

# **CCSU COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT**

## **INTERNSHIP GUIDE**

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## **WELCOME!**

We hope this CCSU Communication Department Internship Guide is helpful to you. If you find errors or have recommendations for additions or improvements, please contact the department secretary at [williamsc@ccsu.edu](mailto:williamsc@ccsu.edu) or 860-832-2690. Our goal is to make this a valuable tool for you and your insight/input would be welcomed.

Our internship information changes frequently, so please visit our website often to see the latest opportunities. This guide, as well as internship opportunities, is available online.

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## **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR AN INTERNSHIP**

To help ensure a successful placement, the following requirements must be met for you to apply for an internship.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Communication major or minor
- \_\_\_\_\_ Junior or senior standing (minimum 60 credits)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Overall 2.50 minimum GPA or 3.00 minimum GPA in all COMM coursework
- \_\_\_\_\_ Completed a minimum of 15 COMM credits
- \_\_\_\_\_ No more than 15 total credits (including the internship) in the semester in which you take the internship

## **APPLYING FOR AN INTERNSHIP**

Once you know you meet the above requirements, you should:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Research the organization(s) that interest you.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Complete and submit the Student Internship Application form to the Internship Coordinator.
- \_\_\_\_\_ If you wish to intern with an organization not currently on our listing, provide the organization with an Organization Internship Listing Form. The organization must complete and return the form to the Communication Department via email.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Meet with the Communication Department Internship Coordinator. The Internship Coordinator will provide you with the contact information for the organization. You will then be responsible for contacting the organization and setting up an interview. After the interview, the organization should email the Internship Coordinator of the intent to hire or not to hire. If you are offered the position, we will enter an override in the system which will allow you to register for the COMM 490 Internship class.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION/GRADING**

Internships are usually granted for three semester hours. Students can complete two internships for credit, but they need to be taken in two different semesters/sessions (spring, summer or fall). If a student completes a second internship at the same site, they need to be involved in a distinctly different activity (i.e., TV Station: first in newsroom, then in the promotion department). For each semester hour of credit, it is assumed that the student will put in five hours of work per week. Thus, for a three-semester hour internship, it is necessary to put in about 15 hours per week and between 180 to 200 on-site hours by the end of the internship. (**NOTE:** Summer internship students may work a flexible schedule as long as a minimum of 180 hours is met.) Internship students will meet with the Internship Coordinator for five classes during the semester/summer session, days and times to be announced.

It is the responsibility of the student to arrange for the internship with the organization of choice. The department may be able to identify contact people for students desiring internships. Details about the organizations selected, e.g., address, telephone, and contact person will be made available to the student who has been approved for an internship. The student should then contact the internship supervisor and set up an interview. After the internship site has been selected and the intern has been accepted, the student must contact

the Internship Coordinator regarding course registration. *Students will not be able to register for COMM 490 Internship without a course override provided by the Internship Coordinator.* For a student to receive credit for an internship, the coordinator will develop a set of assignments. The assignments are, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. A daily log of activities in which the student is engaged during the internship. The log should include the date, number of hours worked, and a detailed description of the activities in which the student is engaged (typed and double spaced). The log should be submitted every week to the Internship Coordinator. The final log is due at the end of the semester/summer session (exact date to be determined by the Internship Coordinator).
- b. A written report of no less than 10 typed, double-spaced pages containing specifics of what the student has learned from the internship. The student must show evidence that they have integrated knowledge with communication theories and research from coursework taken in the department as well as from coursework taken outside of the department. Specific examples of learning experiences have to be described and analyzed critically. The report needs to be written like a research paper (following APA style guidelines). The paper must be submitted no later than the last day of the internship.
- c. An Evaluation Report form from the person to whom the student reports at the internship location. This must be submitted by the last day of classes. The form can be obtained from the Internship Coordinator.
- d. Completion of the required number of hours (180-200).

**General Grading Format\***

Two Book Reports	20% (10% each)
Weekly Logs	10%
Term Paper (Internship Report)**	30%
Evaluation Report (from Internship Supervisor)**	40%

- The Internship Coordinator may change the percentage for each assignment or add other requirements.
- Both the term paper and the evaluation report must be submitted on or before the last day of the internship.

