

# ENGI 1331 UTA Internship Questions Only

## Matthew Woodring

In this document, I provide a list of common questions and answers students have about internships. If you would like me to expand on any of these answers, please reach out to me!

The questions that are highlighted are the most important ones.

### Internship Questions:

#### 1. “Where should I look for internships?”

- a. The first place you should look is within your own network. Ask around and see if anyone you know (family, friends, professors, old bosses, LinkedIn connections, etc.) know of anyone who is hiring an intern. Having an inside recommendation is one of the best ways to get an internship.
- b. Career fairs are another great way to find an internship. I have received many offers from companies I met at various career fairs. Even if you do not find an internship from these career fairs, attending them will help you build the soft skills necessary to get hired anywhere.
- c. You can also find internships online. You could message recruiters on LinkedIn or look at some of the following sites: <https://www.indeed.com/>, <https://www.glassdoor.com/>, and <https://www.internships.com/>. You can also look on any companies' career section on their website for open positions.
- d. For people who want to work in the aerospace industry, I highly recommend looking at NASA internships: <https://intern.nasa.gov/>. They hire a lot of college students and they do interesting work, so it is a great place to look.

#### 2. “What companies are good to work for?”

- a. This is a hard question to answer without knowing your major, what you want to work on, and the current year. I highly recommend you read reviews online to see how a company is to work for. Some companies myself and others have worked for, and had good experiences with, are: Cisco (CS), L3Harris Technologies (CS), Zillow (CS), Amazon (CS), Apple (CS), Paycom (CS), Raytheon (Mechanical), Boeing (Mechanical), Lockheed Martin (Mechanical), NASA (Electrical & Mechanical), GE Aviation (Mechanical), Northrop Grumman (Mechanical), Cummins (Electrical), Iron Ring Technologies (Electrical), GE Healthcare (Biomedical), Avanade (Biomedical), Dow Chemical (Chemical), LyondellBasell (Chemical), Shell (Chemical), and State of Alaska (Petroleum).

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## 3. “Should I do an unpaid internship?”

- a. These are rare in engineering, but they do happen sometimes. I highly advise you *not* to do one of these. Your skills and experience as an engineer are worth much more than \$0 per hour. If you only receive one offer for a summer internship, and it is unpaid, I recommend you do anything *but* that internship. Do not work for a company that does not value you enough to pay you.

## 4. “What can I do to make myself more likely to get an internships?”

- a. There are several things you can do to increase the likelihood of you getting an internship. Some of them are more obvious than others.
- b. First, increase your network and practice your soft skills. Your chances of landing an internship go up when you know more people. Someone you meet may have an opening in the company they work for and can give you a recommendation. A friend you make in class may have a parent who owns a company that can hire you. Knowing more people exposes you to more opportunities. Practicing your soft skills is also important because people want to work with others who are easy to talk to and make their lives easier. You could be the smartest person in the room and still not get an internship if people do not like interacting with you.
- c. Second, and fairly obviously, make the best grades you can. Companies like hiring students with good grades because it increases the odds you will be a good employee. However, you do not need a 4.0 to get hired. Most companies have a cutoff of 3.0, but some have lower cutoffs and some have higher ones. Just do the best you can, and if possible, stay above a 3.0 because it will make getting hired much easier.
- d. Third, build up your resume with experience, projects, and skills. If this is your first internship, add any prior work experience you have and really sell yourself. Do not lie on a resume, but make yourself sound great on it. Adding class or solo projects is also a big boost to your resume because it shows companies that you have some useful engineering skills. Try working on projects you find interesting and add those to your resume. They do not need to be amazing, but they should show case some of your engineering skills.
- e. Lastly, apply to more internships. At the end of the day, getting hired somewhere is partially a numbers game. I recommend applying to any internship where you like the company, position, and meet at least 50% of the requirements.

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## 5. “What skills are most in-demand for an ECE major?”

- a. For hard skills, there are several applications and tools that make you a more desirable to companies. Programming is becoming more important in engineering everyday, so I recommend you be familiar with at least one of them. MATLAB, Python, C/C++, and Java are the best choices, in that order. For applications, Arduino, LogicAid, SimUAid, and GitHub are all nice to know how to use.

## 6. “Who can I get to review my resume?”

- a. There are many places you can go to have your resume looked over. I would recommend having several different people take a look at your resume.
- b. Myself and most other UTA’s would be happy to take a look at your resume. Just make sure you have it completed and have looked over it yourself for any spelling or grammar mistakes. You could also ask a professor that you are comfortable with if they would be willing to look at it.
- c. UH hosts resume reviews throughout the year, which can be useful events. Information about this is emailed throughout the semester and can also be found at: <https://uh.edu/ucs/students/get-resume-support/>.
- d. There are some places online that will also look at your resume and give you feedback such as: <https://www.reddit.com/r/resumes/> and <https://www.reddit.com/r/EngineeringResumes/>. These can be helpful because people here do not know you personally and will not be scared to give you honest feedback.

## 7. “Will a company hire me if I am a freshman?”

- a. The answer to this depends on the company, your skills, and what the current market looks like at the time you are applying. If you apply at a company that hires freshmen, likes the skills you have, and the job market is good, then you have a good shot at getting an internship. I highly recommend freshmen apply for internships, and do any interviews, even if you are not likely to get hired. Going through the process is an invaluable learning tool that will help you a lot when you apply for more as a sophomore, junior, and senior. Getting an internship as a freshman is not all that important. It is great if you can get one, but do not think it’s the end of your career if you do not get one.

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## 8. “What should I do if I do not get an internship?”

- a. If you do not get an internship, there are still lots of things you can do to have a productive summer and increase your chances next year. You could also take the summer off and relax, travel, or work a summer job. All of them are fine options, especially if you are a freshman or sophomore. You could also work on a personal project that you can put on your resume. Make sure it is one you find enjoyable and not just one you chose because it will look good on your resume. If you enjoy what you are working on, you will learn more in the long run.

## 9. “Will having a UTA position help me get an internship?”

- a. In my, and other UTA’s experiences, yes. Being a UTA shows companies you are dependable, able to communicate well, and can work in a team. It is also a fun position to have. If you do not like MATLAB, there are other UTA positions available. You could be an ENGI 1100 UTA or one for a class in your major. I know many courses in ECE that hire UTA’s such as: Digital Logic Design, Microprocessors, Circuits I & II, Electronics, and Signals and Systems. You are welcome to ask any UTA about their experience as a UTA if you want to get other perspectives on it.

## 10. “Will I be unhirable if I do not get an internship?”

- a. No. It *may* be harder to get a job after graduation, but it by no means impossible. I know many people who had no internship or work experience, but got hired on right out of college by good companies. Getting an internship is a good idea because it will make the job search easier and will also help you determine if you really enjoy engineering. Try and get an internship if you want to, but do not panic if you cannot get one.