



**Social Sciences Internship
General Information Handbook**

2017-2018

Dear Social Sciences Student:

Thank you for your interest in the Social Sciences internship program.

This handbook is intended to provide general information regarding our internship program. It outlines eligibility requirements, guiding policies and procedures, and attempts to answer the most frequently asked questions.

Interested students are encouraged to obtain further information or clarification by visiting our office, or by contacting the Programming and Outreach Manager.

We look forward to your participation and to supporting your internship experience.

Sincerely,

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I. Defining Internships

The Faculty of Social Sciences offers paid internship opportunities during the academic year and summer. Internship placements provide students with intense work experiences and allow students to explore careers, develop employability skills and make important contacts for both now and after graduation.

Internship Categories:

Internships are recognized as non-credit course codes on the student transcript. Full-time internships are noted as SOC SCI 3IF0 and part-time internships are noted as SOC SCI 3IP0. Students can view the Undergraduate Student Calendar for more information relating to the course codes and when they are applicable. Students do not receive academic credit for completing an internship placement. However, upon successful completion, a notation describing the placement is recorded on the student's official transcript.

How to Secure an Internship Placement:

There are two ways in which you can secure a Social Sciences internship placement:

1. EE Cultivated Internships

Throughout the year, internship placements are cultivated by the Office of Experiential Education (EE) and posted on [OSCARplus](#) under the *Internships & Co-op* tab. Interested students are encouraged to check the site often as new placements are posted on an on-going basis.

2. Student-initiated Internships

Students can take the initiative to secure a job on their own and have their experience noted on the official student transcript as an internship placement. These positions, though not cultivated through the EE office, may hold equal value in providing students with a unique opportunity to capitalize on the learning opportunities within the position.

Please Note: Sections IV and V of this guide will provide further clarification regarding EE cultivated and student-initiated internship placements.

II. Benefits of an Internship

For the Student:

Students choose to participate in an internship for many reasons. Usually, they wish to experience work in a specific field related to their studies/career interests. Some benefits of completing an internship placement include:

- Work placements enable students to apply classroom learning to practical work environments, allowing students to gain hands-on experience and explore potential career paths.
- Internship students hone employability skills and are more competitive in today's job market. Placements provide opportunities for students to build their professional network and expand their career development skills, best preparing candidates for graduate recruitment.

- All Social Sciences internship placements are *paid* opportunities. Work terms can help to off-set some of the financial responsibilities associated with university, and allow students to pay off school debt prior to graduation.
- Internship placements are supported by the Faculty of Social Sciences and recognized by the university as a notation on the official student transcript. This recognition can add great value to a student's grad school and/or employment applications.

For the Employer:

Employers choose to establish an internship placement in order to:

- Build a pipeline of talented young professionals, as they develop relationships with students early in their academic careers.
- Save on recruitment costs and company resources by test-driving the talent; this is an effective, low-risk solution to evaluate interns for future full-time employment.
- Contribute to post-secondary experiential education and support student interns as they develop employability skills and expand their professional networks.
- Employ enthusiastic students who bring new, innovative ideas to an organization and often come equipped with strong analytical and technical skills.

III. Internship Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible to participate in the Social Sciences internship program, students **MUST** meet the following requirements at the time of application.

- Registered in 18 units or more in the Faculty of Social Sciences in a degree program for the Fall/Winter 2017/2018 term.
- In good academic standing with the university, and not on academic probation.
- In good financial standing with the university, with no outstanding financial accounts on the student record.
- Registered in Level II or above (Please note that official registration for Level II begins only after the student has successfully completed Level I requirements and has commenced coursework for Level II, usually in September of second year).
- Completed [SOC SCI 2EL0, Career Planning through Experiential Learning](#); **No exemptions will be made.** (Please note until a 'Pass' grade is processed by the instructor, permission to view and apply to internship placements will be withheld).
- All internship candidates must be authorized to work in Canada. International students must refer to the Government of Canada website <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/study/work-offcampus.asp> to ensure eligibility before submitting an application. Please see section VII for more information.

