

# Extern Program

**SIU** SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
CARBONDALE CAREER DEVELOPMENT  
CENTER



**Student Planning Guide**  
**March 9-17, 2024**



# SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY CARBONDALE EXTERN PROGRAM

Thank you for considering participation in our 2024 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.

The Extern Program is an unpaid one-week career preparation and exploration experience for current students. Its purpose is to provide you with professional experience relating to your academic/career interests or can assist you in exploring and determining what career field you'd like to go into after graduation. Students are matched with employers, often SIU alumni or supporters of the University, in a variety of careers and industries across the country. You will apply skills learned in the classroom in a professional work environment. The program is individualized and enhances your education. Benefits received are invaluable. Not only will you gain real world career knowledge and experience, but you will also expand your professional network. Some students find their externship has led them to find a lifelong mentor, an internship, and even a full-time employment offer.

**The Extern Program takes place during SIU's spring break, March 9-17, 2024.** Students apply and are matched with externship positions based on their major, career interests, and the host-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.

## HOW TO BECOME AN EXTERN

The Extern Program is open to most majors, but please be sure to view the eligibility requirements listed below if you are interested in this experience.

### Eligibility Requirements:

1. Be in at least your third semester of undergraduate studies at SIU, or a transfer student. Master's and JD students may also apply. Freshmen and PhD students are ineligible.
2. Be enrolled full-time at SIU during the application process and during the externship (March 9-17, 2024). Students graduating in Dec. 2023 are ineligible for the 2024 program.
3. Complete the [online application](#) which requires a resume and a cover letter written specifically for the program to be submitted.
4. Complete a screening interview after submitting your application.
5. Have a 3.0 GPA.\*

\*Please do not let this requirement stop you from applying. If you have questions and/or concerns, please contact Stephanie Mueller at [smueller95@siu.edu](mailto:smueller95@siu.edu) or 618-453-1049.

## STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

“This externship served as a major foot in the door in starting my professional career. It allowed me to learn what exact career path I wanted to follow without even realizing it. If you are looking to gain real and beneficial experience within your major, I would recommend applying to the SIU Extern Program. You won’t regret it!”

- Marissa Schaefer, Agribusiness Economics, Host: Sloan Implement, 2023



“My extern experience at Whitney taught me so much and I value the advice that was given to me. The environment was positive and I was able to receive a lot of informational feedback to questions I otherwise would not have felt confident enough to ask. With this experience - now more than ever I have a career to look forward to!”

- Toki Fijabi, Industrial Design, Host: Whitney Architects, 2023

“My host treated me with the utmost respect and made me feel I was a part of the team. I really enjoyed the work environment and getting to experience what it was like to be a part of the company.”

- Eryn Phipps, Interior Design, Host: Office Revolution, 2023



“Meet meaningful mentors who provide life advice you would need years to learn on your own in the span of a week.”

- Jared Hillyer, Computer Science, Host: SIU Office of Information Technology, 2023

“I learned a lot which can’t be taught at school, and everyone was open to communicating with me and answering the questions I had. It gave me a good perspective of what an engineer in the process manufacturing does.”

- Emmanuel Sanchez Gonzalez, Mechanical Engineering, Host: Prysmian Group, 2023



# FAQS

## **I do not meet the 3.0 GPA requirement, can I still participate?**

We recommend a GPA of 3.0, primarily because if you are struggling in your coursework or still adjusting to the University, you may need to focus on that right now than an externship. However, there are exceptions so if you have a GPA less than 3.0, please call Stephanie Mueller, Experiential Education Coordinator, at 618-453-1049 or [smueller95@siu.edu](mailto:smueller95@siu.edu) to inquire more about the GPA requirements and exceptions.

## **I'm a Doctoral/PhD 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 to be in their third semester of undergraduate studies at SIU. Extern hosts 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. However, there are limited travel assistance funds available. The travel assistance fund application will become available after you apply, have been accepted, and placed with a host employer. This is because once you have been placed with a host, the anticipated travel expenses can be calculated more accurately. **Applying for travel assistance does not guarantee reimbursement.**

## **How do you select who goes to certain externship opportunities?**

Students are paired with hosts based on career/academic interests, location of the externship, and host developed description of the experience. Hosts and students are presented with the offer via email/call, and have a limited amount of time to respond stating if they accept or not. Once both student and host accept, they are introduced together to begin planning the externship.

## **What do I do if I cannot commit to my externship placement?**

If you have gone through the application process, been placed with a host employer, and you cannot follow through with the program for whatever reason, please immediately notify Stephanie Mueller at [smueller95@siu.edu](mailto:smueller95@siu.edu) or 618-453-1049. If you let the Career Development Center and your host know as soon as possible that you are unable to participate, we may be able to reschedule your experience to a different time in the year or work out an alternative option. Failure to communicate with the Career Development Center and/or your externship host may result in being unable to participate in the Extern Program in the future.

