The UNK Information Networking & Telecommunications program prepares students to design, install, maintain, expand, and manage voice, video, and data networks. Students are taught technical skills as well as communication, leadership, and organization skills.

UNK Information Networking & Telecommunications (INT) students are required to complete an internship for academic credit during the summer term (mid-May to mid-August). The purpose is to provide students with professional and applied learning experiences in the industry. Students will work full-time for your company for 12 weeks (no less than 460 work hours) and be involved in required industry experiences, in addition to academic course requirements.

**Benefits All Involved**

**Employer**
- Expose your industry to talented young people.
- Work with students eager to learn and apply their skills.
- Preview skills and work performances of potential fulltime hires (12 week interview).

**Intern**
- Apply classroom knowledge to real world experiences.
- Evaluate areas of interest for fulltime employment.
- Network with experienced professionals.
- Develop time management skills in the balance of academic requirements and work responsibilities.

**University**
- Develop and strengthen partnerships with business and industry.
- Gain feedback for program development and enhancement.
**Required Components**

Students in the Information Networking & Telecommunications program should seek internships that provide experiences in the field of telecommunications and include the following:

- Being exposed to network/telecommunications management best practices or procedures with equipment as well as employees
- Scheduling and supervising a new technology or new equipment implementation or discussing the process of implementation
- Discussing or designing a small network/telecommunications scenario
- Managing and maintaining network/telecommunications projects, equipment or cabling
- Troubleshooting a network/telecommunications problem (e.g. equipment failures, wire failures, service provider issues)
- Researching and testing new equipment or software solution
- Developing and planning involved with management budgeting (e.g. involvement with purchasing new equipment, maintenance contracts, equipment buy-back)
- Exposure to the company's business action plans for disaster recovery, security, service provider contracts, 10-year plans, and team mission and goals.
- As available – Managing relationships as well as wiring and equipment implementations with contractors in new construction processes, new equipment installations or remodeling processes
- As available – Exposure to security best practices and hands-on experience with equipment (i.e. firewalls, VPN, IDS/IPS).

**INT Program Competencies**

Since the internship is a vital and integral part of our program, we have outlined below the core competencies of the Information Networking & Telecommunications program at UNK to assist you in developing the internship experience.

1. **INT Information Technology**
   Demonstrate a current knowledge of information technology to support continuously evolving business applications or processes.

2. **INT Technical Design & Application**
   Design, install, configure, and maintain information networks.

3. **INT Writing, Presenting & Participating**
   Articulate the impact of the regulatory environment upon the networking and telecommunications enterprise.

4. **INT Business & Technology Integration**
   Assess and apply leadership fundamentals and business management practices as they apply to the networking and telecommunications industry.

5. **INT Assessment of Policy, Issues & Regulatory Impact**
   Write and present as professionals in their discipline through the most appropriate form.
Responsibilities of the Employer

- **Interview** students interested in internship position. We recommend you attend our campus career fairs (October & February), especially the **Technology Breakfast** held the morning prior to the February fair.

- Provide potential intern with an **Overview of Internship Experience**, being sure to cover all items listed under “Required Components” listed above (template on degreeinnetworking.com).

- **Make offers** in a timely manner.

- After the site has been approved by the UNK Internship Director and Program Coordinator, the student will send the company an **Internship Agreement** to review, sign and return.

- Place the intern in a location which provides **diverse experiences** and where the intern will be supervised by someone who will provide guidance, direction, and constructive feedback. **Mentoring and training** are vital to a successful experience.

- Provide student with **contact information** of their direct supervisor for the internship.

- Assign work activities pertinent to the professional development of the intern.

- Provide intern with **access to the internet** for academic requirements of the internship. This would include UNK email and our online course management program (Blackboard).

- Direct intern to appropriate resources to complete the **Company Profile** (due end of first week).

- Work with intern to develop a formal **Training Plan** (goals for experience) that will be due prior to the end of the second week.

- Complete **Midterm Evaluation** and **Final Evaluation** of the intern (provided by INT program).

