



**Internships Research  
Readout**

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# Executive Summary (1 of 3)

- Phone interviews with 10 people, representing six State University institutions, indicated that IT and computer science programs have ***moderate success*** in placing students into internships, though not without challenges
- ***Faculty are significantly involved*** in helping students find internships, particularly at the two-year colleges, but ***struggle to find enough employers*** to hire interns or part-time employees
- A number of IT/CS programs ***offer course credit for internships***, and some even ***require students*** to complete an internship to graduate
  - In these cases, a faculty member is often the “internship coordinator” who ensures the internship is meaningful and merits earning credits

# Executive Summary (2 of 3)

- The biggest challenges institutions face around internships are:
  - Students with full-time jobs who **can't make time** for an IT / computer science internship
  - **Insufficient internship opportunities** in the geographies their students want / have to work in
  - **Understaffed career centers** and **very busy faculty** who can't reach enough employers

# Executive Summary (3 of 3)

- Therefore, people expressed interest in Student Services assisting with:
  - **Identifying, recruiting and cataloging employers** who hire interns
  - **Educating employers** on the **benefits of hiring an intern** and the students that are available across the system
  - Offering an **online internship listing service / portal** where employers can post jobs and students can apply for them
    - *Of course, given the abundance of online job boards **already provided by institutions**, this may not be a logical use of SS resources*

# Interview Guide

*Five main questions were used to steer the phone interviews, with the overarching question being: What role should Student Services play in helping students at 4-year and 2-year universities gain and get the most value out of internships?*

1. How do students in IT and computer science majors find internships today?
2. What services, guidance and resources does the school / department / career center provide to help students find IT / computer science internships?
3. What services, guidance and resources does the school / department / career center provide to employers who want to hire IT / computer science interns?
4. What are some of the challenges preventing more internships from occurring?
5. What role(s) could Student Services play in removing some of those challenges?

# Individuals Interviewed

*10 people were interviewed across six State University institutions; a mix of faculty, career center directors and Deans were included.*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Organization</b>
██████████	Faculty	Community College 1
██████████	Dean, College of Management	University 1
██████████	Internship Coordinator, Computer Science and CIT	University 2
██████████	Faculty	University 2
██████████	Director, Career Services	Community College 2
██████████	Faculty	Community College 2
██████████	Dean	Community College 2
██████████	Faculty	Community College 3
██████████	Career Services	Community College 3
██████████	Assistant Director for Employment and Internship Development	University 3

# Institutional Internship Requirements

*Some colleges and universities offer course credit for students who complete an internship, and in some cases, students are required to have an internship to graduate. No two institutions are exactly alike, however, in terms of volume and location of internships (employers) and how students find them.*