## **THE RESUME**

A resume is basically a professional photograph of you. It is a chance for an employer to quickly assess whether or not you may be a potential fit. Most resumes get less than a 20-second glance when they are first reviewed. So, continuing with the picture analogy, you need to determine if you wish to submit a portrait of yourself or a rushed selfie.

Resumes take time to develop, and they take insight from a trusted friend, coworker, professor or professional. Many times, our eyes see what we want to be there, rather than what is actually written, and that can be the difference between getting an interview or being overlooked.

What follows are some tips/ideas for writing your resume. Since thousands of articles and books have been dedicated to this topic, you need to realize that this is just an aid for you. You are encouraged to investigate other resources such as articles, books and websites.

A resume is divided into sections for ease of finding pertinent information. In general, the sections are Header, Objective, Summary, Education, Employment History, and Professional Affiliations.

### **HEADER**

The purpose of this section is to provide your identifying information. It should include your first name, middle initial, last name, street address, city, state, zip, phone number(s) and email address. Make sure the information is in a large enough font to be useful. Also, remember to include your full name on your page of references.

### **OBJECTIVE:**

The purpose of this section is to provide a snapshot of your career objective(s). In most cases, your previous work experiences will serve to identify your career objective(s) and so this section is not needed. However, if you are an entry level worker (recently out of school or just joining the workforce) or if you are changing your career track, then invest time in this section. When writing, focus on how you would benefit the employer/organization and not the other way around. Remember, less than 20 seconds will initially be spent reviewing your resume, so you need to be concise.

If you have more than one career objective in mind, that is fine. Plan to have several versions of a resume so that you can customize the objective for each of your career goals or positions. Be sure to save each resume with a file name you will readily recognize so that you do not submit the incorrect resume to your dream job.

### **SUMMARY:**

The purpose of this section is to showcase yourself. After reading your summary, the employer should have a good understanding of the skills and competencies you will bring to the position

as well as how those skills and competencies will benefit the organization. To have the greatest impact, you should use this section to address the qualifications listed in their advertisement as well as any additional qualifications that will make you stand out from the other applicants. Yes, this means you will need to have several versions of your resume on hand.

Another purpose of this section is to incorporate keywords. Many companies rely on technology and scanning to select relevant resumes/candidates, so use the advertisement and/or the organization's website to identify keywords and then insert them in your resume.

### **EDUCATION and PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS:**

The purpose of this section is to provide your educational information and, if applicable, professional associations. Generally, this section will precede the Employment History section since most college students will have little employment history. Once you have college credits, remove your high school information.

If you are a current student or recent graduate, it is acceptable to list your GPA if it is 3.00 or higher. If your major GPA is higher than your cumulative GPA, list that as well. This is also the section to list any academic honors or awards you may have earned.

### **EMPLOYMENT HISTORY:**

The purpose of this section is to highlight notable accomplishments. Again, you want to catch the attention of the hiring manager. The trap that many people fall into when writing this section is that they provide a job description. But hiring managers already know what most jobs entail. They are not looking for a job description; they are looking for what you accomplished in that job and how you made that workplace better. Most entries in this section should include the answer to the question, "So what?" In other words, *give a measurable result of your action*.

For example:

- "Designed and created an internship packet" becomes "Designed and created an internship packet which resulted in 20% more internship placements."
- "Expanded underwriting territory" becomes "Expanded underwriting territory which increased customer base and revenues by 15%."

List the accomplishment and the positive effect. Remember, if you have resumes with different objectives, you should fine-tune the Employment History section of your resume to reflect the objective. If you are going to be selling hot dogs, your employer does not need to know that you can type 120 words per minute. Your employment history should complement your objective.

List your current or most recent job first and then continue to proceed in reverse chronological order. You have limited space with a resume so use it wisely. Each job does not have to have the same number of lines. Don't use a lot of space trying to list five accomplishments from a

summer job you had five years ago if it is not pertinent to this job.

Lastly, avoid personal pronouns. Since you are the one submitting the resume, it is understood that these are your accomplishments. As in the example above, it does not state “I designed and created” or “I expanded underwriting territory.”

### **OTHER CATEGORIES**

Additional information may be added to your resume if it will reinforce your objective and make you stand out from the other applicants. Some of these categories include Testimonials, Publications, Speaking Engagements and Volunteerism. If you are not sure if you should include something, ask someone for their opinion.

