Ada | DEVELOPERS ACADEMY

Student Handbook - Classroom and Internship Guide
Updated April 2015

Student Handbook

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Student Handbook

Letter from Ada Developers Academy

Dear Ada Student,

Welcome to Ada Developers Academy!

We are thrilled that you are participating in what we believe is one of the most innovative training programs ever designed to help bright and dedicated women become software developers over a 12-month period.

The next year will be filled with an incredible amount of learning. Be prepared to be excited, confused, frustrated, challenged, and enlightened – maybe all in the same day! The instructors and staff are dedicated to make this the best experience it can be for you and your classmates, but that also means we rely on you to bring your best self every day to class and to your internship in the spring.

Ada is thrilled to be launching our third cohort in an effort that we believe can be truly transformational for you as a student, and for the companies where you end up, and eventually, for our region as a whole. We're not just another code bootcamp, we're a tuition-free program dedicated to changing the gender imbalance in tech, one amazing grad at a time.

We've already graduated our first class with 100% placement in programming jobs (before they graduated, no less!). By the end of 2015, we will have helped to launch the programming careers of 85 amazing women programmers.

Kudos to you for taking the leap towards an amazing new career!

Regards,
The Ada Team

Student Handbook

School Overview

Third Sector New England

Ada Developers Academy is a program of Third Sector New England (TSNE). TSNE provides non-profit organizations with fiscal sponsorship and administrative support while allowing for operational freedom within each organization.

Vision

Ada Developers Academy is designed to increase the number of skilled software developers while redefining and reinventing the way we prepare individuals to be successful in information technology fields. By creating an intensive top-quality state-of-the-art learning community that is inclusive, positive, and enabling, we aim to directly address both the information technology labor shortage in Washington State and the gender imbalance in the software industry.

Mission

Ada Developers Academy prepares students to succeed in careers in software development by training them through a year-long, tuition-free, comprehensive program that teaches cutting-edge web technologies, provides high-caliber internships, and links students with hiring companies.

Statement of Inclusivity

Ada Developers Academy (Ada) is designed to be an inclusive, positive learning environment. Everyone is welcome, regardless of sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, education, age, race, or religion. All women (cis and trans) and people with non-binary gender who feel a part of women's community are welcome as students.

2015-2016 Advisory Board

Ada is governed by a Advisory Board, which is comprised of leaders from the Seattle technical community and beyond. Our Advisory Board members include:

- Rogers Weed, Committee Chair and VP of Product Management, 1Energy Systems
- Ted Bardusch, VP Technology & Operations, Marchex
- Scott Case, COO, EnergySavvy
- Kalpana Narayanaswamy, VP of Engineering, EnergySavvy
- Liz Pearce, CEO, Liquid Planner
- Melinda Mizuta, Ada Alum and Software Developer, Expedia

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Contact Information

Physical address:	Mailing address:
Moz (Current Host Location)	Ada Developers Academy
1100 2nd Ave	PO Box 21992
Seattle, WA 98101	Seattle, Washington 98111

http://adadevelopersacademy.org

Leadership
Cynthia Tee, Executive Director – cynthia@adadevelopersacademy.org
Elise Worthy, Technology Director– elise@adadevelopersacademy.org

Instructors
Jeremy Flores – jeremy@adadevelopersacademy.org
Kari Bancroft – kari@adadevelopersacademy.org

Administration / Program
Crystal Hess, Program Manager – crystal@adadevelopersacademy.org
Karen Hambro, Sponsorship & Engagement Manager –karen@adadevelopersacademy.org
Brooke Graham, Program Coordinator – brooke@adadevelopersacademy.org

Communication Outside the Classroom
Face-to-face contact is the primary method of communication between students and staff; however, students are welcome to contact staff through email or twitter at any time. Students should understand that there may be a delay in response and that communication between staff and students is expected to be professional, courteous, and considerate.

Student and Volunteer Communication
Communication with your peers is essential to success in this program. We've set up the following official communication channels, but also encourage you to set up informal communication and gatherings (email, after-class study sessions and meet ups, etc.).

