Internal Internships in Higher Education

Opening Career Opportunities Within Our Universities

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This paper is the culmination of effort of the 2017 ULEAD Team tasked with providing a solution to promote internal undergraduate internships at UNC General Administration (GA), North Carolina Central University (NCCU), and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH).

Background

Internships in higher education are field-based work experiences that are focused on or are related to college students’ academic majors. These experiences can take place internally on campus and externally off campus. Internship programs provide many benefits that favored students, internship hosts, and the university as a whole. The following section details the essential components of an internship experience, and looks at current research offering insight as to why internships are a worthwhile investment that leads toward student success.

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) is a leading professional organization that connects college career services and university relations professionals with professional development resources, guidance, standards and research relating to employment matters. NACE has established criteria specifically for defining what an internship experience should include, and the criteria is based on the belief that internships are learning experiences that benefit students. The criteria for internships was develop to provide guidance and ensure that the internship experience is legitimate. According to NACE an internship experience should have the following:

1. The experience must be an extension of the classroom: a learning experience that provides for applying the knowledge gained in the classroom. It must not be simply to advance the operations of the employer or be the work that a regular employee would routinely perform.
2. The skills or knowledge learned must be transferable to other employment settings.
3. The experience has a defined beginning and end, and a job description with desired qualifications.
4. There are clearly defined learning objectives/goals related to the professional goals of the student’s academic coursework.
5. There is supervision by a professional with expertise and educational and/or professional background in the field of the experience.
6. There is routine feedback by the experienced supervisor.
7. There are resources, equipment, and facilities provided by the host employer that support learning objectives/goals.

The criteria offered by NACE provides a solid foundation for universities to build their internship programs.

In surveying the academic literature on internship programs in higher education and interviewing former interns, we discovered advantage for student interns and institutions of higher learning. Internship programs provide students with significant exposure to real-world work experience. Student interns gain opportunity to explore career interest, expand their professional network, mentoring from a faculty or staff member, acquire new skills, gain professional references, receive academic credit (if offered by the university), and in the case of internal internships many of these benefits can be gain without the student leaving campus. Furthermore, students that complete paid internships are more likely to receive a job offer. According to Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce “63% of college graduates who completed a paid internship received a job offer, compared to 35% who never interned.” Likewise, the Chronicle of Higher Education Marketplace surveyed 700 companies within the United States and found that industries across the board viewed an internship as the single most important credential for recent grads.

Mya M. Reeves is currently a marketing intern with Sodexo, and an undergraduate teaching fellow at North Carolina Central University.

Major: Business Administration

“My internship helped build my confidence, provided me with real-world work experience and was the gateway into my future professional career as a marketing executive.”

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Jake Bridgers is a former UNC-CH intern in the Biochemistry Department, and currently is a graduate student at Harvard University. Major: Biochemistry

“My internship experience significantly helped me get into the Ph.D. program at Harvard Medical School.”

Jake Bridges

The benefits of internship programs also extend to universities. Universities can use their internship programs as a marketing tool to demonstrated success in preparing students for employment and this can lead to an increase in enrollment. Additionally, internships provide a potential pipeline for future employment at the university and allows for universities to hire top talent prior to graduation. Universities can benefit from skilled labor at a low cost, and increased work capacity, freeing full-time employees to perform more critical tasks.

Internal Undergraduate Internships Currently Offered at NCCU, UNC General Administration, and UNC-CH

Our proposals regarding undergraduate internships at our three ULEAD institutions are meant to support and enhance the significant opportunities currently available. So it makes sense to sketch briefly the current opportunities at NCCU, the UNC General Administration (GA) and UNC Chapel Hill. The following scan in not meant to be comprehensive. Indeed, we propose a definitive scan as a goal of the staff in our proposals charged with promoting internal internships. Rather, the following scan is meant to provide a sense of what is available currently, with an eye to highlighting current opportunities for support and growth.