### **RESUME CHECKLIST**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Appearance of resume is clean and wrinkle-free
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ample white space/Even margins/Consistent font and spacing
- \_\_\_\_\_ Clearly labeled sections
- \_\_\_\_\_ No typos
- \_\_\_\_\_ Correct and consistent use of tenses
- \_\_\_\_\_ Objective and Employment History complement each other
- \_\_\_\_\_ Accurate use of bullets and bolding
- \_\_\_\_\_ Accomplishments listed in Employment History also give a measurable result
- \_\_\_\_\_ The information is relevant to the position applied for
- \_\_\_\_\_ There are no personal pronouns such as I, me or my
- \_\_\_\_\_ Keywords

## **THE COVER LETTER**

A cover letter is not always required when applying for a position, but it is another chance to showcase yourself. Use it to highlight the qualifications you have that meet the requirements.

As with a resume, there are some guidelines to follow.

- It should be in standard business letter format. If the contact information was provided with the advertisement, use that information (i.e., Mr. Jones) in your salutation. Otherwise, you may use: Dear Hiring Manager or Dear Sir/Madam.
- It can have pronouns such as I, my, me. However, do not overuse or start every sentence with "I."
- It should be free of typos or grammatical errors.
- It should include keywords specific to each position for which you apply.
- It should not be a "cut and paste" version of your resume.
- Include a signature if you are sending an original versus sending an electronic copy.

## **OPENING**

Start with the sentence, "I am writing to you in regard to...." and then list all the pertinent information such as position title, location, job number. At a minimum, if a cover letter is required, be sure to incorporate all the most relevant information the job listing details. You may also include how you discovered the position, i.e., "...which I saw listed on your website."

Do not use a generic cover letter. Each cover letter should be specific to each position to which you apply. Also, remember to keep your terminology in line with theirs. If they are a university, organization, or office, refer to them as such.

## **QUALIFICATIONS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

This is your chance to impress so list the qualifications/accomplishments that you think are the most critical. Use bullet points or some other indicator that will make this easy to read.

## **PERSONALIZE**

You still want to stress why you are the ideal candidate. List the skills/strengths/competencies that helped you achieve the accomplishments above and that help distinguish you from the other candidates.

## **CONCLUSION**

Be excited! Have a plan. Let them know if you look forward to hearing from them or if you will follow up with a phone call (and then be sure to follow up when you say you will). Restate your contact information in this section with a statement such as, "I can be reached at \_\_\_\_\_." List the means of communication that work best for you: phone number, email or both.



## **THE INTERVIEW**

***YOU NEVER GET A SECOND CHANCE TO MAKE A GOOD FIRST IMPRESSION.***

### Be sure to:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Update your resume and have someone proofread and critique it
- \_\_\_\_\_ Prepare and practice for your interview
- \_\_\_\_\_ Prepare questions to ask the interviewer
- \_\_\_\_\_ Dress to impress. Be neat. Be courteous. Be early. Make eye contact. Give a firm handshake. Be positive and don't dwell on negative aspects of previous jobs.

### Bring:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Copies of your resume
- \_\_\_\_\_ Paper and a pen for taking notes
- \_\_\_\_\_ Your list of questions
- \_\_\_\_\_ Writing samples/portfolio

At the conclusion of the interview, say thank you. Be sincere. Even if you do not think the interview went well or if you are not selected for the internship, you just gained valuable interviewing experience. What did you do well? What could be improved? Make a list for yourself while it is fresh in your memory.

Write and send a handwritten thank you note to the interviewer within 24 hours. (If all correspondence has been via email, send an email thank you). It can be short: "Thank you for the opportunity to interview for the (summer, fall or spring) internship. I enjoyed learning more details about the position." Be neat. Spell words correctly. Make sure you sign the note and put your return address on the envelope.

## **ONCE YOU GET THE INTERNSHIP**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Make an appointment with the Internship Coordinator in the Communication Department.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have the Internship Coordinator notify the secretary to enter an override in the system.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Register for COMM 490 once the department secretary informs you that the override was entered into the system (NOTE: For summer session internships, you must pay for the course within 24 hours of registering or the course will be dropped).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Remember to put your best foot forward every time you go to your internship site. You represent CCSU, but you are also building a foundation for your career. Make it a strong one.

**IF YOU DO NOT GET YOUR FIRST CHOICE**

If you do not get your first choice, don't despair. We have several great organizations that are seeking interns. Come back in and talk to the Internship Coordinator about your second choice.

