

INTERNSHIP LAUNCH KIT

Thank you for your interest in The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) student interns! In this employer guide, you will gain an overview of the development of an internship program and the steps necessary to attract top talent for your organization.

Establish your UTEP talent pipeline with us.

engageoffice@utep.edu



**UTEP
ENGAGE**

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The Value of an Intern

Hosting interns offers organizations the unique opportunity to nurture talent and enhance reputation among emerging professionals. Interns can gain practical, hands-on experience, contribute academic insights and new skills to the workplace.

Types of Internships

- ▶ **Traditional internship:** Temporary placements with external organizations that provide major-related hands-on experience.
- ▶ **Fellowships:** Merit-based opportunities that support academic, research, or career goals.
- ▶ **Micro-internships:** Short-term, project-base experiences that are conducted in-person/virtually.
- ▶ **Cooperative Education (Co-Op):** Structured program built into an academic degree plan, managed by the academic college.

Internship Criteria

To ensure that an experience is eligible to be a legitimate internship, all the following criteria must be met (NACE, 2011):

- Is an **extension of the classroom**: a learning opportunity that supports classroom theory. It must not be simply to advance the operations of the employer.
- The experience has a **timeline** (typically one semester in length or 15 weeks).
- A clearly defined job description with **desired qualifications, learning objectives and goals**.
- **Supervision by a professional or full-time employee** who mentors regularly about expertise within the industry.
- **Routine feedback** is provided by the supervisor and formal evaluations are conducted at the mid-point and end of the internship.
- Must be **hosted in a professional/work setting** (e.g., company/office).

1. Structuring your Internship Program

Determine how an intern can play an integral role when identifying your organization's needs or challenges. Consider the resources and benefits your organization can offer to maximize the intern's experience.

I.I Key Resources

- A safe, adequate workspace
- Technical equipment/internet access
- Company specific software/programs
- Security clearances
- Supervisor

I.II Timeline

Align the internship schedule with the academic terms to accommodate an intern's school commitments.

Academic Terms



I.III Compensation

Intern compensation is influenced by many factors, such as industry norms and organization-specific considerations. In the private-sector, employers are generally required to pay interns at least minimum wage, per the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

Refer to NACE's Compensation resources and the UTEP Engage's Annual Internship Report to establish the intern base pay.

Unpaid Internships

While paid internships are highly encouraged for their numerous benefits, some internships may be unpaid. UTEP emphasizes the importance of paid internships to provide equitable opportunities for all students.

If your organization is unable to provide a paid internship, connect with the UTEP Engage team at engageoffice@utep.edu to explore alternative methods to engage with students.

I.V Supervision

The supervisor is a critical element to the intern's experience. Responsibilities may include:

- Facilitating team introductions and organization orientation
- Outlining expectations and goals
- Defining learning objectives with the intern
- Engaging in regular one-on-one meetings
- Providing career development opportunities and resources
- Evaluating performance midway and at the conclusion of the experience

In addition to the supervisor, a mentor and shadowing in action are essential guides to the intern's growth.

V. Mentoring

A mentor provides guidance, encouragement, and will assist in the intern's growth and development. Mentors can share their career journeys, challenges, and lessons learned which helps the intern gain industry perspective.

VI. Shadowing in Action

The intern will benefit from joining professional meetings, presentations, and learn project development insight. Encourage the intern to network with professionals outside of their department to learn about various career paths.

II. The Interview and Hiring Process

You can use Handshake to post internship openings, review applicant profiles, and connect with potential candidates. Please review the UTEP Handshake Employer Support packet.

Selecting & Interviewing Candidates

When reviewing resumes, consider the following:

- Does the student possess transferable skills required for the internship position?
- Has the student completed relevant coursework to undertake the internship?
- Has the student demonstrated leadership qualities?
- Does the student display satisfactory academic performance?
- Has the student participated in class projects or experience that are relevant to the internship?

Interviewing

Visit the Employer Toolbox for a list of interview questions.



...as of January 2025, 41% of Class of 2025 students had applied to at least one internship through Handshake, compared to 34% of Class of 2023 students at the end of their undergraduate career.

Handshake Internships Index 2025



III. On-boarding your Intern

A well-structured internship program will start with an introductory meeting. This is a key step to provide the opportunity to:

- Set expectations
- Outline the organizational structure
- Review policies
- Provide a tour of the workplace
- Team/mentor introductions
- Discuss evaluation methods
- Allow the intern to ask questions

Intern Welcome Packet

An intern welcome packet is a guide designed to provide interns with the information they need to succeed during their internship. Here are common elements that may be included:

- **Company overview:** history, mission, values, and organizational structure
- **Expectations and responsibilities:** performance standards
- **Policies and procedures:** code of conduct, dress code, safety protocols, security clearance
- **Communication channels:** how and who to contact if they can't make it to work
- **Training and evaluation:** learning resources, feedback
- **Benefits:** networking opportunities, professional development

Human Resources

Provide the incoming intern with the Human Resources office/representative contact information for information on:

- **Eligibility/benefits:** medical insurance/other benefits
- **Absence requests:** vacation/sick leave
- **Payroll:** payment frequency and method, time sheet deadlines and platform
- **Onboarding documents:** required documentation for HR appointments

IV. Building Core Competencies

The National Association of Colleges and Employers defines career readiness through the following competencies that broadly prepare college graduates for a successful transition into the workplace. We highly recommend integrating these competencies in the internship.