## **EXTERN EXPECTATIONS**

As an extern, you are a representative of your department, 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. Host employers are going out of their way to make this a great experience for you. Be respectful and courteous of this opportunity and their time.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Keep in contact with the Career Development Center at SIU, and your host employer once you have been matched. Once matched, you are expected to reach out to your host to thank them for the opportunity and to discuss the agenda and logistics including transportation, dress code, accommodations, parking, etc.

During your externship experience, come prepared with questions to ask your host, and always actively listen and participate in the experience.

### **TIME MANAGEMENT**

“Early is on time, on time is late, and late is unacceptable.”

- Eric Jerome Dickey

Do not be late. Organize yourself by becoming familiar with transportation methods and communicate with your host employer about your schedule/itinerary, especially when they expect you to arrive during the week of your experience. Know where you are supposed to be and when.

### **SAFETY**

Prior to the week of the program, communicate with your host employer about safety. Review and follow any safety protocol your host provides you with.

### **DRESS**

Discuss with your host 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 8:00am-4:00pm Monday-Friday to take advantage of the professional clothing closet. Clothing from the closet can be tried on and taken for free and is yours to keep!

### **COMMITMENT**

By applying for the Extern Program and accepting the offer with a host, 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.

# SAMPLE ITINERARIES FOR THE WEEK OF MARCH 9-17, 2024

## MONDAY

8:30 AM - Arrive meet with John for tour of the office, introductions.

9:00 AM - 11:30 AM - Meet with John, Jane and Adam to discuss background of company, growth, what markets we operate in, and specifically what segments they will be seeing throughout the week in this office.

12:00 PM - Lunch

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM Structural Analysis introduction with Grace.

2:00 PM - 5:00 PM- Pair off meet and shadow structural engineer through a project.

## TUESDAY

8:30 AM - Arrive, continue shadowing engineers through structural projects.

12:00 PM - Lunch

1:00 PM -5:00PM - Continue shadowing engineers through structural projects.

## WEDNESDAY

8:30 AM - Arrive, continue shadowing engineers through structural projects.

12:00 PM - Lunch

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM - Q and A with Grace on open structural items.

2:00PM - 3:00 PM - Meet with John and Jane to discuss inspection projects and process.

3:00 PM -5:00 PM - Work on inspection project with John.

## THURSDAY

8:30 AM - Arrive, Continue to work on ATC inspection project with John.

12:00 PM - Lunch

1:00 PM - 5:00 PM - Continue to work on ATC inspection project with John.

## FRIDAY

8:30 AM - Arrive, Continue to work on ATC inspection project with John.

12:00 PM - Lunch with John, Jane, and Adam.

1:00 PM- 3:00 PM - Wrap up ATC inspection project with John.

3:00 PM - 4:30 PM - Close out week with Adam.

**Start Times** | 10:00am - 5:00pm

**Attire** - We work in a comfortable atmosphere - jeans, gym shoes, sweatshirts, etc. Please feel free to dress comfortably (as if you were attending class). Also, please dress warm since we may have some outdoor activities and the weather can be chilly.

## Location

1234 N. Central Ave.

Carbondale, IL 62901

123-456-7890 ext. 1

## Directions

We are located on the north side of Central Avenue between Main Street and Mill Street. Our door entrance is next to the bookstore, across the street from the restaurant. Be advised that Central Avenue is a one-way street heading north. We are close to public transportations: metra, CTA, and train (red, blue, and yellow).

## Company Information

Please review the website to familiarize yourself with our clientele as you will be participating in various field marketing activities, research gatherings, and focus groups.

## **Tentative Schedule**

### **Monday**

- 10:00am | Orientation.
- 12:00pm | Street team preparation.
- 2:00pm | Attend promotional event.

### **Tuesday**

- 10:00am | Marketing project time.
- 1:00pm | Conference call with prospective client.
- 2:00pm | Attend promotional event.
- 10:00pm | Promotional party at local restaurant.

### **Wednesday**

- 12:00pm | Late start; charity run promotion.
- 3:00pm | Organize data from feedback sheet.

### **Thursday**

- 10:00am | Organize music for day's promotional event.
- 12:00pm | Conference call with client.
- 2:00pm | Questions and answers with director.
- 2:30pm | Finishing of marketing campaign.

### **Friday**

- 10:00am | Concert preparation.
- 1:00pm | Meet with director of advertising.
- 3:00pm | Meet and greet with CEO of company.
- 4:00pm | Farewell party!

# THANK YOU FOR CONSIDERING PARTICIPATION IN THE 2024 EXTERN PROGRAM!

For questions, concerns, or more information regarding the Extern Program, please reach out to:

Stephanie Mueller  
Experiential Education  
Coordinator  
SIU Career Development  
Center  
618-453-1049  
smueller95@siu.edu