- Assure adequate time is available for both the work site supervisor and student to conduct **discussions/conferences** to provide feedback and further instruction. Recommend once a week meetings.

- Meet with the intern and Internship Director during a scheduled **Site Visit**, for purposes of consultation and appraisal of progress. When traveling to the location is not feasible, a telephone call to the supervisor and intern will be conducted with the time set up in advance.

- Provide **feedback** to the Internship Director as needed. Contact the Internship Director in the event of problems or concerns.

Academic Requirements of the Student / Intern

- Represent the University and INT program in a professional manner.

- Complete preliminary paperwork prior to obtaining internship (provided by INT program).

- Compile **Company Profile** by end of week 1.

- Develop **Training Plan**, outlining goals for the experience by end of week 2.

- Complete twelve **Journals** and submit at the end of each week on Blackboard (online course management program).

- Participate in the **Discussion Board** each week, by reading and commenting on other intern journals.

- Participate in two **Web Conferences** with other INT interns.

- Complete a **Midterm Evaluation** and **Final Evaluation** and be sure to submit evaluations completed by the internship company.

- Deliver a **Final Presentation** to the Internship Director and INT program faculty on the internship experience at the beginning of the fall semester.
Offering Internships

• Internships are only available during the summer term (mid-May to mid-August).
• The Technology Breakfast in February is an important event to meet students pursuing an internship.
• Make offers quickly after the Technology Breakfast, no later than two weeks following.
• Prior to March 31, interns must report to the UNK INT Internship Director, their internship company and location. This includes name of their supervisor, telephone number and email address.
• Provide the student with an overview of the company's internship experience which highlights all areas that the UNK INT program requires. A detailed overview is needed in order to approve the internship for academic credit.
• If a student has not secured an internship by March 31, the student will be moved to the next summer for their term of internship.

Keys for a Great Experience

1) Provide intern with a well-rounded experience exposing to the many aspects of information networking and telecommunications.
   • Actively participate in or shadow various positions within the organization.
   • Ensure exposure to management.
   • Provide a balance of technical and business practices.

2) Company recognizes the valuable contribution they are making to the career development of a young professional.
   • Discuss with other employees their important role in assisting in the training of the intern and thank employees on behalf of UNK for providing valuable experience and guidance.
   • Introduce intern to members of your organization during their first day/week.
   • Assign work activities pertinent to the intern's professional development and INT program competencies.
   • Challenge the intern to progressively learn, by providing a variety of responsibilities and a broad spectrum of learning opportunities.

3) Exposure to your company culture and new surroundings (as well as any other onboarding activities provided by the company)
   • Company outings, get-togethers with other interns
   • Meet as many people as possible from your company
   • City offerings (softball leagues, gyms, festivals, etc.)

4) Communication is frequent and effective.
   • Early in the first week on the job, the supervisor and intern should discuss company expectations and develop goals for the experience (develop internship training plan).
   • Supervisor should meet with intern to discuss progress each week.
   • An individual from senior management should contact the intern no less than three times during the summer to ensure that required experiences are being met and the intern is being acclimated to the company culture.
   • Consider providing the intern with a mentor.

5) Complete requirements set forth by the University.
   • Work collectively with intern to develop training plan which is due to the Internship Director prior to the end of the second week.
• Complete midterm and final evaluations and review with intern (forms provided by intern and found in their Internship Manual).
• Participate in either a site visit or phone call from the Internship Director.

6) Provide **access to a computer with internet** so the intern may complete course assignments which include posting his/her journal each week and responding to other student journals. Video conferencing will also take place during scheduled times.

**Common Questions Asked by Companies**

**What is the best way to promote our company to UNK students.**
Successful recruiting is strongly tied to our Technology Breakfast and participation in program activities (such as visiting the classroom).

**Are there minimum or maximum numbers of internships a company can offer?** No. However more interns increase exposure to the opportunities your company provides.

