

# THE BUSINESS EXTERNSHIP PROGRAM: PLANNING GUIDE



**THE CAREER CENTER  
HAWORTH COLLEGE OF BUSINESS  
WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY**

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# EXTERNSHIP FAQs

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## How can an alum or employer become a part of the Business Externship Program?

- Host a student at your company by serving as an externship coordinator and/or professional mentor
- Recommend an alum or friend of the College who might be interested in participating in the program

## What is the difference between an *externship coordinator* and *professional mentor*?

- The externship coordinator is the individual at your company who arranges the externship, including all the pre-program logistics.
- The professional mentor is the individual(s) who a WMU business student shadows. Students are matched with a professional mentor whose occupation closely matches a career the student would like to explore.
- The externship coordinator and professional mentor can be the same person or can be different people.

## What are the benefits of being a professional mentor?

- Showcase the daily activities, challenges and requirements of your profession
- Demonstrate how your profession aligns with a specific business major
- Gain exposure for your organization by introducing students to company culture
- Identify potential student candidates before your competitors
- Develop your employee's mentoring, coaching, and leadership skills
- Participate in a unique program that gives WMU business students a competitive advantage

## What are the responsibilities of the externship coordinator and/or professional mentor?

- Submit a completed Business Externship Program Registration form and externship description online
- Be available by phone and/or email for your extern to discuss and make arrangements for the externship visit
- Inform your extern of any changes in the externship schedule once dates have been confirmed
- Complete online evaluations of your extern and the program at the conclusion of your externship



# EXTERNSHIP FAQs

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## What is the timeline for the Business Externship Program?

Event	Date
Employer recruitment and registration	July – December
Student recruitment	September – February
Application period for students	February – March
Employer notification	April
Extern professional development	April
Externships	May

## What is the application and selection process?

- Pre-business students, regardless of class status, in the Haworth College of Business are eligible to participate. This includes transfer and international students.
- All externships will be released on Go Live Day!
- Students will have one month to research each opportunity and select up to 5 that are of interest to them. As part of the application process, students will prepare a resume and application essay. Submission of an application does not guarantee a match.
- Students will be notified via email of a decision on Match Day!
- Students are responsible for all expenses incurred including housing, meals and transportation.

## How are the students matched with a professional mentor?

- Students and professional mentors are matched based on three criteria: interest areas, career pathways, and externships of interest. Matching is completed by the coordinators of the program.
- After a student receives their match, they have one week to enroll in the program. They may accept or decline their externship.
- If a student enrolls in the program, they will complete an extern profile.
- The extern profile and portions of the extern's application will be emailed to each professional mentor when the match is announced to employers.

## When will externships occur?

Most externships occur during the "Hot Spot," the period immediately following the conclusion of spring semester at WMU. This is usually the first three weeks in May. If necessary, professional mentors may select a date outside of the "Hot Spot."



# EXTERNSHIP FAQs

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## How will externs be prepared for the externship?

In order to participate in the Business Externship Program, externs must attend and participate in two professional development workshops led by the program coordinators.

## What does the first professional development workshop cover?

This workshop will prepare and provide externs with all the necessary information needed to be successful at the externship site. Topics to be covered include:

- Preparing appropriate questions for conducting informational interviews
- Company research
- Business communication, business etiquette, corporate culture
- Requirements after the externship (evaluation, thank you, etc.)

Additionally, externs will receive and sign a series of documents, including:

- Learning contract
- Liability release and confidentiality agreement

Signatures on all documents are required to participate in the Business Externship Program.

## What does the second professional development workshop cover?

This workshop will assist externs with incorporating the externship into their career development and planning strategies. Topics that will be covered will include:

- How to incorporate the externship on their resume
- How to discuss their opportunity in an interview
- Feedback on overall program experience



# CREATING A BUSINESS EXTERNSHIP

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There are a number of decisions to make in planning a rewarding externship experience for college students. The following list is meant as a guide to help in planning your experience, however, it is meant as a guide only. The program is intended to provide the greatest flexibility, allowing each employer to develop their own unique externship experience.