Please Note: *In addition to the eligibility criteria listed above, students must ensure that the internship placement is completed before academic requirements are fulfilled.*

Other students who may be eligible, but are required to pay a \$50 administration fee are:

- Social Sciences students who are registered in fewer than 18 units in the Fall/Winter 2017/2018 term;
or
- Arts & Science or Humanities students who are registered in a combined Honours degree program with a Social Sciences discipline.

Please Note: Applications will be screened for eligibility. If a student's application contains errors, omissions, or is of poor quality, it reflects negatively on the student as well as the Office of Experiential Education and will therefore NOT be passed on to the employer for consideration.

IV. EE Cultivated Internships

Viewing Internship Placements:

Throughout the year, internship placements are posted on [OSCARplus](#), McMaster's on-line recruitment portal. See [Appendix I](#) for OSCARplus User Guidelines for EE Cultivated Internship Postings. Postings contain information regarding the organization, internship duration, required duties and qualifications, location, rate of pay, etc. Application deadlines will vary depending on the needs of the employer.

While some employers have short job posting and hiring timelines, many employers begin recruitment the academic term prior to the internship start date. Therefore, students are encouraged to check the site often for suitable placements, and plan ahead if considering internships for future terms. See below for a sample timeline as to when most employers choose to post on OSCARplus for internship recruiting.

| Internship Term | Term Posted |
|-----------------|-------------|
| Fall 2017 | Summer 2017 |
| Winter 2018 | Fall 2017 |
| Summer 2018 | Winter 2018 |

Please Note: It is the student's responsibility to adhere to all deadlines and supply the necessary application documents as stated in the job description.

Students should take in to account the following when considering an internship placement:

- Employers are looking for 'well-rounded' students; they may consider grades, other work experience, and involvement in extracurricular activities.
- Employers may not be as concerned with finding someone who has specific work experience – instead, they are often looking for someone who is highly motivated, and who possesses skills relevant to their position.
- Keep an open mind when reviewing postings and applying for placements. Job descriptions can be vague or generic. Let an employer determine suitability, rather than trying to pre-screen yourself for a position.
- Apply only to positions that you are seriously willing to consider. It is expected that you will be available to interview for any role that you apply to, should the employer be interested in moving forward.
- Submit complete, well-written, quality applications as employers may be posting with various faculties and/or post-secondary institutions, making internship placements competitive in nature.
- Recognize that application deadlines are **strictly** adhered to. Ensure to submit all applications on time.

Please Note: *Students considering a full-time internship placement during the academic year (September to April) are encouraged to meet with an Academic Advisor to discuss how this option may impact their academic requirements. This ensures that the student is aware of any implications that may exist for future course selection and/or graduation dates. This meeting should take place before a student accepts a placement.*

Making an Application:

Students must submit all application materials required for each posting before the stated application deadline. Employers may choose to review applications as received, therefore students are strongly encouraged to apply as early as possible and not wait for the application deadline.

A complete application always consists of a **resume** and **cover letter**. In some cases, employers may require that students also submit a copy of their unofficial transcript. The employer can also request additional information depending on their recruiting needs. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all application materials are included in their on-line application, as stated within the internship job posting.

Please Note: *Applications will be screened for eligibility. If a student's application contains errors, omissions, or is of poor quality, it reflects negatively on the student as well as the Office of Experiential Education and will therefore NOT be passed on to the employer for consideration.*

Interviews:

The employer determines which candidate(s) will be selected for an interview. Students will be contacted by either the employer or the Programming and Outreach Manager and notified of their application status. Therefore, it is very important that the Programming and Outreach Manager have current contact information on file for interview scheduling purposes. This information is collected through the application documents submitted, but it is the student's responsibility to provide notification of any changes that occur during the academic year.

Every effort will be made to give students notice well in advance of the interview date, however, interviews are scheduled based on employer availability and may be within a couple days of the application deadline. Students should properly prepare themselves for an interview by reviewing the job description and researching the employer and/or organization ahead of time.

