



A Guide For Placement Supervisors

Program Description

Thank you for your interest in becoming one of our placement partners. Our students earn eight semester hours of college credit for their internship and use the experience as an opportunity to learn new skills, make professional connections, and apply their undergraduate coursework to the workplace. All Philadelphia Center internships are unpaid and students are expected to work four days per week over a period of approximately 11-13 weeks.

The Philadelphia Center (TPC) is an experiential education program founded in 1967 by the Great Lakes Colleges Association (GLCA) and managed by Hope College. Since our inception we have provided an opportunity for thousands of liberal arts undergraduates to live in Philadelphia for a semester, participate in city-based seminars taught by our full-time and adjunct faculty, and work 32 hours per week in well-supervised and meaningful internships. We have affiliations with over 800 businesses and organizations in the Greater Philadelphia area and attract highly qualified students with a wide variety of skills, interests, and passions. We hope you'll join us in creating an unforgettable off-campus study experience.

Each Fall and Spring Semester, The Philadelphia Center attracts 50-80 students from the GLCA member colleges (Albion, Allegheny, Antioch, Denison, DePauw, Earlham, Hope, Kalamazoo, Kenyon, Oberlin, Ohio Wesleyan, Wabash, and Wooster) as well as from a number of colleges not in the GLCA (Alma, Bucknell, Hartwick, Juniata, Otterbein, Lehigh, Susquehanna, Whitman, and many others). Our eight-week summer program, Learning Work, provides internship opportunities to approximately 20 students.

Contact Information

For more information about TPC, internships, or becoming a placement partner, please contact:

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Program Mission

The Philadelphia Center is committed to undergraduate education and its connections to field and disciplinary exploration and development; community involvement and responsibility; experiential learning and critical reflection; graduate school possibilities; career and employment options; and collaborative efforts in programmatic and curricular work. We provide a structured educational environment for undergraduate students in the context of an urban setting. Our multidisciplinary approach integrates professional work, academic seminars, and independent living experiences in urban communities and offers opportunities in most fields and disciplines of study. We are dedicated to helping undergraduates find their personal and professional direction in life.

Academic Calendar

Spring 2009 - 16 Semester Hours
January 18, 2009 to May 8, 2009
(Students begin interviewing on or around Jan. 29)

Learning Work: Summer 2009 - 8 Semester Hours
May 31, 2009 to July 26, 2009
(March and April telephone interviews)

Fall 2009 - 16 Semester Hours
August 30, 2009 to December 16, 2009
(Students begin interviewing on or around Sept. 10)

Spring 2010 - 16 Semester Hours
January 17, 2010 to May 7, 2010
(Students begin interviewing on or around Jan. 28)



EXPERIENCE LIFE: EDUCATION AT WORK

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Frequently Asked Questions

Are Philadelphia Center interns paid?

No. Our students receive 16 hours of academic credit for the semester-long program and eight hours of credit for our summer program, Learning Work. Students expect to receive significant, hands-on work experience, acquire knowledge in their field, learn new skills, and make networking connections. Placement sites may elect to offer a TransPass, TrailPass, or a small lunch stipend to defray students' costs; however, these benefits are not required by The Philadelphia Center. If your company requires your interns be paid, please contact our Placement Director.

How are students placed in their internships?

Our Placement Process begins prior to their arrival when they respond to a series of questions and begin thinking seriously about their interests. Then, at the beginning of the semester students meet with their faculty advisor to brainstorm and research potential internship sites. They interview with at least three organizations. The interview process allows both the student and the organization to ensure that a good match is made. This process occurs over a two to four week period. Students will interview over the phone for the eight-week summer session, Learning Work.

How many hours per week and when are your interns available?

Our students are available to work 32 hours per week. They are available for roughly 11 to 13 weeks per semester and eight weeks during the summer. In addition to their internship, our students also take two courses at The Philadelphia Center. Students are available to begin working in mid-September for the Fall and mid-February in the Spring. Summer students are available the beginning of June through the end of July.

How can a student be most efficiently integrated into the workplace?

We ask that during the first week of the internship you and your intern discuss some of the following questions: What meaningful work will the student be given? What title or job description best fits the student's role? Are the student's daily responsibilities clearly defined? How accessible does the primary supervisor expect to be and are there others to whom the student will be reporting? What technology or space requirements need to be resolved? What are the opportunities for learning?

Is it possible for my organization to have more than one Philadelphia Center intern?

Yes. While your organization may utilize more than one intern per semester, we do ask that each intern have separate primary placement supervisors, individual workload responsibilities, and that each student has a unique learning experience.

How are students graded for their work in the internship?

TPC students earn academic credit for learning through experience. The student's Learning Plan is their primary way of identifying, organizing, defining, and documenting learning. The Learning Plan serves as a framework for the student's learning experiences; documents demonstrated progress; provides a set of goals and objectives; serves as a contract between supervisor, student, and faculty; provides a basis for assessment; offers proof of learning for academic credit; and lays the foundation for future learning. Students will collect evidence of learning throughout the semester.

What are my responsibilities as a field placement supervisor and placement partner?

In addition to developing a mentoring and supervisory relationship with the student, we ask supervisors to participate in two meetings throughout the semester (one during the summer) to set out a plan of action for the student and to review the student's Learning Plan. These three-way meetings take place at the placement site between the student, the placement supervisor, and the student's faculty advisor. The first meeting will occur early in the semester, as the student is developing the Learning Plan, and the second meeting will occur at the end of the semester, at which time you will be asked to evaluate the student on the basis of his or her Learning Plan.

What are the student's responsibilities?

You will work with the student to clearly define your expectations for their performance throughout the semester. As you work with your student to integrate them into the workplace and develop their Learning Plan, you will have the opportunity to make your expectations clear to the student.

Who do I contact if I need to update my listing, change contact information, or ask questions about TPC?

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