



“We must engage all students, both academically and socially, providing them the support for persistence along a guided pathway. We will engage students through active and collaborative methods of teaching and learning, advising, tutoring, mentoring, student life, and the provision of opportunities for real-world experiences in the way of internships, Service-Learning, civic engagement and global participation.”

~ ACC 2017-2021 Strategic Plan

The Handbook of Experiential Learning

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1. Overview

A. What is Experiential Learning

ACC recognizes experiential learning as an integral part of a student's learning experiences and overall education. Our Experiential Learning Programs strive to provide real-world, hands-on opportunities that help students build upon and enhance previously learned coursework in their area of study.

While experiential learning can include in-classroom activities, external learning experiences are unique out-of-classroom experiences that are linked directly to job skills development in workplace environments.

B. Types of Experiential Learning

a. External Learning Experiences – Workplace Setting

- i. **Internships (INT)** - Internships are carefully designed and monitored educational experiences that provide students the opportunity to integrate academic knowledge with practical work experience in a professional setting. They are supervised, mentored, and evaluated experiences that help students test interests, develop new skills and learn first-hand about the workplace in their field of study. Internships may be paid or unpaid. Students earn academic credit for the work they provide to their employer. Internship classes at ACC are regulated by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating board (THECB) and have requirements for both the minimum number of hours needed to receive course credit and the relevance of the job experiences to the academic degree. Internship classes are designated by having instructional method INT in the course schedule. *Internship is also a blanket term frequently used by employers that include the other THECB defined external learning experiences – practicums and co-ops.*
- ii. **Cooperative Education, Workforce Coop (COO)** - Workforce co-ops are another form of experiential learning defined by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). Workforce co-ops are identical to practicums, but have an added requirement of weekly lectures. Workforce co-op classes are designated by having instructional method COO in the course schedule.
- iii. **Service-Learning** – Service-Learning is a specific type of external learning experience that engages students in academically relevant service in the community. ACC defines Service-Learning as follows: "Service-Learning is a form of experiential learning that integrates community service into the curriculum and objectives of a course. These courses are reciprocally beneficial; students work toward addressing community-identified needs through service experiences with community partners, while structured in-class reflections aid them in developing a deeper understanding of how disciplinary knowledge connects to and influences the world around them."

- iv. **Apprenticeships** – Apprenticeships are organized and managed in cooperation between educational institutions and employers. They vary in terms of governance, some being more employer-lead and others led by educational institutions, but they are always paid positions associated with a curriculum. Apprenticeships are designed as a means for students to put theory into practice and master knowledge in a way that empowers them with professional autonomy. Apprenticeship programs are typically not course designations, but rather a sequence of courses organized into a degree or certificate plan.
- v. **Health Science Practicums (PRA)** - Practicums are similar to internships or clinical, but are less closely supervised, and are suitable for students preparing for career entry. They provide workplace settings in which students gain practical experience in the discipline, enhance skills, and integrate knowledge. Practicum classes are regulated by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). Practicum experiences typically have a larger contact hour requirement than internships and clinicals, and may or may not be paid. Practicum classes are designated by having instructional method PRA in the course schedule.
- vi. **Practicum (PRA)** – General Practicums
- vii. **Clinicals (CLI)** – Clinical experience is a key component in some programs. Students apply theory learned in the classroom to practice in several clinical settings for 'hands on' experience. Settings for these experiences vary, offering students the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills in areas involving many populations across the lifespan, at medical and/or educational facilities. Clinical classes are designated by having instructional methods CLI in the course schedule.
- viii. **Field Experience** - For students, field studies create opportunities for first hand experiences that encourage critical thinking, long-term retention, transfer potential, positive attitudes towards science, appreciation for nature, and increased scientific curiosity. Cognitive development and motivation are also enhanced when students are active participants in the planning of the field study and in the activity itself.
(<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.5408/0022-1368-43.2.128>)
- ix. **Study Abroad** – Study abroad is an educational opportunity for students to experience the culture and history of a foreign country, while meeting their ACC course or program of study learning outcomes. It is a unique and rewarding way to add a global perspective to your education and resume, expand professional connections, strengthen foreign language skills, promote culturally responsive practices, and develop skills essential to succeeding in the workforce. Most ACC study abroad programs are offered in the summer semester and all are faculty-led to

b. Classroom- or Campus-Based Experiential Learning Strategies

- i. **Project-Based Learning** - PBL is the ongoing act of learning about different subjects simultaneously. This is achieved by guiding students to identify, through research, a real-world problem (local to global) developing its solution using evidence to support the claim, and presenting the solution through a multimedia approach based in a set of 21st-century tools. (<https://www.edutopia.org/blog/what-heck-project-based-learning-heather-wolpert-gawron>)
- ii. **Field Trips** – Field trips can provide firsthand experience, stimulate interest and motivation, add relevance to learning and interrelationships, strengthen observation and perception skills, and promote personal development. (<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1031445.pdf>)
- iii. **Academic Coops** - Academic Co-ops are not regulated by the THECB. These classes are centered on experiential learning activities within the classroom or college campuses. Examples include case studies, entrepreneurial activities, and research-based classes.
- iv. **Simulations** - Simulations are instructional scenarios where the learner is placed in a "world" defined by the teacher. They represent a reality within which students interact. The teacher controls the parameters of this "world" and uses it to achieve the desired instructional results. Students experience the reality of the scenario and gather meaning from it. (<https://teaching.unsw.edu.au/simulations>)
- v. **Volunteerism and Community Service** – Volunteerism provides personal, professional and social opportunities for growth and learning. Students are able to develop life skills and gain valuable perspective of service to others. Students, faculty and staff can get involved and find service opportunities that fit interest, major and schedules by visiting the ACC GivePulse Site. Volunteerism provides a way for you to help your community through serving organizations that light your passion.