Students are expected to bring their official transcript to all interviews. Transcripts can be obtained through the Office of the Registrar (this process can take 5 – 7 days) or through the Faculty of Social Sciences Office in KTH 129. Interviews may be held at the place of employment or on campus. Occasionally telephone interviews may be used in place of a face-to-face interview.

Interview Expectations for Selected Students:

EE works effortlessly to build and maintain positive relationships with our community and recruiting partners. It is expected that students be available to interview for any internship role in which they apply to through OSCARplus. Students who anticipate missing an interview for a justifiable reason should contact the Programming and Outreach Manager immediately so that other arrangements may be made. Any student who misses their interview time without a valid reason, or declines two or more interview offers, will be excluded from applying to future internships for the remainder of their undergraduate degree program.

If following an interview the student feels as though the internship placement is *not* a "fit", or that the role *does not* align with their academic/career aspirations, they are expected to contact the Programming and Outreach Manager immediately to advise that they would like to be pulled from consideration.

This will not affect the student's status within the internship program; however, a meeting with the Programming and Outreach Manager may be required for multiple occurrences.

Offers of Internship Employment:

Placement offers are normally made upon completion of all interviews. Students have 24 hours to accept/decline the offer. Students are welcome to discuss details of the job offer with the Programming and Outreach Manager within the 24-hour time-frame. As well, they are encouraged to review how the work placement may affect their academic studies.

Students, who decline more than one offer per academic term, may be required to meet with the Programming and Outreach Manager to discuss their status within the internship program.

Please Note: *Once an offer of employment is accepted, the student is no longer eligible for any other internship positions for the duration of the placement.*

V. Student-initiated Internships

Students can also take the initiative to pursue a job on their own and apply to have their experience noted on the official student transcript as an internship placement. The Programming and Outreach Manager is available to provide guidance and support should students wish to pursue this option. Ultimately, the student must demonstrate that the secured position is related to their studies in Social Sciences and has an element of career exploration in order to have it recognized as an internship.

- See Appendix II for tips and techniques to assist with your independent job search.

Application Deadlines:

Interested candidates are required to complete the Student-Initiated Internship Application Form to see if their position qualifies.

Student-Initiated Internship Applications are due to the Programming and Outreach Manager in **KTH 129** by **4:00p.m.** on the following dates for each respective term:

| Term | Date |
|--------|-----------------------------|
| Term 1 | Tuesday, September 19, 2017 |
| Term 2 | Wednesday, January 17, 2018 |
| Term 3 | Monday, May 14, 2018 |

- The Student-initiated Internship Application Form can be located on the Experiential Education website at: <http://experiential-ed.mcmaster.ca/students/internships>

VI. Placement Process

Internship Orientation:

Upon securing an EE cultivated or student-initiated internship placement, the student will be contacted by the Programming and Outreach Manager and asked to book an appointment for their orientation to the internship program. In this session, the student intern will be provided with the Internship Participant Handbook, and the Programming and Outreach Manager will review internship guidelines and policies.

In addition, the student will sign off on required documentation in order to formalize their internship status. The internship orientation meeting takes approximately 30 minutes and is scheduled at a mutually convenient time for both parties (within EE regular business hours, 9:00a.m.–12:00p.m. and 1:00p.m.- 4:00p.m.).

Duration of Placement:

Placements must be a minimum of 12 weeks in length but normally last 4, 8, 12 or 16 months in duration. Students can participate in a part-time (5 hrs. to 25 hrs. per week) or full-time placement (26 hrs. to 40 hrs. per week) during the academic year, and Summer Term (May to August).

Students are informed of the placement duration within the job posting, during the interview and/or upon offer of employment. Specific dates for the start and end of the work term are arranged in consultation with the employer.

Some employers ask students to stay on for a subsequent work term or return in future for a second placement. In such cases, the decision is left to the student. Students considering an extension or returning for another term are encouraged to discuss the academic implications of this with the Programming and Outreach Manager and/or a Student Advisor before accepting the second placement. Students who choose to stay on for an additional term must advise the Programming and Outreach Manager of their new ending date as soon as it is confirmed.

Please Note: Internships must be completed before the student has fulfilled academic requirements for graduation.

