EXTERN PROGRAM
STUDENT PLANNING GUIDE

March 11th – 19th, 2023
SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY CARBONDALE
EXTERN PROGRAM

Thank you for considering participation in our 2023 Extern Program! For more than 30 years, SIU has provided the Extern Program as a unique professional development experience for students. To date, more than 4,000 Salukis have worked with companies and organizations around the nation to gain first-hand experience.

A partnership between the Career Development Center and Alumni Association, the Extern Program provides students with professional experience in their chosen career fields. Students are matched with SIU alumni and friends in a variety of careers across the country. They apply skills learned in the classroom in a professional work environment. The program is individualized and enhances the student’s education. Benefits received are invaluable. Not only will students gain real world career knowledge and experience, they will also expand their career network. Some students find their externship has led them to find a lifelong mentor, an internship, and even a full-time employment offer.

Externships are an unpaid one-week career preparation and exploration experience for current students in their third semester at SIU or be a transfer student (JD and Master’s students may also apply). Each spring, alumni and friends of the university host students at their workplaces and provide job shadowing in a wide variety of career fields. The Extern Program takes place between March 11th – 19th, 2023. Students apply for externship positions based on their major, career interests, and the sponsor-developed description of the experience.

This guide will help prepare you for the Extern Program application process, as well as what to expect if you are offered an externship. If you find yourself having questions along the way, feel free to contact the Career Development Center. Our contact information is at the bottom of this letter.

With Saluki Pride,

Jaime Conley-Holt
Director
SIU Career Development Center
careerdevelopment@siu.edu
EXTERN PROGRAM PREP SERIES

EXTERN PROGRAM: INFO SESSION
August 30th, 2022, 4:00 – 5:00PM
Location: Student Services Building, RM 150/160

EXTERN PREP: RESUME
September 29, 2022, 4:00 – 5:00PM
Location: Student Services Building, RM 150/160

EXTERN PREP: INTERVIEW SKILLS
October 29th, 2022, 4:00 – 5:00PM
Location: Student Services Building, RM 170
EXTERN PROGRAM STUDENT REQUIREMENTS

Eligibility in the Extern Program requires students must:
- Be in at least their third semester of undergraduate studies at SIU or a transfer student (Master’s and JD students may also apply at any point in their studies)
- Be enrolled full-time at SIU during the application process and during the externship
- Complete an application here.
- Submit a Career Development Center approved resume and cover letter during the application process
- Complete a screening interview – November 3rd, 2022 Time TBD
- Contact your sponsor prior to the externship
- Initiate and continue contact your sponsor prior to the externship
- Attend the Send-off Ceremony prior to the externship – March 7th, 2023 SSB Room 150 4:00 – 6:00 PM

Recommended:
- Have a 2.75 GPA (if you do not meet this, it must be addressed in your cover letter)

*Resumes must be approved by a Career Development Center staff member. Please make an appointment with one of our staff members by calling us at 618-453-2391.

Ayla Lee & Aalaiyah Ticer at FDH Infrastructure externship 2019
WORDS FROM PAST EXTERNS

“This was an absolutely priceless experience. I feel like I had a serious insight into what it means to be a motion designer and what an agency team is like. I’ve improved so much from what I learned at Scofield! I would highly recommend this externship to other students interested in motion design, if they apply to the program.”

“A great first step into the professional world!”

“I just can’t say enough about this program. It was a great experience and an absolute pleasure to take part in, even for just a short time.”

“It was a very valuable experience. I learned a lot and it helped me decide on my next adventure.”

“There are a lot of parts about a future job that can't be learned from just a classroom alone. That's why this externship was so important.”

“Everyone should do it!”

“It was a great experience and I feel that I made beneficial connections that will help my career. I got to see what it was like in an architectural office and got to observe the dialogue that happens between employees.”

“I learned a lot about a company I didn’t even really know about, and it helped if anything confirms my interest in my major.”

“If students have the opportunity to take part in an externship program, they shouldn’t have any reservations in doing so.”
EXTERN EXPECTATIONS

Contact your sponsor. Once connected with your sponsor via a Career Development Center staff member, you are expected to reach out to your sponsor and maintain contact with them.

Attend the Send-Off Ceremony. This is a mandatory ceremony for all Extern Program participants. You will be given a gift for participating, as well as provided with a gift for your sponsor.

Do your externship! This is what you’ve worked for! Enjoy it and learn as much as you can!

As an extern, you are a representative of your department, your college, and Southern Illinois University. All students are expected to behave in accordance with the Student Conduct Code, as well as present yourself professionally. Consider these areas of professional behavior.

Respect. A respectful attitude towards others is essential. Sponsors are going out of their way to make this a great experience for you. Be respectful of this opportunity and their time.

Communication. Keep in contact with your sponsor prior to the externship, as well as during the experience. Ask questions, listen, and use good manners when engaging with others.

Time Management. Do not be late. Organize yourself by becoming familiar with transportation methods and times so you can be on time. Utilize a schedule to know where you need to be, and when.

Safety. Review and follow any safety protocol your sponsor details.

Dress. If you have not already, I encourage you to have a discussion with your sponsor about appropriate clothing during your extern experience. When in doubt, business casual is usually acceptable. If you do not have professional clothing, please visit the Career Development Center between 8:00-4:00PM Monday – Friday to take advantage of the Professional Clothing Closet. You are allowed to take one complete outfit home for free, and use it during your externship.

Commitment. By applying for the Extern Program and accepting the offer with a sponsor, it is assumed you are committed to following through with the experience. If you do not follow through with the commitment, you will not be allowed to participate in future extern opportunities. In the case of an emergency, please contact the Career Development Center at 618.453.2391
FAQS

I don’t have a high GPA. Can I still participate?
We recommend a GPA of 2.75, primarily because if you are struggling in your coursework, you may need to focus on it right now rather than an externship. However, there are exceptions so if you have a GPA of less than 2.75, we ask you address it in your cover letter.

I’m a doctoral student and want to participate. Can I?
The Extern Program does not currently support doctoral students. However, if you are seeking experiential learning opportunities (e.g., internships) and struggling, please contact our office at 618-453-2391. We can meet with you to discuss your search!

I’m a freshman and I want to participate. Can I?
We require students be in their third semester of undergraduate studies at SIU. Extern sponsors typically want more advanced students who have had some coursework relevant to the position. We appreciate your enthusiasm and hope you apply in the future, but at this time we hope you focus on your studies and finding your footing as a new Saluki!

Is the externship paid?
No, externships are not paid. Students sign up for them with the understanding that the experience is unpaid. We do offer travel awards based on funding availability. Information on applying for a travel award will be made available in January 2023. Applying for a travel award does not guarantee reimbursement.

Is travel reimbursed?
Yes and no. We do not guarantee any reimbursement of travel. However, we do offer travel awards based on funding availability. Information on applying for a travel award will be made available in January 2023. Applying for a travel award does not guarantee reimbursement.

How do you select who goes to certain externship opportunities?
Students are paired with sponsors based on career interests and location of the externship. Sponsors and students are presented with the offer via email, and have a limited amount of time to respond stating if they accept or not. Once both student and sponsor accept, they are introduced together to begin planning the externship.

What do I do if I cannot commit to my externship placement?
If you are placed with an extern sponsor you cannot follow through with for whatever reason, you need to notify Jaime Conley-Holt at jbcholt@siu.edu, immediately. Failure to communicate with the Career Development Center and/or your externship sponsor may result in being unable to participate in the Extern Program in the future.