Ada Student Forum
To post a message to the group, send an email to: ada-cohort-3@googlegroups.com

IRC
Instructions for the #adadevacademy IRC Channel: https://github.com/Ada-Developers-Academy/daily-curriculum/blob/master/IRC-channel.md

Classroom Guide

Holidays and Class Breaks

Ada Developers Academy will be closed during the following days (however assignments and project work may be assigned):

- Memorial Day – May 25th
- Free Friday – June 12th
- Break 1: June 29th –July 3rd
- Free Friday – August 14th
- Break 2: September 7th –September 11th
- Free Monday – October 12th
- Veteran's Day – November 11th
- Break 3: November 23rd –November 27th

Attendance and Punctuality

Absence Policy

Your attendance during class is mandatory. Over the seven-months of class, you're permitted five flexible absence days that may be used for illness or personal time. Barring an emergency, an email notification must be sent to the Program Manager and instructors prior to your absence. Additional time off may be granted with advanced notice and approval from Ada, though additional coursework may be assigned. Students who have two or more unexcused absences will be subject to the Serious Concerns and Dismissal Process detailed in this handbook.

Hours of Operation

The Ada classroom is open from 8:30am to 5:00pm on weekdays. Class is held from 9:00am to 5:00pm.

Conferences

Students are welcome and encouraged to go to programming conferences while they are enrolled in Ada Developers Academy, with the following guidelines:

- During class, students must receive prior written approval from the Ada instructors.
- The conference must be a programming conference (examples: Open Source Bridge, RailsConf) or a technology culture conference (example: Grace Hopper Celebration). Events that are on the fence will be reviewed and approved at the program's' discretion.
- Students may miss no more than 2 class days for conferences - these may be either concurrent days for one event or separate days for two events. These do not count against your personal/sickness leave.
- Students will receive no financial assistance from Ada, but are encouraged to apply for scholarships.
- During the internship, students may attend conferences at the discretion of their host companies.

Code of Conduct

All Ada students are required to review, sign and abide by the Ada Student Code of Conduct and Attendance Policy, which exists to to help all students enrolled in Ada Developers Academy receive a barrier-free learning environment and meet base expectation required to advance to an internship.

Syllabus

As Ada's program is dynamic, our syllabus is housed online as a living document. The syllabus is an important contract between Ada students and instructors and contains information about timelines and assignments. The syllabus should be used as a reference document for specific class assignments and expectations. https://github.com/Ada-Developers-Academy/daily-curriculum

Expectations

Attendance, Punctuality, and Classroom Participation

- You are expected to be in class from 9am to 5pm Monday through Friday and to arrive on time for the beginning of every class session.
- It's not enough to just show up! You are expected to be an active collaborator and work with your fellow students with a positive and accepting attitude.
- We expect you to participate to the best of your ability and to arrive each day ready to tackle new challenges.

Assignments

- You are expected to turn in every assignment and project.
- Assignments are expected to be complete and meet all base expectations.
- Assignments will be hard and sometimes long. They're built with real-world programming scenarios in mind, and you're expected to take them as seriously as you would a project at your workplace.

Projects

- You will frequently work in pairs and on teams to complete multi-day or multi-week projects. You are expected to work professionally and respectfully.
- You will often need to meet after hours or on weekends to complete team projects. Your off-hours schedule needs to accommodate your group work and ensure that you'll be able to actively participate.
- You will be expected to give and receive honest feedback about your own and your teammates ability to work together on a team as this is a vital skill for programmers.

Community Events

- You will be expected to attend a minimum of three community events per month. Your instructors will inform you of recommended events in advance. These events will help you grow your network of support as well as gain skills that are not specifically covered in the classroom.

Quizzes

- You'll be given periodic quizzes to assess your understanding of core concepts. The quizzes are to help you and your instructors understand your strengths and weaknesses and will be used to plan your future assignments.

Presentations

- Communicating about code is as important as writing it. You'll be expected to participate in project presentations and lightning talks throughout the program.

