

DARTMOUTH

INTERNSHIPS AT DARTMOUTH COLLEGE

Dartmouth College strongly endorses internship experiences for undergraduates as part of a liberal arts education. Internships provide students with opportunities to apply academic learning in non-academic settings, to test career interests, and to exercise responsibility in challenging and maturing situations. Moreover, internships help emphasize that education is not something that takes place only in a formal classroom setting. The interdependence of work and education represents a fundamental part of our philosophy of liberal arts education—to train students to think clearly, to judge and act wisely, to communicate effectively, and to be prepared to take on responsibility in any context and in any situation.

Dartmouth's support services, including our undergraduate career center, encourage students to pursue internships and provide guidance in selecting internships that will best fit each student's academic and career interests. The focus is not only on internships in the context of future career choices, but also on encouraging undergraduates to use their leave terms as an integral part of their liberal arts education. Dartmouth's year-round academic calendar allows students to take advantage of internship opportunities at times when most other college students are in school. Dartmouth has four terms per year in which classes are taught (fall, winter, spring, and summer). During sophomore and junior years, students may elect any pattern of enrollment during these terms, allowing them the flexibility to participate in internships at any time of the year.

Although Dartmouth College fully supports the value of internships, the College does not provide academic credit for these experiences. Academic and non-academic work experiences are both valuable, but the skills needed to develop and evaluate one are quite different from those needed to develop and evaluate the other. Because internships occur outside the supervision of the Dartmouth faculty, the college cannot make judgments about a student's performance in these settings. Similarly, employers cannot be expected to assign academic value to a student's performance in a work setting. Although students do not receive academic credit for internship experiences, many students do use these experiences in their formal academic work by taking an independent study project or writing a thesis based on what they did in an internship. Thus, credit sometimes is earned as a result of an internship but is done within an academic context.

Every year, many of our undergraduates participate in internships and gain a strong sense of the interdependence between a liberal arts education and other forms of work and intellectual activity. We sincerely appreciate the generosity of employers who provide these opportunities, and hope the experiences are as rewarding for employers as they are for Dartmouth students.