

BSC

Birmingham-Southern College

Internships That Work

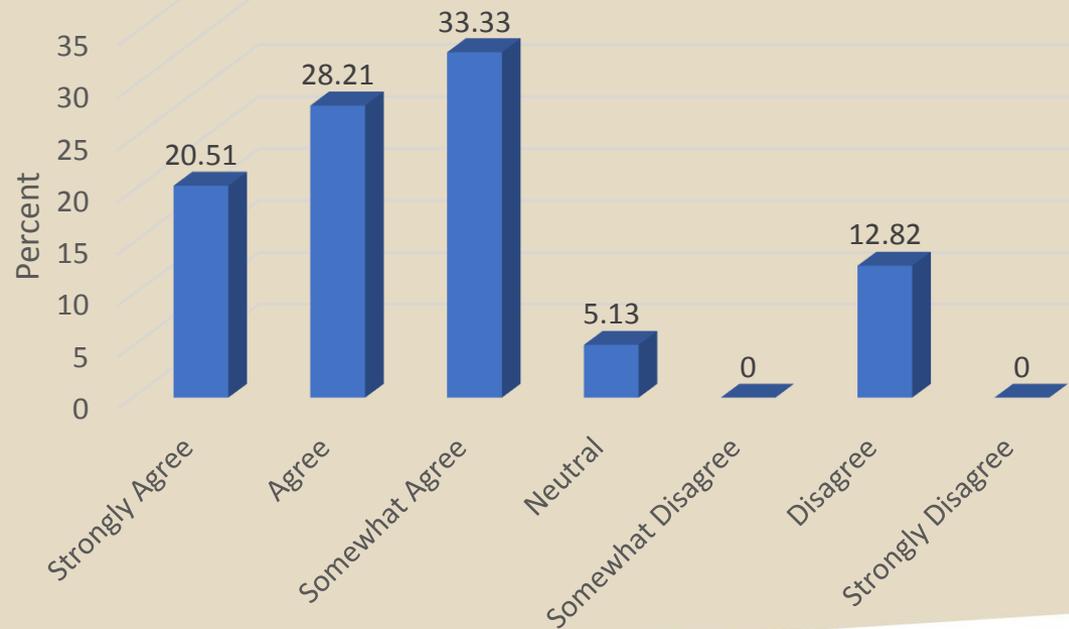
Alabama Possible's Higher Education Alliance
and the
Krulak Institute for Leadership,
Experiential Learning, & Civic Engagement

Dr. Jessica Pincham King • Katy Smith, MPA

Poll

I see internships as a “resume filler” and “door opener” that *need* to be completed in order to land a job after graduation.

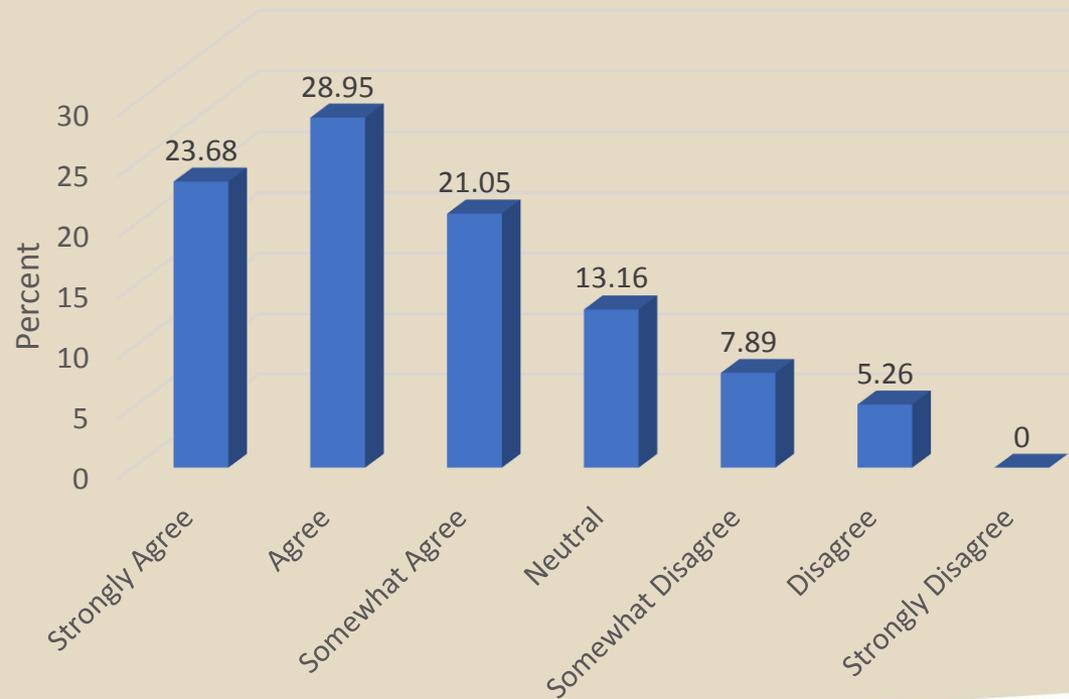
- A. Strongly Agree
- B. Agree
- C. Somewhat Agree
- D. Neutral
- E. Somewhat Disagree
- F. Disagree
- G. Strongly Disagree



