Operations and Supply Chain Management Internship Program

Overview and Objectives
Mission Statement
The Operation and Supply Chain Management (OSCM) Internship Program will provide OSCM students with opportunities to develop practical skills and experience in real-world operating environments which, when combined with the technical and soft skills learned through their academic studies, will enhance their employability and provide the OSCM business community with a larger pool of better prepared graduates from which to draw.

Internship Program Overview
Logistics and supply chain management are major drivers of business and employment in the City of Long Beach and in all Los Angeles County. To meet the demand for qualified entry-level OSCM employees, the College of Business Admission (CBA) has expanded and strengthened its major by adding qualified faculty and relevant course work, and by encouraging employers to offer internship opportunities.

College graduates with real-world experience will have the practical skills that enhance their value to future employers. Internships provide students this real world experience. This benefits both students and future employers. For example, students gain experience, make industry contacts, build their resumes, and potentially transition to full-time entry-level positions. Employers fill short-term or lower-level employment needs, gain access to a trained pool of future employees, and perhaps identify entry-level employees for post-graduation full-time jobs. A successful internship program also enhances CBA’s reputation by turning out prepared graduates and in turn, making the CSULB OSCM degree more valuable in the OSCM marketplace.

Our program encourages paid internships that coincide with academic semesters. A paid internship can be treated like a part-time job. Also, paid internships avoid the Department of Labor regulations governing unpaid internships. Finally, paid internships will attract a larger pool of qualified students. Internships in Fall and Spring semesters and summer provide opportunity to the greatest number of students. However, it is recognized that flexibility may be required on a case-by-case basis. Internships can be broadly defined, and can be in logistics, supply chain management, or a related business function. The intern should have the opportunity to understand how that function facilitates the overall mission of the business.

Advisory Board and Faculty Support
In order for an internship program to be successful, OSCM faculty and Advisory Board members will work together to develop internship opportunities. Advisory Board members will generate internship opportunities in their companies or other companies and OSCM faculty will inform students about, and recruit students for, the internship opportunities. An OSCM internship program will help the student along his or her career path, provide valuable OSCM professionals for local companies, promote the economic vitality of the region and enhance the reputation of the College of Business Administration.
Creating a Meaningful Experience for Students

The materials included in this document are derived from the CBA Student Center for Professional Development (SCPD) (www.csulb.edu/cba/scpd) and the CSULB Career Development Center (www.careers.csulb.edu).

Internships

An internship is an opportunity to enhance classroom learning through practical career-related work experience. Internships can be found in corporate and private businesses, government agencies and nonprofit organizations. All internships should have the primary goal of providing students supervision and a chance to learn while contributing to the organization’s needs.

Employer Benefits of Internships

The 2011 National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) Job Outlook Survey indicated that internships were one of the most effective recruiting methods for hiring new college graduates. Internship benefits include the following:

− Internships provide a continual pool of pre-screened highly motivated employees.
− Internships support special or short-term projects.
− Internships provide companies with new ideas and innovative approaches.
− Through internships, staff members have an opportunity to develop supervisory skills.
− Internships reduce recruitment costs and train potential employees.
− An employer’s visibility on campus is increased when promoting internships.

NACE Internship Standards

NACE standards aim at ensuring educational and legitimate internships. All of the following criteria must be met:

− The experience must be an extension of the classroom: a learning experience that provides for applying the knowledge gained in the classroom. It must not be simply to advance the employer’s operations or be the work that a regular employee would routinely perform.
− The skills or knowledge learned must be transferable to other employment settings.
− The experience has a defined beginning and end, and a job description with desired qualifications.
− There are clearly defined learning objectives/goals related to the professional goals of the student’s academic coursework.
− There is supervision by a professional with expertise and educational and/or professional background in the field of the experience.
− There is routine feedback by the experienced supervisor.
− There are resources, equipment, and facilities provided by the host employer that support learning objectives/goals.

Types of Internships

Paid vs Unpaid Internships

The OSCM Internship Program favors paid internships that avoid conflicting with the Department of Labor Regulations for unpaid internships and are more likely to attract a qualified pool of students. The rate of compensation can be determined by the employer; however, most successful internship programs offer comparable hourly wages, stipends, licensing, and/or tuition

Unpaid internships are scrutinized heavily by the U.S. Department of Labor and have a minimum set of criteria that must be met for the internship to be considered legal. [http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.htm](http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.htm)

**Credit vs Not-for-Credit Internships**

In addition to compensation, employers must also decide whether internships should be offered on a for-credit or not-for-credit basis.

- **For-Credit Internships** count as an academic or extracurricular semester course, are often strongly related to a student’s academic discipline, and must be approved by the university/academic department. Students enroll in the CBA 493 Internship Course and complete various forms of documentation throughout academic semester or year. Examples of documentation include: journals, essays, presentations, mid-term/final evaluations, etc.

- **Not-for-Credit Internships** – Students do not earn university credits for their internship experience. To be included in the OSCM Internship Program, the university must still approve the internship posting to ensure that students are offered a meaningful learning experience.

**A Meaningful Learning Experience**

Meaningful learning experiences provide genuine opportunities for students to learn about their desired career path outside of a classroom environment, and for CSULB College of Business Administration internships include the following:

- The internship must be aligned with the student’s chosen major.
- The internship must include specific measurable learning objectives/outcomes. Some examples of learning objectives/outcomes include:
  - The intern will apply their analytical skills (such as Excel spreadsheet) to assist the decision-making process.
  - The intern will observe a day-to-day operation of a supply chain company and write a short report.
  - The intern will be exposed to supply chain contract design and negotiation.
  - The intern will participate in a mini-project that aims to improve the performance of a specific SCM process.
- The intern must be closely supervised to ensure they are receiving guidance and feedback regarding their performance.
- The intern should have time to reflect on the learning objectives and summarize their experience.

**Internship Creation**

The start-up time for an internship program can range from several weeks to several months. This range is based on a number of factors such as the number of interns sought or internship type.

Though not always possible, it is best practice for employers to have fully developed the internship program prior to posting the position and beginning the recruitment process. This ensures that the approval to post the position has been granted and that all involved parties have a clear understanding of the expectations from the onset.
The next companion document, *Creating Your Internship*, provides a step-by-step guide to creating an internship at your organization and various resources/forms to reference. If you have specific questions or would like to schedule a meeting to discuss an internship program in greater detail, our contact information is listed below.

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