

# INTERNSHIP & O-OP GUIDEBOOK



MORAVIAN  
COLLEGE

CAREER & CIVIC  
ENGAGEMENT

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# ! INTERSHIPS AND CO-OPS OVERVIEW

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## What IS an Internship?

- Carefully monitored temporary work or volunteer experiences
- Student has intentional learning goals and reflects actively on what is learned throughout the experience.
- Usually last one semester but can be longer or shorter.
- Students can intern in almost any area of study in any part of the country or abroad.
- An internship helps students get their foot in the door for their first full-time permanent position.
- Employers use internships as a way to gain a first look at prospective employees.

## What IS a Co-op?

- Similar to but more intensive than an internship.
- Students participate full time (36-40 hours per week), while enrolled in one course connected to their experience.

*If interested in completing a co-op, please connect with your academic advisor and the Center for Career and Civic Engagement.*

NOTE:



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## When is the Best Time to Complete an Internship/Co-op?

Start thinking about an internship/co-op as early as your sophomore year in college. Students usually secure an experience their junior or senior year, but it is never too soon to start looking. Begin looking for your internship or co-op 6-8 months in advance. Because co-ops are more time intensive, please consider planning for this early, and working with your academic advisor and the Center for Career and Civic Engagement.

## When are Internship/Co-ops Offered?

During



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# ADVICE FOR THE INTERNSHIP/CO-OP STUDENT

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The opportunity for an internship to turn into a full-time job offer is real! But even if that offer doesn't come, your internship/co-op supervisor and the professionals you meet during this experience can be some of your greatest assets in your job search. Here is some of our best advice for making the most out of your internships/co-op experience.

*Of course, if you are ever made uncomfortable, talk to your supervisor/Moravian College faculty member and/or the Center for Career and Civic Engagement about your concerns.*

## DEVELOP YOUR SKILLS

- Take on any task assigned—no matter how small—with enthusiasm.
- Take the initiative to acquire new skills and ask for things to do.
- Read everything you can get your hands on; talk with people in different departments as well as clients and vendors to become informed on all elements of the business.
- Be a team player.

## SET REALISTIC GOALS & EXPECTATIONS

- Work with your supervisor to set up your learning agreement. It should target specific skills and competencies you wish to acquire. After all, the learning agenda is what distinguishes a short-term job from an internship or co-op. Maintain a journal of your activities and accomplishments in order to monitor your progress.
- Seek regular reviews from your supervisor to assess your performance.
- Accept criticism graciously and maintain a sense of humor.

## TAKE YOUR POSITION AND ASSIGNMENTS SERIOUSLY

- Build a reputation for being reliable and dependable.
- Be diligent and accurate in your work.
- Seek direction when in doubt. Your supervisor knows there will be an initial learning curve and will make allowances for mistakes. Learn from your errors and move on to your next task.

## MEET DEADLINES

- ASK when an assignment is due. This will help you understand your supervisor's priorities and to manage your time accordingly.
- Be willing to accept additional work responsibilities as the position continues.
- Alert your boss in advance if you will be unable to meet expectations...this shows respect and professional maturity.

## COMMUNICATE RESPECTFULLY

- Find out the proper way to address individuals, including customers, clients, patients, etc.
- Maintain a pleasant and respectful demeanor with every person, regardless of his/her/their rank.

## GET A MENTOR

- Identify at least one individual to serve as your mentor or professional advisor. It should be someone who is willing to take a personal interest in your career development & success.
- Once you know your way around, begin to network wisely and get "plugged in" by associating with seasoned employees who may share their knowledge, perspectives and insights.
- Get noticed

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