

Dear Student Intern,

If you're reading this, that means you have accepted a virtual internship for the next upcoming months. We wanted to congratulate you and commend you for making the most out of this difficult time. The Office of Internship Programs at Siena has created a guidebook of tips and tricks to help you during this new experience! We hope you find this information helpful, and if you have any questions, concerns, etc. our contact information will be listed at the end of this document.

Thank you, and good luck with your virtual internship!

Sincerely,

The Office of Internship Programs at Siena College

Tips & Tricks for Success: Virtual Student Internships

1. Creating Space and Structure

- It's important for student interns to note that while this internship will alleviate travel time of physically going into the office, the work is no less important. A virtual internship must meet all of the criteria as a traditional internship, the only difference is where the work takes place (remotely).
- Make sure that you are on the same page with the employer as far as a schedule/hours/expectations go. It helps to establish this at the very beginning of the internship.
- Select your workplace and if possible, set up a desk with any and all materials necessary for yourself! This separation and designation of space will help you maintain professionalism and to stay organized. Have all of your materials set up on your desk beforehand (notes, calendar, pens, pencils, etc.). If you can, set it up in a quiet space in case the employer wants to speak over the phone or Zoom call.
- Create structure for yourself. Flexibility is nice, but structure enables you to stay organized and on top of your tasks.

2. Communication

- Be flexible! Keep in mind that everyone is working remotely during this pandemic, and people may be keeping different schedules. It is important to be flexible, have patience, and check your main form of communication (email, cell phone, etc.) frequently.
- Clearly and effectively communicate. This is another area where professionalism is key, whether you are communicating via Zoom, Skype, phone calls, or emails.
- Communication tools: if there is a specific program that your employer wants you to use make sure that you familiarize yourself with it beforehand so you are ready to go and comfortable with the technology aspect of this position.
- It is also important to maintain good communication with your supervisor and mentor during this internship experience.

3. Professionalism

- Professional development is crucial. Therefore, it is important to maintain the professionalism of the position. Just because the work is being done at home, doesn't mean that it is any less important. It is crucial to maintain a separation between your home and professional life, and remind yourself that this is a step in your professional and academic career.
- Stay in frequent contact, but maintain professionalism always.

4. Organization & Time Management

- Plan ahead and stay organized! One tip to help you stay organized is to have a set schedule that you and your supervisor are comfortable with, and try to stick to it! While working remotely may allow you to be in control over the hours while completing your internship remotely more so than going into an office from 9-5, it's important to maintain a schedule and a routine. This will create structure within your work day and will help you get everything done, while balancing other class work or occupations.

- Maintaining a schedule and staying goal oriented will aid you in meeting deadlines and keeping the stress low, but know that it is okay to revise your goals as necessary. Sometimes, the unexpected work will arise, so it is important to prioritize your goals and revise as necessary.
- Set deadlines, and make sure you break down the work into smaller pieces. This will help with stress reduction and ensure that you meet the deadline accordingly.

5. Productivity

- Prepare your materials beforehand so that you don't waste any time! This includes snack and beverage preparation to ensure that you don't waste time wandering into the kitchen and potentially getting distracted by your environment (sounds ridiculous, but it's true!)
- Take notes and have a to-do list with upcoming deadlines, or create deadlines and goals for yourself to enhance productivity. This will ensure that you are getting the most out of your internship experience as possible.
- Ask your supervisor/ mentor for feedback. This will allow you to grow within the internship. This is vital especially since you will be doing the work remotely. It's important for you to take the step and ask for feedback so you can reach your full potential so be proactive by asking for feedback.
- Clarify the expectations of an assignment or task until they are understood
- Don't be afraid to take initiative when possible! Employers will commend you for this.

Contact Information for the Office of Internship Programs

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