Communication and Progress Reporting

If you ever feel that you are falling behind or need extra attention, you are expected to keep instructors in the loop so that they can provide you with the tools that you need to learn effectively. Instructors will keep track of your progress and identify any areas where performance should be improved.

Addressing Concerns

- During your one-on-one meetings, you and Ada staff will assess and discuss your performance and any concerns or questions that you have. In the event that Ada staff is concerned with your progress in the program, a plan for improvement will be created for you. Failure to follow this plan for improvement may result in dismissal from the program.
- If you have a concern about the class or instruction and you do not feel comfortable bringing it to an instructor, you are welcome to bring the concern to the attention of the Ada Program Manager or other Ada Staff that you are comfortable with.

Serious Concerns and Dismissal Process

- We have high expectations for you in the program, but we will also strive to provide high levels of support. In the event that student performance does not meet the program standard, Probation and Dismissal Policies will be followed.

Internship Guide

Integral to the Ada Developers Academy experience is the internship, which is the final 5 months of the program. During the internship, Ada Developers Academy students are exposed to real-world problems on actual development teams. The internship is meant to be a guided transition into a position as a software developer upon graduation from the program and is a vital part of the learning experience.

Duration and Hours

The Ada Developers Academy internship is five months in duration, commencing November 30th, 2015 and ending April 30th, 2016. The internship is 35 hours per week, allowing for one afternoon per week to be spent at the Ada Developers Academy classroom.

Classroom Time

During the five hours per week that interns are in the classroom, they will participate in a range of activities, which may include: teacher instruction, guest lectures, volunteerism and open-source contribution, reviewing Ada student applications, assisting new students, and participating in round robin and individual discussions about the internship experience. Interns are expected to be present during these weekly sessions unless excused.

Expectations of the Company

During the internship, the host company will work with the intern to provide a mutually successful and beneficial learning experience. To this end, the company will assign a mentor or team lead to oversee professional development of the intern. Additionally, the company will provide guidance and tools for success to the intern (including development environment, workstation setup, workflow, etc.).

The company understands that the internship is a learning and growth opportunity. The intern may not be solely responsible for delivering production code and must work in tandem with mentors while working on public-facing projects.

The company agrees to set up the following items for success:
- Pairing schedule with at least two developers
- Learning goals and projects, mutually accepted by intern and company
- Bi-weekly progress review with mentor/team lead
- Monthly check-in with Ada program staff regarding intern's progress
- Participation in and completion of a 90 day review

In the event of any issue(s) with the intern, the company agrees to immediately notify Ada program staff.

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Expectations of the Intern
The intern understands that the internship is a required part of the Ada Developers Academy program and that they will not graduate unless the internship is successfully completed.

Interns are expected to do the following while at their internships:
- Be punctual and present; put their best foot forward
- Communicate with mentor/team lead and team
- Work with company to ensure that learning goals and projects are being completed to mutual satisfaction
- Alert mentor/team lead and Ada Developers Academy if any major issues arise

Program Information

Compensation
While completing the internship, Ada interns receive a monthly scholarship payment, with no additional compensation from the companies.

- Provided that all program requirements are met during the internship, Ada will provide the student with a monthly scholarship payment. The scholarship payment, less applicable taxes, will reflect the equivalent of minimum wage for hours spent in the internship each month, and will be based on successful participation in the internship.
- Assuming internship participation is successful, payment will be remitted at the end of each month of the internship that the student has completed.
- If a student voluntarily terminates her participation in the program, for circumstances other than those beyond her reasonable control, the student will be responsible for reimbursing Ada for any scholarship payments she has received thus far. No further scholarship payments will be made.
- If a student is not meeting program expectations and has been asked to leave, the student will no longer receive monthly scholarship payments. Her final payment will be remitted at the end of the last month she was enrolled in the program, and will be pro-rated to reflect the date of her departure.

Job Offers
We encourage interns and their hiring companies to remain in a dialog about their relationship after the Ada program officially ends. Job offers for post-internship are encouraged.

Time Off, Work from Home, Conference Attendance
The Ada Developers Academy recommends that the intern work with their mentor/team lead to establish ground rules around time off, working from home, and attending programming conferences.