1. Decide how many students to host and whether they will visit you as a group or on separate days.
2. Determine the date(s) and the start and end time(s). A one to three day externship is recommended.
3. Decide which departments and/or business functions can be observed at your site (accountancy, finance, marketing, management, computer information systems, etc.).
  - Keep in mind first-year students and sophomores may be exploring a variety of business majors and may not have selected an area of business they will focus on yet.
  - The externship is a learning experience and students should not be expected to know the specific details related to your daily work.
4. Determine any other requirements or qualifications desired.
5. Identify a professional mentor and externship coordinator to participate in the program.
  - The professional mentor and externship coordinator can be the same person or different.
  - Externs can have more than one professional mentor during their externship. They do not have to stay with the same person the entire time.
6. Coordinate with others in the company to plan the scope of the extern's experience to gain exposure to various applications of his/her area of interest.
7. Decide on topics to showcase during the experience.
8. Organize a schedule of events. Review the sample agendas in this guide for ideas (pages 8 to 12).
9. Obtain appropriate clearance for the visit if necessary.
10. When appropriate, inform supervisors (and/or affected clients/customers) that a student(s) will be present and that they have signed confidentiality agreements and waivers of liability.
11. Contact a current externship coordinator or professional mentor to discuss their experience and ask questions. Names and contact information are on page 19 of this guide.
12. Communicate with The Career Center to address any questions, problems, or concerns.



# EXTERNSHIPS ACTIVITIES TO CONSIDER

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Each externship opportunity will be unique, but some of the possible activities that others have scheduled include:

- Allow extern(s) to observe the day-to-day activities and challenges of a job(s) that relates to his/her area of interest
- Schedule informational interviews with the professional mentor and/or other staff members
- Attend a business meetings or lunch
- Allow limited assistance with day-to-day responsibilities for demonstration purposes
- Provide a short-term project, depending on the length of the externship opportunity
- Provide a tour of the company
- Show a sample of the company's marketing and training videos
- Discuss the organizational chart, company culture and work environment
- Schedule meetings with the President, CEO, head of the department, or other individuals who can give a broad perspective of the company
- Have an HR representative describe future employment opportunities within the company, review the student's resume, and practice/discuss interviewing
- Expose the extern(s) to current technology and tools used by professionals in your field
- Have the extern(s) meet new hires to get a realistic view of the first year on the job
- Have the extern(s) meet a current intern to learn more about the internship program at your company
- Set up an informal meal/meeting with alumni or other professionals to teach the extern(s) more about the company and provide an opportunity to network
- Possible topics for discussion with extern(s):
  - Advice for extern(s) wanting to get into your industry and/or your particular company
  - Trends affecting your industry
  - Classes the extern(s) should consider taking
  - Experiences/internships extern(s) should have if they want to pursue a career in your field
  - Suggested publications to keep extern(s) informed
  - Professional associations that extern(s) should consider joining
  - Internship experience at your company



# SAMPLE EXTERNSHIP AGENDAS

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There are many ways to organize your externship. We have built an incredible amount of flexibility into the program – there is not one, prescribed way that you must conduct your externship. We want you to determine what is best for your company. Your externship can be one to three days in length (or longer if you prefer). Our advisory committee recommends a two day externship, based on their experience with the program and feedback from externs and mentors.

Below are several examples of externships that have occurred in the past. You may use these as a guide when arranging your own externship.

## Sales externship at Enterprise Rent-A-Car<sup>1</sup> – 1 day

Time	Activity
9-9:30 a.m.	Meet with externship contact (WMU alumna) to discuss goals and outcomes of the day
9:30-10:45 a.m.	Shadow first professional mentor; visit various company branches
10:45-11:45 a.m.	Participate in role plays: “Steps to Making a Sale” and “Steps to Finding Facts” and a resume critique
11:45 a.m.-12:15 p.m.	Visit a local client
12:15-1:15 p.m.	Lunch with second professional mentor
1:15-2:00 p.m.	Tour of corporate building
2-2:30 p.m.	Informational interview with second professional mentor
2:30-3 p.m.	Informational interview with a company employee (WMU alumnus)
3-3:15 p.m.	Break
3:15-4:30 p.m.	Observe a client presentation
4:30-5 p.m.	Meet with second professional mentor to wrap-up and discuss the entire day

## Accounting externship at The Dow Chemical Company<sup>2</sup> – 1 day

Time	Activity
8 a.m.	Meet externs in hotel lobby for transport to Dow campus
8:10 a.m.	Travel to Dow Center
8:30-9:30 a.m.	Welcome and overview of Dow (includes breakfast)
9:30-9:45 a.m.	Break and travel to 5000 building
9:45-11:15 a.m.	Job shadows
11:15-11:45 a.m.	Break and travel to Midland Country Club
11:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m.	Lunch with Vice President and Controller
1:15-1:30 p.m.	Break and travel to 5000 building
1:30-3 p.m.	Job shadows
3-3:15 p.m.	Break
3:15-3:45 p.m.	Meet with newer Dow employees and 2012 interns
3:45-4 p.m.	Wrap-up with recruiters