Poll

The students I work with see internships as a “resume filler” and “door opener” that *need* to be completed in order to land a job after graduation.

- A. Strongly Agree
- B. Agree
- C. Somewhat Agree
- D. Neutral
- E. Somewhat Disagree
- F. Disagree
- G. Strongly Disagree



High-Impact Practices

- 1st Year Seminars and Experiences
- Learning Communities
- Writing Intensive Courses
- Collaborative Assignments
- Service-learning Experiences
- Undergraduate Research
- Internships

High-Impact Practices

- Facilitate learning outside the classroom (Kuh, 2008)
- Require meaningful interactions with faculty and students (Kuh, 2008)
- Provide frequent and substantive feedback (Kuh, 2008)
- Increased student retention (AAC&U, 2017)
- Increased student engagement (AAC&U, 2017)
- Especially beneficial for underserved students (AAC&U, 2017)

High-Impact Practices

“Kuh’s argument is that as long as these practices remain marginal to the whole curriculum, there will be insufficient breadth to reach all students and insufficient depth to help students become more sophisticated in their learning over time. His message for increasing student success is simple: ‘make it possible for every student to participate in *at least two high-impact activities* during his or her undergraduate program, one in the first year, and one taken later in relation to the major field’” (Kuh 2008).

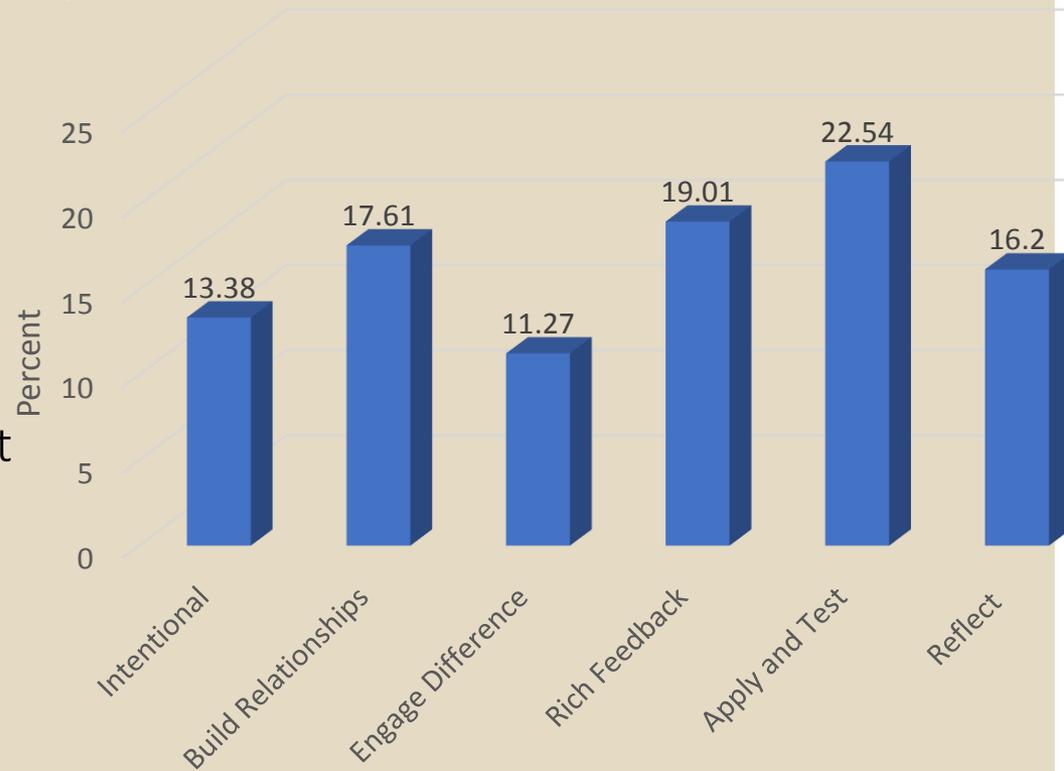
BSC

Birmingham-Southern College

Poll

What makes a practice high-impact?

