Peabody/JHU Policies on Internships – Guidelines for Employers

At the Peabody Conservatory of The Johns Hopkins University, students participate in internships that may be paid or unpaid. Academic credit for internships is coordinated through the office of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Students may complete internships in the summer, fall, or spring, or during winter break. As an employer, it is your responsibility to be aware of the Federal government’s requirements for unpaid and minimally paid internships, regardless of whether academic credit is awarded by an educational institution. For-profit organizations should review the U.S. Department of Labor’s Internships and the Fair Labor Standards Act at http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.htm.

Below are some tips for complying with the DOL’s standards as well as links to other resources.

Internship definition:
An internship is a career-related experience that allows students to apply the knowledge and skills they’ve developed from their academic studies in a practical, workplace setting. All internships should provide students with exposure to an occupation, industry or career field and have a clear purpose and focus. Internships typically involve a student working in a professional setting under the supervision and monitoring of one or more practicing professionals. As such, employers are expected to be invested in the career exploration and professional development of the students that intern at their organizations. (Adapted from the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) http://www.naceweb.org/Home.aspx)

Criteria for internships that primarily benefit students' career development:
- The internship's central focus is educating students to apply in a professional environment the artistic, technical, organizational, critical thinking and communication skills that they've developed at Peabody/JHU.
- The intern receives regular and on-going supervision, feedback, coaching, and mentoring.
- The intern contributes to the organization in a value-added, meaningful way.

To do this:
- **Create a job description that outlines the expectations and objectives of the internship.** The description provides a framework for students to learn about your field/industry and affirms the value of the work they will do. Having specific projects for students to complete is an excellent way for students to develop career-related competencies while contributing to your organization. Also include in the description a list of duties and qualifications, as you would when advertising for regular paid positions.
- **Connect the internship experience to learning.** Whether or not a student receives academic credit for an internship, it should provide the student with an opportunity to develop career-related skills and competencies. These competencies should be transferable to other organizations or even other industries in order to foster the student's career development. Students want to learn about organizational structure, engage with a variety of professionals, and receive insight into pertinent topics. Clear transparent communication is important for students to learn about your organization, field, and the world of work.
- **Plan to supervise the intern.** Supervision is the foundation for a successful internship. Setting clear expectations, engaging in regular follow-up and providing feedback are essential components of a great internship experience for both student and employer. Due to the educational nature of internships, employers provide a greater level of supervision to interns than to employees. Providing opportunities for students to reflect on their internship experiences during supervision is an excellent way to foster to their career development.

If you have questions, please contact Peabody’s Music Entrepreneurship & Career Center at mecc@jhu.edu.

For more information on internship best practices and federal regulations please see:
- U.S. Department of Labor: Internships and the Fair Labor Standards Act