- **Career and self-development**
- **Communication**
- **Critical thinking**
- **Leadership**
- **Professionalism**
- **Teamwork**
- **Technology**

Explore the Employer Toolbox for a breakdown of each core skill, a list of learning objectives, and ideas on how to integrate them into the internship.

II.I Internship Learning Objectives

When crafting learning objectives, connect the competencies to specific projects/tasks to evaluate the intern's development of skills and acquired knowledge.

We recommend following the S.M.A.R.T. goal system:

- **Specific** (Who, what, where, when, why?)
- **Measurable** (Set a clear goal to evaluate and quantify success.)
- **Attainable** (Assess what resources you have and how they can help you reach your goal)
- **Relevant** (Determine if your goal aligns with the organization's overall goals.)
- **Time Bound** (Establish a firm start and end date to maintain accountability.)

E.g.,) By the end of the 12-week internship, the intern will improve multi-channel communication skills through drafting marketing content and supporting social media campaigns, aiming for a 15% increase in audience engagement.

V. Performance Evaluations

The evaluations should be constructive for the intern and motivate growth for future opportunities. We emphasize conducting two formal evaluations at the mid-point and end of the internship.

V.I Performance Evaluation Structure

Mid-point Review

Conduct a mid-year review with your intern to assist in their progress during the work term. The mid-point discussion is an opportunity for the supervisor and intern to discuss topics such as:

- Progress towards overall expectations and goals
- Intern's work performed to date
- Training or mentoring resources needed to help meet expectations
- Addressing any questions/concerns

End-of-Term Evaluation

The end-of-term performance evaluation allows the supervisor and intern to fulfill the evaluation process. Identify the intern's strengths, areas of improvement, and final thoughts about the internship.

V.II Internship Wrap-up

Feedback

The intern should be given the opportunity to present their work/project to their respective team and receive constructive feedback. This is a chance to acknowledge the intern's skills and how they can be strengthened for future settings.

Evaluation of Program

Intern

1. How were my skills developed from this program?
2. How did it influence my career options/pathways?
3. What challenges did I face?
4. How did my supervisor and mentor affect my learning journey?
5. What changes can benefit future interns?

Employer

1. How did the intern transition into the team and their projects?
2. How was the intern challenged to build skills and knowledge?
3. Were there sufficient resources for the intern?
4. How did the internship benefit the organization overall?
5. What learning lessons were found about the internship program's structure?

VI. Off-Boarding

Showing appreciation for the intern's contributions can make a lasting impression. Hosting a farewell lunch/meeting are ways to celebrate their internship journey. If you view your intern as a potential new hire and extend a full-time offer, please allow a reasonable timeframe for their decision.

For job offer policies, please review and adhere to the UTEP Engage's Internship Guidelines, NACE Principles for Ethical Professional Practice, and NACE Advisory Opinion.

Intern Spotlights

As part of UTEP Engage efforts in celebrating your intern's success, we encourage interns to submit a photo showcasing their internship journey.

Encourage your interns to become an inspiration for other students and influence new talent to apply to your organization for future opportunities.



"Thanks to the partnership between Workforce and the El Paso Police Department, I've gained valuable insights and real world experience that are helping me build the skills for a leadership role in the marketing field."

Genesis M.
Marketing Coordinator - El Paso Police Department



"This internship has propelled me to become a professional researcher and help make new connections as well as shaping me into a successful individual. My pathway has become more brighter as I approach to graduate school, to open the doorway with my experiences and connections."

Maximiliano M.
GEO Research Intern - Penn State University

VII. Final Things to Consider

International Students

There are several types of visas granted to international students, most of which allow the student to work off-campus. After securing an internship, international students should contact The Office of International Programs to request the necessary paperwork and guidance on obtaining the required authorization to work off-campus.

Internships provide a valuable opportunity for employers to engage with talented international students without the need for visa sponsorship. This arrangement benefits both parties by facilitating skill development and cultural exchange in a mutually beneficial way.

Reporting your Internship

Benefits of internship reporting:

- Free non-credit transcript notation
- UTEP intern swag
- Exclusive intern appreciation events

Internships and Academic Credit

Earning course credit for an internship is not a substitute for monetary compensation. It is up to the student to contact their academic department to determine if the internship meets the required prerequisites to earn course-credit.

While the UTEP Engage does not grant academic credit for internships, we do offer students a way to earn recognition on their transcripts as a non-credit COOP notation. Students may visit the UTEP Engage's Internship page to learn more.

The Employer Toolbox provides essential tools to launch and manage your internship program effectively.

Includes

1. Internship Job Description
2. Interview Questions
3. Student Handbook
4. Core Competency Skills
5. Learning Objectives
6. Student & Supervisor Evaluations
7. Exit Interview Sample