

# Penn State World Campus

## Internships for Adult Learners: Traditional and at a Distance

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PennState

Hendrick Best Practices for  
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# Agenda

- World Campus student demographics and snapshot
- The Benefit of Internships for the Adult Learner
- Obstacles Facing Adults Seeking and Completing Internships
- Rethinking Internships for Adult Learners



# Snap Shot -World Campus Demographics

- Over 18000 students
- Over 20 academic programs require internships
- Average undergraduate age: 32
- Percentage military students: 18%



# A Day in the Life of...A typical student experience

As a Penn State World Campus student, what does a typical school day look like for you?



Currently, I work at the University of Notre Dame where I assist in Department of Sociology with the undergraduate program. Early in the week, I will try to get all of the reading assignments completed. By midweek I will try and complete any quizzes or group assignments. This can be challenging with three courses; however, this is a course load that I am used to and enjoy very much! By Friday, I am working on any writing assignments. For me this means researching as many articles as possible at the Penn State Libraries online. This schedule leaves me just enough time for working out and making dinner with my boyfriend.

When I am not working on classes, I am busy with other activities, such as being the treasurer for the Sustainability Club at Penn State World Campus and the director of finance at the newly formed SHRM Chapter at Penn State World Campus. I also virtually participate in a social psych lab at Penn State World Campus. These groups have not only furthered my educational interests, but allowed me to interact with other students as if I were attending a brick-and-mortar university.



# Internship Benefits and the Adult Learner

- Many programs require internships (ex. Business, Human Development & Family Studies, Information and Science Technology)
- Unique ability to demonstrate professional skills to employers
- Opportunity to learn the culture of the company
- Excellent Networking Opportunity
- Eases the transition for career changers



# *What challenges do adult learners face when it comes to internships?*

- Many employed full time
- Cannot reduce work hours due to impact of income and/or medical insurance
- Typical internship time obligation 300 hrs. in 1 semester
- Family obligations maybe responsible for parents and children
- Academic coursework requires time commitment



# The Internship Experience: Rethinking Possibilities

- Utilize Penn State resources to identify internship opportunities
- Explore an internship within their company but in a different division
- Internship searches are not limited to posted opportunities
- Work with advisors and program leads to divide the internship between two semesters



# Virtual Internships: A Flexible Alternative

- Develop internships utilizing NACE standards
  - Clearly defined expectations (i.e. meeting participation)
  - Clearly defined outcomes including project based models
  - Structured supervision (i.e. zoom, google hangout, skype)
- Blended opportunities can provide the best of both worlds.





# Self Advocacy Essentials

- Adult learners may experience more success when using effective advocacy skills.
- Propose their own internship with company managers and academic internship coordinators
- Demonstrate practical creativity that is a win-win situation (i.e. project based internships completed early morning, evening and weekends, explore virtual internships in other time zones)
- Understand company and academic internship protocol



# Ways to Support Your Students

- Encourage your students to practice their pitch when seeking nontraditional internship opportunities
- Consider partnering with World Campus for virtual internships
- Consider developing traditional or virtual internships on your campus
- Encourage students to work with Career Counselors and Internship Coordinators early in the search process



# Questions???