Salary and Benefits:

The salary offered for a particular role may be based on company policy, nature of work or student experience, and is determined solely by the employer. Student salaries for each work term are recorded by the Programming and Outreach Manager. Employers are not obligated to pay other than the normal hourly minimum-wage rate. Some employers, however, choose to compensate at an increased rate of pay for overtime, or provide equivalent time off.

Students are expected to contribute to income tax, unemployment insurance and Canadian Pension Plan (employers are required to pay 4% vacation pay or provide vacation days) by law. Additional benefits are at the discretion of the individual employer. It is the responsibility of the student to determine if they are covered by the Worker's Compensation Act while participating in an internship. The Programming and Outreach Manager is available for assistance should any questions or concerns arise.

Normally, students are eligible for benefits from claims as the employers pay premiums to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board. According to Ontario's Occupational Health and Safety Act, employers are required by law to provide and ensure a safe working environment. Students should know and understand their rights and responsibilities for personal safety and actions, and for others affected by those actions.

Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the Ontario Human Rights Code on Sexual Harassment/Discrimination. Students, like any other employees, are protected by the Code. As well, students need to be aware of their own behaviour or comments and be sensitive to those around them in the workplace.

Illness/Absences:

Employers most often handle incidental absences for sickness in the same manner as for other temporary full-time employees. The decision to pay or not pay is usually identified in the terms of employment, and is determined by the employer.

If a student is absent due to illness, it may be appropriate to provide the employer with a doctor's note. Students should inquire about the employer's policy regarding absence due to illness. In cases where there is a significant loss of time, students are required to contact the Programming and Outreach Manager. In the unlikely event that there is a work stoppage due to a strike or layoff, students must contact the Programming and Outreach Manager immediately.

Dismissal:

If an employer dismisses a student for any reason, the student must contact the Programming and Outreach Manager immediately so that the necessary follow-up can be initiated.

Follow-up and Support:

The Programming and Outreach Manager is available by phone or e-mail to answer questions or concerns that arise during the placement. It is important for the student to provide the Programming and Outreach Manager with appropriate contact information while on a placement.

Midway through the work term, the Programming and Outreach Manager will contact each intern to set up an in-person site-visit or telephone/email follow-up. This meeting/conversation is scheduled around the student intern and Programming and Outreach Manager's mutual availability.

Student Assignments and Employer Evaluation:

i) Students

All students completing an internship placement are required to submit a:

- Learning Plan (due two-weeks from internship start-date)
- Student Evaluation Form (due toward end of placement)

These documents must be submitted by the specified deadlines, in order for the student to ensure a "Pass" on the official student transcript. Detailed information regarding these requirements and deadline dates will be provided once the placement has been secured.

ii) Employers

Employers are asked to provide ongoing supervision and support to the student, as well as complete a formal written evaluation toward the internship end date. The final review of the work placement is intended to:

- a) Allow the employer to provide constructive feedback to the student intern
- b) Help the student to identify his/her strengths and weaknesses

Employer evaluations are conducted by the student's immediate supervisor, or whoever can best evaluate the student's performance. Signed originals are forwarded to the Programming and Outreach Manager and retained in the student file.

In the event that the student and his/her employer do not have an opportunity to discuss the evaluation, the student is encouraged to meet with the Programming and Outreach Manager to review the document. Student interns must receive a satisfactory evaluation from the employer, in order to receive an internship "Pass".

iii) Statement of Confidentiality

The Experiential Education Program, Faculty of Social Sciences, is dedicated to providing high quality internship opportunities to students. By maintaining a policy of confidentiality, the Program ensures that students' privacy rights are respected and that their educational experience is enhanced.