C. Administrative Rules & Guidelines Governing Experiential Learning

Administrative Rule #6.05.003 acknowledges that Austin Community College supports internship programs for enrolled students.

The following are the ACC General Guidelines and Policies for Internships:

- Students must be enrolled in a supervised practicum to participate in an internship.
- Internships are structured as a one-semester work experience that coincides with the academic calendar:
 - Fall Semester: August – December
 - Spring Semester: January – May
 - Summer Semester: June – August
- Internships may be paid or unpaid

- Students work approximately 48-336 hours to earn credit (varies by department and program).
- Students work for a minimum of 10 weeks Fall/Spring and 6 weeks Summer.
- Students work agreed hours set by the employer during the semester term. Students need to meet the minimum contact hour requirement for credit.
- Students have a site supervisor who monitors and evaluates work performance.
- Internships include an academic component supervised by an ACC faculty member (also called – internship practicum instructor) who monitors and evaluates the academic learning and assigns grades.
- Learning objectives, job duties and academic assignments are documented in an Internship Agreement. Interns will work toward achieving specific learning objectives.
- A performance evaluation is required at the end of the internship.
- Interns are never required to pay the employer in any form to take part in the experience (i.e. training fee, licensing fee, uniforms, equipment, etc.)

2. Service-Learning

The mission of the Service-Learning Program is to strengthen Austin Community College's relationships with the greater Austin community, while simultaneously engaging students in the highest quality Service-Learning experiences available. These experiences will deepen students' understanding of course material and enhance their sense of civic responsibility.

Service-Learning is a specific type of external learning experience that engages students in academically relevant service in the community. Effective Service-Learning courses share three key elements:

1. **Academically relevant** service experiences are developed with and in service to the community.
2. Students are afforded **structured time to reflect** on their experiences in effort to connect the experience to their course work.
3. **Civic responsibility** is fostered, enhancing students' experiences and the academic curriculum itself.



At Austin Community College we define Service-Learning as follows:

“Service-Learning is a form of experiential learning that integrates community engagement into the curriculum and objectives of a course. These courses are reciprocally beneficial: students work toward addressing community identified needs through service experiences with community partners, while structured in-class reflections aid them in developing a deeper understanding of how disciplinary knowledge connects to and influences the world around them.”

Students – Participating in a service-learning course

Service-Learning course sections cover all of the same content and learning objectives as standard courses, but integrate community engagement and hands-on practice directly into the teaching and learning experience.

Service projects are a required component of the course along with reflective activities that help you connect your service back to critical course content. This experience can be included in your resume and give you an idea of how your future career can work to affect real change

To enroll in a service-learning section, look for a “service-learning” notice in the **course notes**. Contact servicelearning@austincc.edu to find out what service-learning courses are available in your area of study.

Faculty - Service-Learning Course Development Process

Service-learning is grounded by the relationships and partnerships between ACC Faculty and Community Partners.

The following process is used to establish the Service-Learning course:

1. Training. Faculty must first complete the OEL Service-Learning Faculty Training, available to all teaching faculty, to learn more about the processes, procedures, timelines, approvals, safety considerations and reporting requirements of Service Learning course implementation. This training also introduces faculty to the fundamentals of service-learning theory and best practices, then walks them through the process of completing a Service-Learning Course Proposal. This course proposal will serve as the foundation for their future course implementation.

Any teaching faculty member may enroll in Service-Learning Faculty Training. An Asynchronous Online version of the Service-Learning Training Course is available to enroll in at any time, and will earn participants 6-hours professional development and a \$150 stipend. A Synchronous Online Institute version of the training is held annually during the Summer, offering the same professional development credit and stipend. For more information regarding the Fellowship Training and pathway, please visit the [ACC Service-Learning Training](#) enrollment page and the [TLED Service-Learning Fellowship](#) website.

2. Course Proposal. The next step is for the faculty member to submit a “[Service-Learning Course \(SVL\) Proposal](#)” to express their interest in implementing a service-learning course. Faculty are asked to describe their interest, experience, and draft plan to implement their Service-Learning course based on learning objectives and using the best practices of the P.A.R.E. model (Preparation, Action, Reflection, and Evaluation).

Only faculty who have completed ACC Service-Learning Training or have equivalent experience are eligible to teach SVL-designated course sections. Designating course sections as ‘Service-Learning’ with the SVL tag enables students to seek out and enroll in these opportunities. Additionally, your students will be aware of the community engagement component of your course before enrolling. After implementing service-learning in their course for one semester, a Service-Learning Faculty member will be eligible to apply for an additional \$150 implementation stipend.

It is important to note that **Service-Learning Course (SVL) Proposals must be submitted at least one semester in advance of the requested course offering timeline** to ensure all college procedures and protocols are in place. However, schedules are also based on course demand and you should be aware that submitting a Service-Learning Course Proposal does not guarantee course offering, or course offering during the requested semester. You can discuss this in more detail with your Department Chair or Dean.

3. Meet with Service-Learning Program Coordinator. The Coordinator will assist in finding the community partner and to discuss the course, faculty, student, and community partner expectations. The ACC Service-Learning Program Coordinator will work with faculty to begin identifying a suitable community partner and project within the academic discipline around the ideas generated. In some cases, community organizations initiate outreach to ACC with identified project needs or ideas for future projects. This step also helps the college note how to include course information in the schedule for student selection. The Service-Learning Program Coordinator will discuss service options for high school students and students who require on-campus, family-friendly, virtual, and other placements.