*Note: Dow requested that the externs arrive the night before their externship due to the distance most would travel. Dow arranged for the hotel and generously paid for the cost of lodging for each extern.*

## Externship for all majors at Educational Community Credit Union<sup>2</sup> – 2 days

Time	Activity
<b>Day 1</b>	
9 a.m.	Kickoff – All externs and staff in training room for introductions
9:15 a.m.	Overview of ECCU by President/CEO
9:30-9:55 a.m.	Department presentation: IT
10-10:25 a.m.	Department presentation: Compliance
10:30-11 a.m.	Department presentation: Deb Solutions
11:05 a.m. to noon	Department presentation: Lending (possible tour)
Noon	Lunch with senior management
1-1:55 p.m.	Department presentation: Marketing
2-2:55 p.m.	Department presentation: Accounting
3-3:55 p.m.	Department presentation: Operations (tour specific areas)
4-4:55 p.m.	Department presentation: Human Resources (“What’s my color?” activity)
<i>Note: scheduling for day 2 will be completed during the Human Resources presentation. Health breaks may be taken as needed during the day.</i>	
<b>Day 2</b>	
The day 2 schedule will be arranged to accommodate the requests of our externs. Time will not be an issue. If externs are taking a morning class, we will schedule afternoon sessions. We will provide one-on-one time with any of our department representatives for in-depth questions and further exploration of fields of interest. Externs may request to be scheduled with any or all of our various departments during this day.	

## Banking externship at Fifth Third Bank<sup>3</sup> – 2 days

Time	Activity
<b>Day 1</b>	
9 a.m.	Welcome and ice breaker
9:15 a.m.	Overview of Fifth Third Bank and tour
10 a.m.	Small group roundtable discussions with Fifth Third Leadership (Community President of Kalamazoo Market, Vice President of Commercial Banking, and Retail & Banking LOB CFO) – three rotations for 30 minutes each
11:30 a.m.	Fifth Third quiz and prizes
Noon	Lunch, catered from local restaurant
1:15 p.m.	Curious Bank workshops with Fifth Third employees
2:45 p.m.	Wrap-up and assignments for day 2
<b>Day 2</b>	
Job shadows with Fifth Third employees; match based on extern’s indicated major or area of interest.	



### Retail externship at Wal-mart<sup>3</sup> - 1 day

Time	Activity
10 a.m.	Introductions in Market Office
10:10 am.	Human resource overview with personal associate
10:30 a.m.	Invoice overview with office associate
10:50 a.m.	IMS/Backroom/ASM overview with assistant manger
Noon	Lunch with store manager and human resource manager
1:10 p.m.	Fresh overview with assistant manager
2 p.m.	Frontend/community involvement/shift overview with shift manager
3 p.m.	SOTC and tour with store manager
3:55 p.m.	Wrap-up in Market Office with human resource manager

### Supply chain management externship at John Deere - 2 days

Time	Activity
<b>Day 1</b>	
8 a.m.	Arrive at Harvester Works Lobby (Moline, IL)
Morning	Order Fulfillment Process Rotation (OFP = Production Supply Management)
Mid-Morning	Product Delivery Process Rotation (PDP = New Product Development)
Lunch	Cafeteria at Factory
Mid-Afternoon	Tour of Harvester Works
Afternoon	Production Control
4 p.m.	Wrap-up
6 p.m.	Dinner at local restaurant (John Deere employee will drive externs to dinner.)
<b>Day 2</b>	
8 a.m.	Arrive at Davenport Works Lobby (Davenport, IA): Introduction to C&F Supply Chain Structure and Order Fulfillment Process Rotation
9 a.m.	Cost Management
10 a.m.	Tour of Davenport Works
11:10 a.m.	Cost Management
11:30 a.m.	Lunch at factory cafeteria
12 p.m.	Strategic Sourcing – Supply Base Manager
1 p.m.	Indirect Materials and Services
2 p.m.	Implementation and Integration
3 p.m.	Wrap-up discussion