The Program is committed to providing information to students regarding our commitment to confidentiality so that students understand the nature of communications between them and the Experiential Education Team. Therefore, students should note that the reflection on and evaluation of the work term are confidential in nature. Only the Experiential Education Team will be privy to the information that students share in these documents. These documents will not be given to or shared with anyone outside of the Experiential Education Team unless the student intern provides written consent to any such disclosure or in the case of one or more of the situations listed below:

- If the student intern discloses a reasonable suspicion that a child presently under the age of 16 has been or is being physically, sexually or emotionally abused or neglected.
- If the student intern discloses the threat of serious danger to him/herself or others.
- If the student intern discloses that he or she is likely to harm him/herself unless protective measures are taken.
- If the student intern reports imminent danger to the campus and/or community-at-large.
- Where the submitted documents indicate harassment or violations of codes or laws and/or other issues that may pose a danger to the student intern or a third party.
- As otherwise mandated by law; for example, responding to court subpoenas or search warrants.

In the situations listed above, the Programming and Outreach Manager is responsible to report these matters to the relevant parties so that appropriate action can be taken to maintain the safety of the student intern and other third parties. To the extent possible under any of the above circumstances, the student intern will be informed of and consulted on any proposed action without limiting the Experiential Education Team's obligation to maintain a safe and harassment-free environment for all student interns.

VII. General Information

International Students:

The Faculty of Social Sciences internship program requires that students be authorized to work in Canada. International students may be qualified to work part-time (up to 20 hours/week) off-campus during the academic year, and full-time during university scheduled academic break periods (winter and summer).

International students interested in participating in the internship program must refer to the Government of Canada website at <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/study/work-offcampus.asp> to ensure eligibility before submitting an application.

Students requiring general support are advised to seek guidance from McMaster's International Student Services, located in Gilmour Hall, 110.

Internship Fees:

The following fees will be applied to internship placements. Internship fees are charged so that the Faculty may recover a portion of the overall administrative costs associated with the internship program. These include: access to OSCARplus internship postings, employer development, application processing, internship mid-way review and transcript notation.

| Internship Type | Each 4-month Term |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| Full-time | \$200 |
| Part-time | \$100 |

Income Tax:

Employers should supply students with a TD1 form for income tax purposes. If one is not given, it should be requested by the student. Students whose income is below the exemption limit will not be required to pay taxes. All questions relating to income tax requirements and exemptions should be directed to a local Revenue Canada office. Students are advised to obtain a copy of the Student and Income Tax publication prior to the start of a placement.

OSAP Loans:

Although the Programming and Outreach Manager is available for general information, it is the student's responsibility to determine how an internship placement may affect their OSAP status.

Student Scholarships/Awards:

Students who hold an ongoing scholarship or are awarded an in-course award should contact the Student Financial Aid and Scholarships Office (GH/120, or Ext. 24319) to discuss deferring their scholarship/award disbursement.

Taking Undergraduate Courses While Doing a Placement:

Students completing a part-time internship may register for/maintain a full course load while completing their placement.

Students completing a full-time internship are permitted to take up to three (3) units per academic term while on a placement. Students who wish to take up to six (6) units must seek written permission from both the employer and the Programming and Outreach Manager.

Courses may be taken at McMaster, or at another University on a Letter of Permission. Requests for Letters of Permission must be approved before the placement begins by the Faculty of Social Sciences. Students needing assistance with course selection should see a Student Advisor.

Please Note: *The employer is not obligated to provide the student intern with time off in order to complete course work and/or exams for the duration of the placement.*



APPENDIX I

OSCARplus User Guidelines for EE Cultivated Internship Postings

Throughout the year, internship placements are cultivated by the Office of Experiential Education (EE) and posted on OSCARplus. Only students who meet the Social Sciences internship eligibility criteria are provided access to view and apply to these postings through the OSCARplus system.

Students who find and secure their own internship must go through the student-initiated internship process.

1) Login:

- Students can login to OSCARplus at <http://www.oscarplumcmaster.ca>

2) Update your profile:

- Once you have entered the system, click on **My Account** beside **Overview**.
- You will be taken to a page with your account information.
- Ensure all the information is correct and complete.
- Once your profile is updated, select **Save** at the bottom of the page to ensure all required information is saved.

