

60x30TX & INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS

A toolkit for integrating the goals and targets of 60x30TX into employer internship programs



USHCCF
UNITED STATES HISPANIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOUNDATION

Prepared in support of the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Foundation's University Partnerships Initiative



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AGENCY MISSION

The mission of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) is to provide leadership and coordination for Texas higher education and to promote access, affordability, quality, success, and cost efficiency through 60x30TX, resulting in a globally competitive workforce that positions Texas as an international leader.

AGENCY VISION

The THECB will be recognized as an international leader in developing and implementing innovative higher education policy to accomplish our mission.

AGENCY PHILOSOPHY

The THECB will promote access to and success in quality higher education across the state with the conviction that access and success without quality is mediocrity and that quality without access and success is unacceptable.

THE THECB'S CORE VALUES ARE:

ACCOUNTABILITY:

We hold ourselves responsible for our actions and welcome every opportunity to educate stakeholders about our policies, decisions, and aspirations.

EFFICIENCY:

We accomplish our work using resources in the most effective manner.

COLLABORATION:

We develop partnerships that result in student success and a highly qualified, globally competent workforce.

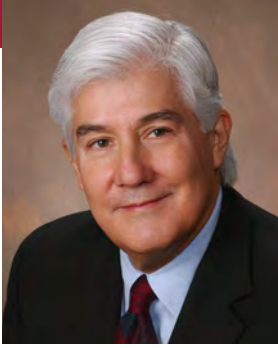
EXCELLENCE:

We strive for excellence in all our endeavors.

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age or disability in employment or the provision of services.

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FOREWORD FROM THE COMMISSIONER

Internships provide a bridge for students from education to the workforce, enabling students to explore in-demand industries and occupations as they make critical decisions about their futures. Internships not only provide important work and life experiences for students but also set them up for future workplace success.

In addition, internships support two of the four goals of the state's strategic plan for higher education, **60x30TX**: ensuring that students gain identified marketable skills and manage their student debt.

Internships provide an opportunity for the business community to mentor, guide, and inform students about career opportunities and market potential. Internships are an applied learning opportunity that can help students discover how their education and experiences are expanding and enhancing their marketable skills.

Working with the business community to create more paid internship opportunities is one of the most promising strategies we can offer for students. This is especially true for the more than 60 percent of children in Texas who come from low-income families. Many students in Texas have to earn income to make their way through college. Providing paid learning opportunities for these students is critical.

Internships may become a major component of financial aid in tough economic times. Therefore, education and workforce leaders need to work together to ensure that higher education remains affordable by creating meaningful, paid internships that add work experience to students' academic programs. Ultimately, we hope to also attach academic credit to many of these internships.

This toolkit dovetails with the **Texas Internship Challenge**, a statewide, tri-agency campaign to increase and promote internships for students that was launched in 2017 by the Texas Education Agency, Texas Workforce Commission, and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

In addition to benefiting your student interns, your program can be a great asset to your business. Internship programs help develop and train future employees. The unemployment rate in Texas has remained below the national rate for most of the last 10 years. Leveraging internships to create a talent pipeline is an advantage in tight labor markets.

I invite you to use this toolkit and other available internship resources as you join education and workforce leaders as we work together to expand educational and career opportunities for Texas students. The economic prosperity of Texas and Texans depends on it.

Raymund A. Paredes

Commissioner, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board



FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Parents, educators, mentors, and employers generally agree that high quality internships are a key component of professional readiness. Research shows that students with one or more internships do significantly better in the post-college job search than those without – and this effect is even more pronounced for minority students.

But what about employers? Do internship programs benefit them also, or are they just a way to give back to students?

Over the past two decades, I've seen firsthand that having an effective internship program is one of the very best ways to identify and nurture future talent and gain an advantage in the competitive talent market.

Research also bears this out. According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers, approximately 66 percent of interns receive a full-time offer and more than 75 percent of those accept. More importantly, after one year, more than 66 percent of employees hired from an internship remain employed with the company compared with a retention rate for interns from other companies of only 52 percent. Even more striking, the one-year retention rate drops to only 46 percent for those with no internship experience.

This toolkit is designed to help employers – both large and small – reap the benefits of internships, whether they are creating a new internship program or wish to grow or enhance an existing program. It provides valuable insights from both the **U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Foundation** and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to help internship programs be a win-win for employers and students.

This toolkit also supports the THECB's visionary *60x30TX* initiative, which has set the ambitious goal of at least 60 percent of 25- to 34-year-old Texans holding a certificate or degree by 2030.