North Carolina Central University

Of our three institutions, NCCU is perhaps currently the most consistently open to undergraduate internal internships, which are available in nursing, internal auditing, human resources, the Women’s Center, the School of Business, and the athletic department, among other areas. In part, this emphasis is

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Tucciarone, Kristy. "How Universities can increase enrollment by advertising internships: The message and the medium." College and University 90, no. 2 (n.d.), 28-38.

due to the requirement for graduation of 120 hours of community service; internal internships are an effective way to meet this obligation right on campus, without requiring students to commute extensively, a significant benefit of internal internships. And as exemplified by Mya Reeves, many NCCU undergraduates use internal, on-campus internships as stepping stones to external, off-campus work.

Several NCCU degree programs have an internship component built into their curricula. For example, the School of Business teaches an upper division course, Management 4801, called, simply, Internship Experience. As taught by Ms. Deborah Brame, the class meets three times per semester, at the beginning, middle and end. Unfortunately, most internal internships at NCCU are unpaid, but this course is four elective credit hours, a substantial benefit for the interns.

In addition to providing the students networking opportunities, Management 4801 and similar courses give interns the opportunity to prepare for and process their internships. Recall that many undergraduate interns are often entering a professional work environment for the first time. The opportunity provided by this course to orient and support them can contribute importantly toward them performing well on the job, including establishing the desirable win-win working relationships with their mentors that will inspire the mentors to continue supervising interns.

Unfortunately, there is no one localized place where undergraduates can study the full range of available internal internships at NCCU. Career Services has a beautiful website with a “Handshake” component, allowing students to enter specific interests and qualifications to be matched to available jobs and internships. The various potential internship supervisors do not, however, often enter available internships into this software. To facilitate this, therefore, represents an opportunity for the staff in our internal internship-promoting proposals.

To give one concrete example, looking a couple of hours on the NCCU Career Services website on November 3, 2017, two of us were unable to see mention of the Summer of Learning and Research (SOLAR) internships offered to underrepresented students in science, providing the opportunity to do research in cutting-edge laboratories at UNC-CH. The recent stipend was $5250, with housing provided. Yet of the forty alumni shown on the SOLAR website, only one is from NCCU, while six are from Oakwood University and twelve from the University of Puerto Rico, places where there are individuals guiding students to the SOLAR program. Our internal internship staff would promote SOLAR and other similar internships, identifying NCCU students who would be strong candidates. Indeed, they would cultivate those students’ preparations and help lead them through the application process.

Part of the great value and pleasure of ULEAD, illustrated as well by SOLAR internships, is the “cross-pollination” possible across our three institutions. So considering internal internships we are especially attuned to all such opportunities, including the joint Partners Program between researchers at

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7 Conversation with Shannon Morgan Keith, Internship and Experiential Education Coordinator, NCCU Career Services, Durham, NC, November 3, 2017.

8 “Welcome to UNC’s SOLAR Program,” University of North Carolina School of Medicine, accessed October 15, 2017, http://www.med.unc.edu/oge/stad/solar
UNC-CH and NCCU. Funded by the National Cancer Institute, it is designed, among other goals, to introduce NCCU undergraduate students to paid research in public health or cancer molecular biology laboratories. Currently the Office of Student Affairs of the UNC-CH School of Public Health has a role in placing NCCU students in laboratories in the Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center at UNC-CH.\footnote{9}

While we hope to promote such exciting cross-pollination, we frankly acknowledge the inherent challenges. The UNC Center for Aids Research (CFAR) is committed to bringing NCCU students from the Department of Public Health Education into UNC-CH labs, in part to provide them with opportunities to increase their currently low acceptance rate into the UNC-CH School of Public Health. This effort is still a work in progress, despite the inspired and dedicated work of several talented people.\footnote{10}

**UNC General Administration**

At GA three types of internship programs being supported are: (1) the Marian Drane Graham Scholars Program, (2) the Presidential Scholars Program, and (3) the North Carolina Governor’s Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Internship Program.

The Marian Drane Graham Scholars Program is named after the wife of Frank Porter Graham, prominent twentieth-century North Carolina politician and the first leader in the 1930s of the newly consolidated UNC university system.\footnote{11} A recent class of Graham Scholars consisted of six undergraduates who worked six weeks last summer and were paid $2400, with housing provided at NCCU.\footnote{12} These internships are open to rising juniors and seniors at all of the sixteen UNC campuses who have a passion for understanding how higher education functions in North Carolina. Several recent Graham scholars fashioned capstone projects that made their internships “internal,” preparing them for work in the academic world.

