Pathways to Careers

OUR AIM —

Leverage the professional networks of the entire University of Maine System to:
• Better steward our relationships with employers and their workforce needs
• Increase student access to internships
• Increase the quality of internships for UMS students
Workforce Development Integration

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Why the emphasis?

“Research shows that internships improve students’ academic outcomes, labor market outcomes, and career adaptability.” (Fangjing, 2022)

However, not all internship experiences are the same!

• A growing body of literature show that working, first-generation, and low-income students and students of color do not have the same access to internships. (Hora, et al., 2020)

• Meaningful learning experiences and professional network development depend on the design and quality of the experience.
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OUR APPROACH — the UMS Pathways to Careers Center

Coordinate by economic sector

Design for greater student inclusion

Support for High Impact Practices
Pathways to Careers

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Coordinate by economic sector
Bias in internship participation and resultant professional success is linked to:

- **Socioeconomic barriers** (Hora et al., 2019, 2020; Curiale, 2010)
- **Non-representative professional networks** (Rivera, 2012, 2015; Ashkenas et al., 2017; Tholen et al., 2013; Petersen et al., 2000)
- **Biased application pools** (Flory et al. 2021)
- **Biased hiring practices** (Campero 2022)

PTC will design and spread practices that allow for greater participation and success of our students, regardless of experience, socioeconomic status, or personal situation.
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Design for greater student inclusion

Direct and “wrap-around” Supports
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Inclusive Designs

What is an internship?
Professional learning experience with a potential employer that offers meaningful, practical work related to a student’s field of study or career interest.

- Student Employment
- Co-Ops
- Clinicals
- Practicum
- Job Shadows
- “Micro” Internships
- Apprenticeships
- Full or Part-time
- In-Person or Online
- Summer, Reg. Semester, or Periodic

Design for greater student inclusion
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Support for High Impact Practices
Pre-Internship Training for Students *(REQUIRED)*
The internship program should provide pre-internship training to increase the likelihood of student success and to enhance student learning. The pre-internship training should include thematic or sector preparation that exposes students to specific career opportunities in addition to more general career preparation such as communication and coachability.

*Examples of ways to achieve:*
- Cohort-based ”bootcamps” that expose students to career fields and build skills
- Career preparation courses specific to a sector or job category
- Micro-credentials
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**Tangible, Substantial, and Achievable Learning Outcomes (REQUIRED)**
To ensure high quality experiences, learning outcomes should be defined with students and employers in advance. Meaningful work appropriate for the students’ knowledge and experience should be emphasized.

**Student Compensation (REQUIRED)**
Compensation should be provided to allow students with financial constraints to forgo other paid work to participate in these career-relevant opportunities. Ideally internship employers should contribute all or a portion of this compensation to demonstrate that they have “skin in the game.” Compensation may be supplemented by the program and wrap-around supports such as travel and housing to increase access to internships are also best practices for maximizing inclusivity.
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**Mentorship & Networking (REQUIRED)**
Internships should include some form of faculty, staff or employer mentorship to enhance student engagement, and internships should also provide networking opportunities for students to gain exposure to several employers and to build networking skills.

*Examples of ways to achieve:*
- Peer groups that meet on a weekly basis with a staff or faculty member
- Sector or theme-based employer mentorship
- Networking events with employers and/or peers
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Feedback and Assessment (REQUIRED)
Internship programs should obtain feedback from both students and employers for an evaluation of student performance, learning outcomes and the overall quality of the internship program. Pathways to Careers pilots will work with the Pathways to Careers Center & Student Success Initiative assessment team.

Opportunities for Students to Present Their Work (OPTIONAL)
Students should have the opportunity to present their work, projects and learning outcomes before a general audience. The Pathways to Careers initiative will seek to provide venues for these presentations.

Employer/Project Vetting (OPTIONAL)
Internships should have a process for vetting employers and their internship opportunities to ensure these practices are met, often with a signed agreement to make the terms clear to both the university and employer.
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Other considerations

- Systemwide collaboration
- Assessment of existing sector relationships
- Partnerships with external entities, i.e. Maine Career Catalyst, JMG, trade associations
- Equity plans
- Cross-sector segments (i.e. Innovate for Maine, DEI)
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Poll:

Where are you in the process?

What elements of the high impact practices would be most helpful to workshop with your teams?

How are you coordinating across the System?
First Cohort of PTC Interns and Pre-Internship Training Begins

Sector Coordination

UMS Workshop

November December January February March April May June July August September

Notice of Intent of Intern Plans

Notice of Intent to Apply for PTC $

Sector Coordination Plan Due

Full PTC Campus Proposals Due

UMS-wide PTC Hiring Board goes live

PTC Director Search Begins

PTC Director Begins