4. Complete Memorandum of Understanding. The faculty member and community partner reciprocally complete the Service-Learning Memorandum of Understanding prior to student service. Once matched with a service organization, the faculty member and their community partner will complete a Service-Learning Memorandum of Understanding for the purpose of maintaining accurate records about the course and students, reporting participation and outcomes, and ensuring all of the safety protocols and requirements are met. Note that when students are individually signing up for the partners' volunteer opportunities, a Memorandum of Understanding may not be necessary.

5. Course Catalog SVL Tag/Designation. The service-learning course is then tagged with the Service-Learning Course (SVL) tag or designation through the course catalog. The Service-Learning Program Coordinator will collaborate with the faculty member and the corresponding department chair to approve and designate the course through the ACC Schedule Development office. All SVL courses require Service-Learning Program Coordinator, Instructor, and Department Chair approval. A course may be tagged or designated with the SVL tag at the course level (whereby all courses with that number are always service-learning courses) or the section level (where courses are designated as service-learning courses semester-by-semester). Course-level SVL designations require approval by the Curriculum and Programs committee (which meets once per month), while section-level SVL designations do not.

6. Course Note added to Course Schedule. Depending on department procedures, a course note will be added to the course schedule by the Department or the Service-Learning Program Coordinator to alert students to the service-learning component of the course prior to registration. If requested, students may be informed in the course note that on-campus, virtual, and/or alternative assignments are available.

7. OEL Support. Throughout the implementation of the Service-Learning Course, the Office of Experiential Learning provides support and resources to help faculty throughout the process, including the following:

- Community Partner Outreach to find the best fit for your course outcomes;
- Assistance and resources for all components of the service-learning course according to the best practices of the P.A.R.E. model: Preparation, Action, Reflection, and Evaluation;
- Daily Service-Learning Office Hours to respond to your questions and course needs;
- Syllabus review and consultation to ensure learning objectives adequately align with your service project;
- Library and research support to find examples of service-learning in your discipline or resources for students through our [Service-Learning Lib Guide](#);
- Supplementary professional development to help you hone your service-learning expertise over time;
- Unique course and program evaluations to gather feedback on your implementation experience and help revise the program to better serve students, the community partner needs and your instructional goals. We encourage faculty to track the student perceptions and outcomes through qualitative and quantitative means.

8. End-of-Semester Evaluations. At the end of the semester, service-learning faculty will be requested to submit an Service-Learning End-of-Semester Evaluation. Students will also be asked to submit a Service-Learning Student Survey. Both are used to provide feedback and data to help us improve the success of the program. Faculty may also be requested to provide photos (with photo consent forms) and examples of student work to use in program marketing and reports.

Community Partners – Help us educate the next generation of nonprofit leaders

Our community partners ensure that ACC's service-learning program is responsive to immediate needs and projects happening throughout the greater Central Texas community. We are always seeking new partnerships with non-profit community organizations and/or government agencies who are directly addressing social issues in and around Austin.

By establishing a partnership with the ACC Service-Learning Program, community organizations have a direct link of communication with the Service-Learning Program Coordinator in order to share their upcoming needs and events. Once notified, we work to develop service projects around those needs or on recruiting ACC student volunteers. Service-Learning partners will act as co-educators alongside ACC faculty.

How to get started

If your organization has a need or upcoming project on the horizon that would benefit from collaborating with students and faculty from ACC, you may submit a [Service-Learning Project Proposal Form for Community Partners](#) or contact the ACC Service-Learning Program Coordinator at servicelearning@austincc.edu. We will work closely with you and potential faculty to find the ideal match of students and curriculum alignment to support your needs and those of our students in completing their course objectives and outcomes.



3. Internships

Internships provide critical hands-on practice for students shown to be a high-impact practice affecting student outcomes and student success. These educational opportunities help students link classroom learning experiences with workplace responsibilities and tasks to bolster career choice.

ACC offers internships in 45 different program areas. The Office of Experiential Learning works directly with academic Department Chairs to help establish and support Internship programs, and works across the college to ensure student and employer resources and outreach meet the needs of academic areas.

Students

OEL offers internships in 45 different program areas and works with over 750 area employers. Students consistently identify their internship experience as being one of the most influential and meaningful components of their college education.

Programs with Internships

If you are interested in participating in an internship? Please contact the [Department Chair](#) within your area of interest or Study.

The following areas of study offer Internships, Practicums or Coops: (group by area of study)

Arts, Digital Media & Communications

Business and Technical Communications
Communication Studies
Creative Design and Technology
(gaming) Creative Writing
Dance
Drama
Music Performance & Business
Radio, TV & Film
Visual Communication

Business

Accounting
Business Administration
Fashion Merchandising
International Business
Logistics & Supply Chain
Management Management
Marketing
Office Administration and Technology

Computer Science & Information Technology

Culinary, Hospitality & Tourism

Culinary Arts - Baking & Pastry
Culinary Arts - Chef Training
Hospitality, Meeting & Event Planning, Tourism

Design, Manufacturing, Construction & Applied Technologies

Auto Collision
Auto Technology / Small Engine , Motorcycle Repair
Engineering Technology
Geographic Information Systems / Land Survey Heating, A/C & Refrigeration
Technology Welding Technology - Welder

Education

Exercise Science

Liberal Arts

Anthropology
Government
Interdisciplinary Studies

Public & Social Services

Paralegal
Human Services

Science, Engineering & Math

Bio Technology

*Note all health science programs (not listed) are required to participate in clinicals as part of their degree plan.