It is my sincere belief that every company that embraces the principles contained in this toolkit will not only develop a significant competitive advantage for themselves, but also will contribute just as significantly to the communities in which we live and work.

Thank you for taking on this important work and supporting the success of the next generation of business leaders in Texas and beyond.

Nina Vaca

Chairman and CEO, Pinnacle Group
Founding Member, University Partnership Initiative
Founder and President, Nina Vaca Foundation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This toolkit has been designed by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, the state agency that provides oversight and coordination for higher education in Texas. This toolkit was inspired by the University Partnerships Initiative: Building the College-to-Career Readiness Pipeline, sponsored by the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (USHCC) Foundation. As this initiative comes to fruition, the USHCC Foundation wants to ensure their internship partners are implementing programs that align with 60x30TX, the strategic plan for higher education in Texas. This document is a guide to help with that alignment.

This toolkit is prepared for two audiences, both of which are businesses or employers. First, it is designed to reach employers who have existing internship programs to provide information about how those programs can help meet the *60x30TX* strategic goals and targets. Second, this toolkit is directed to employers who **do not** have an existing program to provide a primer on how to build a new internship that integrates the goals and targets of *60x30TX*.

The toolkit is comprehensive and thorough, and it includes many descriptions. It has been compiled after researching best practices, and its contents have been curated to assist in developing and maintaining successful internship programs. Note that not all of the recommendations included here are mandatory or necessary. They are here to serve as resources to be used at your organization's discretion.

INTRODUCTION

60x30TX & Internships

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) recently developed a Career Readiness Handbook in partnership with the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). This handbook was developed to emphasize how the third goal of 60x30TX (sixty by thirty Tex), the marketable skills goal, is relevant to students. The handbook is designed to provide postsecondary students, regardless of age or background, with information on how to prepare for their transition into the workforce. In this handbook, we encourage students to pursue co-curricular activities that will provide experiential learning opportunities. These can include internships, study abroad opportunities, apprenticeships, service learning, and student leadership programs. The information provided here could apply to any experiential learning opportunity.

We define internships as short-term periods of work experience. They may be paid or unpaid and must allow students to learn how a particular industry works. The Commissioner of Higher Education in Texas, Raymund Paredes, is a strong advocate for paid internships. He argues that payment will allow equal access to marketable skills for underserved students. These students almost always need to work to attend college and cannot afford to take an unpaid position. This is especially true if the student is also earning semester credit hours for the internship. While it is ideal for students working internships to earn credits that apply toward their degree plan, they will likely have to pay for those credits, as if they were taking an equivalent course.

Internships provide a mechanism for both the student and the employer to discover if they are a good fit for one another. A **2014 Gallup poll** found that graduates who took internships had increased odds of being engaged at work, thriving in their overall well-being, and being emotionally attached to their alma mater. These positive outcomes are partly why the tri-agency collaboration among the THECB, TWC, and the Texas Education Agency produced the **Texas Internship Challenge**. The challenge encourages industry and employer partners to offer paid internships, for universities and colleges to promote the campaign and grant academic credit for internship opportunities, and for students to apply for and accept these internships.

The National Association of Colleges and Employers defines an internship as

“ a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in professional fields they are considering for career paths; and give employers the opportunity guide and evaluate talent.”

CAREER SERVICES

IS A PRIMARY RESOURCE FOR INTERNSHIPS

Most institutions of higher education have a Career Services office, which alternatively may be called a career center, career placement office, or career office. This office provides services to help students (and often alumni) meet their professional goals.

Career Services professionals are a resource for your internship programs.

One strategy associated with the marketable skills goal is for college students to engage with Career Services as early as freshman year. If a student waits until their senior year to work with Career Services professionals, they may miss out on opportunities – such as internships – that can prepare them for the workforce.

Career services offices provide vital services to students. These include:

Career decision-making	On-campus recruiting
Career exploration	Credential management
Resume writing/cover letter writing	Career management
Job interview preparation	Graduate school advising



Most institutions of higher education have a Career Services office, which alternatively may be called a career center, career placement office, or career office.

The Career Services office not only benefits students, though. These offices are an important resource for employers as well. They can provide outreach to students across a campus and across majors. They stay current on recruitment practices through their professional networks, including the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). Career Services professionals also advocate for their business partners by channeling students who will be a good fit for organizations. These offices are well-versed in higher education policy and can help navigate requirements. Specifically,

they can help navigate policy for internships, such as semester credit hour requirements and the rules surrounding paid internships.