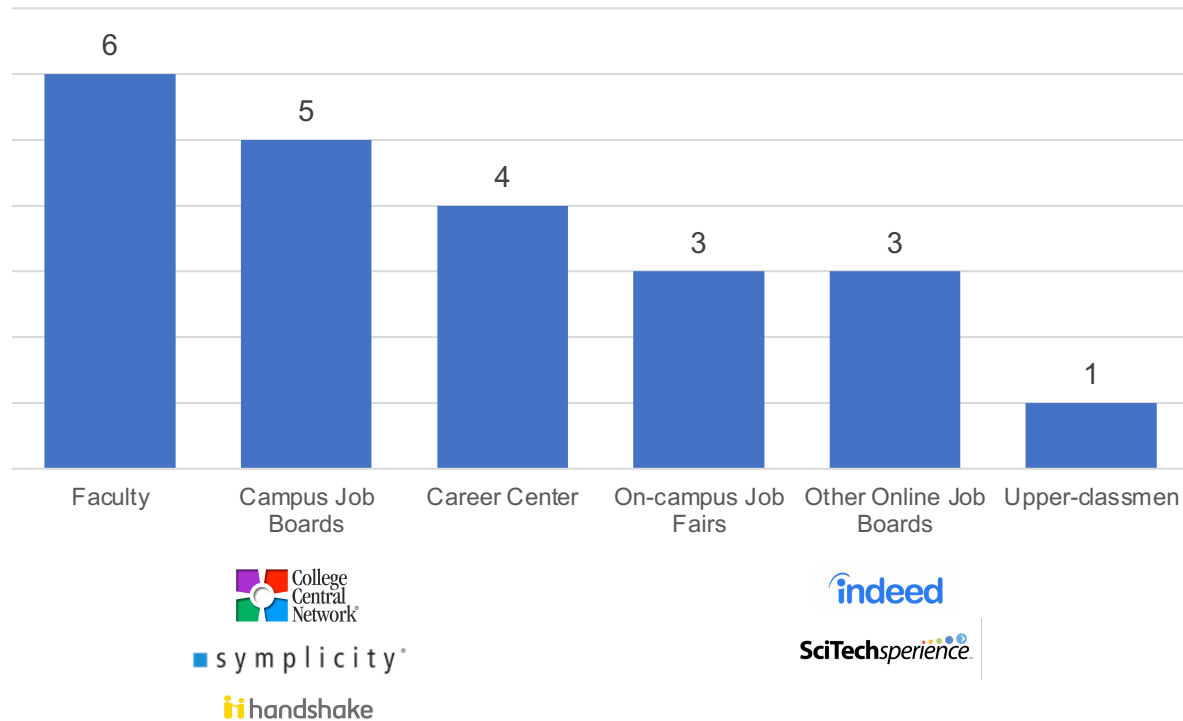
Campus	Internships for Credit	Internship Required to Graduate	Details
University 1	Y	Y	There is no shortage of internships in the ██████████ area, surprisingly. Students also are often willing to work in other cities, both in the southwest and across the U.S. One challenge is placing international students.
Community College 1	Y	N	Both the career center and faculty help the students find internships. Some internships don't challenge the students, as employers don't want to give them real work.
University 2	N	N	Though an internship is not required, it is well-known that getting an internship is paramount to finding a full-time job upon graduation.
Community College 2	Y	Y	Since the program is online, students are located in many cities, making it more-difficult for the college to help students find internships.
University 3	N	N	While ██████████ does require an internship, the rest of the university doesn't have required internships.
Community College 3	Y	Y	There is a real shortage of internships around ██████████ and ██████████, and most students need to work in those areas. Students often have to just do a project, supervised by the faculty.
Community College 4	Y	Y	Faculty have relationships with employers who have a history of hiring students. Employers call into the career center too, which then passes the internship opening along to the faculty.



# How do Students Find Internships?

Students are generally on their own when it comes to finding their internship, but institutions offer resources, especially in cases where an internship is required to graduate. Often times, faculty are involved in helping students find internships. There appears to be no shortage of online job boards, both supplied by the career centers as well as third-party sites.

## Responses



## Quotes

*"Yes, it's common for a student in class to ask the faculty member for where they might go to work and get an internship."*

*"And so there were, there were a handful of employers that the teachers, the instructors typically knew that those were places that the students could find their internships."*

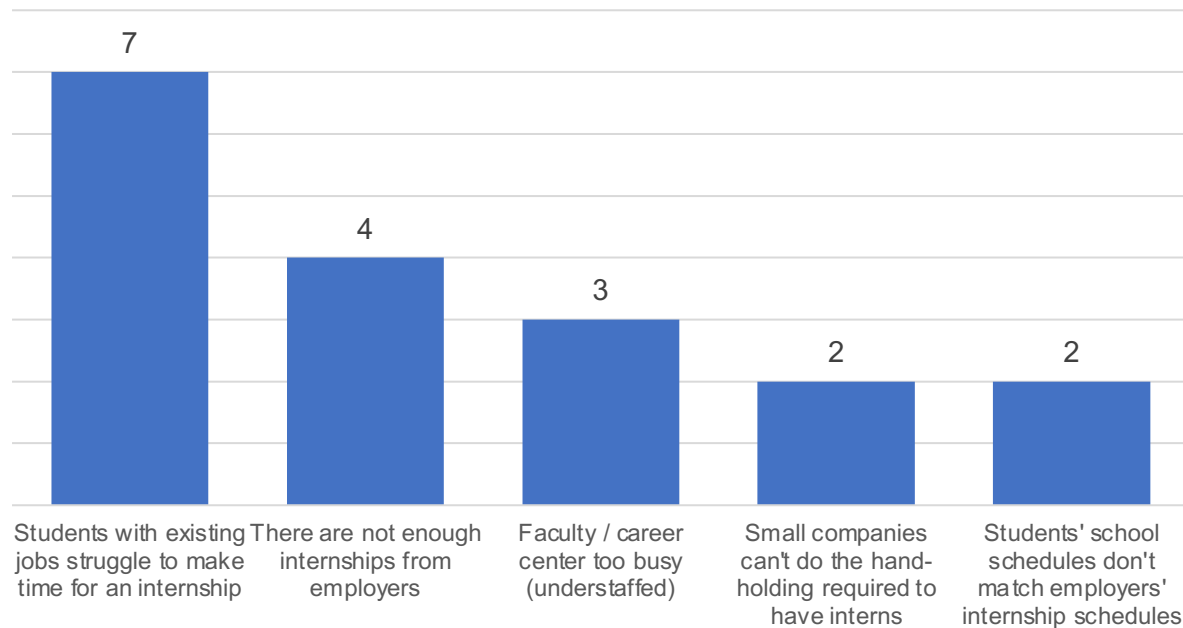
*"Usually, the internships that our students find out through our local businesses who usually reach out to us as faculty in the department and they say we have an open position for an internship and then do you have someone in your program that would be good?"*