Applying for an Internship

Timing is critical in preparing for an internship. Students should begin exploring options the semester before the internship takes place. This will provide ample time for review and editing of a resume, employment considerations, interview preparation and practice, transportation and child care needs, and more.

In order for students to qualify for an internship, the following general guidelines should be followed:

- Students must be enrolled at ACC.
 - Ideally, students should be at or near the end of their certificate or degree program.
 - To receive credit for employment, a student must be enrolled in an internship practicum *in the department of the declared major.
1. If you're an ACC student, you can start by contacting the department chair in your program area and express your desire to participate in an internship. Send a follow-up email if you don't hear from them after 7 business days.
 2. Next, get a step ahead by building or updating your resume. Visit ACC Career Resources.
 3. Also, ask your professors, former employers, and others who are familiar with your work to write a recommendation letter to add to your resume.
 4. While not always required unless indicated by a potential employer, you can differentiate yourself from other candidates by **building a portfolio**. A portfolio can include:

Samples of your work (projects, reports, presentations, etc.) Organizations in which you have participated. Honors and awards you have received. Licenses or certifications you have received. Skills you would like to highlight.

Any questions about applying for an internship, please contact your department chair.

*ACC Courses have other designations for internships such as Academic Cooperative, Capstone, Clinicals, Cooperative Education, Field Experience, Independent Study, Internship and Practicum

Student Responsibilities Checklist

1. Meet with Department Chair or Assigned Faculty to Determine Internship Eligibility.
Best Practice: Send an email indicating to the department chair or assigned faculty expressing intent or register for the internship course.
Meet with the department chair or assigned faculty 60-90 days prior to the beginning of the semester.
2. Prepare Resume, Cover Letter and Portfolio (Optional), Register for Internship Course

Students requiring assistance should schedule [an appointment](#) with a career services specialist a minimum of 30 days prior to the beginning of the semester

The Career Services Team is available to assist students with resume, cover letter, and interview skills

To schedule an [appointment](#) with Career Specialist email careers-group@austincc.edu

Students are also encouraged to register for “Strategies for Today’s Jobs” a free online four week course that offers comprehensive job search training to increase students’ employment outcomes. Students with questions can contact Katie McClendon at katie.mcclendon@austincc.edu or register here:

<https://www.austincc.edu/students/career-services/strategies-for-jobs>

Faculty encouraged to reach out to Career Services to coordinate [classroom presentations](#). Topics include job search, resume & interview best practices, career readiness and more. Contact Trish Welch, Director, attwelch2@austincc.edu.

For more information please see the website for Career Services:

<https://www.austincc.edu/students/career-services>

3. Interview for Internship Positions
4. Complete Internship Agreement - This agreement is due before the student begins their internship in order to begin accruing contact hours. Agreements not received by the 6th week of class, and without explanation, may result in the student being dropped from the course or receive an incomplete.
5. Complete Student Employer Evaluation - Students complete evaluations 1-2 weeks before the end of the semester. The college wants to gather information about the student experience in their placement.

Internship Opportunities

Listed below are just a few of the nearly 1000 companies that we are currently working with. If you are interested in an internship, please contact the [Department Chair](#) within your area of interest or Area of Study



Don't see a company you're interested in interning with? Please contact our [Office](#).

National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE)

As part of our practices, the Office of Experiential Learning Internship Program follows the [National Association of Colleges and Employers \(NACE\)](#) Internship Standards. These are nationally recognized standards. NACE also provides multiple resources, including [best employer internship practices](#).

Paid vs Unpaid Internships

Because the emphasis of ACC's experiential learning programs concerns the extension of classroom learning into a real world environment, the OEL Internships Program will stress the importance of finding suitable placements for our students without regard to compensation. We will, however, always strive to find paid positions when possible, and will note paid or unpaid on the departmental active lists.

For any questions about our guidelines and policies, please contact us at: internships@austincc.edu

International Students

F-1 visa holders must be enrolled in a departmental internship practicum or clinical class to count as Curricular Practical Training (CPT) per the US Department of Homeland Security, Office of Citizenship and Immigration Services. Curricular Practical Training is a temporary work authorization directly related to an F-1 student's academic program for which the work counts towards completion of a degree. The work performed must be directly related to the student's major field of study.

To be considered for an Internship as an F-1 Visa international student you will need to;

- Register and gain approval for their departmental practicum/clinical class within their program.
- Complete a Request for Curricular Practical Training Form and a Curricular Practical Training Application. These forms should be submitted to the International Student Office for a CPT approved I-20 Visa.

Employment cannot begin until all steps have been completed and all forms have been signed by the employer and department.

International students may need to obtain an identification number from the Social Security Administration if the internship is paid or if it is required by the employer.

Local Social Security Office Locations:

Oak Hill SSA
B5508 Highway 290 East,
Building G
Austin TX 78735
1-800-772-1213

Austin SSA Office
1029 Camino La
Costa Austin TX
78752
1-866-627-6991

Georgetown SSA
Office 104 Parkview
Drive Georgetown TX
78626 1-877-531-4699

Faculty – Internship Program Development

Departments and assigned faculty can develop an internship course by following these simple steps:

1. Identify Curriculum Needs for an Internship - Faculty can work with the Office of Experiential Learning to assess curricular needs and support requirements when establishing an internship program. They have extensive experience working with state agencies and are familiar with the guidelines on what constitutes appropriate internship experiences.

