Workforce@Whatcom

Industry Partnership Overview

[Whatcom Community College](#) (WCC), in partnership with [Technology Alliance Group for Northwest Washington](#) (TAGNW), is developing a new Software Development associate degree with a targeted launch of fall 2021, pending approval. WCC is striving to achieve Career Launch endorsement for this new degree. This endorsement requires Industry Partners provide paid work-based learning opportunities to students, in order to create newly skilled software development professionals for the workforce.

What is Work-Based Learning?

During work-based learning, students gain understanding as they apply classroom knowledge to real-world experience. This approach creates a stronger connection with the knowledge, skills, and qualities of a successful job candidate in demand by employers. Work-based learning creates several opportunities for Industry Partners to interact with varying levels of commitment:

➢ Paid Internships (short term): Hire a second year student for 15 to 30 hours per week for one quarter to provide meaningful, supervised on-the-job experience.

➢ Work-Study (longer term): Hire a student for 10 to 16 hours a week during the course of their program and receive partial reimbursement of wages (50 to 75%).

What is Career Launch?

Career Launch is the term used to describe endorsed academic programs that include meaningful, supervised paid internships within their degree. Career Launch connects career-minded and invested students with paid internships, giving you an opportunity to grow your own talent.

Local Students + Classroom Learning + Paid Internships = Career Launch!

WCC will be seeking Career Launch endorsement for the Software Development degree. The richer the pipeline of qualified talent, the stronger your workforce.

Why Become an Industry Partner?

Providing work-based learning opportunities for students creates value and benefits to your organization in numerous ways:

- Increase your visibility for recruitment.
- Connect with career-minded students.
- Screen and grow your pipeline of qualified talent.
- Diversify with new, motivated team members.
- Contribute to a vibrant local workforce.

Recruiting Benefits

In appreciation for your primary efforts in partnering with WCC to provide paid internships for our students, the following outline benefits:

- ➢ Listing job and internship positions on WCCPathways
- ➢ Opportunity to complete on-campus recruiting and hiring activities
- ➢ Free participation in WCC Virtual Job Fairs
- ➢ Reduced fee for participation in WCC on-campus Job Fairs

Industry Partnership Commitments

WCC strives to ensure academic internships provide robust learning opportunities without cumbersome requirements on behalf of the employer. In order to provide paid internships to WCC Students, the industry partner is committing to:

- ✓ Providing a safe, supportive, and meaningful opportunity for student learning.
- ✓ Comply with State and Federal regulations regarding human rights and equal employment standards.
- ✓ Identify a direct supervisor for each student, to provide oversight of student's learning, coaching, and performance evaluation.
- ✓ Supervisor signs off on internship paperwork, attends a 30 minute mid-quarter site visit, signs off on total hours completed, and writes evaluation at the end of the quarter.

Industry Partnership Timeline

The following timeline provides an overview of the anticipated activities that will be required for involvement in the software development internship program, as an Industry Partner.

- **Winter 2020**
  - o Review Software Development Associate Degree program outcomes and curriculum template.
  - o Review and sign endorsement letter for WCC Career Launch program.
- **Summer 2022**
  - o Receive overview packet that includes curriculum outline, internship form and WCCPathways job posting instructions.
  - o Sign interagency contract with WCC to formalize relationship to host academic internships.
- **Fall 2022**
  - o Complete short employer orientation with Cooperative Education Program Coordinator.
  - o Post internship job positions on WCCPathways.
- **Winter 2023**
  - o Screen and hire intern(s) of your choice.
- **Spring and/or Summer 2023**
  - o Host paid software development interns.
- **Ongoing**
  - o Complete work-study contract and hire part-time student employees for wage reimbursement.

Internship Roles

Cooperative Education Program Coordinator: Your resource to develop and market internship opportunities that build a vibrant workforce. Supports site supervisors, students, and faculty to foster mutually beneficial internship placements.

Internship Site Supervisor: A specific person at your company responsible for supervising and overseeing the student intern's experience, training, and learning.

Faculty Mentor: Provides oversight to ensure students are meeting learning objectives, while supporting their academic requirements and assigns an internship grade.

WCC Student Intern: A student completing the internship for academic credit, to explore career pathways, apply knowledge and skills, gain work experience, and contribute to a local company.
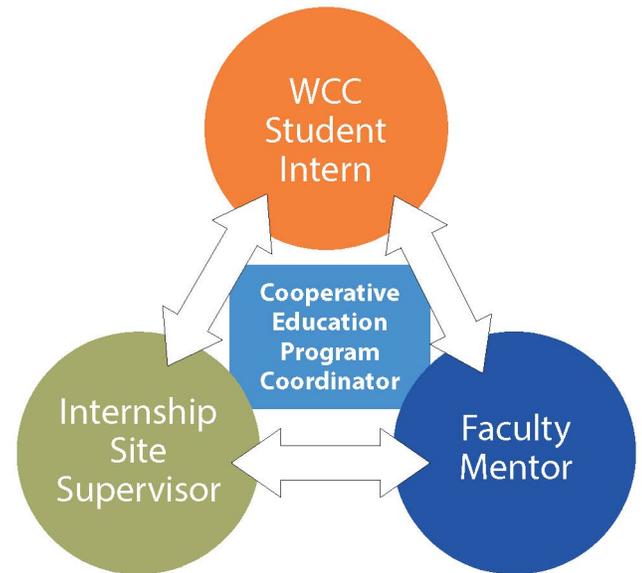
Frequently Asked Questions

Do we have to commit to hire a certain number of paid interns?
To become an Industry Partner, you are writing a support letter that states you expect to be able to hire a student intern in 2022. This is not a binding contract, yet our Career Launch endorsement relies on these placements for program and student success. Your business would provide an estimate of number of paid internships but is not bound to that number.

Will we choose the intern or will they be placed at our business?
You will be responsible for interviewing, screening, and hiring the student intern of your choice. WCC does not place students, as each business must decide which student is the best fit.

Can we require a longer internship for students?
Yes. You are welcome to structure your internship program to meet your capacity, project needs, and to ensure return on investment. It will help the student and college if the internship schedule and length of time is included in the job description.

Can I hire both an internship and work-study employee?
Yes. You can plan to hire any combination of interns and part-time work-study employees. Work-study employees also have the opportunity to use their employment as academic internships, if it has adequate supervision and opportunity for new learning.

Industry Partnership Contact

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