Ada recommends a standard 5 days of time off to account for sick and vacation time during the internships.

Reviews

Student Check-Ins
During the one afternoon per week that students are back in the Ada classroom, instructors and Ada staff will meet with the Ada interns for informal feedback about the internships.

Formal Review
90 days into the internship, we will solicit reviews from all sponsoring companies regarding interns' performance. In this review, Ada Developers Academy will capture information about 1) whether the student is on track for a job offer, 2) whether the student needs improvement and if so, in what areas. The Sponsorship Manager and CTO will be reviewing student feedback with each company.

At the same time, Ada Developers Academy will solicit feedback from the students about the internship experience: 1) whether the student plans to accept a job if it is offered, 2) any feedback about the company or internship program. The Program Manager will be reviewing the company feedback with each student.

Policies

Interpersonal Relationships and Fraternization[1]

Ada Developers Academy encourages a collegial and supportive atmosphere for its students, staff, and volunteers.   Interpersonal relationships may become a concern if they have the effect of:

- Impairing the work of any student
- Harassing, demeaning, or creating a hostile working environment for anyone
- Disrupting the smooth and orderly flow of work within the classroom
- Harming the goodwill and reputation of Ada in the community at large

For this reason, Ada has the following guidelines, both during and after classroom hours:

The individuals(s), whether students, staff or volunteers, responsible for such problems will be subject to counseling and/or disciplinary action, up to and potentially including termination of employment or dismissal from the program, depending upon the circumstances.

If a student, staff member, or volunteer has any concerns about the behavior of their peers, staff, or volunteers, they are encouraged and welcomed to talk to the Ada Program Manager.

A supervisor (instructor, staff, mentor, or volunteer) should not engage in any form of relationship with a student that could potentially have the appearance of creating or promoting favoritism or special treatment for the student. In the event of such a relationship, the individuals involved have a responsibility to disclose the relationship to the Executive Director.

No student, staff, or volunteer may use company equipment or facilities for furtherance of non-work-related activities or relationships without the express advance permission of the Ada Program Manager.

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[1] *Adapted from the Texas Workforce Commission*

Anti-Harassment Policy[2]

Ada Developers Academy is committed to providing a work environment that is free from all forms of discrimination and conduct that can be considered harassing, coercive, or disruptive, including sexual harassment.   We expect our students, staff and volunteers to exhibit behaviour that embraces this commitment.

Ada Developers Academy, as a program of Third Sector New England, complies with all federal, state, and local equal employment opportunity laws.   We are committed to providing equal employment opportunities for all employees regardless of legally protected characteristics or activities, such as race, color, age, sex, religious or political beliefs, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, honorably discharged veteran or military status, or the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability, the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability, political activity, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Ada believes that harassment or discrimination based on legally protected characteristics and activities undermine the integrity of the classroom. All students, staff, and volunteers are expected to be sensitive to, and respectful of others with whom they come into contact while representing Ada.   Therefore, Ada prohibits harassment, discrimination, and retaliatory conduct by any student, staff member, or volunteer towards any other person, including fellow students, staff, volunteers, and third parties, such as vendors and visitors to the workplace. Ada also prohibits third parties, including vendors and visitors to the workplace, from harassing, discriminating, or taking retaliatory action against any student, staff member, or volunteer.

Prohibited Conduct

The following are examples of conduct prohibited under Ada's policies:

- Fraternization between students and staff in personal or exclusive settings (i.e. non-Ada related social activities that are not open to all students) prior to graduation from Ada.
- Epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, or threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts that relate to any legally protected characteristic or activity;
- Written or graphic material displayed or circulated in the workplace that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group because of any legally protected characteristic or activity;
- Intimidating, hostile, derogatory, disrespectful, or otherwise offensive conduct or remarks that are directed at a person or group because of any legally protected characteristic or activity;

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[2] *Adapted from the Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce Employee Handbook*

- Knowingly and recklessly making a false complaint of harassment or discrimination, or providing knowingly false information regarding a complaint; and
- Retaliation against an employee for filing a good faith complaint, opposing harassment or discrimination, or cooperating in the investigation of a complaint.