Once the Internship program is defined, the department chair designates a faculty member to teach the internship course. Faculty teaching these courses are considered internship practicum instructors.

ACC courses that can include an internship have the following designations • INT (Internship)

- COO (Co-op)
- PRA (Practicum)

2. Participate in Internship Faculty Development – To ensure internships, practicums and co-ops meet all required policies, rules and guidelines, and to support faculty in the development process, the Office of Experiential Learning offers a series of training and professional development programs.

- a. ***Internship Regulations and Processes*** – A 1-hour training module required by faculty scheduled to teach an internship, practicum or co-op. After completing the *Internship Regulations and Processes* training faculty gain designation as Certified Internship Instructors and gain one hour of professional development credit.

The module focuses on key and critical elements of offering, managing, tracking and reporting of these experiential learning offerings. The course is broken down into the following areas:

Section 1 – Guidelines, Rules and Laws for Establishing an Internship

Section 2 – Effectively Managing Internship Courses

Section 3 – Processes and Procedures for Faculty, Student and Employer

- b. ***OEL Internship Best Practices*** – This training is designed to help faculty learn about national standards and best practices, identify methods of collecting data and reviewing to compare data trends with a focus on disaggregated data, and review methods of implementation that help improve the student and employer experience.

An online, self-paced, 3-weeks session composed of readings, videos and discussion board questions allows faculty to participate in a flexible format and interact with fellow peers. Faculty receive a \$200 stipend and 10 faculty development hours upon completion.

The course is broken down into the following areas:

Week 1 - ACC Internship Best Practices

Week 2 - Managing Internship Resources

Week 3 - Data and Research surrounding Internships

3. Establish the Employer Relationship and Assign Internships - With the support of departments the OEL Internship Program develops and maintains a *master list* of potential internship employers. The master list is compiled by direct outreach to employers to discern their inclination of hiring ACC students as interns, and the types of positions they might consider.

Before the start of each semester, the OEL contacts employers to:

- (a) identify potential openings for ACC interns
- (b) confirm adherence to NACE standard
- (c) establish whether the positions are paid or unpaid
- (d) obtain brief job descriptions.

The list of employers seeking interns during a given semester is called the *active list*.

- **Master List** - A list of all potential employers open to hiring an ACC intern. At a minimum, the master list includes the company or agency name and name, phone number, and email address of the hiring agent. Contacts are emailed one month prior to the start of each semester to develop the active lists for each department.
- **Active List** - A list of employers who have agreed to hire an intern *in the upcoming semester*. Active lists are only valid a single semester and will be updated prior to the beginning of each semester by the OEL Internship Program.

All internship instructors will have a customized active list each semester. It is the responsibility of the internship practicum instructor to contact all employers on their *active list* to discuss the internships, clarify the learning objectives, confirm adherence to NACE standards, and establish a hiring process and timeline.

As internship positions are filled, the internship practicum instructor should work with the OEL to update the active list.

4. Gather Feedback through Evaluation - At the conclusion of the internship semester, the department chair and the internship practicum instructor will be asked to provide feedback through an evaluation. This feedback will be used to assess the internship experience and consider needs for improvement.

How to get started

The OEL Director works closely with department chairs to help establish internships for their academic programs. To get started please email us at: internships@austincc.edu

For a description of the most updated internship eligible courses, please refer to the [ACC Catalog](#).

Faculty Support

The Office of Experiential Learning works directly with department chairs to help establish and support internship programs.

- Assess needs and support in establishing an internship program
- Receive instructions about what constitutes appropriate internship experiences for each degree program in that department.
- Deliver training to ensure that the internships meet safety and operational standards
- Manage the required forms and documentation for reporting and tracking to include Internship Agreements and evaluation forms.
- Recruit, vet, and maintain a list of interested internship employers for each departmental practicum. This list of departmental internship partners is called the departmental Assistance with the development of internship programs, including best practices, advice, curriculum support, and internship placement assistance.

Assistance with the development of internship opportunities and leads specific to each department. Internship opportunities are shared with the department through lists developed by the OEL Internship Program.

Updated information regarding the Standardized Online Internship Agreement which is powered by Salesforce. All performance evaluations are also online and accessible via SurveyMonkey.

The OEL Internship Program provides training for internship practicum instructors that outline support functions, options, [recommended best practices and NACE \(National Association of Colleges and Employers\) guidelines regarding internship](#)

Faculty – Teaching an Internship, Practicum or Co-Op

Once your internship, practicum or co-op has been established, you are ready to teach the course, provide support to students and ensure all guidelines and regulations are being met. Here is the process to get started.

1. Review Employer Active List - The Internship Coordinator will send a weekly email to department chairs and internship instructors. Employer Active List will be updated and maintained weekly in Google Docs. Faculty can reject or approve internship opportunities.

2. Contact Employers on Active List – Contact with students internship sites is considered a best practice and enables faculty to reach out to employers to ask specific questions or to make introductions prior to the beginning of the semester. Instructors can also wait until students have been placed in internship opportunities before establishing contact.
3. Meet with Students to Determine Goals and Plan Internships – Within the first week of the semester, schedule a time to meet with students and review the goals and requirements for completing a successful internship. It is Important to maintain communication with students throughout their degree to plan ahead for internships.
4. Complete Internship Agreement *

Deadline for submission is the end of the 6th week, Friday, of the semester. If a deadline can't be made, the instructor must communicate this to OEL.

If using the online agreement, the agreement is a 3 step submission process initiated by the student.

