

## DIFFERENCES BETWEEN AN INTERNSHIP AND A CO-OP

*Work experience, work experience, work experience* -- a characteristic employers consider to be a valuable asset in today's business world. As the job market becomes more competitive . . . good grades, a positive attitude, strong communication skills, and work experience related to your major will help you to be that well-rounded student that employers are wanting to hire. It is very common to hear of up to 80% of a companies' full time employment pool coming from their internship and co-op programs. So how can you get work experience related to your career interest while attending college? Here are some options for you to consider:

*The Michelin Career Center's Internship Office, 316 Hendrix Student Center, coordinates corporate and not-for-profit internship opportunities for all majors.*

*Employers can either: post their internships; interview students on campus; or request resumes using our resume book by utilizing ClemsonJobLink (our on-line recruiting system). Students can also find internships through: the Career Fair offered in the fall and spring; targeted internet listings on our web page; individual appointments; academic advisors; and networking.*

**Length:** Are offered for one period of time during the spring or fall semester (14-16 weeks) or during the summer (10-14 weeks). \* **Note-** there will be some variations in certain cases.

**Assignments:** An internship allows a student to enhance their career development as they explore interests and work experiences related to their field of study and demonstrate skills in a work setting. This can be a vital link between college majors and professional opportunities. Internships involve a project that relates to a student's major or career interest.

**Salary:** Most positions are paid, but a few will be voluntary depending on your field of interest. Typically salary ranges from \$10-\$14/hour based on major, degree level, and past experience.

**Location:** Primarily in the southeast, although some are in other areas, many companies are willing to assist students in locating housing and in some cases will assist students with housing expenses. Being able to relocate increases the number of opportunities.

**Eligibility:** Varies: employers determine the required GPA and other qualifications necessary for application; some employers consider rising sophomores but generally prefer rising juniors, seniors, and graduate students.

**COURSES OFFERED:** \*Various classes/credit dependent on major  
\*CCINT 101 Part-Time 0 Credit Hours  
\*CCINT 201 Full-Time 0 Credit Hours

**Important dates:** Students are strongly advised to begin their search at least 4-6 months in advance. All students should attend a workshop or visit with a counselor at the beginning of each semester. The Career Fair is held each September and February for additional internship opportunities.

*Visit our Web site at <http://career.clemson.edu>*

*The Cooperative Education Office, 321 Brackett Hall, coordinates all co-op opportunities and provides students with personalized assistance. Employers can either interview students on campus or request resumes.*

**Length:** Requires working multiple semesters, generally two to three semesters and one summer that provides the student with 7-12 months of work experience. Based on the employer's needs and the student's major, a student will work one of the following two schedules:

1. Alternating - most common; students alternate going to school full-time with going to work full-time until the student has worked three work terms (12 months of experience).
2. Back-to-Back - students work two semesters in a row consisting of a spring/summer or a summer/fall (7-8 months of experience).

**Assignments:** Cooperative Education allows participants to put what they have learned in the classroom into practice. The program is designed to help students successfully integrate theoretical knowledge with practical know-how. The progressive work assignments provide higher levels of responsibility for students to get an understanding of real world jobs.

**Salary:** Co-ops are always paid; non-technical average salary \$10-11/hour; technical average salary--\$12-14/hour; for first work period. Some companies also provide housing accommodations and additional benefits such as signing bonuses and 401 K plans.

**Location:** 56% of co-op jobs are in South Carolina; 75% are located between Virginia and Florida; students worked in a total of 27 states during 1999-00.

**Eligibility:** Completed 27 hours prior to going to work and have 2.45 cumulative GPA or higher.

**Courses Offered:** \*CO-OP 101 Full-Time 0 Credit Hours

**Important dates:** Students are strongly encouraged to register at the beginning of the Fall or Spring semesters in order to participate in the Co-op "Interview Days" held in October and March. Interviews take place the *semester prior* to starting work.

internship

co-op