Our proposed internal internship promoters can explore ways to advertise opportunities such as Marian Drane Graham internships. Currently the GA site on Facebook is followed by only a tiny fraction of the UNC system’s students.\footnote{13}

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\footnote{10} Personal correspondence with Caressa Jo Harding, Director of Strategic Community Engagement Education Dissemination Office, UNC Center for AIDS Research, October 26, 2017.

\footnote{11} Rob Christensen, *The Paradox of Tar Heel Politics*, 2nd ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 66-68.


\footnote{13} Facebook Post, UNC General Administration, accessed November 12, 2017, \url{https://www.facebook.com/uncsystem/posts/1486789494691298}
A second type of internship at GA is the Presidential Scholars Program, which is open to UNC system students just as they are entering the professional world. The current crop of Presidential scholars consists of four students.\(^4\) With the opportunity to interact over their yearlong appointment with leaders at the Board of Governors and GA, and to work in GA’s departments, such as academic affairs, legal affairs and communications, the Presidential Scholars program provides a significant opportunity to see how public higher education is administered in North Carolina.

The General Administration, located on a relatively isolated edge of the UNC-CH campus, benefits by having Presidential Scholars’ perspectives, albeit the perspectives of only a small handful.\(^5\) The small size, established infrastructure and proven success of the Graham and Presidential Scholars programs suggest an opportunity for growth, if money could be found (such as via our forthcoming proposals) and the interns chosen were prepared to function productively in this environment. Mentoring an intern often requires a hint of altruism, but generally the investment a mentor makes training and working with an intern must pay off in valuable work for the mentor.\(^6\)

A third type of internship supported by GA is the North Carolina Governor’s Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) internship. These internships are not internal; the program is administered by GA in conjunction with corporate sponsors, such as AT&T, Bank of America and Cisco Systems. This past summer there were fifty-two interns from the historically black schools in North Carolina in the UNC system, such as NCCU, and those outside it, too, such as Shaw University. A major goal of these internships is to increase the employability of students at the eleven North Carolina HBCU schools and, as a consequence, increase the percentage of these students ultimately staying in North Carolina. A benefit for the businesses involved is access to a diverse, sometimes under-tapped workforce. These HBCU internships demonstrate that programs with vision can sometimes locate funding.\(^7\)

Several of the companies that host HBCU interns do an especially fine job orienting and supporting them. So as pointed out by Glenda Farrell, Associate Vice President for Employment and University EEO

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\(^6\) Interview with Glenda Farrell, Associate Vice President for Employment and University EEO, Bethany Meighen, Director of Student Development, and Robbie Snuggs, Human Resources Consultant at GA, Chapel Hill, NC, October 5, 2017.

at GA, their efforts constitute a nice source of good practices for us as we similarly seek to orient and support interns.18

**University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**

Over the past several months we have talked with numerous UNC-CH faculty and staff who had been approached by undergraduates desiring an internship opportunity. Such internships, when arranged on an ad hoc basis, were generally only available for students who could afford to work for free, something many students cannot do.19

One thing that became clear talking with internship supervisors was that, while often deeply rewarding, mentoring an intern often requires substantial commitment on the part of the mentor. We benefited, for example, by hearing the experiences of Shandol Hoover, Director of Student Development and Special Projects for the Honors Program, who has supervised interns on an ad hoc basis.20 So has Bettina Shuford, Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.21 How great it would be to provide support not only to interns but to mentors, including a forum for sharing their supervisory experiences, what is working and what is not. We seek to provide such support in our proposal. In this and other ways we hope to cultivate internal internships in the many pockets within the University that do not routinely host interns, but could do so.

Another place ad hoc internships are currently possible for small numbers of UNC-CH students is with Carolina Performing Arts (CPA). These are generally unpaid or close to it. Despite this drawback, CPA interns enjoy perquisites such as free tickets to performances and access to artists in informal settings.22

A specific example of a successful ad hoc internship was that of former UNC student and ULEAD graduate Taylor Libby, currently a Human Resources Consultant at GA. Taylor was emphatic with us regarding the importance of her internship for her career. She created this opportunity in the UNC Office for Employment and University EEO.