*"Yes. At the technical college, it was just a job posting board that students could log in with their User ID and all of those career partners, two year schools in the urban areas, they're all using the same one, College Central Network."*

# What Challenges Exist?

*The number one headwind preventing more internships from happening is students already having a full-time job, and thus they cannot take time off for an internship in the IT/CS field. There is also belief that there are just too few IT / computer science internships out there, and that institutions don't have enough personnel to do more employer outreach.*

## Responses



## Quotes

*"As you may know majority of our students are working. It may not be in this field but they have to work to be able to come to school. They have families who they need to support."*

*"We need internships with flexible hours, because so many of them have full time jobs that they need just to get by and they can't give up their job and still live."*

*"There was not that many companies who are willing to spend time to train and work with interns, from the programming area, because we are not the biggest hub for software development in southern [redacted]."*

*"No [there are not enough internships available], because right now I have 14 people in internship and three of them still don't have internships and one of them is in [redacted], so I'm trying to help him."*

*"At the two-year colleges where we're a one-person office, we don't have the capacity to grow things like we should. It's like a catch-22 ... we don't have the capacity to establish more relationships with employers, but then not being able to supply enough students, since the internship is an elective."*

# Other Challenges

*There were numerous other challenges mentioned by people, though none with more than one voice citing the challenge.*

## Other Challenges

- Employers are not offering as many internships, but rather, are looking for part-time employees
- Employers may not offer internships to international students
- Employers may not offer internships to students at two-year colleges
- First-generation students don't know how to find internships
- Lack of transportation may get in the way of more internships happening
- Low paying internships may get in the way of more internships happening
- Not all internships actually provide good IT/CS experience
- Small companies may have false notions about internships
- Students' communications skills may hinder internships from happening
- Students' inexperience hinders their ability to get an internship

## Quotes

*"You may have some employers that are a little bit wary of offering an internship to an international student if they don't think that they can employ them for a very long time."*

*"So I can tell you offhand a couple of employers I've spoken with do not have internships for community or technical institutions."*

*"57% of our students are first generation. So they have no idea how to navigate. You know who am I supposed to talk to, what type of internship, what's the importance of even having an internship, and what will that get them in the end."*

