

Engaging students outside the classroom can be a great way for employers to build talent pipelines, gain fresh perspective, and procure assistance in accomplishing organizational objectives. Remote methods for doing so include virtual internships, micro-internships, and collaborations with BW's on-campus internship programs. This document explains the difference between these types of experiences and how you can promote these types of opportunities to BW students.

REMOTE INTERNSHIP GUIDELINES*

Remote internships are internships in which an intern works in a location other than a traditional office setting. Generally, this means working from home or somewhere close to home (coffee shops, libraries, etc.). With these internships, much of the communication between the employer and their intern(s) takes place via teleconferencing software, telephone and email. There is usually a physical office location which interns may travel to on occasion, but part of what differentiates virtual internships from traditional internships is that most of the work does not take place in a conventional office location.

The following guidelines pertain to remote internship positions:

- 1. Defined Learning Goals.** As is the case with any internship, students must identify learning objectives that they intend to accomplish during the experience. These objectives may include obtaining desired industry-related knowledge, skills, and abilities required for successful career advancement. Supervisors will work with the intern at the beginning of the internship to develop a plan detailing how these objectives will be met.
- 2. Thorough Onboarding and Orientation.** In order for the intern to get oriented and established in their new working environment, supervisors should plan for the intern's first day on the job to be focused on orientation and training. This should consist of meeting other staff members, learning about the organization, reviewing organization-wide communication standards and workplace expectations (including taking required legal breaks, lunches, and system of tracking hours), and reviewing the student's defined learning goals. If this orientation will not be completed in-person, a synchronous meeting platform should be used for orientation, in addition to electronic written documentation. This will provide the intern the chance to ask clarifying questions, as this might be their first professional work environment, and is likely their first virtually based position.

- 3. Consistent Communication.** Supervisors should review intern deliverables and provide timely feedback to students on a regular basis. Supervisors are asked to schedule feedback meetings for a minimum of thirty minutes each week to discuss the student's progress on their learning objectives. These meetings also serve as an opportunity to share updates regarding expected work activities for the week, discuss outcomes from prior work submissions, and share any other relevant announcements pertaining to the organization. To help your intern prepare for these meetings, we recommend establishing a check-in document that they will have prepared for each meeting. Pre-planned training topics should also be discussed during these sessions. Synchronous meeting platforms should be used for this portion of the internship, including video conferencing or telephone, not email or messaging platforms.
- 4. Pre-arranged Schedules.** Although a key feature of remote internships is schedule flexibility, supervisors and interns should agree upon a definitive time allotment per week and per day for internship activities. Shift caps – defining the amount of accrued time allotted for any given task - are strongly recommended to avoid unreasonable work demands on the student and any conflict with reported internship hours. If a task is taking longer than the established shift caps, this is something that should be addressed during weekly feedback meetings so expectations can be adjusted.
- 5. Organizational Involvement.** In addition to facilitating a remote internship, site supervisors should make a good faith effort to integrate the intern into the organization's work culture. After initial onboarding orientation, this may include client visits and attendance at select team meetings, use of company tools and resources, and any other forms of access to other staff members.
- 6. Reimbursement of Expenses.** Students engaged in remote internships should not incur personal expense for anything needed solely for the internship experience. For example, any software or hardware that the student has no need for outside of the experience should be covered by the internship host site. Materials the intern will need should be discussed prior to the start of the internship and provided either before or on the start date during onboarding.

Notes:

Student interns benefit from tasks being contextualized. Rather than just assigning “to do” deliverables, communicate why the work is important. What is it contributing towards or connected to? How will this task contribute to the greater good of the organization?

This may be the first time your intern has worked in an independent work environment which necessitates high levels of self-motivation and personal organizational skills. The more support and tools you equip them with in this new environment, the more easily they will adapt.

Some students may seek to gain academic credit for this experience. Students wishing to receive academic credit should work directly with BW Career Services as soon as the offer is accepted.

These opportunities can be promoted to BW students via [Handshake](#). We recommend including 'remote' in the title when posting.

MICRO-INTERNSHIP GUIDELINES

Micro-internships differ from remote internships in that they involve a very specific scope of work. Whereas an internship is first and foremost an educational experience designed to help the student build skills, awareness of their industry, and an understanding of the company/organization, a micro-internship is an opportunity for students to apply existing skills to a specific project. Micro-internships allow for companies to have projects completed that they don't currently have staffing capacity for, while also allowing students an opportunity to add to their resumes and show off their skills.

The following guidelines pertain to micro-internship opportunities:

- 1. The scope of the project must be established in advance.** This write-up of the project should include:
 - An anticipated timeline for how long the project should take. Micro-internships typically do not last for a full semester as appropriate projects usually require no more than 12 weeks of work. This may vary depending on how many hours students put in per week.
 - A clear definition of what the deliverables of the project are
 - What skills/software will be needed to complete the project
 - The price that will be paid for the project.

If you would like examples, micro-internship expert Parker-Dewey has some templates of [common micro-internship projects](#).

- 2. Contracts.** All micro-internships should take place within the confines of a contract signed by both the organization and the student that details:
 - The expected deliverables and the manner in which they will be supplied to the employer at the end of the experience
 - The timeline in which this will take place
 - What, if any, equipment will be provided by the employer and what, if anything, needs to be provided by the student. This should also include in what manner the equipment will be provided and/or returned if applicable.
 - The amount and method of payment as well as when it will be dispersed to the student
 - What, if any, opportunities exist for either party to terminate the contract

Notes:

These opportunities can be promoted to BW students via [Handshake](#). We recommend including 'micro-internship' in the title when posting.

Typically, micro-internships do not meet the educational requirements that would allow the student to register them for academic credit.

VIRTUAL CO-OP GUIDELINES

A virtual co-op involves working through one of BW's two established internship programs, detailed below. In this model, students in the program work remotely for outside employers, scheduling the projects around key milestones. Each student receives support and guidance from a faculty mentor in their discipline, creating an effective learning opportunity and ensuring a high quality of work on each project.

Digital Marketing Clinic: The Digital Marketing Clinic (DMC) at Baldwin Wallace University provides businesses and organizations with an effective, research-based digital marketing strategy using proven inbound methodologies and the latest best practices. Projects are tailored to client needs, but generally include a strategy playbook and a range of tactics such as:

- New website and/or blog
- Social media platform launch
- Social media content and production calendars
- Email and marketing automation plans
- Paid media strategies

Each client has a dedicated student team consisting of one account executive and 2-5 digital specialists who will develop and deliver your strategy and related tactical content. Contact Tim Marshall at dmc@bw.edu or (440) 826-2792 if interested in becoming a DMC client.

BusinessWorks is a project-based interdisciplinary experiential learning and virtual co-op program that provides valuable, paid employment opportunities for BW students while providing employers with experiential insight into prospective talent. Organizational project deliverables could focus on improving business insights and organizational performance, safeguarding organizational data, or designing, developing and delivering new digital product or service offerings. You can learn more about the program and request a project team at <https://www.bw.edu/schools/business/industry-community/businessworks/>.

Notes:

The above options are subject to student and faculty mentor availability. Contact the programs for details and assistance in determining the best service offering for your organization.

GET STARTED

We encourage all employers to consider supporting a remote/virtual experience. With clear expectations, established deadlines, and regular communication, remote student talent can be a wonderful investment in your organization's future.

If you have questions, please contact:
Baldwin Wallace University Career Services
career@bw.edu



bw.joinhandshake.com



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