**PROBLEMS AT THE INTERNSHIP SITE**

If you encounter any problems at your internship site, **contact the CCSU Internship Coordinator right away.** Problems are rarely encountered and communicating your difficulties is your best chance of resolution. Be proactive.

**INTERNSHIP LISTING – Visit our website**

# APPENDIX

# **The Resume**

**Your Name, Street Address, City, State and Zip Code**  
**Your Email and Phone Number**

## **OBJECTIVE**

Remember, this section is not required but is recommended if you are entering the work force or changing your career track. If you have more than one career track you are pursuing, remember to save various versions of your resume so it is customized to each job.

## **SUMMARY**

Use this section to highlight how you meet/exceed the qualifications listed in the job advertisement.

## **EDUCATION**

College Name, College Town, College State      Degree Conferred

## **EMPLOYMENT HISTORY**

ORGANIZATION NAME 1

POSITION HELD

DATE STARTED-PRESENT (if still there or list date)(Use MM/YYYY format)

Town, State

Highlight accomplishments which use skills/competencies most desirable to the hiring organization.

- Use bullets or indentations for ease of reading.
- Do not use this section to write a job description.
- Give a measurable result of your action whenever possible.
- List employment in reverse chronological order.

## **ORGANIZATION NAME 2**

POSITION HELD

DATE STARTED-PRESENT (if still there or list date)(Use MM/YYYY format)

Town, State

Formatting is important. Be sure your columns are lined up and your use of indentations , font, line spacing, and bolding are consistent. The appearance of the resume should be appealing to the eye.

- Do not list numerous achievements if they do not relate to the job opening.
- You may find you only use bullet points on the first few entries. When positions were held long ago and/or do not pertain to the current opening, do not waste space trying to elaborate on items.

## The Cover Letter

Your Name  
Street Address  
City, State and Zip Code  
Your Email and Phone Number

Date

Hiring Manager Name and Title (If known)  
Organization Name  
Organization Street Address  
Organization City, State, Zip

Dear Hiring Manager,

Opening paragraph goes here. List pertinent information such as job title, number, location and where you learned about the position. Be sure each cover letter is specific to each position to which you apply and that you keep your terminology consistent with theirs.

Highlight the qualifications and accomplishments which are most crucial to this position. You may use bullet points. Do NOT cut and paste from your resume for this section. They want to see some effort went into designing the cover letter.

Use this paragraph to indicate how the qualifications and accomplishments listed above make you the ideal candidate for the position for their organization.

Let them know you look forward to meeting them and indicate if you plan to follow up with a phone call (and then be sure that you do). Be sure to restate your contact information in this section.

Sincerely,

Leave some space and then type your first and last name and sign above it.

## Commonly Asked Interview Questions

It may be helpful to write some of your answers on index cards and practice your responses (aloud) until the answers come smoothly and without relying on the cards.

- What qualifications do you have that make you think that you will be successful in your career?
- How do you determine or evaluate success?
- What do you think it takes to be successful in an organization like ours?
- How would you describe the ideal job for you following graduation?
- Why did you decide to seek an internship with this organization?
- What do you know about our organization?
- What two or three things are most important to you in your job?
- How would you describe yourself?
- How do you think a friend or professor who knows you well would describe you?
- What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort?
- How has your college experience prepared you for your career choice?
- Why should I give you an internship?
- What led you to choose your field of major study?
- What college subjects did you like best? Why?
- What college subjects did you like least? Why?
- Why did you choose the career for which you are preparing?
- Which is more important to you, the money or the type of job?
- What do you consider to be your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
- What major problem in school or at work have you encountered and how did you deal with it?
- What have you learned from your mistakes?
- How do you work under pressure?
- What kind of a work environment are you most comfortable?
- Do you think your grades are a good indication of your academic achievement?
- What have you learned from participation in extracurricular activities?
- In what ways do you think you can make a contribution to our organization?
- What qualities should a successful intern possess?
- Describe the relationship that should exist between a supervisor and subordinates.
- What two or three accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction?
- Describe your most rewarding college experience.
- If you were hiring a student for this position, what qualities would you look for?
- What are your long range and short range goals and objectives?
- What specific goals, other than those related to your occupation, have you established for yourself?
- What do you see yourself doing five years from now?
- What do you *really* want to do in life?
- How do you plan to achieve your career goals?
- What are the most important rewards you expect in your career?