Our policies prohibit discrimination based on sex. This includes discrimination based on being male, female, or transgender, and also based on sexual orientation or gender expression or identity, including gender stereotyping. These terms can be difficult to define. Transgender individuals are those who transition from the gender assigned at birth. Sexual orientation means heterosexuality, homosexuality (gay or lesbian), bisexuality, and gender expression or identity. Gender expression or identity means having or being perceived as having a gender identity, self-image, appearance, behavior, or expression, whether or not that gender identity, self-image, appearance, behavior, or expression is different from that traditionally associated with the sex assigned to that person at birth.

The following are examples of inappropriate behavior prohibited under Ada's policies:

- Vulgar or sexual comments, jokes, stories, or innuendo;
- Graphic or suggestive comments about someone's body or manner of dress;
- Gossip or questions about someone's sexual conduct, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or transition to another gender;
- Vulgarity, leering, inappropriate touching, or obscene or suggestive gestures;
- Display in the workplace of sexually suggestive photographs, cartoons, graffiti, or the like;
- Unwelcome and repeated flirtations, requests for dates, or the like;
- Subtle pressure for sexual activity, including unwelcome but apparently sanction-free sexual advances by a supervisor to a subordinate;
- Solicitation or coercion of sexual activity, dates, or the like by the implied or express promise of rewards or preferential treatment;
- Solicitation or coercion of sexual activity, dates, or the like by the implied or express threat of punishment;
- Sexual assault;
- Intimidating, hostile, derogatory, disrespectful, or otherwise offensive conduct or remarks that are directed at a person because of that person's sex, whether or not the remarks themselves are sexual in nature; and
- Retaliation against an employee for refusing sexual overtures.

Sexual harassment may be difficult to recognize. It can consist of unwelcome romantic or sexual attention; unwanted touching; sexual jokes or crude remarks; sexual favoritism; attempts to trade employment benefits—such as a good evaluation, a raise, or promotion—for a date or for sexual concessions; or other conduct that creates a hostile or intimidating atmosphere. We want an open, friendly environment for all employees.

Complaint Procedure

If you believe that you or another student, staff member, or volunteer has been subjected to harassment or discrimination, or you have witnessed activities at Ada that may undermine our commitment to equal employment opportunity and a safe classroom, you must report it immediately to the Ada Program Manager, or any other Ada manager you feel comfortable approaching. If you are not satisfied with that person's response, it is your responsibility to make your complaint to at least one other manager.

We will take your report seriously, and we will investigate as we deem necessary. We will protect your confidentiality and the confidentiality of others involved to the extent that we can, consistent with our need to investigate. We will take disciplinary action, including dismissal from the program if warranted, against persons who violate this policy, and against anyone who condones such conduct. We will not permit retaliation against anyone who in good faith (a) reports harassment, discrimination, or retaliation; (b) opposes harassment, discrimination, or retaliation; or (c) participates in an investigation. If Ada determines that an employee has engaged in retaliation in violation of this policy, the employee will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

Probation and Dismissal Policies

Understanding the Process

In order to complete the Ada Developers Academy program, students must adhere to academic and behavioral conduct standards. It is not in the best interest of the student, nor the program, to let a student continue in the program if they are not achieving at the minimal level of competency for the program standards.

The probation and dismissal policy is in place to:
- warn a student when they are not meeting minimal academic or behavioral standards to allow for improvement
- specify what improvement is necessary and by when
- dismiss a student from the program if they should fail to meet the terms of the improvement plan outlined during the probation process

Probation

A temporary status due to an identification that student performance is below program standards. Improvement in performance is needed for continued enrollment in the program.

