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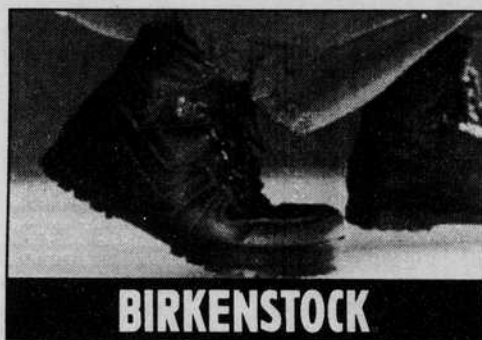
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At school in the real world

■ The Career Center gives undergrads the opportunity to earn credit as they earn experience

By Kristy Hessman
Oregon Daily Emerald

Not sure what you want to be when you grow up?

An internship could help you decide.

Internships provide job experience, a few priceless lines on a resume and the chance to explore various fields of study. Typically, students choose to participate in internships during the summer.

The Career Center formed the Career Development Internship Program to assist interested students in finding internships while receiving academic credit.

"Internships give students real-world experience," said Rick Guerra, assistant director of the CDIP. "For some it is their first exposure to their fields of study, and can help them decide if that's what they want to do."

Anchors, sports writers and social service workers are just a few of the positions students in the CDIP have filled.

"Summer is a big period for us," Guerra said. "There are at least 100 folks who had internships in various areas."

CDIP provides internship opportunities for juniors and seniors in good academic standing. Interns can earn up to three credits after finishing at least one term for a minimum of nine hours a week.

For successfully completing the internship and required coursework, which can include creating a contract with the help of a supervisor and writing a report about the internship experience, students are eligible to earn upper-division credit in counseling psychology.

Students can also propose their own internships or they can interview with one of the organizations that regularly participate in CDIP.

"The employers get exposed to the University and students; the students get real-world experience and skills they couldn't get in the classroom," Guerra said. "It's a win-win situation for everyone."

Haley Smith, a senior majoring in English and minoring in business, participated in an internship through the Career Center.

"I worked at the Big Brother Big Sister Program at the YMCA," Smith said. "I did event planning and fundraising, made calls, wrote letters and worked on getting funds and support."

Smith said the most important skills she learned are how to be professional in a business situation, how to interact in the office and how to prioritize.

"The pressure of a job is totally different than in the class-setting," she said.

In addition to internships, many students in pre-professional majors participate in programs known as practicum and field study, where they are put into the professional environment.

"For many pre-professional programs, experience in the real environment is part of the requirement for getting the degree," said Dianne Ferguson, coordinator of Academic Support Services in the Education Department.

In the Education Department, students who are going into the teaching field take part in a program called September Experience. University students go into classrooms during the beginning of September when school starts and watch teachers set up classrooms and welcome new students.

"I really enjoyed it," Karen Brohlin, graduate student in speech

Internship and summer job timeline

October to November

- 1) Write a statement of career goals and learning objectives
- 2) Research and locate companies, agencies, programs, etc.
- 3) Be aware of early deadlines and testing dates to fill all requirements for particular internship programs
- 4) Prepare a rough draft of your resume

Mid-November to Mid-December

- 1) Call or write for applications to special programs
- 2) Write further letters of inquiry, networking letters, etc.
- 3) Contact your "network" people — friends, family, professors and previous employers concerning leads for internships
- 4) Set up informational interviews for fall break, holidays, January

Mid-December to January

- 1) Prepare and send letters of application, internship proposals and final copy of resume
- 2) Contact personnel directors, contacts from "networking" and other influential people in the organization or business
- 3) Submit applications
- 4) Conduct informational interviews that had been scheduled
- 5) Follow-up on responses to letters of inquiry

SOURCE: Bucknell University

pathology and a program participant said. "It really gives you an idea of the class setting."

For more information on internships check out the Career Center Web site at <http://uocareer.uoregon.edu/>.



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