

Undergraduate Internships in International Studies

What is an internship?

An internship is a full-or part-time position for a fixed term, during the academic year or during school breaks, in which a student receives supervised practical training in a specialized professional field. An internship is closely related to the student's academic and career goals, and may serve as a precursor to employment. An internship is an excellent avenue for exploration into unfamiliar professional fields, or a way to develop specific skills such as writing, analysis, fundraising, web design, etc. It will allow you to "try out" a potential employer or type of job, without a long-term commitment from you or from the employer. Internships also provide valuable networking opportunities in your chosen field. In many cases (although this varies by industry) internships can lead to future offers of employment.

What are the benefits of an internship?

One benefit of an internship is academic credit. INTS students can earn between 0 and 4 credits for an internship if it is pre-approved by the INTS program office (0 credits means transcript notation). Registration for credit is not required – students can complete any internship without notifying or getting approval from INTS, so long as they do not want to earn credits for the internship. A second benefit is that an internship provides work experience, skill development, networking opportunities, and a window into the industry. Some internships are paid and/or offer transportation or housing benefits.

How do I find an internship?

Many organizations in Denver do work relevant to International Studies. Students may also find relevant internships in Washington D.C., New York City, their home towns, or outside of the US. Technology has made finding internships much easier, as many organizations now post internship opportunities on their websites, and there are numerous consolidated internet databases of internship listings. The main DU Career Center in Driscoll South maintains listings of opportunities in a variety of fields. The INTS Internship Coordinator posts International Studies-related internships on the program website: <http://portfolio.du.edu/intern>, along with links to numerous internship search sites. Many students find internships by attending DU internship and career fairs, and by talking to their classmates and professors who have worked with relevant organizations.

What do interns do?

Many internships involve a clerical component, along with more specific responsibilities related to the mission of the organization. Examples include special research, coordination of special events, external communication projects, or direct support for permanent full-time employees in their ongoing duties. The options are endless, so if there is something specific you wish to do or a skill you wish to hone, that is the first decision to make in beginning your internship search. Organizations expect that most interns lack substantive job experience and will consider your education, technical or foreign language skills, extracurricular involvement, and your interests as they relate to the organization's mission.

Where do I start?

Visit <http://portfolio.du.edu/intern>, conduct online searches, make an appointment with the INTS internship coordinator in Room 101 of Cherrington Hall (baints@du.edu or 303.871.4495), and talk to friends, family, and professors.