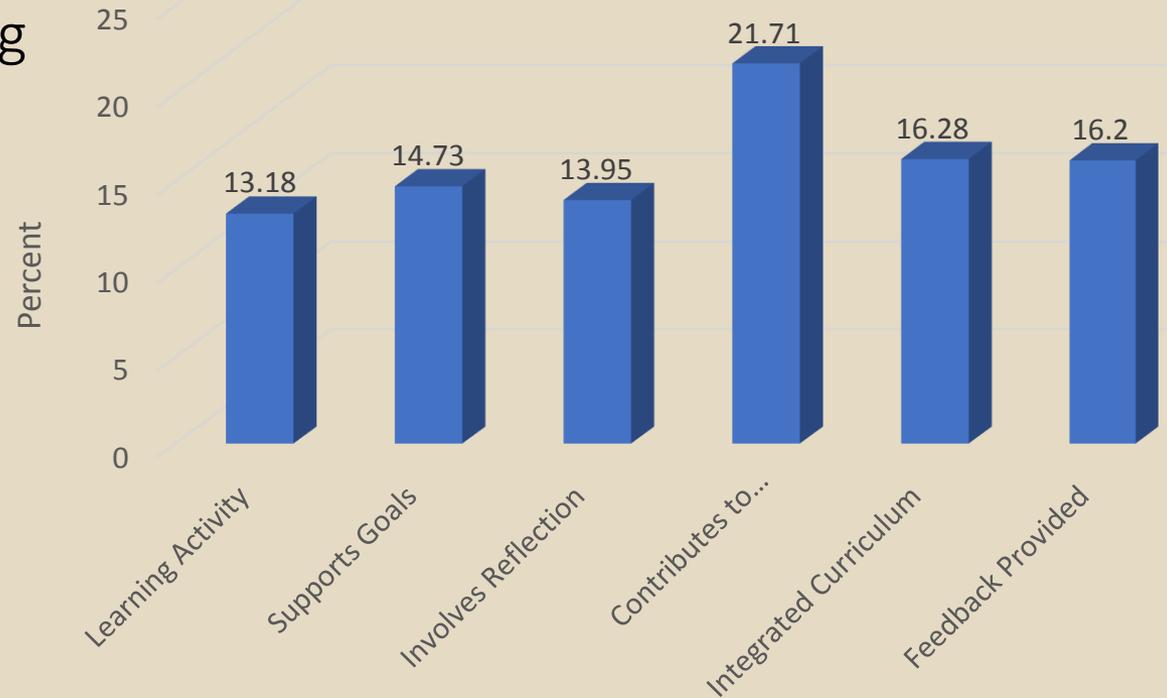
- A. It's intentional
- B. Students build substantive relationships
- C. Students engage in difference
- D. Students receive rich feedback
- E. Opportunities to apply and test learning
- F. Opportunity for students to reflect on who they're becoming



Poll

What makes an internship high-impact?

- A. Framed as a learning activity
- B. Supports academic learning goals
- C. Involves reflection
- D. Contributes to the students' academic experiences
- E. Integrated into the curriculum
- F. Detailed and continuous feedback is provided



Internships as a High-impact Practice

- Intentional and deliberate (O'Neill, 2010)
- The degree of supervision and self-study sets it apart (CAS, 2015)
- Alignment with learning goals and objectives is key (O'Neill, 2010)
- Feedback for improvement and reflective components contribute to the conceptualization as learning activity (CAS, 2015)
- Probing of complex issues by mentors, peers, and faculty (AAC&U, 2007)

Two Things

- We're learning together!
- Keep in mind that ultimately students bear the responsibility for making internships successful.

