

Internship Coordinator Overview

The University of Pittsburgh School of Information Sciences (SIS) Internship Coordinator is responsible for the development and coordination of opportunities for student internships, field experiences, and/or practica. The Internship Coordinator works closely with faculty to develop external relationships with employers, external entities in order to provide experiential opportunities to SIS graduate and undergraduate students, and with the students directly in facilitating best fit and preparedness for their experiential learning endeavors. The Internship Coordinator will also manage the end-to-end administration of the experiential learning program as a whole.

Progress summary

Internship opportunity development:

Since the launch of the position in December 2014, the Internship Coordinator has begun development of a centralized internship program, and many SIS students have already enjoyed opportunities to network and interact with companies for potential employment and internships. From Deloitte to Progressive Insurance to the IT sector of the Federal Reserve Board, the students at SIS have benefitted from ongoing engagement with industry partners as well as continued career counseling and guidance.

Additionally, SIS is actively engaging our alumni network in an open dialogue about their organization/industry needs, and help them to create internship opportunities for SIS students when appropriate. The Internship Coordinator is also working with the Director of Student Services, Wes Lipschultz, and the Office of PittServes to continue a skills based volunteer program started in Fall of 2015 called iServe@PittServes, which strives to leverage the talents and aspirations of the students within SIS in order to facilitate meaningful volunteer projects with local organizations. Utilizing a skills-based inventory, organizations once again have the opportunity to submit project proposals and seek student volunteers to work on the projects in the Fall of 2016.

The Internship Coordinator and Director of PittServes were invited to present at the Gulf South Summit conference in Savannah, GA in March 2016 on the iServe@PittServes project. The presentation covered implementation, lessons learned, and gave attendees a road map for starting a similar program at their respective institutions.

Some companies that SIS students have connected with include:

- Solutionary
- Matrix Solutions
- Progressive Insurance
- BNY Mellon
- UPMC
- MSA
- First Niagara

- Confluence
- Giftcards.com
- Giant Eagle
- Highmark
- Mt. Lebanon Public Library
- Gumberg Library, Duquesne University
- Federal Reserve Board
- Deloitte
- PNC
- RAND Corporation
- Medidata
- PPG
- City of Pittsburgh, Department of Innovation & Performance
- Truefit

The Internship Coordinator is also currently in the process of recruiting companies to participate and sponsor iFest 2017, which is a week-long event where SIS invites employers, speakers, and students to visit the school and participate in two different career expo events. iFest showcases our talented students in competitions, giving them a chance to present research projects they are working on.

Student preparedness development:

During the spring 2016 semester, the Internship Coordinator organized several professional development sessions for SIS students—during iFest, LANtek, a leading IT staffing and consulting agency was invited to speak to SIS students about how to interview for an IT job and shared valuable advice about how to tell your story during an interview. Students found this session particularly helpful and worthwhile. In addition, Truefit, a local Pittsburgh software company, gave a presentation to students about how product development works in technology startups, with a particular emphasis on how Truefit approaches it for their clients. Specifically, they covered lean startup principles such as fast feedback loops, measurable hypothesis and selecting good metrics, and embracing failure so you can learn from it and adjust accordingly. Our students with a particular entrepreneurial spirit found this talk to be highly engaging and meaningful.

Also, the Internship Coordinator helped organize a session on the power of LinkedIn. This presentation highlighted the benefits of the social networking platform and how it can help job/internship seekers. Students found this session to be incredibly eye opening and commented that they will be using LinkedIn to help them start their careers. This presentation will also be given during a session of Visiting Professor of Practice, Leona Mitchell's, "Decision Making in IT" class on September 29th.

In addition to these professional development sessions, the Internship Coordinator met with over 150 students who are interested in obtaining internships, conducted resume and cover letter reviews with students as needed, conducted mock interviews with several students to prepare them for scheduled interviews, and helped students to research internship opportunities.

Internship process development:

In order to develop and implement a new internship process, the Internship Coordinator has:

- gathered, organized, and combined prior internship data in order to implement consistent standards and best practices
- created a database for each of SIS' programs that include all the employers SIS has partnered with in the past and how frequently they've done so in order to analyze patterns and trends among our industry partners
- sent out thank you letters to employers who have hosted SIS students to ensure some consistency when it comes to communicating with our industry partners
- streamlined the internship application and paperwork processes as much as possible for students in order to establish clear requirements, including creating online forms to eliminate paperwork.
- worked closely with the Office of International Services to learn the ins and outs of immigration rules in order to better educate and prepare SIS' international students for internship opportunities
- took over all administrative duties involved in the undergraduate internship course—enrolling students, grading both midterm and final internship reports, and assigning grades at the end
- helped to create an iSchool job board which is the central repository for job postings, internship announcements, volunteer positions, as well as relevant student worker positions

Future Endeavors

For the fall semester, several exciting events are planned:

- On September 19th, Medidata, a global SaaS technology company that specializes in developing and marketing a cloud-based platform of applications and data analytics will visit the iSchool to hold a resume review and information session.
- On September 30th, PPG will hold a lunch time meet and greet with our students to recruit for several open positions, both internships and full time.
- On October 4th, the T. Howard Foundation will be holding a resume review for students. In addition, they will be interviewing students for several positions.
- On November 11th, SIS will host the Information Executive Roundtable where information executives meet over lunch with a select group of top-performing students to discuss employment opportunities, strategies for career preparation, practical work experience, and the “soft” skills necessary for success as a leader in the information field. This event is an excellent opportunity for employers and students to network in an informal, small-group setting.
- On January 17th, ARMA, the Association of Records Managers and Administrators, will be hosting an informational lunch meeting for students interested in working in the records management field. Students will be able to hear firsthand from individuals currently in the field in many different capacities.