What is an externship?
An Externship is a short-term, unpaid, 2-14 day, career exploration and problem solving opportunity for students hosted by an employer. Each externship will be customized to the student’s preference as best as possible in order for them to gain real-world experience in a field relevant to them.

What is the purpose?
The purpose of an externship is to provide an opportunity for students to gain real-world problem solving experience while working in a business setting and building relationships with local professionals. Externships also provide an opportunity for employers to engage with students prior to their internship eligibility; allowing an exclusive opportunity to educate students on the company’s brand, culture, various functions, and future internships and professional positions.

NOTE: Any student can participate if desired, regardless of classification and major.

* Externships make a great addition to your resume and can be counted as volunteer service hours! *

**Additional Benefit to Students:**
- Explore potential career field options.
- Gain first-hand experience on the job.
- Develop your critical thinking skills.
- Connect with local professionals.

**Benefit to Employers:**
- Gain exposure for their company.
- Identify potential job/internship candidates.
- Gain insight from a fresh perspective.
- Develop their mentoring/leadership skills.

Program Components and Time Commitment:

- **Deadline to Sign Up:** October 17, 2016
  Each externship experience is designed with the interest and availability of the student, as well as the employer in mind. That said, you must sign up by October 17th in order to allow enough time for your custom externship experience to be built.

- **Mandatory Orientation:** December 8, 2016 @ 12:30pm-1:30pm
  Orientation is required to insure that students and employers expectations are aligned. This session will cover professionalism, problem solving, and the format of the required presentation.

- **Externships begin in the first week of January** (timeframe varies)
  Your externship schedule will be set according to your availability and the plans of the employer.

- **We Solve It Deliverables**
  Each student will present on the externship experience and the problem solutions presented to the Career Development Center and Employer-Mentor. The We Solve It Report is due at the same time.
Externship On-Site Schedule Components:

1. Brief of the company (goals, target market, organizational chart and/or explanation of departments and how they interact).
2. Brief of the specific department/area/role (goals, connection to overall company, and day-to-day work/projects/interactions)
3. Project/Problem explanation (what it is, what resources available, expectations of when can be completed – schedule/timeline).
4. Networking with leadership in business atmosphere (lunch, staff meeting, offsite visits, etc.)
5. Feedback/Question check points with professional mentors (multiple).

POSSIBLE Externship Problem-Solving Assignments:

- Create suggestions on how to market company’s product/services to college students.
- Figure out workflow plan of the business operations.
- Research who and why current and potential competitors are for the companies market.
- Allow to participate in the simulation of solving a common problem in the work environment.
- Assist in completing a short-term project that is a piece of a greater deliverable.

Evaluation Process

The evaluation piece of this process is the most important component for growth and development within this program. Employers will mentor students to understand how the solution will be utilized and its effects on the business as a whole in order to understand the realistic relevance and application of solutions to problems of this business’ type. This type of experience will help a student in providing value to the next opportunity presented in job interview or project/class assignment.

The student will receive resources and direction necessary to aid in solving the problem/project, however the goal is to have the student go through the problem-solving process on their own. Students will be encouraged to use their current education knowledge, personal background/experience, and available company or research resources to complete the problem/project.

Professional mentors will utilize a specific rating sheet “We Solve It” Rubric (included) to provide assessment and feedback on the completed presentation of the problem solution. Center for Career Development staff will utilize the “We Solve It” Rubric (included) to assess the We Solve It Report.

How do I sign up?

Please email Kirsten Pratt, Career Development Specialist for Employer Relations, at KMP@columbusstate.edu by October 17, 2016 to sign up for the Externship program.
We Solve It! Report

Student Name ___________________________ Student ID ________________

Course# Cougar Externship Program___ Semester Spring 2017

Title of Assignment/Location ______________________________________________

DISCOVER Process of Creative Real-world Problem Solving:
1. What was the real-world problem that you or your team addressed and why was it challenging to solve?

DESIGN Process of Creative Real-world Problem Solving:
2. What were the approaches to the problem that you or your team identified, considered, analyzed, and evaluated, and why did some of those solutions appear stronger than others?
3. What were the creative solution(s) that you or your team selected and developed for addressing the identified real-world problem?
4. Why should your or your team’s proposed solution to the real-world problem be considered creative, reasonable, and powerful?

DELIVER Process of Creative Real-world Problem Solving:
5. How did you or your team present the proposed solution for the real-world problem?
6. Describe the audience to whom your presentation was made and their receptivity to your proposed solution.

REFLECT Process of Creative Real-world Problem Solving:
7. What new learning or insights did you or your team gain about your DISCOVER, DESIGN, and DELIVER skill levels of creative real-world problem solving from this experience?
8. What would you or your team do differently to improve your DISCOVER, DESIGN, and DELIVER skills of creative real-world problem solving in the future?

OVERALL PROBLEM-SOLVING ABILITY
9. How would you evaluate the overall problem-solving ability of you or your team?

For more information on the Cougar Externship Program, please contact: Kirsten Pratt at 706.507.8764 or KMP@ColumbusState.edu.
Columbus State University Cougar Externship Program
Student Expectations Agreement

Please be aware, for the purpose of this agreement, the term “student” refers to the person signing this form and the term “organization” refers to the company hosting the externship.

Please read the following statements and only initial next to them if all components have been explained to you clearly. Ask questions before agreeing to each of these if any statements are unclear to you. Failure to follow through on these commitments will result in loss of Experiential Education participation privileges with Center for Career Development.

________ I understand and agree to complete the following components of the program.
  • Orientation: December 8, 2016 at 12:30-1:30pm
  • Prior agreed upon and submitted working hours (set during 1st day, sent to Kirsten Pratt)
  • Evaluation process: We Solve It Presentation & Report

________ I understand and agree to uphold the following expectations throughout all components of the externship experience.
  • Maintain respect and professionalism in the way that I dress and communicate
  • Actively participate and add value to this collaborative effort to the best of my ability
  • Arrive on time and stay for the duration of each externship component
  • Communicate any schedule conflicts, yet prioritize the completion of this assignment
  • Coordinate my own transportation to all externship components
  • Drop In visits to work site will occur at random by Center for Career Development staff

________ I understand and agree to the following terms of my externship.
  • No academic credit or monetary compensation is awarded for this externship
  • Time spent on this externship will be reported as volunteer hours on CSUInvolve

________ I understand that I am to treat this externship as I would an internship and report to my Professional Mentor as my supervisor. I also understand that I may contact Kirsten Pratt, Career Development Specialist for Employer Relations at Columbus State University, at any time during my externship if needed.

________________________________________________________  ____________________
Student Name (Print)  Student Cell Phone

_____________________________________________________
Student Signature  Date