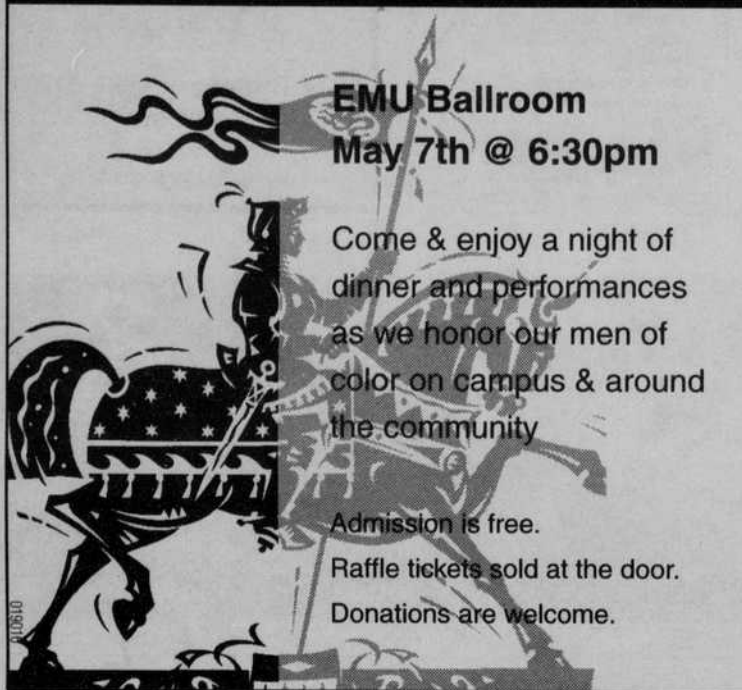


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## Internships prepare students

Richard Guerra, the Career Center's assistant director, said internships can teach lessons not found in class

By Steven Neuman  
News Reporter

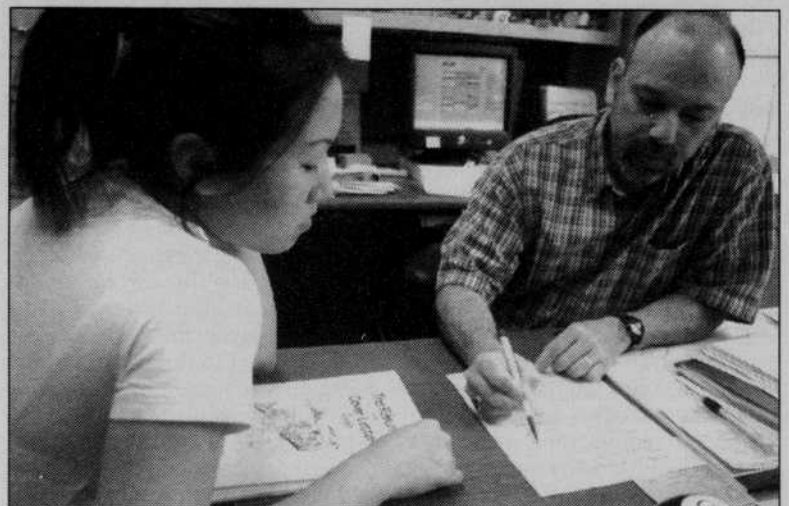
Summer internships are a lot like marriages. According to Career Center Assistant Director Richard Guerra, they may require making commitments, drawing up preliminary contracts and realizing that the process is a partnership.

"Students forget that it's not just 'what are you going to give me,' or 'what can you give to me,' but 'this is what I'd like, and this is what I'm offering you,'" Guerra said.

Summer internships offer students professional experience in the job market before graduation. Assistant Director of Undergraduate Career Services James Chang said internships are an asset when it comes to getting a job after graduation.

"The emphasis for all students is experience," said Chang, who runs the Lundquist College of Business career center. "Half the things that happen in an office only happen in an office. You won't get that experience in school."

Career Center Students Information Specialist Tina Haynes said departments are a prime resource for



Tim Bobosky Photographer

Career Center Assistant Director Richard Guerra discusses résumé strategies with junior biology major June Wang.

students looking for internships.

"The first place I would suggest students go is within their own professional schools or departments," she said. "Both the business and journalism and communication schools have their own internship coordinators, but if you can't get to a internship coordinator then I suggest you find a academic advisor or even a peer coordinator."

Guerra also recommends that students talk with their professors.

"They'll have professional contacts and networks that students can use," Guerra said. "The other thing is for students to go and do informational interviews with companies, businesses and organizations that they are interested in working for to find out if there are any opportunities to help them get in the door."

Guerra said students need to keep in mind that internships are not only about what companies can do for students, but about what students can contribute to the businesses as well.

"A student needs to be clear about what they want to do and have a good way to articulate that to someone," Guerra said. "It's not enough to go in and say 'I'm a journalism major, and I want to be a reporter.' We always encourage students to get more specific, be able to talk about what kind of learning experience that they want to gain from it, but also talk about the skills they possess already."

Individual department Web sites often have excellent resources for finding summer internships, Haynes said.

Chang said registering on the Career Center's Web site has some of the best opportunities, but acknowledged that one of most important factors is a student's initiative.

"For summer internships there are a lot of people looking to get into a few positions," he said. "Take the initiative to see someone in the company, to stand out, and don't be too wishy-washy about what you want."

He also recommended the Campus Interview Program because the employers who participate haven't just expressed interest, they've committed to hiring.

However, Chang said he draws a line between using actual business Web sites to find company contacts and using online job search Web sites

like Monster.com.

"Sites like that don't really work for internships," he said. "Especially for summer internships they're not going to be very good because even for real jobs companies that post there are looking for specific skills."

Internships are generally divided into two categories, paid and unpaid, each with their own benefits and drawbacks.

### PART 2 OF 2

**Tuesday:** How to find local summer jobs

**Today:** Tips for success in summer internships

"If it's going to be a paid experience,

it's almost going to be like a real job," Guerra said. "They're going to be expecting very high quality work from you, typically it's going to be some sort of competitive process where they select from a pool of talent."

He added quality work is expected in unpaid positions as well. He said students in unpaid internships may be able to personalize their experience by working with an on-site supervisor who will help them focus on what they want to do or learn.

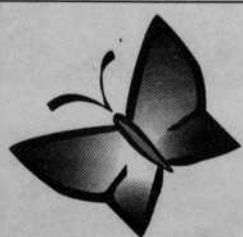
Although whether an internship is paid tends to be the defining factor for most students, Chang said in the end it should be about the learning process.

"The name internship means nothing," he said. "We've all heard the horror stories about people who get an internship and they spend the whole time making copies and answering the phone. There are also those people who do a volunteer position and take away these amazing skills and get the most experience. The value of experience is multi-fold."

In some cases the best defense to bad job experiences is a strong attempt to communicate.

"The best way to combat bad internships is to make your priorities clear," said Guerra. "The number one thing that goes wrong is students not doing their research on the organization and the internship itself and relying on somebody's word for what they're going to be doing."

Contact the business/science/technology reporter at [stevenneuman@dailyemerald.com](mailto:stevenneuman@dailyemerald.com).



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