

EMPLOYER EXPECTATIONS

Northern Oklahoma College has expectations of students who complete an internship program and likewise has expectations of the sponsoring company or organization.

The organization sponsoring or employing the student as an intern will provide a well-rounded, academic learning experience for the student intern. Implicit in this expectation is that the student not be used primarily as a gofer or otherwise be employed in a succession of meaningless tasks.

It is recommended, but not required, that students seek internships with corporations and organizations willing to help the student financially. Compensation may take the form of hourly wages, a per-diem to offset expenses, a tuition scholarship, travel or meal expenses, relocation expenses, parking and in other ways. The student should address compensation when discussing the internship with the employer. Be advised; students are not under contract with NOC and therefore will not receive any compensation from the College. Note: The sponsors/employers need to be aware of the Fair Labor Standards Act; two important provisions affect internships:

- The employer “derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the ... students.”
- Interns “do not displace regular employees.”

Further, if the student’s time or work will be billed to a client and the student is not compensated, the company will be in violation of the act and will be subject to a fine. However, the Wage and Hour Division, recognizing there needs to be a trade-off benefit for the employer, rather than enforce the letter of the law, determines on a case-by-case basis when to enforce the criteria. The division generally asks one primary question, “Who benefited the most?” Assigning too much clerical or duplicating work to a student will invariably result in a finding of unfair practices.

- The employer needs to conduct a frank and honest interview with the student and explain the specific requirements and expectations of the internship experience. Included should be a discussion of what learning opportunities will be afforded the intern, the regular hours of work, expectations of after-hours availability, dress and grooming requirements, and the issue of punctuality, among others.
- The employer needs to provide a supervisor who is well experienced in the profession of the company/ organization and who will agree to oversee the work of the student on a daily basis. This supervisor will be expected to evaluate the intern’s performance near the conclusion of the internship.
- The employer further must agree to provide a positive internship experience for at least the minimum number of hours corresponding to the student’s credit hours. The student will have that information for the supervisor.