### HR externship at Palace Sports & Entertainment - 1 day

Time	Activity
10 a.m.	Welcome and Palace Sports & Entertainment overview
11 a.m.	Palace tour
12:15 p.m.	Lunch
1:30 p.m.	Speaker panel: VP of HR (overview of HR team, structure, and objectives)
2 p.m.	Speaker panel: HR Operations (payroll, benefits, HR systems)
2:30 p.m.	Speaker panel: Organizational Development (culture integration/performance management)
3 p.m.	Speaker panel: Talent Acquisition (recruitment strategy and selection process)
3:30 p.m.	Wrap-up and Q&A

## Externship for all majors at Haworth Inc. - 3 days

Time	Activity	Externs
<b>Day 1</b>		
8-8:15 a.m.	Greetings and information	All
8:15-9:15 a.m.	Tour of headquarters	All
9:15-10:15 a.m.	Video: The Haworth Story	All
10:15-11:15 a.m.	Tour of manufacturing P\plant	All
11:15 a.m. – 12 p.m.	Welcome from VP of Global IS and Human Resources	All
12-1 p.m.	Lunch in Member Center	All
1-5 p.m.	Member Relations	Extern 1
	Corporate Communications	Externs 2 and 3
	Product Line Management	Extern 4
	Marketing Collateral/Program Management	Extern 5
	HR Staffing	Extern 6
	Member Relations	Extern 7
	Finance	Extern 8
<b>Day 2</b>		
8 a.m. - 12 p.m.	Marketing Collateral/Program Management	Externs 1 and 2
	Public Relations	Externs 4 and 8
	Supply Chain	Extern 5
	Member Relations	Extern 6
	Marketing Programs/Mosaic	Externs 3 and 7
12-1 p.m.	Lunch	All
1-5 p.m.	Marketing Collateral/Program Management	Extern 2
	Public Relations	Externs 2 and 3
	Supply Chain	Extern 5
	Creative Studio	Extern 3
1-3 p.m.	HR Staffing	Extern 6
3-5 p.m.	Member Relations	
<b>Day 3</b>		
8-9 a.m.	WMU Alumni Coffee	All
9 a.m. – 12 p.m.	Manufacturing Consolidation and Transfer (MCAT)	Externs 1 and 6
	Client Services	Externs 2 and 7
	Creative Studio	Extern 4
	Client Services	Extern 5
	Product Line Management	Extern 3
	Marketing Collateral/Program Management	Extern 8
12-1 p.m.	Lunch	All
1-5 p.m.	HR Staffing	Externs 1, 6, and 7
	Marketing Programs/Mosaic	Extern 2
	Creative Studio	Extern 4
	Member Relations	Extern 5
	Client Services	Extern 3
	Product Line Management	Extern 8
5-5:30 p.m.	Wrap-up and closing	All

## Externship for all majors at DFCU Financial – 2 days

Time	Activity
<b>Day 1</b>	
9 a.m.	Welcome externs as they arrive in the lobby
9:15 a.m.	Group welcome with opening remarks from the CEO
9:30 a.m.	All about DFCU presentation
10:15 a.m.	Break
10:30 a.m.	Department Speakers: Marketing
10:50 a.m.	Department Speakers: Accounting
11:10 a.m.	Department Speakers: Finance
11:30 a.m.	Department Speakers: Lending
Noon	Lunch with department speakers and executive team
1 p.m.	Department Speakers: Human Resources
1:20 p.m.	Department Speakers: IM&D
1:40 p.m.	Department Speakers: Branch/MSC
2 p.m.	Break
2:15 p.m.	Building tour
3 p.m.	Myers-Briggs personality type activity with Human Resources
4 p.m.	Wrap-up
<b>Day 2</b>	
9 a.m.	Opening remarks and department assignments
9:15 a.m.	Meet with departments of interest
Noon	Lunch with departments
1 p.m.	“Choosing the career that fits you” activity
1:45 p.m.	Meet and greet with other graduates at DFCU (discussion about transition from school to work and best advice)
3 p.m.	Break
3:15 p.m.	Attracting and retaining current workforce discussion
4 p.m.	Program wrap-up: answer final questions and closing comments

## Finance externship at Edward Jones – 1 day

Time	Activity
9 a.m.	Meet with professional mentor to discuss daily activities including an overview of financial planning for clients and prospective clients.
10:30 a.m.	Meet with professional mentor’s secretary to learn computer systems, daily office activities, and proper communication with clients.
11 a.m.	Shadow a financial advisor with two years of experience to understand necessary skills to turn prospective clients into actual clients through phone calls and seminars.
2:30-5 p.m.	Shadow a new financial advisor by walking door-to-door in a local neighborhood.

