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Experiential Education: The Basics

WHAT IS "EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION"?

"Experiential education" and "experiential learning" are umbrella terms that cover a variety of activities. Broadly, "experiential education" refers to what Jarvis, Holford, and Griffin (1999) have defined as "the process of creating and transforming experience into knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, emotions, beliefs, and senses." At Stony Brook, experiences can be easily integrated into new and/or existing courses, giving student opportunities to participate in internships, research, service-learning, and more.

WHY SHOULD I CONSIDER SPONSORING A STUDENT'S EXPERIENCE?

Internships and other experiential opportunities like research and service learning are considered high-impact pedagogical practices that have wide-ranging benefits for all students. Experiential education encourages more meaningful contact between students and instructors, behind the university and the community, between students and future employers, and, most importantly, between students and the world around them. Research has proven that these benefits are especially impactful for historically underserved students. By encouraging and sponsoring student experiences, you indirectly engage at-risk students who otherwise might not participate in these opportunities at Stony Brook University.
Eight Principles of Good Practice

ACCORDING TO THE NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION (NSEE)

INTENTION
PREPAREDNESS AND PLANNING
AUTHENTICITY
REFLECTION
ORIENTATION AND TRAINING
MONITORING AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
EXP+ at Stony Brook University

Stony Brook University highly encourages students to satisfy one or more of the curriculum's "Pursue Deeper Understanding" requirements with approved experiential learning activities, including internships.

Learning Outcomes for EXP+:

Students should be able to . . .

- Demonstrate interpersonal competency (e.g. teamwork, communication, collaboration, etc.), including relationships with faculty advisor(s), on-site supervisor(s)/mentor(s), team members and/or the broader community that is impacted by the project.
- Apply knowledge and skills gained through coursework to a real-world situation.
- Appraise the personal, academic, and/or professional effects before, during, and after the applied learning experience through deep and sustained reflection.
- Apply feedback on performance promptly and productively.
WHAT IS AN INTERNSHIP?
Internships are real-world experiences related to students' career interests; they may or may not be directly related to students' majors.

The SBU Career Center offers more than 2,000 internship opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students each year.

WHAT KINDS OF INTERNSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE AT STONY BROK UNIVERSITY?
1. Non-credit and paid
2. Non-credit
3. Credit and paid
4. Credit
EXT Internship Program at Stony Brook U.

ACADEMIC INTERNSHIP

An academic internship is a form of experiential education that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skill development in a professional setting. Eligible students may earn academic credit; a faculty sponsor oversees the experience. The internship is usually the length or equivalent of an academic term, usually part-time, and either paid or unpaid. An integral component of the experience that distinguishes it from other types of work is one or more forms of structured and deliberate reflection based on pre-determined learning objectives.

PARTNERS IN THE ACADEMIC INTERNSHIP

1. Site Supervisor: provides a position description for students that outlines responsibilities and expectations for work performance; trains, mentors, and supervises students; completes midterm and final evaluations of students.

2. Faculty Sponsor: SBU faculty member who believes the internship is worthy of academic credit, is willing to work with the student(s) throughout the term, and who will read and respond to student assignments.

3. Career Center: EXT is administered by the Career Center; the Career Center is a resource for site supervisors, faculty sponsors, and students.
EXT INTERNSHIP REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS

AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SEMESTER:
1. Report the internship in Handshake (done through the EXT credit approval process)
2. Attend an online EXT INTERNSHIP ORIENTATION session
3. Create/update ePortfolio

DURING THE SEMESTER:
1. Complete reflection assignments in Blackboard as per faculty-approved syllabus
2. Complete online midterm and final evaluations with supervisor by stated deadlines

AT THE END OF THE SEMESTER:
1. Complete the online STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT SURVEY
2. Attend an online EXT INTERNSHIP DEBRIEFING session
3. Update your resume to reflect new experiences and upload new version of resume to Handshake.

There are two ways for students to register for credit-bearing internships:
1. Through their Departmental Major (i.e. BIO 488; EGL 488)
2. Through the Career Center (EXT 288/488 Internship Program)

Departmental Registration:
Most academic departments at Stony Brook have an internship course for their majors (i.e. BUS 488; PSY 488; ENS 488).

Registration through the Career Center:
Students must identify, apply for, and accept an internship (on or off campus); secure a faculty sponsor, and report the internship on Handshake.

Next, students must register for either:
- **Ext 288 Internship**: a freshman/sophomore-level course designator; this course is not repeatable. 0-3 credits; S/U grading
- **Ext 488 Internship**: a course used to support upper-division internships; it may be repeated. 0-6 credits; S/U grading
EXT Program Overview

ELIGIBILITY:
- minimum GPA of 2.5
- completion of at least one semester at Stony Brook University
- must be a matriculated student

CREDITS AND TIME COMMITMENTS:
- 4 hours per week = 1 credit (50 hours/semester)
- 8 hours per week = 2 credits (100 hours/semester)
- 12 hours per week = 3 credits (150 hours/semester)

NOTE: The faculty sponsor and the Career Center determine the credit value of an EXT Internship.
FACULTY SPONSOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- Work with students to create a clearly defined plan for the internship
- Provide feedback to students throughout the semester
- Encourage students to reflect on their experiences
- Assist students in identifying connections between academic knowledge and industry experience
EXT courses already have reflections built into the Blackboard site for students; however, the following have also proven to be effective assignments that encourage students to build meaningful connections between their experiences and their content knowledge:

Sample Assignments

- Pre-internship quiz (administered and graded through Blackboard)
- Reflective journal entries
- Presentations and colloquia
- Small-group meetings
- Organization analysis essay
- Diversity and inclusion analysis
- Problem analysis assignment
- Networking activity
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"We do not learn from experience . . . we learn from reflecting on experience."
- John Dewey, American Educational Reformer and Philosopher

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