3) Search for positions:

- Select **Internship & Co-op** in the grey navigation bar on your left; this should default to **Social Sciences Internships** tab.
- Once on the **Internship Home** page, select **EE Cultivated Internships-Active Postings** under the **Internship Quick Links**.
- Scroll down and review available positions by selecting **Available Internship Placements** under the **Additional Quick Searches** heading. Be sure to follow all application instructions for each unique posting.

Please Note: Applications will be screened for eligibility. If a student's application contains errors, omissions, or is of poor quality, it reflects negatively on the student as well as the Office of Experiential Education and will therefore NOT be passed on to the employer for consideration.



APPENDIX II

Student-initiated Internships – Tips and Techniques

Finding a Work Term Opportunity – How do I start?

Looking for an internship position is a crucial process because the strategies you use to secure this job will be invaluable in eventually helping you explore permanent career opportunities after graduation.

You can begin the research process by following two directions:

Research Visible Jobs:

- Fewer than 25% of all positions will be formally advertised. Using this method involves some leg work to find positions that suit your skills and interests.
- Resources that can help you find these jobs include the Student Success Centre (GH 110), newspapers, job banks, career fairs, magazines, public postings, and word of mouth.
- Talking to others is a very effective way of finding a job. Family and friends are usually most willing to pass along leads about job openings. The key is to do your part by making others aware of your goals and following through with the information that they provide.

Research Hidden Opportunities:

- The secret to find hidden opportunities is not looking for a specific job, but rather to look for ways to become connected to an industry or organization.
- Key resources include:
 - Cold calls – make cold calls in the form of seeking information, rather than a specific job, more people will be willing to talk to you. You can get started by reading articles in newspapers, publications, newsletters, brochures, and web sites (look specifically for companies that are moving, expanding or undertaking new projects). Once you have this information collected, organize it according to your priorities (location, size of company etc.).
 - Volunteering – Building relationships is the key to be remembered. Volunteer for a fund raising event the company is holding, offer a few hours a week to help out with daily tasks.

- Looking outside the box - Start thinking about opportunities where you least expect them. Think about your skills and interests, not your degree title.

Contacting the Employer for the First Time – How do I do that?

Contacting a potential employer for the first time can be a bit overwhelming. Here are some tips to consider:

- Calling employers that you are less interested in first can be great practice for when you are calling those employers that you really want to impress – you'll be more relaxed, and you'll better know what to expect.
- First Impressions Count - Be confident. Be sure of yourself, your skills and what you want to get from the phone conversation.
- Contact the right person. Know who you want to talk to BEFORE you call. Never ask for “someone in human resources”, instead ask for Ms. Smith, or John Mitchell. The best person to talk to is usually involved in recruiting, human resources, or even the manager of a specific department that you would like to get more information about. (You can find out names on the web site, company advertisements and brochures etc. or for a larger company you could simply call and ask the receptionist who the best person to speak to would be).
- Know what you want to say BEFORE you call. Role play with a friend or write down a script to practice beforehand. Never read from a script when you are talking to a potential employer – instead, write down general questions that you would like to ask.
- Make sure to clearly introduce yourself, tell them that you are enrolled in the _____ program at McMaster University, and that you are calling for general information about...
- Ensure that you understand what the employer is saying by asking questions and paraphrasing statements.
- If the person you would like to speak to is not in the office, leave a message, then call back within a couple of days if they haven't returned your call. Show genuine enthusiasm and interest in your messages.
- Always thank the employer at the end of your conversation. Tell them how they have helped you learn something about an area/career/subject matter etc.
- If you would like to contact them again in future, ask for permission. The employer may direct you to another person who may be better suited to answer your questions.

After Contacting a Potential Employer – What next?

After you have initially approached an employer, and talked to them about potential opportunities within their organization, you should start thinking about:

- Are you still interested in working for this organization?
- Did the employer seem interested in speaking to you?

- Did the employer identify some areas or departments where you may wish to consider pursuing an internship? If not, where can you see yourself working within this organization?
- What do you think you will learn from an internship with this organization?
- How will an internship with this organization relate to your area of academic study?

**"Co-op Tips and Techniques" is taken, in part, from the Canadian Association for Cooperative Education's (CAFCE) Accreditation Council, 2002*