



INTERNSHIP PREPARATION CHECKLIST

Why Internships Matter

Internships give you **real-world experience**, help you explore careers in your field, and boost your job prospects. Students who complete internships:

- Land more interviews
- Get hired faster
- Earn higher salaries

Some programs require an internship, while others allow it as an elective for credit. Either way, why not turn your hard work into both career experience + college credit?

To help you secure an internship for academic credit, here's your step-by-step checklist:

Step 1: Check Your Program's Requirements

Before you start searching, get clarity on your program's internship requirements.

☐ **Contact your Department Chair or Academic Advisor to ask:**

- Does my program offer an internship, co-op, or practicum course?
- What are the requirements to register, and when do I need to take the course?
- Do I need to find my own internship, or will the class provide the work experience?

 Pro Tip: Most students need to find their own internship. Start EARLY! Some employers recruit 3-6+ months in advance.

Step 2: Build Your Professional Toolkit

Part of the internship experience is learning the “art of the job hunt.”

Build these essential tools:

☐ **Create Your Resume**

- Include a skills section you can tailor for each application.

☐ **Draft a Cover Letter Template**

- Develop a strong template you can customize for each opportunity.

☐ **Polish Your Online Presence**

- Complete your Handshake and LinkedIn profiles.

 Pro Tip: Career Services can help you with all of these! Visit austincc.edu/career.

Step 3: Know Your Timeline & Apply Early

☐ **Start your internship search 3-6 months before your internship semester begins.**

It is your responsibility to have a position secured by the first day of class.

- Contact your internship instructor 3-6 months before your internship semester to ask about available opportunities.
- Search on multiple platforms: Handshake, LinkedIn, Indeed, company websites, and more! You can even prompt ChatGPT for leads.
- Attend job fairs and networking events.
- Utilize your personal and professional networks (professors, family, friends).

Remember: Employers recruit early, and the best opportunities fill quickly - don't wait!

Step 4: Apply Strategically

☐ **Cast a Wide Net**

- Apply to multiple positions (don't put all your eggs in one basket!).

☐ **Stay Organized**

- Keep detailed records of where you applied.
- Save copies of all job descriptions.

☐ **Be Responsive and Professional**

- Check email and voicemail daily.
- Respond quickly to employers.
- Prep for interviews by researching common interview questions in your field.

Step 5: After You're Hired

Congratulations! Once you secure an internship:

☐ **Tell your Internship Instructor and Department Chair right away.**

- If you're already registered for the internship course, they'll want to know you have secured a role.
- If you're not yet registered, ask about the steps to enroll and get credit.

☐ **Follow their guidance to make sure you get academic credit.**

If You Don't Have an Internship by Day 1 of Your Internship Semester

We have a process to support you, but you need to know the terms.

☐ **Submit the Emergency Placement Assistance Request Form**

with your instructor's guidance ASAP. These forms will not be accepted after the 2nd week of the semester

What you need to know:

Placement is not guaranteed

Positions may be unpaid

You must follow up with every employer contact

You may need to withdraw or accept an instructor-approved incomplete

(Keep in mind, the longer you delay withdrawing, the less of a tuition refund you will receive.)

Refunds may not be available after the college's deadline

**START EARLY. STAY ORGANIZED. ASK FOR HELP.
YOU'VE GOT THIS!**