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In Touch with Career Planning and Placement

Internships: One warm-up for the job marathon

Any student graduating in the near future knows the spine-chilling paradox of the working world: In order to get a job, you must have experience. In order to get experience, you must have a job.

The frustration felt by that paradox is equaled only by frustration in the lack of hands-on experience offered by college classes. How can this invaluable experience be obtained so the sparkle of graduation will not be overshadowed by unemployment? One option is the internship program at the Career Planning and Placement Service.

Juniors and seniors in the College of Arts and Sciences can work with about 20 organizations around the area, which offer upper-division credit and experience that could help students find a job upon graduation.

"Internships are the only way to go," said John Crenshaw, coordinator of the CPPS internship program and intern with the Bach Festival.

Crenshaw, a senior majoring in English, handles the promotional and administrative aspects of the internship program. By distributing flyers around campus to advertise internships and cut costs of other advertising, the internship program saw a rise last term in the number of interested students.

CPPS offers an orientation meeting in the middle of each term, designed to match students and organizations for the following term. Each student can sign up for two interviews, and one alternate interview if the other two do not work out.

Students also have the option of creating their own internship. Elizabeth Gallagher, a se-



Elizabeth Gallagher (left) and Virginia Ross (below) broke the vicious "job to get experience, experience to get a job" cycle by working as interns. Gallagher works at KMTR-TV news and Ross works at the Eugene City Planning Department.

nior majoring in English, developed her own internship, receiving upper-division credit as a camera operator for KEZI-TV news.

Gallagher went hunting on her own, inquiring to several places before she struck a deal with KEZI. She took her proposal to CPPS and asked for approval.

Gallagher said she wants to be a film director and believes this internship will provide the experience needed to successfully direct.

"For the field I want to go into, this internship teaches me about 400 of the 500 things I need to know," Gallagher said. "You get your feet wet and develop some networking."

Virginia Ross, a senior majoring in psychology, is helping to organize the Small Business Celebration to be held in May, sponsored by the Eugene City Planning Department. Ross found her internship by working with Gina Houston, a career counselor at CPPS.

"To work as a one-on-one psychologist, I would need to go on to a masters or even a Ph.D.," Ross said. "This internship provides a great baseline for work."

Ross said she believes the internship program helps a student in many other ways, besides just providing credit and experience. She said internships can help build confidence, develop verbal and writing skills and help develop the

student's ability to converse freely with business managers.

Crenshaw also believes it is hard for students in college to communicate with professionals. "Internships allow that communication and help the professionals in wanting to open up," Ross said.

"I am really pleased with my experience. It helps not only the community, but also the intern."

Chad McPride is an intern at Looking Glass Youth and Family Services, Inc., providing about 12 to 14 hours a week as a resident counselor. McPride is using his political science and international studies majors and his interest in overcoming homelessness in his work at Looking Glass.

"I hope to be working later with similar issues if not homelessness," McPride said. "The experience and knowledge gained from this internship will help me later."

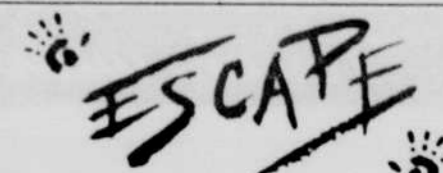


Photo by Andre Rameri

Students involved in internships can earn up to nine credits and can have the same internship for more than one term. Students are expected to do worksheets for CPPS and midterms and papers appropriate to their internship. CPPS also makes site visits on the intern at the job to check progress.

"I love it," Gallagher said. "You kind of make the internship what it is and try to make the most of it."

—Jennifer Thomas



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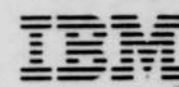


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