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18 Interview with Glenda Farrell, Associate Vice President for Employment and University EOO, Bethany Meighen, Director of Student Development, and Robbie Snuggs, Human Resources Consultant at GA, Chapel Hill, NC, October 5, 2017.


20 Interview with Shandol Hoover, Director of Student Development and Special Projects for the Honors Program, Chapel Hill, NC, August 28, 2017.

21 Interview with Bettina Shuford, Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, Chapel Hill, NC, September 25, 2017.

of Human Resources simply by approaching the workers there to see if an internship might be possible. Her internship experience confirmed Taylor’s interest in human resources and opened the door to that field for her. She was later hired where she had interned.\textsuperscript{23} Linc Butler, currently Associate Vice Chancellor for Human Resources, told us that in the Human Resources offices on Airport Road in Chapel Hill, removed from the main campus, one can feel distanced from the energy and ideas that constant close contact with students, such as interns, can provide.\textsuperscript{24} Internal internships are mutually beneficial.

Some internships at UNC-CH do provide the possibility of course credit. For example, the courses Chemistry 395 and Biology 395 function as loci where undergraduate interns earn elective credit hours for work they arrange on an ad hoc basis in laboratories. Among other things, students in these courses meet at the end of the semester for a poster session to summarize the research done at the bench. These scientific courses work because some UNC-CH labs are willing to take in and train promising undergraduates and Biology 395, for instance, can be administered by teaching faculty in the department.

There are currently some paid internal internships at UNC-CH that are administered by organizations outside of North Carolina. The National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), based in Washington, D.C., sponsors the organization’s Undergraduate Fellows Program (NUFP), internships during the summer in which students interested in higher education and student affairs can work at UNC.\textsuperscript{25} These internships specifically aim to increase numbers of students underrepresented in student affairs and higher education, such as those from racial minorities, with disabilities or identifying as LGBTQ.

The National Association for Orientation Transition Retention in Higher Education (NODA), based in Minneapolis, has sent students in the summer who, for example, interned in the UNC Department of Housing and in New Student and Family Programs.\textsuperscript{26} The goal of these internships is to train students potentially interested in the orientation and retention of students in higher education.

In addition to the SOLAR program already discussed, there is a wonderful array of summer internships available for limited numbers of budding scientists that deserve to be more widely known than they are, some of which are well paid. These include (1) the Summer Research Program in Biophysics, (2) IMHOTEP, Summer Internships in Public Health, (3) SMART, Science and Math Achievement and Resourcefulness Track, (4) SUROC, Summer Undergraduate Research of Chemistry, (5) the SPIRE Undergraduate Research Program, (6) Carolina Population Center Summer Internships, (7) SURE,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{23} Interview with Taylor Libby, Human Resources Consultant at GA, Chapel Hill, NC, October 5, 2017.
\item \textsuperscript{24} Interview with Linc Butler, Associate Vice Chancellor for Human Resources at UNC-CH, Chapel Hill, NC, August 30, 2017.
\item \textsuperscript{25} “NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Program,” NASPA, accessed October 24, 2015, https://www.naspa.org/constituent-groups/professionals/nufp/issuessx
\item \textsuperscript{26} Interview with Shandol Hoover, Director of Student Development and Special Projects for the Honors Program, Chapel Hill, NC, August 28, 2017.
\item \textsuperscript{27} Interview with Bettina Shuford, Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, Chapel Hill, NC, September 25, 2017.
\end{itemize}
Summer Undergraduate Research Experience, and (8) IDEA, Increasing Diversity and Enhancing Academia. More extensive programs with a summer component are (1) CSS, the Chancellor’s Science Scholars Program, and (2) the McNair Scholars Program. Rewarding summer internship programs for students interested in pursuing advanced degrees in non-science fields include MURAP, the Moore Undergraduate Research Apprentice Program.\(^{28}\)

For the sake of simplicity, we will mention in some detail only one of these, the McNair Scholars Program, named after the southern astronaut Ronald McNair who passed away in the Challenger space shuttle incident in 1986. Located on over 150 campuses nationwide, the goal is to increase the number underrepresented undergraduates in Ph.D. programs, including low income, first generation students.\(^{29}\) The McNair program is funded by the U.S. Department of Education and at UNC-CH has the support of several other institutional entities.\(^{30}\) The Class of 2018 at UNC is composed of eleven undergraduates. The curriculum supporting these students over several years to prepare them for graduate work is so multifaceted and superb that every UNC-CH undergraduate who aspires to a Ph.D. and meets the entry requirements should be made well aware of the McNair program. This is a task for our proposed internal internship staff.