Examples of why a student may be placed on Probation:
- Excessive late or incomplete assignments or projects
- Low performance on quizzes or other assessments
- Poor attendance records including excessive absences or tardies and/or lack of communication around attendance issues
- Obstruction or disruption of teaching or learning
- Physical or emotional harassment or threats
- Destruction, damage, or misuse of program (or its affiliates') property
- Public defamation of the program, program host organization, staff, sponsoring companies, volunteers, or students

Students who are placed on probation will receive a written notice, including a performance improvement plan (PIP) with a timeline for completion. Students who do not meet the improvement outlined in the performance improvement plan may be subject to program dismissal.

Program Dismissal

In most cases progressive discipline may be used, prior to dismissal, to correct a performance problem. However, certain types of misconduct are so severe that one incident of misconduct will result in immediate dismissal without prior use of progressive discipline.

Procedure

Stage 1 – first warning: misconduct or need for academic improvement
If conduct does not meet acceptable standards the student will be given a written warning. This will set out the nature of the misconduct and the change in behavior or performance required. The individual will be advised that this warning constitutes the first stage of the formal procedure.

Stage 2 – improvement note: unsatisfactory performance
If performance does not meet acceptable standards the student will be given an improvement note. This will set out the performance improvement areas required and the timescale for achievement. The warning will also inform the student that a dismissal may be considered if there is no sustained satisfactory improvement or change.

Stage 2 – final written warning
If the offence is sufficiently serious, or there is a failure to improve during the currency of a prior warning, a final written warning may be given to the student This will give details of the complaint, the improvement required and the timescale. The warning will also inform the student that a dismissal may be considered if there is no sustained satisfactory improvement or change.

Stage 3 – program dismissal
If there is still a failure to improve the final step in the procedure may be dismissal. Dismissal decisions will be approved by the Executive Director and the Advisory Board, and the student will be provided, with written reasons for dismissal. The decision to dismiss will be confirmed in writing.

Ada Student Code of Conduct and Attendance Policy

Ada Developers Academy works to foster a learning environment where all participants feel supported and learning goals are met. All students that choose to participate in Ada Developers Academy agree to uphold and abide by the following Student Code of Conduct and Attendance Policy.

Attendance Policy

1. Students enrolled in the program are expected to attend and be on time to all scheduled classes. The Ada Program Manager will keep a daily record of student attendance and late arrivals (fifteen or more minutes late).
2. If a student is going to be absent or late, she must notify the Ada Program Manager and Instructors via email with as much advanced notice as possible.
3. Missed class, whether due to late arrival or mid-day appointment, that is greater than 90 minutes will be counted as an absence. Previously communicated visits to sponsoring companies, meetings with mentors, and pre-approved conferences are not counted as missed class.
4. Students are allowed five sick or personal days throughout the classroom portion of the program. Three tardies count as one absence.
5. Students will receive a written warning if attendance issues present a concern. Exceeding the number of allowed absences may result in dismissal from the program.

Student Code of Conduct

This Student Code of Conduct is established to assure that all students enrolled in Ada Developers Academy are provided with a barrier-free learning environment and meet base expectations required to advance to an internship.

1. Students are expected to be self-disciplined, able to work independently, and complete all coursework (quizzes, assignments, projects, blog posts, etc.) satisfactorily and on time. Excessive late or incomplete assignments will receive a written warning and may result in dismissal from the program.
2. Students are expected to be respectful towards the instructor, staff, and teaching assistants at all times. Obstruction or disruption of teaching will not be tolerated.
3. Physical abuse, verbal threats of violence, intimidation, physical or mental harassment, bullying, microaggression, and/or other conduct which threatens or endangers the health or safety of any member of the program (student, staff, volunteers) in the classroom or through Ada communication channels (mailing lists, chat rooms) will not be tolerated.
4. Destruction, damage, or misuse of the program, public, or private property will not be permitted.

5. Public defamation of the program, program host organization, staff, sponsoring companies, volunteers, or students will not be tolerated.

Violations of the above rules will be grounds for disciplinary action and potential dismissal from the program. Inappropriate behavior should be reported to Ada Staff.

A student's performance in the classroom will inform her internship placement and the program's involvement with job search support at the conclusion of the program. Placement in an internship or job is not guaranteed.

Signed by _____   Date_____