

Media Studies Internship Expectations

What should students expect?

- Internships are meant to provide students with a real-life, hands-on experience working in a media environment. They are meant to supplement academic knowledge with a day-to-day understanding of what happens in the ongoing production, distribution, or management of media. Internships should provide an opportunity to develop contacts for further work and to give a realistic sense of what kinds of career opportunities would make sense for future goals.
- Internships should provide exposure and supervision. Students should be given identifiable tasks and as much as possible be drawn into the actual operations of the media business or institution.
- Students should not expect to step into creative or management positions. They need to recognize how much “grunt” work is part of the daily grind of media production and operations.
- Students should expect to learn enough about the business or institution to see if there is a future career direction in that area.
- Students will be responsible for writing up their experience in a way that communicates the values, benefits, and/or limitations of the internship. This is not meant to be an academic paper, but a report.
- Students should always act in a responsible manner, show up on time, treat an internship as a job, and recognize that they represent the Department of Media Studies as well as themselves. Difficulties or misunderstandings should be dealt with in an adult manner. The Media Studies advisor is always available to assist in any situation that causes confusion. Students should not hesitate to contact the Media Studies office if they have questions.

What should sponsors provide and expect?

- The most important contribution Sponsors make is to provide access to a real world media environment. The realities are often more amazing, but very different, from what students imagine. The experience is invaluable in giving students an opportunity to think about their future career goals and the skills they need to acquire to function as professionals in a media environment.
- Sponsors are NOT expected to provide academic training, supervise papers or writing assignments given by Media Studies, or to do anything outside the normal day-to-day operations of their business or institution.
- Sponsors should try as much as possible to provide a supportive learning environment recognizing that students come with willingness, intelligence, and good writing and research skills. They may not have strong production skills and may not have had the experience of a pressured work environment. The Media Studies office at UVa is happy to clarify any confusion about expectations.
- Our students are our best resource. Your participation in this program provides an invaluable experience. We want it to work for everyone involved. Let us know if we can improve the internship program.

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