

# The MSU IB International Internship Process

## I. Overview and Key Requirements.

One of the primary features of the International Business Program at MSU is its emphasis on the development of practical business and cross-cultural skills. In order to provide an opportunity for skills acquisition, all IB students are required to successfully complete an internship of no less than ten (10) weeks as an absolute condition to graduation. There are several points to remember when planning your internship:

- While the IB Office will use its best efforts to assist each student in their internship search, it is the responsibility of the student, and not the IB Office, to secure and complete the internship.
- All internships must be approved in advance by the IB Office. Students who wish to intern in a given semester must complete and submit (1) the Intent to Intern Form (Document C) declaring the nature and location of the prospective internship, and (2) a fully-completed Student/Parent Liability Release (Document D). *Students who fail to submit the Intent to Intern Form and the Liability Release will not receive credit for their internship.*
- Keep in mind that, regardless of initial approval, internships must have a clear relationship to international business. Students are strongly encouraged to pursue internships outside of the United States. While US-based internships will remain allowable, the burden is on the student completing a US internship to discuss in his or her IB 4903 internship paper (covered below) how his or her experience relates to international business.
- “Successful” completion of an internship for purposes of the IB graduation requirement is defined as the completion of at least ten-weeks’ work with respect to an approved internship, or completion of the full internship term agreed with the employer at the outset, whichever period is longer. *Students who are unable to tender a Supervisor’s Certificate of Completion (Document E) will be presumed not to have satisfactorily completed their internship.*
- Students are advised *not* to serve their internship during the final semester prior to graduation. There are two reasons for this: (1) many employers do not accept interns who are not returning to school; and (2) problems can, and do, occur with respect to internships, and pushing your internship back to your final semester gives you no room for error – that is, failure to complete the internship will automatically delay your graduation.

## II. Internship Options.

A number of options exist for securing an internship. These include:

**1. IBAP/Corporate sponsored internship option.** This is the bridge built between the IB Program and selected corporations. These corporations have agreed to accept interns based on company selection criteria, but have asked the IB Office to screen and qualify intern candidates. Generally the companies provide a stipend or transportation allowance, though some internships are unpaid.

Bear in mind, sponsored internships are open only to students who have successfully completed the MSU IB “Corporate Boot Camp” (the intensive resume and job interview preparation seminar open to IB students). At the beginning of each semester, an announcement will be made as to the sign-up for that semester’s Boot Camp.

**2. MSU Co-op Option.** The MSU Cooperative Education Program is open to IB students and, upon

completion, will satisfy the internship requirement, provided the co-op position was approved in advance like any other internship. For further information, contact the MSU Cooperative Education Program.

**3. Academic-Based Internships.** Certain of the study abroad programs offered through the IB Office and the Department of Foreign Languages provide an opportunity for an attached internship (Duisburg-Essen and Liège being two). These are generally unpaid internships but can be solid work experiences. Please keep in mind, however, that the requirements for these internships may be set by the partner institution as well as the employer involved, and students should have alternative opportunities planned.

**4. Your own internship option.** You are encouraged to supplement the foregoing internship opportunities with others that fit your own interests and skills, keeping in mind the requirement that the internship have a clear relationship to international business. The MSU IB website contains a number of useful links (and a database of internship opportunities completed by IB alumni) that can get you started.

### **III. Typical Internship Timetable.**

Although a certain degree of flexibility is acceptable, the following represents a typical IB student's progression through the program, including the internship process:

#### **Year I**

Choose your Business emphasis area and language. Talk to senior classmates about their experiences, internships and work. Learn about study abroad and foreign exchange opportunities. Get involved with the IB Club. Talk to your parents, relatives, and neighbors about the IB Program and the internship requirement. Can they help when the time comes? A business work experience each summer should be a developmental path for your ultimate work future.

#### **Year II**

Continue Year I activities. Participate in a 3-week summer Study Abroad program (resources permitting) to learn about yourself, other cultures, and living outside the United States. Think about a geographical area in which you would like to live and work.

#### **Year III**

Continue Year II activities. Your chosen business emphasis should be somewhat firm now. Think about the industries and/or companies with which you would like to work. Make a list and find out all about them. Begin making contacts with companies. At this point many students go abroad and work; the 6-week programs abroad are excellent to add an understanding of culture and foreign language at work.

Develop a resume. Take the resume development and interviewing skills seminar for International Business students (IB Corporate Boot Camp). Register with the MSU Career Center and start to hone your interviewing skills. ***Begin seeking an internship in earnest.***

#### **Year IV**

Aggressively send cover letters and resumes to prospective internship sponsors. This is a critical first step in securing an internship. Begin preparation for internal interviews; remember that the selection process is VERY competitive.

Contact friends and relatives for personal contacts with potential internship sponsors. Ask previous IB interns for help in securing an internship. Ask fellow students in the IB Program. Networking and contacts are very important. Search for and research internships available via the internet and the IB

Website.

Interview with companies. Select your internship and sign up for IB 3900 for the semester in which you will be interning.

**Year V**

Go on internship. Acquit yourself well, as the internship can turn into a valuable post-graduation job opportunity. Return to MSU to take your last classes, including IB 4903. Work hard sending letters to companies, and network constantly. Continuously improve your resume and hone your interviewing skills.

Have job offers in hand before you leave MSU.

**NOTE: Preference for scheduling the internship is the second semester of the 4<sup>th</sup> year or first semester of the 5<sup>th</sup> year.**