## QUESTIONS FOR THE INTERVIEWER

Though it may be hard to believe, an interview is a two-way conversation. Both parties are seeking information so that when a decision is reached, it is the best fit for everyone. The hiring organization and you have a vested interest in the outcome of the interview. They want someone who is motivated and who will perform well in their duties. You want a position where you can showcase your talents and where your contributions will be appreciated.

If you do not have questions prepared to ask, it may send the message that you did not prepare for the interview or that you are not enthusiastic about the position. So, do your research and know the correct terminology. Are they a organization? University? Business? Agency? *Familiarize yourself with their website.* This will:

- Provide background information.
- Prevent you from wasting time in the interview by asking questions that are addressed on the website.

There is not a set number of questions to ask. However, your questions should show a thought process. Employers are interested in candidates who ask pertinent questions and who can converse based on what they know. Prioritize your questions based on the interview and realize that some of the questions may be answered during the course of the interview. If this occurs, it is perfectly fine to state, "I was interested in knowing about\_\_\_\_, but that information was provided during the interview." However, if all facets of your question were not answered, you may ask for clarification.

### **Remember:**

- The best questions – for both the interviewer and the interviewee – are open-ended questions. These are questions that cannot be answered with a "yes" or "no."
- It is ok to have a list of your questions in front of you **and** to take notes when the questions are answered.
- If a question was already answered during the interview, skip it and move to the next one on your list.
- Breathe. Relax. Have confidence. You may have butterflies in your stomach, but no one else can see that. Look for a good fit.

**QUESTIONS FOR THE INTERVIEWER (Continued):**

What do you most enjoy about your work with this organization? How will my performance be measured? By whom?

What are the day-to-day responsibilities of this job?

What are some of the skills and abilities necessary for someone to succeed in this job?

What particular organization equipment and software do you use? (To be asked if you require specific materials to perform your duties.)

Can you describe an ideal intern?

What were the greatest strengths and weaknesses of the last person who had this position?

Can you describe a typical week in this position?

I enjoy work that is fast-paced, high energy and requires innovation and creativity. Will this position provide that kind of environment?



## PITFALLS TO AVOID/NEGATIVE FACTORS LEADING TO REJECTION

We've all made mistakes or wished we had handled some things differently - even the person interviewing you. So, if someone appears to dwell on an "imperfection," turn it around. What matters the most is not that you encountered difficulty, but that you LEARNED something from the experience. If you had a bad semester, can you explain it? Was there a family illness? Did you take on a job with too many hours? Don't try to hide it or brush it off. Take ownership and then explain what you did to prevent the pitfall from reoccurring.

Potential employers will possibly take note of the following:

- A poor scholastic record—low grades without reasonable explanation.
- Poor attitude/lack of self-confidence. It is okay to be nervous, but be in control of it. Breathe. Relax. Remember, you are also interviewing them to be sure it is a good fit.
- Lack of goals and objectives/poorly motivated/does not know own interests.
- Lack of interest in our type of business/our organization/the position we have to offer. If you realize that the opportunity is not a good fit, remember, you are still gaining valuable interviewing experience. Stay engaged in the conversation. You can always courteously turn down the position.
- Lack of enthusiasm/lack of drive/not sufficiently aggressive/little evidence of initiative. You might be thinking, "I just want a job. Just hire me already." But what you should be thinking is, "I really want this job. What can I do to really sell myself during the interview? What would make me want to hire myself?" Would you want to hire someone who just wanted a job or would you rather hire someone who was the best candidate for the job?
- Inability to express self/poor speech/inability to sell self. Practice, practice, practice. Rehearse behind closed doors. Or with a trusted friend. Or in front of a mirror. You don't want your answers to be robotic, but you do want them to be polished.
- Poor personal appearance/lack of neatness/careless dress. Dress to impress. You never get a second chance to make a good first impression.
- Lack of maturity. No evidence of leadership potential.
- Lack of extracurricular activities/inadequate reasons for not participating in activities. Employers are looking for well-rounded individuals. They want to know that you work well but also that you realize the importance of balance.
- Failure to get information about our organization/lack of preparation for the interview/did not read the literature. Check out the website at the very least.
- Inadequate preparation for type of work/inappropriate background. If this is the case, then it is not a good fit and a rejection is a good thing. They would not be happy with your performance and you would not feel valued or appreciated. Keep looking.