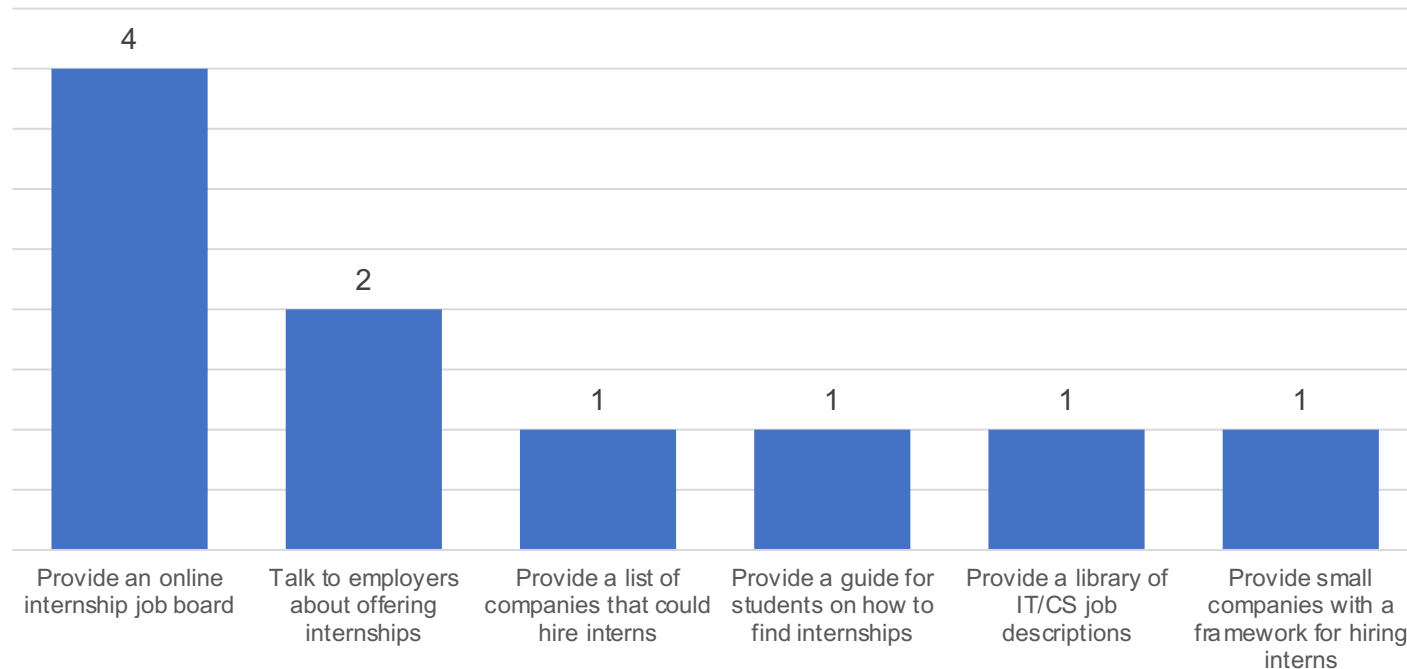
*"How much they pay could be a source of, especially in the smaller companies, if they're not offering a fairly well paying internship, they might have trouble attracting a candidate because other companies might pay more, or the student just might not be able to afford to do it financially."*

*"I think employers sometimes they're not, especially smaller employers, they don't know that, they think there's some magic, that there's some magic steps you have to follow in order to do an internship."*

# What Could ITCoE Do to Help?

*A range of answers came back on this question, with the most-popular response being to offer a state-wide listing of available internships ... though this answer came exclusively from faculty. Institutions certainly need help placing students into meaningful internships, and the greatest constraint is often relationships with employers.*

## Responses



## Quotes

*"If I could find some companies in other areas that I could point them to and there was some kind of centralized list, that would be all the better. Some kind of centralized list and different geographical areas of the state."*

*"Yes, something where companies can perhaps even find interns based on their location. So like you said, if I'm a company from [redacted], I go to Student Services, on "find interns" link, or whatever, and I look at the map of the state, and I click on my region, and I see, oh there are two schools, [redacted] and [redacted], and then maybe you have a list of skills that these interns might have and whether that's matching or not."*

*"I think probably most importantly, if they could create a number of internship positions. That would be the most effective way of helping out."*

# Recommendations and Next Steps

- Given the feedback from faculty, deans and career center directors, SS should consider creating services around the following areas:
  - Identifying, recruiting and cataloging employers who hire interns
  - Educating employers on the benefits of hiring an intern and the students that are available across the system
- Though feedback also suggested SS could offer an online internship listing service, this idea does not seem like a logical use of SS resources, given the abundance of online job boards already offered by institutions
  - Perhaps SS could aggregate all of the IT / computer science listing onto a single site, as a consideration

# Recommendations and Next Steps

- SS should further socialize these services with institutions, as well as the system office, and determine if this is a logical role for the Center to play
- If so, then SS should create a business plan to justify the additional investments in people and technologies to become a centralized IT / computer science “career center” for internships across the system

# Thank you