<sup>1</sup> This company is a sponsor of the Business Externship Program and a Premier Partner of The Career Center.

<sup>2</sup> This company is a sponsor of the Business Externship Program.

<sup>3</sup> This company is a Premier Partner of The Career Center.

# PREPARING FOR YOUR EXTERN'S ARRIVAL

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- Provide extern(s) with a set of company promotional and recruitment materials to learn more about your company.
- Provide extern(s) with directions to your office, along with information about parking if needed.
- Provide extern(s) with an agenda for their externship. Also provide a list of the common acronyms used at your organization.
- Provide extern(s) with their professional mentor's name and contact information, if it is someone other than the externship coordinator.
- Inform extern(s) about the company dress code.
- Inform extern(s) about their dining options (lunch, dinner, etc.)
- If applicable, inform extern(s) about possible hotel accommodations. Certain hotels have an age minimum to make reservations (generally 18 years old). Please check with the hotel you are recommending to ensure your extern(s) will be able to make a reservation.
- Determine whether or not your company would be willing to have a staff member from The Career Center visit during your externship. If you are willing, please let us know. We would love to visit and see how your externship is arranged.



# FEEDBACK FROM PROFESSIONAL MENTORS

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At the end of each externship cycle, we ask both the externs and mentors to complete evaluations of the program. We use this information to make changes for improvement. We hope this information demonstrates the power of this program, as well as how diverse each externship can be.

Below you will find excerpts from the professional mentor evaluations, placed into three categories: Strengths of the program, what worked, and what could be done differently.

## What are the strengths of this program?

“I thought the externship was a wonderful way to allow students to really see a day in the life without committing much of their own time to that company. I also believe from my company's standpoint, it is a great way to evaluate the talent at our top campuses for recruiting and also prepare the next generation for life after college.”

“It is a great program for students and organizations to be exposed to each other. It has served as a talent pipeline opportunity for us as well as for potential interns.”

“I think the students overall asked great questions, were engaged and open to learning about our company and my position.”

“The benefits to the externship program can only be evaluated over time. For the business this exercise represents a commitment of time and resources that does not disrupt productivity. The benefits could potentially come from the goodwill and promotion of the company as a future employer to these students. Improving the knowledge base of students is beneficial if our company can tap into this improved talent pool.”

“I was very impressed with the extern and found that actually talking about what I do is enlightening even to me.”

“As a WMU alumna, it feels great to share my professional experience with current students. I do not feel as if graduates today are realistic with their expectations regarding their careers and this program has given me the opportunity to provide students with a realistic, real-world job preview.”

“It was wonderful being able to give that ‘real world’ experience to an individual so eager to learn her prospective occupation. Alumni should get involved not only because they are able to directly help the community in which they operate, but also because they can aid in the development of youth in our industries.”

“As a WMU HCoB alumnus, I found the Business Externship Program to be personally very rewarding while offering an opportunity to mold and develop future business professionals. As alumni and business professionals, I believe part of our duty it to ensure WMU students have the greatest opportunity to excel both academically and professionally. By all accounts, participating in the Business Externship Program provides that opportunity.”

“Post-graduation, it is good to see that there are new WMU students being introduced into the Advertising and Promotion program in the early stages of their college careers. Both of the externs posed good questions and seemed genuinely interested in learning all facets and departments of the Agency.”

“I feel the Department of Treasury benefitted from having this extern along with the extern benefitting. Our extern is studying supply chain management and I look at this as an opportunity for him to learn more about government procurement while we learned from him what students look for in their work environment.”

# FEEDBACK FROM PROFESSIONAL MENTORS

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## What worked?

“Making a schedule: I provided my extern with a schedule of what meetings she would be involved in and who was involved from my company in those meetings. Prior to each event I was able to brief her on what the meeting was about and answer any questions before and after.”

“Schedule meetings related to her areas of interest: Prior to arriving I asked my intern what specific areas of the business she was interested in. She explained her interest in the environment and sustainability. I set up meetings with people in the organization who are responsible for our sustainability initiatives.”

“Rotating through the different areas of our organization was good because it only required a small time commitment from each person who was involved. Yet the students were able to get a wide view of the organization.”