The plethora of summer internship programs can be a challenge for possible mentors in terms of keeping straight the variety of deadlines, applications and possible financial commitments.\(^{31}\) Again, this represents a possible opening for organizational contributions by our internal internship staff.

The Office for Undergraduate Research offers workshops to help potential interns write grant and internship proposals. In addition, Career Services provides excellent help for internship candidates looking to hone their CVs and prepare for interviews. So there is no need for our proposed internal internship personnel to duplicate those services.

In conclusion of this section, as we have thought about internal internships these past few months as a ULEAD team, we are struck by stories heard repeatedly of the importance of internal internships and how easily they often might not have happened. One student to take advantage of the research-for-credit courses at UNC-CH was Jake Bridgers, now a recent UNC-CH Biochemistry graduate, formerly one of the fourteen percent of UNC-CH undergraduates known as Carolina Covenant students. (The Covenant makes it possible for these students to graduate debt-free; financial need is met through grants and scholarships, money that does not have to be repaid, plus nine to twelve hours of work on campus per week. Eligibility

\(^{28}\) Many of these and others are mentioned at “Undergraduate Research Program at UNC-Chapel Hill,” Office for Undergraduate Research, accessed August 20, 2017 and November 9, 2017, https://our.unc.edu/resources/undergraduate-research-programs-at-unc-chapel-hill/.


\(^{31}\) Conversation with Jean Cook, Professor of Biochemistry and Biophysics and Associate Dean for Graduate Education, Chapel Hill, NC, November 2, 2017.
is based on family income.) As a first-year undergraduate Jake did work-study in the lab of Professor Brian Strahl in the Department of Biochemistry and Biophysics. Later when Jake wanted to intern in the lab doing research, it was initially thought that there was not bench space, money, or the time to mentor him. The diligence and intelligence he demonstrated as a first-year student were essential in, finally, the decision to accept him as an intern. He did so well that the Strahl Lab hired him during summers and for two years after he graduated as a technician. In that capacity he contributed significantly to several important publications and earned sterling letters of recommendation from Strahl Lab members. Jake is now completing his first semester in a Ph.D. program at Harvard Medical School. Regarding internal undergraduate internships there are great needs and great opportunities! Our proposals are meant to support and enhance all this current good work.

**Actionable Recommendations**

After aggregating the information gathered through the interviews conducted during the environmental scan, and a review of literature, the four items below were identified as key components to include in actionable recommendations for implementing internal internships in higher education.

1. **Use a standardized approach for defining and implementing undergraduate internal internships.**

   As described earlier, NACE provides criteria that are widely accepted as the standard for defining and internship, namely, that the internship experience provides: an extension of the classroom; defined time points and job description; defined objectives/goals; supervision by relevant professional; routine feedback; and resources to support experience. Requiring that all internal internships be defined by these criteria will assure that each are meaningful and of similar caliber. Additionally, employing an implementation approach that uses a shared application deadline, consolidated interview day, and consolidated marketing will facilitate the ease in which students can move through the internship application and interview process. It also allows students to capitalize on multiple internship opportunities if they so choose.

2. **Capitalize on existing infrastructure wherever possible.**

   Career Services departments exist on all the UNC system campuses. These departments have an established model for executing external internships, and to a lesser extent, internal internships. Using this infrastructure will greatly facilitate the implementation of a systematized internal internship program. Additionally, the software platform Handshake is currently in use across the UNC system, and offers an online vehicle for cataloging internal internship opportunities. Further, if Handshake could be opened up for access between campuses, it provides an opportunity to foster reciprocity and cross-pollination across institutions.

