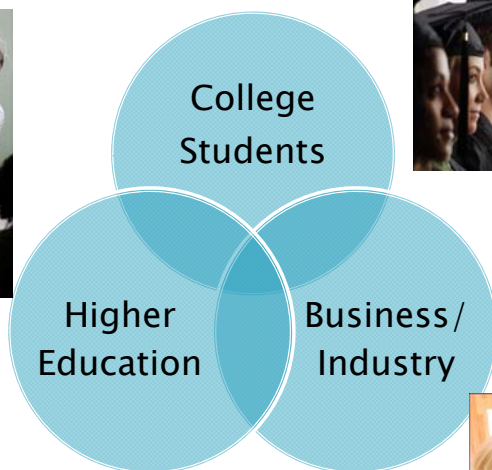


# Collaborative Educational Experiences through Higher Education-Industry Partnerships

Thomas Pinelli, PhD  
Cathy Hall, PhD

## Interconnections



## Internship Benefits

### ▶ Students

- Explore/evaluate specific careers, specific companies
- Develop/improve 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and competencies
- Apply skills and knowledge from the classroom
- Collaboration
- Networking
- Developing technical skills
- Gaining confidence
- Gain competitive advantage, increase marketability to employers
- Increased starting salary
- Real-life expectations.....

## Internship Benefits

### ▶ Business/Industry/Government

- Opportunity to recruit future employees
- Opportunity to evaluate prospective employees, virtually risk free
- Cost advantage
- Functions as flexible, cost-effective work force without long-term commitments
- Frees up professional staff to pursue more creative projects
- Offers a year-round source of highly motivated pre-professionals
- Brings new and innovative ideas to the workplace
- Strengthens the bond with academia
- Builds a positive (corporate) image and social capital

## Internship Benefits

### ▶ University

- Validate the university's curriculum in a working environment
- Improve post-graduation (hiring) statistics
- Improve corporate fund-raising efforts
- Provides learning experiences to supplement classroom lectures and case studies
- Connects faculty to current trends within their professional field
- Develops more competitive and employable graduates
- Increases program credibility; ties to alumni and to business, government, and industry

## Specific Expectations for Students – Bok

- ▶ According to Bok the learning goals of a student's major involve demonstrating "a substantial body of knowledge about a particular field, learning special techniques to search for information and analyze it in illuminating ways, and ultimately using these methods to address problems of substantial complexity".

## General Expectations for Students – Bok

- ▶ In addition to knowledge and skills specific to a student's major, there should also be knowledge and skills associated with any major that include: critical thinking, oral communication, written communication, reading comprehension, cultural diversity, ethics/social responsibility, mathematics, and adaptability.
- ▶ Derek Bok, *Our Underachieving Colleges: A Candid Look at How Much Students Learn and Why They Should be Learning More*, Princeton University Press, 2006.

**Table 1: Mentor Ratings of Interns' Workplace Skills and Interns' Perceived Improvement over Internship (Mentors = 91; Interns = 149)**

Skill Area	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Written Communication				
Mentors	38.2%	48.3%	11.2%	2.2%
Interns	46.2%	37.2%	13.8%	2.8%
Oral/Verbal Communication				
Mentors	49.5%	44.0%	4.4%	2.2%
Interns	67.1%	26.7%	4.8%	1.4%
Critical Thinking/Problem Sol				
Mentors	56.3%	35.6%	5.7%	2.3%
Interns	69.6%	28.4%	2.0%	0.0%
Judgment/Decision Making				
Mentors	55.6%	33.3%	8.9%	2.2%
Interns	66.7%	29.3%	3.4%	0.7%
Time Management				
Mentors	60.4%	29.7%	6.6%	3.3%
Interns	62.3%	28.8%	6.2%	2.7%

**Table 1: Mentor Ratings of Interns' Workplace Skills and Interns' Perceived Improvement over Internship**

Skill Area	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Analytical Thinking				
Mentors	51.1%	38.6%	8.0%	2.3%
Interns	68.7%	26.5%	3.4%	1.4%
Computational Skills				
Mentors	63.8%	25.0%	8.8%	2.5%
Interns	64.8%	26.9%	6.9%	1.4%
Flexibility/Adaptability				
Mentors	66.7%	23.3%	8.9%	1.1%
Interns	74.0%	24.0%	2.1%	0.0%
Technical Skills				
Mentors	56.8%	31.8%	11.4%	0.0%
Interns	62.6%	29.3%	6.1%	2.0%

**Table 2: Mentors Ratings of Interns' Workplace Skills**

	Agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree
My intern demonstrated appropriate technical knowledge for someone at his/her current educational level.	68.9%	26.7%	3.3%	1.1%
My intern demonstrated the expected verbal and written communication skills for someone at his/her current educational level.	59.3%	33.0%	7.7%	0.0%
My intern demonstrated appropriate self-regulation skills in the workplace for someone at his/her current educational level.	67.8%	26.7%	1.1%	4.4%

## Why do these skill sets matter?



## Skills and Qualities Employers Seek (NACE, 2011)

Skill/Quality	Weighted Ave. Rating
▶ Communication (Verbal)	4.65
▶ Strong work ethic	4.61
▶ Teamwork skills	4.59
▶ Analytical skills	4.56
▶ Initiative	4.50
▶ Problem solving skills	4.58
▶ Communication (Written)	4.48
▶ Interpersonal skills	4.40
▶ Flexibility/adaptability	4.37

- ▶ 5 point scale: 1 not important to 5 extremely important

## Factors Influencing Disciplining and Firing of New College Hires (Gardner, 2007)

Reason for Discipline	Very Often(%)
▶ Lack of work ethic/commitment**	52
▶ Unethical behavior**	46
▶ Failure to follow instructions**	41
▶ Ineffective in teams	41
▶ Missing assignments/deadlines**	33
▶ Problem communicating effectively - verbally	32
▶ Inappropriate use technology**	34
▶ Being late for work**	28
▶ Problem communicating effectively - written	28

▶ \*\*Reasons given for firing new hires

### Table 3: Internship Experience

	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree
Intern learned what full time job is like				
Mentors	53.7%	42.7%	3.7%	0.0%
Interns	62.4%	29.8%	7.1%	0.7%
Intern gained in confidence				
Mentors	85.2%	11.4%	3.4%	0.0%
Interns	64.1%	31.0%	2.8%	2.1%

## Table 3: Internship Experience

	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree
Intern: I was able to apply knowledge gained in the classroom to my internship assignments/projects.	58.4%	32.2%	8.1%	1.3%
Mentor: Being mentor was a very rewarding & valuable experience	78.7%	16.9%	3.4%	1.1%
Intern: Overall rating of mentor/intern experience as excellent	79.1%	14.9%	4.1%	2.0%

## Future Research

- ▶ Role of internship in college retention - especially women and minorities
- ▶ Role of internship in workforce retention
- ▶ Feedback system(s)
- ▶ Longitudinal study