Key Characteristics of an Internship

- Integrates academic knowledge and practical application
- For the primary benefit of the intern
- Not service or volunteer work; must contain deliberative learning (O'Neil, 2010)
- Can be a high-stakes event for some or all parties involved (CERI, 2011)

Characteristics of a High-Impact Internship

“ An internship is more likely to be ‘high impact’ for students when it is intentionally organized as an activity that leads to particular learning outcomes; when students apply what they have learned in courses to work experiences, reflect on these experiences, and receive feedback that helps them to improve; when students build mentoring relationships with supervisors, faculty, and peers; when students are exposed to differences across people and in ways of thinking; and when students are asked to use their experiences to clarify their values, interests, and personal goals—including, in this case, their values, interests, and goals related to careers.” (O’Neil, 2010)



Guiding Assumptions

- An internship is a learning activity.
- “Academic credit is awarded for the **learning achieved**, not for the work experience alone.” (Augsburg University, Guidelines)
- Students cannot rely on faculty or employers to make their internships meaningful!
- But, faculty and employers can help empower students to take charge of their own learning.

Challenges & Barriers

Consider the challenges and barriers you face in designing internships and/or working directly with interns. What obstacles do you encounter? What prevents you from implementing high-impact practices?

How might we....?

How could we...?



Job Descriptions

- No job description = Potential for conflict
- Components of a thorough job description
 - Organization Description/Mission
 - Title of internship (use key search terms)
 - Desired start date
 - Desired number of hours per week (note whether this is negotiable)
 - Paid or unpaid?
 - Job duties (e.g., Create social media content)
 - Learning opportunities (e.g., SEO and Google analytics)
 - Qualifications and skills
 - Application information, **including how long it will take you to respond**

Job Descriptions

- Employers should thoroughly review job description with students.
- College faculty/staff should request a copy of the job description from the student
 - Ensures overall appropriateness of the position
 - Ensures appropriateness of the tasks and level of responsibility
 - Helpful in developing future opportunities for students

Syllabus

- Faculty role is instructing students how to learn; syllabus lays out a plan for doing that
 - Methods of and prompts for critical reflection
 - Strategy for cohort discussions
 - Explains specific ways the course can guide students in achieving their goals (e.g., Team-teach with appropriate college staff to help students reach career development goals)
 - Determines how learning will be assessed
- Students should share syllabus with employers to further develop shared expectations

Learning Agreements

- Syllabus and job description spell out what the intern will do and how they will be supported; the learning agreement details to what end
- Fluid documents that help students clarify their goals and the steps needed to achieve them
- Cornerstone of a successful internship
- “ To fulfill [an internship’s] ‘high-impact’ potential, everyone—faculty, advisors, career development professionals, and employers—must agree to help students set and fulfill explicit learning *and* career development goals” (O’Neill, 2010)

Learning Agreements

- A tool for empowering students to take ownership of their learning
- A tool for ensuring students have opportunities to pursue their goals
- Motivational; students should want to take initiative to reach goals they chose themselves
- A tool for further clarifying expectations
- A guide for supervision
- A starting point for reflection
- A basis from which to challenge the student
- A basis for evaluation from faculty and employer

Learning Agreements

- Educational goals
 - Evaluating academic theories as applied to the work
 - Examining a topic or problem in the field from competing perspectives
 - Analyzing decision-making in an organization
- Career development goals
 - Clarification of personal goals, aspirations, strengths, and weaknesses
 - Exploring different careers within an industry
 - Building a professional network
 - Understanding how to showcase skills and experiences to employers
- A faculty/staff- led workshop on setting appropriate goals is recommended

Learning Agreements

- Goals are reviewed with employers
- Employers should help interns achieve goals– but it's easy!
 - Allow students to indulge curiosity and see the big picture by shadowing, observing other departments, reading business plans, attending meetings
- If it's not possible to support the intern in achieving a goal, work with them to modify the goal
 - No one signs off until everyone is comfortable!

Supervision

- Students may think they know what they want from an internship, but do not know what they need
- “To apply knowledge productively in field-based settings, all **students should experience in-depth questioning** from faculty, staff, and other mentors about their assumptions, analyses, conclusions, and actions. Learners also need **both guidance and feedback**, from mentors and peers” (AAC&U, 2007)
- “What is critical is to **have students enter a process** where faculty, staff, and peers ask them to reflect, challenge their assumptions, test theories, and make connections across different sites of learning.” (O’Neill, 2020)