The Internship Agreement

The ACC Internship Agreement is a 3-step, online process initiated by the student. <https://austincc.force.com/learningbydoing/s>

Students who are enrolled in a designated internship, practicum or coop course will log into the system with their ACCeID to initiate completion of the required forms and approvals for tracking and managing the process.

All parties receive a digital copy of the completed agreement and OEL will maintain internship agreements available for department records.

If you have trouble accessing the internship agreement, please contact internships@austincc.edu for further assistance.

5. Advertise / Match Students to Internship Opportunities – Faculty are responsible for advertising and assisting with matching students to internship opportunities. It is strongly encouraged and considered a best practice that faculty make contact with each employer on the Active List to discuss employer needs and possible matches. It is also expected that faculty know their students enough to make recommendations or encourage students to apply to specific internship opportunities.

Faculty should not share the Active List, (google doc) with students as some of our employer partners do not want their contact information shared. It is recommended that a new document is created or personal information such as phone number or email is blocked out for those employers who do not want to be directly contacted. Department Chairs, the course faculty and any other departmental staff that assist with internship placement can be added to this Active List at any time.

Emergency Placement Request

The Internship Coordinator is available to assist internship practicum instructors whose students are having difficulty finding placements from the departmental master lists. This option is **ONLY** available after the student and instructor have exhausted all internship resources, including the semester's active list. The faculty member will also be required to complete the online *Emergency Placement Form, located under the forms tab. The OEL Internship Program will need to know the circumstances of the failure to find placement and the student's specialization.

In this situation, the OEL Internship Program Coordinator will re-engage the departmental masterlist to make inquiries about hiring a student with that specialization. The internship practicum instructor will be notified as employers express interest, and the departmental active list will be updated.

The *[Emergency Internship Placement Request](#) form should be completed by the practicum instructor when students have exhausted all efforts to find an internship through the standard process by the census date of the current semester.

6. Monitor student progress – It is important that the course instructor keep up with the student throughout the course of the semester. Whether it be a midterm evaluation, journals, weekly, monthly or quarterly meetings, the faculty should keep abreast of the students progress. This also means ensuring student employers submit evaluations of the student as they are considered a required document.

Provide Supervision and Guidance to Student and Employer Instructors agrees to be available to student and employer throughout the course of the semester.

Advising the OEL Internship Program director of issues with the

employers Faculty should first advise their department chair of the issue.

The director will only intercede with the employer to remediate a situation at the request of the department chair.

The director will provide advice and support for faculty, as well as documentation in case of a complaint.

The employer may be removed from the master list if requested by the department chair.

7. Submit Final Evaluations - Faculty should complete an OLE Internship Program evaluation to assess the internship experience from the perspective of the internship practicum instructor, and offer feedback to the OEL Internship Program for program improvements.

Evaluation for Faculty

If you are an ACC faculty that has participated in our internship programs, please submit the * Evaluation for Faculty to give us feedback on our internship services. For any questions about our forms, please contact us at: internships@austincc.edu

Employers

Austin Community College Offers Internships in over 45 different program areas and currently works with nearly 1000 business and industry partners for placement of interns. We can help you find the perfect intern for your specific needs within our many academic program areas across the college.

Employers do not have to have a formal internship program to participate. We have many students who take part-time, full-time or temporary positions to fill their academic requirement. We request that employers provide a current job description to the Office of Experiential Learning or directly to the faculty of record for the internship.

Internships provide the perfect opportunity for students, employers and faculty to ensure our graduates have the key workplace skills in their job area

The ACC Office of Experiential Learning can help employers by:

- Establishing an internship program
- Connecting employers with corresponding ACC departments to find students for open internships
- Providing general support during the interns hiring process.

If you are interested in hiring an intern, you can complete the '[Request an Intern](#)' online form and we will reach out to you within one business day to begin the process.

If you would like more information before participating in this program, you may email us at internships@austincc.edu.

4. Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are organized and managed in cooperation between educational institutions and employers. They vary in terms of governance, some being more employer led and others more educational institution led, but they are always paid positions that are associated with a curriculum and are designed as a means for students to put theory into practice and master knowledge in a way that empowers them with professional autonomy. Apprenticeships are typically not course designations, but rather are a sequence of courses organized into a degree or certificate plan as part of an organized apprenticeship program. Apprentices are regular employees of their companies.

Currently, ACC provides related technical instruction for apprenticeship programs in automotive technician (Honda, Toyota), manufacturing (Samsung), and informational technologies (various employers). Interested students should discuss apprenticeships with their department chairs.

Employers interested in partnering with ACC to develop apprenticeship programs should contact the Director of Employer Outreach and Experiential Learning Programs at samuel.greer@austincc.edu.

5. Partners



6. Career Resources

Finding an opportunity that interests you is half the battle. The next step is demonstrating to the employer that you are the right person for the job.

ACC Career & Transfer Services is available to support students in each step of their experiential learning journey. We can help you shape your future, beginning the day you enter our doors with visions of your future life in mind, all the way until you exit our college and land the university transfer spot or job that moves you onward in your career journey. We are eager to support you, not only in your ultimate career goal, but in gaining the insight, skills, learning experiences, and intermittent jobs that strengthen your opportunities and solidify you as the ideal, highly sought after candidate that employers are seeking.