**Does the Training Plan have to be done individually for each student or can a general one be utilized with pre-determined objectives?**
Most effective is when the company sets overall objectives for the experience and then the student and supervisor tailor the goals outlined in the training plan based upon the company objectives. While developing the training plan, ask the student what types of experience they would benefit from while also discussing goals the company has for the internship. Students are required to write all goals utilizing the SMART concept (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound/trackable) as well as define specific activities in which to achieve these goals. Students are provided with examples of internship training plans of previous interns.

**Would we see the journals and evaluation that the student completes?**
Student journals and evaluations are not shared unless the student opts to do so. However, each year we compile data of all interns that can be shared with the company if requested.

**Is the student required to complete their academic requirements (i.e. journal, discussion board, etc.) during work hours or is it to be done after work?**
We ask that you provide the student access to a computer with internet capabilities. Many will be in temporary housing situations without access and their academic requirements of submitting journals each week and responding to other intern journals requires internet access. Internet access is also needed for video conferences, often completed in the evening. Whether the time spent on academic requirements is compensated time is the discretion of the company.

**Are there requirements on what we pay a student for an internship?**
There are no requirements; however students seek out competitive opportunities much as they would a full time position. The average pay for INT intern during the past few summers has been $11.04 per hour. Assistance with housing outside of Kearney may also be provided.

**What does the company need to submit to UNK prior to starting the internship program?**
Please contact Brenda Jochum to discuss your proposal for an internship experience.
The Project
All interns are required to have a project. The project should be new and not repeated from a previous intern. Projects include using good judgment, creativity, and knowledge of the industry. Measurable results and impact should be demonstrated by the end of the internship experience, hopefully with continued value to the company beyond the conclusion of the internship.

1) Company develops possible project ideas (prior to making offers – include on the Overview of Internship Experience).
2) Supervisor and intern collaboratively prepare the Project Charter (first weeks of internship) – Due to Internship Director at the end of Week 4
   Project Charter includes project objective, project scope, project milestones (timeline), impact statements, budget, roles and responsibilities, risks and mitigation strategy, and measurements of success.
3) Intern leads the project, throughout the summer
4) Intern presents to company representative on the outcome of the project
5) Intern includes information on the project in Final Presentation to Internship Director and program faculty.

Examples of Internship Projects
- Prepare budget for product purchase including all components needed as well as ongoing costs such as employee, maintenance or code/software upgrades
- Help setup MRTG (network monitoring solution) and iBoss web-filtering.
- Research and set up new software management system for clients
- Remove old telephony system and assist with installing new system
- Install wireless links which involve putting up antennas, running cables, and programming routers
- Document and plan a fiber optic cable project (plowing several major cables from central office, cutover, and verifying customer connections.)
- Implement laptop encryption to ensure company’s compliance with federal regulations
- Perform a Cisco product replacement plan (research all Cisco devices for end of life and a suitable replacement.)
- Configure and implement VPN edge boxes
- Install wireless access point and manage cabling runs in new construction
- Update AutoCAD drawing of building to include all network jack locations. Help implement a new labeling system including patch panel labels, jack labels, building maps, and spreadsheet documents.
- Install internet connectivity and phone connectivity for the new building
- Transfer a company’s DHCP, DNS, and file servers and domain controller to new hardware
- Write documentation for base configuration on routers and switches (included vlans, interface labeling, time synchronization and SNMP)
- Develop new access control lists for new subnet/interface implementation
• Create a more ideal subnetting layout developing different subnets for different company groups
• Research a domain controller upgrade and teach the rest of the IT department how it worked

**Recommended Hiring Procedures**

The program recommends that your company conduct the following prior to hiring an intern or full-time employee from UNK.

a. Background check
b. Drug test
c. Request and review university transcripts.

Interns must have a 2.5 department GPA to enroll in the internship program. Due to FERPA regulations, the INT program is not able to provide you with this information and it must be obtained directly from the student.

We suggest that offers contain a statement similar to "this offer is contingent upon acceptable results regarding background check, drug test, and GPA verification."

**Additional Questions**

If you have questions, please contact Brenda Jochum, Internship Director
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