“I think the fact that the extern was able to get a glimpse into the many areas of our company that she was interested in is the key. By the time I met with her, she was able to say that certain things interested her still and others not. To be able to gain even the slightest amount of insight is huge in making career choices.”

“I think exposing them to different meetings was beneficial in learning the scope of our largest industry tradeshow. It demonstrated the full range of people that work together from different departments to create a successful sales tool.”

“Coffee with other alumni - this gave the students a chance to network with different members of the business.”

“A 2 hour block of time was perfect to review our department information. I structured the time as an overview of the departments that I manage and walked through some of the activities that the department is responsible for.”

“We had the externs meet with everyone from our newest employees to our most established employees, interns to managers. I felt this was beneficial in demonstrating the link between the choices they are making now and where those choices can take them in the future. It's one thing to say I want to be an IT Manager, but it's an entirely different thing to actually see the path that is required to get there.”

“We arranged meetings with as many different areas as possible within a two-day period. We could have filled an entire week having them meet with all of the areas in IT, but this was a great introduction to the many opportunities in IT.”

“The first couple hours of getting acquainted were nice. I feel that the extern walked away with the benefit of having a networking contact and mentor if he chooses to use the connection.”

“Our team luncheon was great because it was an opportunity for the whole team to meet the extern. Also, the morning huddle introduction was helpful because it was a great way to make the externs feel included from the beginning.”

# FEEDBACK FROM PROFESSIONAL MENTORS

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## What worked? Continued.

“For this to be effective the professional mentor must be comfortable with completely sharing what happens during their day which may not always be easy.”

“My extern helped me build an in-store display which is a reflection of what I do on a day-to-day basis.”

“We made extra time for him to work with the departments he was most interested in. We also took the extern out for lunch to talk about plans, goals, life, etc.”

“Both externs met with employees at various levels (Staff Accountant, Senior, Manager, Senior Manager, Partner). Meetings were a half hour. This set up seemed to work really well. We also had a small group of five to six people that went to lunch so the externs also had a chance to ask questions in a less formal setting.”

“We showed him all aspects of our company, so he understood the processes that make things happen. We also involved him in activities so he felt welcome and not just watching everything we did.”

“Our business is based on the road. We took our extern to actual sales calls on the road.”



# FEEDBACK FROM PROFESSIONAL MENTORS

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## What would you change or do differently?

“I would make sure the length is appropriate to the goals. I spent two hours with our person and probably could have spent more time with additional lead time and planning.”

“Perhaps time should be built in for small breaks as they were literally being talked at all day and I could tell that energy was down, and understandably so, at the end of the day.”

“Unfortunately I could only spend one hour with my extern, not allowing much time to explain the total aspect of my job.”

“I think next year, we will put more structure around the shadowing piece. That part was looser than I would have liked.”

“We didn’t have the extern participate in any actual work. We will incorporate some of that into next year’s program.”

“I felt that 90 minutes was not enough time. I would have liked to go over more but was rushed with actual production needs.”

“I had one extern scheduled for 2 hours and one for 4 hours. 4 hours is too long a block to be assigned to one person.”

“Send the extern a schedule, maps, the people involved and their contact information before the externship.”

“Provide an outline or agenda of what the company will be doing with the externs so that they know what they will be doing and what will be expected of them before the externship.”

“I would have extern hosts try to give the extern as much real life, hands on experience as possible. Talking with them is fine, but if you can involve them in your company’s routine activities (conference calls, meetings, etc.) I think that gives them a better perspective on their field.”

“Consider having mentors include externs in meetings, and daily activities by all levels of business so they get to see the different responsibilities.”

“We had two days full for the students to meet with various roles. I think it may have been more beneficial for the students to meet with less people for longer times.”

“We may consider lengthening our externship to two days instead of one. Two of our three externs remained after hours to ask more in-depth questions of our Chief Financial Officer.”

“I would make the experience be more of a rotational overview and bring the students in for one day instead of two. I don’t think it would be completely valuable for the students to come in and sit with only one or two people for a day or two.”

# FEEDBACK FROM EXTERNS

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## What did you find valuable about being an extern?

“I learned a lot of things that can't be taught from classes or books. Getting real-world exposure is the best way to learn and that is definitely what I did. I can use what I learned to be more professional and have sharper skills in the workplace.”

“I was given extensive insight as well as advice that I will carry through my future endeavors, things that I would have never learned without the help of this program.”