Most employers require that you send a resume and cover letter. A well-written resume and cover letter increase your chances of being invited to an interview. Optimizing your resume utilizing career technology tools can get you past employer firewalls (applicant tracking systems or ATS). Properly preparing and practicing for an interview will help you close the deal and secure the position.. Employers are typically seeking individuals who fit into their work culture and will enhance their team. Your challenge is to demonstrate how you fulfill what the employer is seeking. Clearly articulating your personal competencies, as well as your job-related skills will often give you a competitive edge. "Personal competencies" include a variety of attributes employers are actively seeking in their ideal candidate (how well you communicate, your work ethic, your ability to interact with peers and supervisors successfully, favorable character traits, your leadership skills and problem solving ability, etc.).

Current information is available through the ACC Career Resources web site and can be accessed by simply remembering "/career" (austincc.edu/career). The Career Ready portion of our website features specific events and opportunities associated with preparing for that ideal opportunity.

www.austincc.edu/students/career-services/career-ready

Below are some of the resources available to ACC students seeking Experiential Learning opportunities. These are designed to support your progress toward your ideal career goal.

[Career Ready 101](#) – is a free, independent Blackboard course which can be added by every ACC student who has a Blackboard account. Career Ready 101 is designed to introduce you to the foundational skills and competencies employers are seeking in applicants and interns (based on the National Association of Colleges and Employers [NACE] core competencies). . Career Ready 101 is a self-guided non-credit course designed to provide you with foundational knowledge so you can represent yourself to the best of your ability when the time comes to compete for an internship or other work

opportunity. Upon successful completion of Career Ready 101, students will:

- Use a planning model to make educational and career decisions.
- Identify personal interests, skills and values
- Assess personal strengths and abilities, and practice articulating them
- Research career fields and occupations of interest
- Outline the NACE core competencies
- Articulate transferable skills
- Write a beginner resume
- List career building jobs and economic outcomes of selected career pathways.

Students are encouraged to add Career Ready 101 to their Blackboard account during their first or second semester and actively go through the course . Request access to Career Ready 101: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScwHxhS46hmOtA5re19vGopf2CJunSqwp8d_cL_BXap7EWnuA/viewform

b. Strategies for Today's Jobs (AARX 3002) – This free Continuing Education course is a comprehensive **job search training** program designed to specifically increase your employment opportunities in today's current digital era. Students are encouraged to complete this 1-month long course *the semester prior to enrolling for an internship, practicum, clinical, coop, or apprenticeship; prior to the semester of their graduation; or at any time when needing to secure employment or wanting to advance in their current career path.* . The Strategies for Today's Jobs course is a 16-hour, non-credit, free Continuing Education course (AARX 3002) spanning up 4-weeks, which is applicable to any paid or unpaid job opportunity in a student's area of study. ACC seeks to be a catalyst for economic and social equity in Central Texas. In support of this objective, Strategies for Today's Jobs intentionally incorporates strategies designed to equalize the playing field for individuals who may face barriers or biases in the hiring process. Students enrolled in Strategies for Todays Jobs receive:

- 1-on-1 career coaching
- Help preparing a personal brand and elevator pitch
- Insight regarding transferable skills
- Guidance in writing targeted resumes and cover letters
- Resume analysis utilizing an AI system (artificial intelligence) to strengthen the potential of successfully navigating automated employer screening systems to secure an interview invitation
- Face-to-face and remote interview practice with AI-driven interviewing technology
- Networking experience
- Training in how to take advantage of LinkedIn and Indeed's advanced functionality
- Salary negotiation skills
- Ongoing guidance after completing the course to help secure employment.

b. CareerLink

ACC's Career Service platform, CareerLink, is available via mobile app. CareerLink can be downloaded immediately upon entry to ACC (requires ACC Gmail account) and connects students with important information and services to guide toward, and maintain focus on, career goals. CareerLink provides quick access to:

1. Positions posted by employers seeking to hire ACC students and the ability to interact with them through CareerLink
2. ACC Career & Transfer Services staff
3. Experiential learning opportunities
4. Events such as job fairs, employer meet-ups, networking opportunities, university transfer activities, tips to maximize your experiential learning opportunities and job search, job and career preparation workshops, etc.
5. Feedback on resumes
6. Numerous videos and tips for career exploration or to help stay on track toward your career objective

Use your ACC email to create an account and your ACCeID (numbers only, no first letter). Or schedule an [appointment](#) with a Career & Transfer Specialist for one-on-one assistance. [Login](#) or [create your account](#) today!

c. LibGuides

These resources include a number of articles, videos and other resources that will help you with your resume, workplace skills, and interview strategies

7. Glossary

Active List - A list of employers who have agreed to hire an intern *in the upcoming semester*. Active lists are only valid a single semester and will be updated prior to the beginning of each semester by the OEL Internship Program.

Clinical - Clinical experience is a key component in some programs. Students apply theory learned in the classroom to practice in several clinical settings for 'hands on' experience. Settings for these experiences vary, offering students the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills in areas involving many populations across the lifespan, at medical and/or educational facilities. Clinical classes are designated by having instructional methods CLI in the course schedule

Cooperative Education - Cooperative education is a structured method of combining classroom education and practical work experience. At ACC, cooperative education is defined as employment placement for course credit. Examples at ACC include internship classes, practicums, capstone courses with external placement, independent study courses with external placement, leadership classes, and Health Science clinicals. Internships are a common type of cooperative education experience.

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) - a temporary work authorization directly related to an F-1 student's academic program for which the work counts towards completion of a degree.

Email List - A list of all unduplicated company contacts from all of the departmental master lists who are emailed one month prior to the start of each semester to develop departmental active lists.

Experiential Learning - ACC recognizes experiential learning as an integral part of a student's learning experiences and overall education. Our Experiential Learning Programs strive to provide real-world, hands-on opportunities that help students build upon and enhance previously learned coursework in their area of study.

