

Internships: What, When and Why?

UCS defines an internship as a field-based experience related to your career interests, academic major or graduate school discipline. UCS has resources and counselors to help all students, first year through PhD, find internships that meet their needs. (MBA, Law, Dental and Medical School students are not eligible for UCS services.) You may participate in an internship during either semester or in the summer. Many graduate and professional programs include internships or practicums as part of their requirements and have staff who manage student's internship placements, however students in these departments sometimes participate in summer internships to gain more experience with help from UCS.

An internship may be part-time or full-time, paid or unpaid. Internship benefits include allowing you to:

- Explore or refine career interests
- Enhance your professional and personal skills
- Increase motivation for school
- Gain a competitive edge on the job market
- Develop a network of professionals

An internship is an investment in your future and makes you a more appealing candidate for jobs after you graduate.

Internships can be pursued at any point - first-year through graduate and professional school. For many graduate and professional school students internships or practicums are an integral part of their program, these students often participate in summer internships that are not an official part of their program to gain additional experience. Graduate and professional school students whose programs do not include internships can benefit from the additional experience offered by internships or can explore careers outside of their discipline.

When should I start looking?

Students should begin searching for an internship about three months before they want to start working. Summer internships are posted throughout the year, with the peak of

posting happening roughly in late-January/early-February. But, note that some summer internships have deadlines as early as October and November, especially competitive fields and government organizations.

To how many should I apply?

There is no correct number. But, don't put all of your eggs in one basket. Apply to multiple internships. Typically students may ultimately apply for a dozen or more before finding a right fit. Be resilient and consistent. Don't get discouraged and don't give up. That perfect internship may be right around the corner!

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