“I thought the networking was one of the best parts of this program. I was able to meet and talk to so many people that were once in my shoes. I received excellent advice how to further my leadership skills, to progress in my major, and how to interview better. I also had awesome conversations with others that were not my mentor and this made it easy for me to make my mind up on what I want to accomplish in the future.”

“I have learned a ton about the corporate world in general. I am not sure what I expected but it was totally different than what I had expected. It was also very beneficial to me to have two different externships because one was with a smaller company and another with a large corporation. I think that's a very important aspect to research, and having hands on, inside access to the workplace in these two types of companies was helpful. I have learned that your career will probably go in many different directions throughout life, but I think it is important for a student to know what kind of business they would like to work in after college, corporation or privately owned. I would recommend this program to every student, it helped me so much and I am so happy I was able to participate.”

“I feel like this experience has had a great impact on my academics and future career. I was able to apply classes such as Computer Information Systems, Accounting, and Economics to this externship because of the activities I participated in. I gained so much knowledge on an industrial marketing perspective which was very interesting for me. I know that I will use a lot of this information from this externship in the future because of all the things I learned academically I was able to use in this experience. I found this externship very beneficial for me in a variety of ways.”

“Though I found all careers and jobs that I shadowed interesting, I was able to eliminate a number of them from ones I might have a potential interest in pursuing. At the same time, I was better able to narrow my focus on what kind of jobs I might enjoy and want to look into further. Because I was able to better understand the skills and talents that made one successful in certain positions, I could examine my passions and how they fit into each of the roles I shadowed.”

“One of the main things I learned at my externship was things don't just fall in your lap. You need to work hard for what you want. It also taught me how to act in a business environment. I got to see all the different kind of jobs companies have, and see how they work together to make their customers happy. I gained the real world experience, and may have an interest in pursuing hospitality as a major.”



# PROFESSIONAL MENTOR ASSISTANCE

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If you are interested in speaking with a current externship coordinator or professional mentor, please feel free to contact anyone from the list below.

**Patti Lis**, Group Human Resource Manager  
Enterprise Holdings (Farmington Hills, MI)  
[patricia.a.lis@ehl.com](mailto:patricia.a.lis@ehl.com)  
Externship Coordinator 2010-1013

**Tammy Phelps**, VP of Operations  
Educational Community Credit Union (Kalamazoo, MI)  
[tphelps@eccu1.org](mailto:tphelps@eccu1.org)  
Externship Coordinator 2013, Professional Mentor 2010-2012

**Tim St. Onge**, VP of Operations  
Eliaison Corporation (Portage, MI)  
[tims@eliasoncorp.com](mailto:tims@eliasoncorp.com)  
Externship Coordinator and Professional Mentor 2010-2013

For any additional questions, please feel free to contact a Business Externship Program coordinator listed below.

**Geralyn Heystek**, Director  
[geralyn.heystek@wmich.edu](mailto:geralyn.heystek@wmich.edu)  
(269) 387-2759



# SPONSORING THE BUSINESS EXTERNSHIP PROGRAM

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The first cycle of Business Externship Program was funded through grants from Enterprise Rent-A-Car and Eaton Corporation, and has been generously sponsored by The Dow Chemical Company, Educational Community Credit Union, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, and The J.M. Smucker Company in the past few years.

We are currently seeking sponsors for the 2014 cycle of the program. There are three levels of sponsorship available: Bronco Gold (\$2,000), Bronco Silver (\$1,000), and Bronco Bronze (\$500). The levels are described on our sponsorship handout, which can be requested by contacting GERALYN HEYSTEK.

## Externship Assistance for Students

As a part of the Business Externship Program, students are required to pay for any cost associated with the program. As we expand to a larger geographic region and increase the number of students in the program, we will continue to provide more travel scholarships for externs. A portion of your sponsorship will assist externs with the cost of their externship, including lodging, food, and transportation.

Please contact GERALYN HEYSTEK if you are interested in becoming a sponsor and to request the sponsorship handout.

**Geralyn Heystek**  
[geraly.heystek@wmich.edu](mailto:geraly.heystek@wmich.edu)  
(269) 387-2759



*Above: The Business Externship Program receives grant from Enterprise Rent-A-Car. Pictured (l-r): GERALYN HEYSTEK (Director and Externship Coordinator), Michelle Hoisington (Enterprise Rent-A-Car, Regional Recruiting Supervisor), Patricia Lis (Enterprise Rent-A-Car, Human Resource Manager), and Jessie Wagner (Career Development Specialist and Externship Coordinator).*