3. **Offer resources and support to supervisors.**

   Internships require a significant time commitment from supervisors. To that end, offering resources and support for supervisors will help ease this burden. Resources can include a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and responses, sample scope of work documents, sample evaluations, tips, etc. Also, fostering a community for social support and sharing best practices will further assist supervisors.
4. Provide compensation to interns.

In order to provide internal internship opportunities accessible to ALL students, regardless of socioeconomic status, all internships should offer compensation. This could be in the form of traditional hourly pay, or via course credit or mandatory graduation requirement (thus included in tuition). Providing compensation eliminates the need for students to choose between a paying job versus an internship that provides a meaningful experience which will make them more employable.

Building on these four key components, two models are proposed as actionable recommendations for the UNC system.

**MODEL 1 – Summer Pilot Program at NCCU & UNC-CH**

This small pilot program would be housed at NCCU and UNC-CH during the summer months, and would offer 10 paid internship positions at each institution, focused in Student Affairs and Higher Ed Administration. It would include a seminar series on Fridays that would bring together the combined cohort from each institution. Interns would gain exposure to the speakers from each campus, and would interact, dialogue, and learn with one another. Interns would earn course credit for the seminar series.

Implementing this program requires investment from both campuses. Internship positions would be coordinated by partial effort employee, 0.3 Full Time Employee (FTE), within Career Services at each institution. These employees would be best suited to facilitate capturing the internal internship opportunities on the respective campuses.

The seminar series would be organized by partial effort, 0.3 FTE, within either Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, or Career Services at each institution. Their responsibilities would include recruiting and coordinating faculty to present during the Friday sessions.

After completion of the pilot, an overview and evaluation of the program should be presented to Career Services Directors at their bi-annual gathering in order to pursue opportunities for continuing the program with permanent funding, and possibilities for implementing across other institutions.

**MODEL 2 – University Professional Internship Program**

Model 2 will be a small pilot program offering internships at NCCU & UNC Chapel Hill during the academic year and fashioned after Clemson University’s University Professional Internship Co-op Program (UPIP). As background, UPIP began at Clemson University when then President James Barker came up with the idea to provide targeted experiential learning opportunities to students on campus. The goal of UPIP is to partner with departments on campus to provide part-time internships during the fall and spring semesters, typically 10-15 hours/week. The internships are designed to provide professional knowledge.

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and skill development consistent with a student’s major/career goals and expose students to potential career opportunities in higher education that students would not normally have known existed.

A key component to UPIP stresses that supervisors provide mentorship to their interns to ensure the students are maximizing the internship opportunities and the departments. A large percentage of our students need to work while in school; by providing opportunities on campus during a semester, we can ensure that they have supervisors who provide strong mentorship by connecting academics to career goals while also providing support for timely completion of degrees.

Many UPIP interns also receive academic credit for their experiential learning, sponsored by their academic college.

Our Model 2 version of UPIP will take place at both NCCU and UNC Chapel Hill, and will target several departments to partner with to design and develop 5 – 10 internships during a fall or spring semester. Internships will also follow some key components as Model 1, namely: positions will be coordinated through Career Services with a partial effort employee, 0.3 FTE, at each institution; and results will be presented to the UNC Campus Career Services Directors at their bi-annual gathering.

The differentiating factors between the two models is that Model 2 offers an option during the academic year, capitalizing on the fact that students are already living on campus; and Model 2 does not include a seminar series providing a cohort learning experience.

**Funding for Model 1 or Model 2**

As outlined previously, students with financial constraints must often pass on an unpaid internship opportunity in order to work to pay for school or other living expenses. To bridge the paid versus unpaid gap and assist students completing internships, specifically for students with financial needs, many universities and colleges have put together programs that offer students a stipend, grant, or other funding opportunities to cover the expense of housing, meals, and travel during a paid or unpaid internship opportunity.

Most traditional funding sources for these stipends come from grants or alumni donations to specific programs, such as the Praxis program at Smith College and the Summer Internship Grants program at UNC Chapel Hill. But traditional funding will not be enough to cover a program like Model 1 or Model 2. Without increasing funding to these programs, current funding sources would be stretched too far and may affect students who currently benefit from these programs. In order to make this program sustainable, long-term funding sources should be identified and implemented.