Supervision

- “The most important agent in the reflection process is the intern’s supervisor; the person the student works with everyday.” (CERI, 2011)
- Employers should:
 - Have a set time for meeting with intern
 - Provide feedback on intern’s work
 - Evaluate behavior, not just production
 - Provide context for projects, meetings, other work
 - Review the learning agreement regularly
 - Make suggestions for next steps the intern could initiate in achieving goals
 - Provide “in-depth questioning...about [the intern’s] assumptions, analyses, conclusions, and actions.” (AAC&U 2007)

Supervision

- Students should prepare an agenda in advance of each meeting
 - Projects for review/questions about work
 - Something they've learned
 - Something they have a question about
 - Something they'd like to do to reach their goals
- Let students take the lead within an agreed-upon framework
- Where they fall short, employers facilitate and guide them

Supervision

- Faculty should do more than check-in
 - “How’s the internship?” “It’s good.” “Any problems?” “No.”
- Faculty supervision should be woven into assignments and course meetings.
- “Have students enter a process where faculty, staff, and peers ask them to reflect, challenge their assumptions, test theories, and make connections across different sites of learning.” (O’Neill, 2020)

Tips for Supervision

- Question everything.
- Don't let students get comfortable in their plans or assumptions.
- Show students how to learn from diversity.
- Push back.

Supervision

- End-of-internship evaluation is final step in employer's supervision
- Use evaluation form as a tool to sum up and reflect upon comments from all supervisory sessions
- Sample in folder

Summary of Best Practices

- Set clear expectations for all parties through shared job descriptions, syllabi, and learning agreements
- Empower students to take charge of their learning by letting them determine their goals and action steps and the structure of their supervisor meetings
- Good supervision requires structure.

Lunch

We will begin the afternoon promptly at 1 p.m.

BSC

Birmingham-Southern College

Case Studies

BSC

Birmingham-Southern College

References

- Association of American Colleges & Universities. (2017). High-impact practices. Retrieved from <https://www.aacu.org/resources/high-impact-practices>
- Association of American Colleges & Universities. (2007). *College Learning for the New Global Century*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.
- Augsburg University. Guidelines for Writing an Internship Learning Agreement Plan. Retrieved from <http://web.augsburg.edu/strommen/websitedocs/guidelines-for-writing-learning-agreement.pdf>
- Augsburg University. Internship Learning Goals. Retrieved from <http://web.augsburg.edu/strommen/websitedocs/internships/LearningGoalsFormPreview>
- Collegiate Employment Research Institute (CERI). (2011). Internships as High Stakes Events. Retrieved from <http://www.ceri.msu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/High-Stakes-Internships.pdf>
- Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education. (2015). *CAS Standards for Programs and Services*. Washington, DC: Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education
- Kuh, G. D. (2008). *High-impact educational practices: What they are, who has access to them, and why they matter*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.
- National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). (2015). 15 Best Practices for Internship Programs. Retrieved from <http://www.naceweb.org/talent-acquisition/internships/15-best-practices-for-internship-programs/>
- NACE Center for Career Development and Talent Acquisition. (2017) The Impact of Undergraduate Internships on Post-Graduate Outcomes for the Liberal Arts. Retrieved from <https://www.naceweb.org/uploadedfiles/files/2017/publication/report/2017-nace-impact-of-internships-on-liberal-arts-report.pdf>
- National Survey of Student Engagement. (2017). High-impact practices. Retrieved from http://nsse.indiana.edu/html/high_impact_practices.cfm
- O'Neill, Nancy. (2010). Internships as a high-impact practice: Some reflections on quality. *Peer Review: Internships & Experiential Learning*, 12(4). Retrieved from <https://www.aacu.org/publications-research/periodicals/internships-high-impact-practice-some-reflections-quality>
- Stetson University. Internship Learning Agreement. Retrieved from <http://www.stetson.edu/administration/career/media/REVISED%20Template%20Internship%20Learning%20Agreement.pdf>
- Stetson University. Internship Pre-Approval Checklist. Retrieved from <http://www.Stetson.edu/administration/career/media/internship-pre-approval-checklist.docx>
- St. Olaf College. Academic Internship Learning Agreement and Plan. Retrieved from <wp.stolaf.edu/isa/files/2012/11/Academic-Internship-Learning-Agreement-Plan.doc>



Thank you for learning with us and providing
valuable opportunities for students!

Dr. Jessica Pincham King

Director, rise³ Experiential Learning Initiative

(205) 226-4658

jpking@bsc.edu

Katy Smith, MPA

Assistant Director of Internships

(205) 226-3037

kesmith@bsc.edu

BSC

Birmingham-Southern College