What Is an Externship?

An externship is a short-term job-shadowing experience that allows students to learn more about a career field of interest. Through discussions with a professional, students can assess their “fit” with a particular position or organization, make connections, and begin establishing an alumni network. Cornell’s Extern Programs match students with alumni for visits at their places of work during academic breaks.

Various activities determined by the sponsor—such as discussing specific jobs and careers with the sponsor; observing the sponsor’s daily activities; attending meetings and tours; and perhaps completing a small project—will provide greater clarity on how an academic major or one’s other skills and interests, relates to a given career field or job.

Externships are available in various career fields and geographic locations. See reverse for a partial listing of recent sponsors.

Interested students should attend an information meeting in September (Winter Extern) or January (FRESH).

Important Considerations for Applicants

Availability. Externs are expected to accommodate the sponsor’s schedule, and have a flexible schedule during the break that allows completion of the stated externship length (specified by the sponsor, generally one to three days).

Placement Priorities. Placement is based on a variety of factors including sponsors’ requirements, and well-written introduction essays and resume.

Expenses. Students are responsible for paying their own expenses and for making all arrangements, including housing and transportation. Students do not receive academic credit or compensation from the sponsor.

Winter Extern Travel Grants. A limited number of students may receive funding to cover transportation and housing expenses in designated career fields. See the Extern Program website for details and application instructions.

Application Instructions. See detailed Extern and FRESH application information at career.cornell.edu. The Winter Extern sponsor listing descriptions and online application system will be activated in mid-September. The FRESH sponsor listing descriptions and online application system are available in late January.

Requirements for Participation in Either Program:

- Create or update your CCNet career profile (login using the CCNet logo at career.cornell.edu).
- Create a one-page resume (see samples in the Career Guide), upload to your CCNet account, and publish it to the Cornell Extern or FRESH Program Resume Book in CCNet.
- Complete the Extern/FRESH Online Application - includes demographic information, externship choices, and a set of introductory questions. These questions serve to introduce you to the alumni sponsor.
- Accept terms of the Extern/FRESH Participation and Hold Harmless Agreements.
- Meet deadlines and contact sponsors in a timely manner.

Requirements Specific to the:

Winter Extern Program

- The Program is open to matriculated sophomores, juniors, and seniors from all colleges.
- Winter externships occur January 2-19, 2013. Most externships last from one to seven days, specified by the sponsor.
- Students submit a set of the introductory questions for each listing. These responses explain to the sponsor how their interests are a good fit for the externship, and articulate the students goals for the experience.

Spring FRESH Program

- The Program is open to matriculated freshmen from all colleges. Spring transfers and Winter athletes will be considered during Open Round only.
- Students are required to attend one of the FRESH Information and Registration meetings before they apply.
- Students submit one set of introductory questions.
“I now have a firm image of what I want to do as a career. This was the best learning experience Cornell has offered me so far.”

“I didn’t think I would find out that much in just one day. I’m really glad I did the externship, and look forward to doing another one.”

“I cannot stress how much my externship was. My sponsor offered invaluable advice. He even encouraged me to contact him in the future for whatever questions or concerns I may have involving not only med school but these four years and anything else.”

“My sponsor introduced me to careers I previously knew very little about, but now want to pursue. My externship was an eye-opener.”

“This experience is something every college student should have before they choose a career. It solidified my own desire to become a pediatrician. And now I have a new role model.”

“Prior to the externship, I had my own ideas of what daily activities were in the field of law; this day clarified the role of a lawyer. Being in an actual legal environment helped confirm my desire to pursue a legal career.”

“I gained a sense of accomplishment and confidence. It helped me visualize myself being in the workplace.”

“I had the opportunity to observe the doctor while with patients, to see how they run their lab, and see how the pharmacy is set up. I also learned about social issues such as Medicare and the problems with healthcare costs. It was a very valuable experience!”

“It showed me that there are so many aspects to a business and a person could major in just about anything and get a decent job.”

“My externship was sensational! I met new and old editors, wrote book reports rejecting or accepting new manuscripts, attended an art department meeting and a meeting discussing a jacket cover. I also saw the editing of a bilingual book, and realized how important foreign language skills are in the publishing industry.”

“Pediatricians can see a wide variety of children coming from different socioeconomic backgrounds. I was encouraged to contact him in the future for any questions or concerns I may have.”

“I look forward to doing another one.”

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