External Learning Experiences - experiential learning experiences can include in classroom activities, external learning experiences are unique out-of-classroom experiences that are linked directly to job skills development in workplace environments.

Internship - Internships are carefully designed and monitored educational experiences that provide students the opportunity to integrate academic knowledge with practical work experience in a professional setting. They are supervised, mentored, and evaluated experiences that help students test interests, develop new skills and learn first-hand about the workplace in their field of study. Internships may be paid or unpaid. Students earn academic credit for the work they provide to their employer. Internship classes at ACC are regulated by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating board

(THECB) and have requirements for both the minimum number of hours needed to receive course credit and the relevance of the job experiences to the academic degree. Internship classes are designated by having instructional method INT in the course schedule. *Internship is also a blanket term frequently used by employers that include the other THECB defined external learning experiences – practicums and co-ops.*

Marketable Skills - Marketable skills include interpersonal, cognitive, and applied skill areas, are valued by employers, and are primary or complementary to a major. Marketable skills are acquired by students through education, including curricular, co curricular, and extracurricular activities. Marketable skills are often called employability skills in other countries, or transferable skills here in the states. They include both technical and soft skills.

Master List - A list of all potential employers open to hiring an ACC intern. At a minimum, the master list includes the company or agency name and name, phone number, and email address of the hiring agent. Contacts are emailed one month prior to the start of each semester to develop the active lists for each department.

Practicum - Practicums are similar to internships, but are less closely supervised and are suitable for students preparing for career entry. They provide workplace settings in which students gain practical experience in a discipline, enhance skills, and integrate knowledge. Practicum classes are regulated by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). Practicum experiences typically have a larger contact hour requirement than internships and may or may not be paid. Practicums classes are designated by having an instructional method PRA in the course schedule.

Project-Based Learning - PBL is the ongoing act of learning about different subjects simultaneously. This is achieved by guiding students to identify, through research, a real-world problem (local to global) developing its solution using evidence to support the claim, and presenting the solution through a multimedia approach based in a set of 21st-century tools.

Resume - A resume is a document used to represent yourself to potential employers during a job search. It includes your name, current contact information, summaries of your employment experience (work history), education, and relevant skills and achievements.

Service-Learning - A form of experiential learning that integrates community engagement into the curriculum and objectives of a course. These courses are reciprocally beneficial: students work toward addressing community identified needs through service experiences with community partners, while structured in-class reflections aid them in developing a deeper understanding of how disciplinary knowledge connects to and influences the world around them.

Study Abroad - Study abroad is an educational opportunity for students to experience the culture and history of a foreign country, while meeting their ACC course or program of study learning outcomes. It is a unique and rewarding way to add a global perspective to your education and resume, expand professional connections, strengthen foreign language skills, promote culturally responsive practices, and develop skills essential to succeeding in the workforce. Most ACC study abroad programs are offered in the summer semester and all are faculty-led to

Workplace Skills - Workplace skills, often called employability skills, are the basic skills a person must have to succeed in any workplace. They are the core knowledge, skills and attitudes that allow workers to understand instructions, solve problems and get along with co-workers and customers. These skills are necessary for success at all levels of an organization and are transferable from one organization to another. Job skills are not the same as workplace skills. Job skills are the knowledge and experience required to perform a specific job. For example, a nurse must know how to safely give an injection and must be a registered nurse (RN). Workplace skills are more general and are the foundation upon which job skills are built.

8. Forms

Descriptions of each form and process for submitting, online or printed, can be found by selecting the form links below.

A. Internship Forms

Forms available at [TLED.Internship](#)

- a. Curricular Practical Training (CPT)
- b. Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Employment Verification
- c. Emergency Internship Placement Request
- d. Evaluation for Faculty
- e. Evaluation of student
- f. Internship Agreement (online)
- g. Request and Intern
- h. Training Application

B. Service-Learning Forms

Forms available at [TLED.ServiceLearning](#)

- a. [Service-Learning Course Proposal](#)
- b. Service-Learning Agreement - Issued by the Service-Learning Coordinator

9. Contacts

The Office of Experiential Learning

The Office of Experiential Learning (OEL) works with over 750 companies and organizations to assist ACC departments with development and maintenance of cooperative education and service-learning programs. They provide the following services:

- Train and certify faculty.
- Assist with the recruitment and vetting of industry and community partners
- Provide active lists of open vetted internship positions each semester for departments.
- Recommend College-wide standards and best practices for cooperative education and service-learning courses.
- Provide cooperative education training for employers.
- Maintain an internship agreement repository and collecting college-wide data regarding cooperative education and service-learning programs
- Assist city, state, and county agencies, companies, and nonprofits. to develop internship programs.

Staff

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The Office of Career Services

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Career Services provides strategic career guidance, resources, and programs to help students strengthen academic and career goals, establish career plans, develop career readiness competencies, and make successful career transitions. Get personalized, individual assistance from Career Services staff.

Career & Transfer Specialists are available to assist with your job search, connect you with community resources, and help you navigate the changing job market. Our Career Counselors are licensed professionals trained to help individuals navigate change, identify individual strengths, cope with complex emotions, and create a plan of action.

Career Services can assist students with:

- Career exploration and coaching
- University Transfer Assistance
- Resume & cover letter writing assistance
- Access to software tools that analyzes resume effectiveness and provide Face to-face & remote interview practice
- Networking guidance
- Help creating a personal brand & elevator pitch
- LinkedIn & Indeed training
- Salary negotiation skills
- Jobs and internships