

Externship Program: Frequently Asked Questions

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What is an externship?

A unique, intensive job shadowing opportunity that allows Gettysburg students to gain an insider's view into a career field, observe on-the-job activities, and participate in hands-on learning experiences in the workplace. This experience typically lasts one week during the summer (mid-May to mid-August). Hosts have offered as short as 3 days, as well as longer experiences, which can be discussed with the Center for Career Engagement staff as needed. You set your availability!

How much preparation does hosting an externship require?

The amount of time you spend as a host can vary. In our post-externship host evaluation surveys, most hosts have responded that the externship required less time than they originally expected. It may take some initial set up with your place of employment, as well as time to determine what aspects of your position and any other colleagues or departments the extern can/should be involved in during the experience in order to get an in-depth view of the career field.

What should I do with the student(s) during the externship experience?

Involve the student in the day-to-day activities of your office/department (i.e. meetings, conference calls, etc.) that will provide them with insight into your career field. The student does not have to be with you the entire time. You can set up meetings with other colleagues/departments to give the student(s) a more well-rounded view of the company/organization. If there are any unique opportunities occurring, perhaps plan to have the student(s) be included in those. You can also consider giving the student a short-term project to work on for the duration of the externship.

Where does the student stay during the externship?

Hosts often offer to house the student in their home or apartment during the experience, which can provide students with a better understanding of the relationship/balance between work and home life. If a homestay is not an option, students can explore staying with friends or family nearby or they can work with the Center for Career Engagement staff to find other Gettysburg alumni or parents locally who can house them. In some cases, students will find reasonably priced housing (hotel, hostel, etc.) near the externship location.

Does it cost me anything to participate as a host?

No. However, many hosts have offered to make or take their extern(s) to lunch or dinner at some point during the week. It is not an expectation of a host to provide students with meals during the experience. Additionally, if the student(s) is coming from a great distance, hosts have offered to pick up/drop off the student(s) at the airport/bus/train station to help offset the student's costs in participating as an extern.

How will I be matched with the extern(s) and when will I be notified?

As the host, you get to submit the description of your particular externship opportunity that will be used to advertise to students. Students go through an application process and choose their top three externship options, as well as answer several questions related to their career goals and interests. An internal committee of Career Engagement staff reviews all the applications and matches students with each opportunity based on their application materials. Hosts are notified of their student participant(s) following student confirmation, which usually takes place in early April.

Why should I volunteer to be a host?

You get to connect with talented students who are eager to learn and make a difference in their lives. You can share your career and professional expertise, as well as help them understand the working world as a young professional. You can get re/acquainted with the current happenings at Gettysburg and hear from students about their experiences. And, these students could become potential great candidates for future employment.

You can call or email us with questions at (717) 337-6616 or career@gettysburg.edu.