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11 “University Professional Internship / Co-op Program,” Clemson Center for Career and Professional Development, accessed October 28, 2017, [https://career.sites.clemson.edu/internship_programs/UPIC_program/departments/](https://career.sites.clemson.edu/internship_programs/UPIC_program/departments/).

One funding model currently in place is based upon the University Professional Internship Co-op Program at Clemson University and the University Professional Internship Program at UNC Charlotte. In this funding model, participating campus departments pay 50% of the hourly intern salary with a cap of 15 hours per week each semester. The UPIC/P program contributes the remaining 50% up to the 15 hours per week maximum each semester. The department will be responsible for any salary above this maximum.15

For example, if a student is paid a $10 hourly rate, the estimated department contribution might be the following:

Estimated department contribution at 15 hours per week = $1200 max
Estimated department contribution at 12 hours per week = $960 max
Estimated department contribution at 10 hours per week = $800 max

We recommend a similar funding approach. These are arguably modest contributions for which departments could budget in advance, knowing they will be gaining the intern’s efforts toward a well-defined project with measurable outcomes.

**Marketing**

A coordinated and centralized marketing effort is critical to ensuring all students are afforded the same opportunities with regard to internal internships. In order to achieve this, separate marketing efforts should be targeted to departments and students.

**Departments:** A coordinated effort to reach out to the student affairs department at both NCCU and UNC-Chapel Hill should define the internal internship program, and articulate the benefits to both the department and the intern. Having an employee at both institutions is critical to help facilitate this effort, and ensure the as many internal internship opportunities are captured.

**Students:** Educating students on the benefits and availability of internal internships, as well as making them aware of resources to help them succeed in these positions will be important. Make use of the marketing and resources for students that Career Services already uses rather than creating an additional venue. All internal internship opportunities should be coordinated through Career Services so that students know they can go to one place to find all that is available. Utilizing the existing vehicle of Career Services will ease student burden rather than requiring them to go to a separate website or department to find out about internal internships.

There will likely be a building period over a few years, where a larger marketing effort will need to be made in order to establish the program. However, eventually this should subside as internal internships

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become more commonplace. UNC Charlotte had a similar experience as Dr. Patrick Madsen, Director of UNC Charlotte Career Services, noted:

“At the beginning of the program, it took a lot of discussion and explanation to get departments on board. Now, we have greater demand than what we have budget for and little marketing is needed for the program.”

Challenges and Obstacles

We recognize several challenges to starting either Model 1 or Model 2 at any institution, such as

1. Securing funds to pay for the initial pilot and ultimately to sustain an established program
2. Ensuring the capacity of faculty and staff for supervising interns.
3. Determining how academic credit could be given for our proposed seminar series at each campus.
4. Building awareness among students and the rest of our university communities regarding the benefits of internal internships, and
5. Fully capturing and centralizing information about all internal internships opportunities.

However, even with these obstacles and challenges, supporting internal internships requires relatively small investments given their large returns in benefits to students, UNC institutions, and, ultimately, the state of North Carolina.

Closing

Internal internships provide students with real-world experience in higher education careers, and cultivate the talent pool that the UNC system is so proud of producing so that it can feed right back into the system with future university employees. Enriching the Carolina experience by offering paid internal internships creates an equitable opportunity for all students regardless of income level. Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Ron Strauss stressed his support for an internal internship program during an interview for this project.

“We’ve been talking about the possibility that UNC could provide a venue for internships and I think that would absolutely an amazing thing to undertake and totally would support that. But for me, the real blessing would be if you could focus those internships on students that don’t usually have the network of connections that allows them to mobilize internships. Those are students like our first generation, and Carolina Covenant students who frequently are looking for opportunities, and can’t really travel away from the campus. If we can mobilize UNC- Chapel Hill to provide them with internship opportunities that are meaningful that would be a wonderful gift.”

Dr. Ronald P. Strauss

36 Interview with Dr. Ronald P. Strauss, Executive Vice Provost and Chief International Officer, Chapel Hill, NC, September 22, 2017