want to research funding offered by your department, search online for sources, and check for eligibility for any of the scholarships listed on the IAP website. Find links and more on our funding page: http://internships.international.wisc.edu/students/funding/

Fundraising is also an option – look to your community and family and try to raise awareness of what you are trying to accomplish and why they should support you in this. There are crowdfunding applications online as well as ideas for hosting events, talking to people, etc.
RESOURCES

UW-Madison International Internship Program (IIP)
http://internships.international.wisc.edu

Career Services at UW-Madison
http://careers.wisc.edu

UW-Madison International Academic Programs (IAP)
http://studyabroad.wisc.edu/

CALS International Programs
http://ip.cals.wisc.edu/choose-a-program/international-internships/

BuckyNet
Access through your Career Services website. IIP opportunities are also posted here.

myECS
https://ecs.engr.wisc.edu/schubert/job_seeker/login/login.php

GoinGlobal
Access through links in BuckyNet or myECS for full country guides and internship postings. Free introduction at www.goinglobal.com

Wisconsin Alumni Association Chapters
http://chapters.uwalumni.com/

Find more on our website:
http://internships.international.wisc.edu/students/campus-resources/
INTERN TESTIMONIALS

“Being an international intern is more than just a ‘working’ internship; it is also a challenge to learn to adapt to different situations and new people—something that can’t be taught in a book, but instead by doing”
—Dan Lawler, intern at Plexus in Penang, Malaysia.

“As modern technology rapidly expands our ability to communicate and interact across greater distances, there has been an inexorable push toward an environment of increased international cooperation in the realm of business.”
—Casey Sennott, intern at Japan Rail Central in Tokyo, Japan.

“My time in India was the single most important decision I have made thus far in life. It allowed me to see not only a different part of the world, but also to step back and reevaluate myself, my values, thoughts in ways that I never had before.”
—Brittany Taylor Thompson, intern at Nalmanam Charitable Trust in Chennai, India.

Questions?
International Internship Program
internships@international.wisc.edu  |  608-261-1018
259 Bascom Hall  |  500 Lincoln Drive  |  Madison, WI 53706
Check website for walk-in advising hours or to make an appointment