

# Internships: Getting Started

## AN INTERNSHIP IS...

- An opportunity for hands-on career exploration
- Exposure to professional work setting
- Possible academic credit
- Reinforcement of classroom learning
- Experience in chosen field
- Likely to increase employment marketability
- A possible step toward full-time employment
- Available to students of all class years and majors.
- Offered throughout the year, usually full-time in summer and part-time during the school year
- Usually one semester in length
- Either paid or voluntary: Employers offering unpaid internships are expected to have clearly articulated educational objectives. Compensation can take a number of different forms: hourly wage, lump sum (stipend), room and/or board, reimbursement for expenses, such as travel, miscellaneous perks, etc.

## HELPFUL HINTS:

- Start your search at least 3 to 4 months before desired start time. For more competitive programs with the federal government, start 6 to 8 months ahead. (Some government security checks may take longer.)
- Summer internships are the most competitive. Internships during the fall and spring semesters are often easier to obtain.
- To interview for an internship through the Career Center, you must register through **JobMate**.
- Investigate academic credit *before* the internship begins, not after. Find out if credit for an internship is available for students with your major by checking with the internship coordinator in your academic department. (We have a contact list of coordinators in the Career Center.)
- Don't underestimate the value of an unpaid internship in helping you land a job after graduation.
- Individual employers set requirements for internships (including GPA), not the Career Center.
- Have answers prepared for the following employer questions:
  - 1) What is an internship? **or** Why are you seeking an internship?
  - 2) When do you want to intern? (Have exact dates of availability ready, if possible.)
  - 3) Will you consider working voluntarily? **or** What hourly pay are you looking for?
  - 4) How will an internship benefit our organization?
  - 5) Can you receive academic credit for this internship? If so, what is required of our organization?

## INTERNSHIP RESOURCES:

- Career Library:
  - Check directories and meet with a counselor for help in locating additional resources.
- Internet Sites:
  - See [www.sc.edu/career/?id=webresources/internseasonal](http://www.sc.edu/career/?id=webresources/internseasonal) for links to internship posting sites.
  - See [www.sc.edu/career](http://www.sc.edu/career). Search JobMate for internship postings.
- Academic Departments: Check with faculty, student services, advisors, and bulletin boards on campus.
- Network with people you know: Family, friends, classmates, employers, etc.
- Create your own internship:
  - Develop a list of employers who hire in your field of interest (Use Career Library for assistance).
  - Contact these employers about a possible internship.
  - Make sure the employer knows you are seeking a career-related experience and not clerical work.