Career Services offices are also partners in your interns' development. They can help design a post-internship exercise (a reflective process) or an assessment, and they can share best practices for articulating to students the marketable skills obtained during the internship. Additionally, Career Service can connect you to existing internship initiatives on their campus.

INTEGRATING 60x30TX INTO EXISTING INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS

Thank you for providing experiential learning opportunities for Texas students. Your role in developing an educated and diverse workforce is critical.

Your organization can help achieve the goals and targets of *60x30TX*

There are several ways you can integrate the state’s strategic plan for higher education into your current internship program. Let’s start from the beginning, with the first goal.



The 60x30 or Educated Population Goal

The 60x30 or educated population goal is reliant not only on our ability to grow talent in Texas but also on our state’s ability to attract talent from elsewhere. In this way, this goal is closely tied to the business world. The job opportunities in Texas are the main reason people from other states and countries move here.

Your business may be able to help achieve this goal in other ways, too. One of the strategies for achieving the 60x30 goal is to “Develop practices to encourage stop-outs with more than 50 semester credit hours to return and complete a degree

or certificate.” One way to use this strategy is to develop a **“returnship” program** as a complement to your existing internship program. A “returnship” is like an internship for experienced workers looking to re-enter the workforce. This might act as an entry point for those who needed to exit the workforce and postsecondary education for personal reasons. Returnships also are an excellent way to engage military veterans in your talent pipeline.

Another strategy for 60x30 is to “Develop and implement education and curriculum delivery systems (e.g., competency-based programs) to



The completion goal is about developing a talent pipeline of Texans and getting students to and *through* college.

make higher education available to a broader and changing population.” Higher education lingo aside, returning adult students were exactly who the THECB had in mind when it developed this strategy since competency-based systems can allow returning students to leverage their work and life

experiences to help them gain a college degree faster through a mix of classroom or online courses. Your returnship, incorporated into such a program, could be the tipping point that encourages someone to go back to work and/or college.



The Completion Goal

The completion goal is about developing a talent pipeline of Texans and getting students to and *through* college. You can help by encouraging your interns to complete their credential. As mentioned earlier, data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics make clear that students don’t get much of an economic lift from going to college unless they complete.

Four out of the six targets under this goal are focused on generating completions for target populations so that completions better represent the Texas population. For example, the Hispanic population is projected to be 52 percent of the Texas population in 2030, so the *60x30TX* plan projects that Hispanic completions should be 52 percent of our 2030 goal – 550,000 completions

in that year. The plan developers similarly designed targets for African Americans, males, and economically disadvantaged students.

You can help with these completions by bolstering your efforts to recruit diverse interns. This could be a boon for your business, too. Recent research **provides evidence** that diverse teams lead to better decisions. A ready example of fields that would benefit from diversity are those that are predominantly one gender, like nursing, which is largely female, or computer science, which is largely male. There also are many professional fields

in which minority populations are underrepresented.

Like the other goals, there are recommended strategies to help Texas reach the completion goal and targets. One of these strategies is to “Build credentials at each level with the aim of reducing coursework duplication and time to subsequent degrees.” Your organization can help reduce students’ time in getting degrees by working closely with your partner colleges and universities to develop an internship program that counts as college credit toward a degree plan.



The Marketable Skills Goal

The marketable skills goal is perhaps the most salient for your internship program. This goal requires colleges and universities to do the following: (1) identify and document the skills offered in their programs, (2) communicate those skills to students, and (3) update documented skills on a regular basis (and continue to communicate them to students).

Marketable skills are often called *employability skills* in other countries, or *transferable skills* here in the United States. They include both technical and soft skills. The state’s higher education plan purposefully leaves the definition of marketable skills broad to allow colleges and universities the freedom to focus on those skills valued by their industry partners. The marketable skills goal was designed to help students market themselves to employers – to you.

Marketable skills may include interpersonal, cognitive, and applied skill areas; are valued by employers (you); and can be primary or complementary to a major. The marketable skills goal is intended to provide students with a clearer picture of how courses and curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities relate to workforce

opportunities. As workforce opportunities change over time, so will marketable skills. No one knows exactly what the job market will look like in 15 years or exactly what skills will be needed. That is why the state’s higher education plan calls for the skills to be continuously updated.

You already are playing a major role in this effort if you are working with your partner colleges and universities to identify marketable skills. The THECB has encouraged higher education institutions to ask their industry or business partners to help identify the marketable skills offered in their programs. If you have participated in this process, thank you for your contribution!

You can take this a step further by identifying the marketable skills offered in your internship programs. Depending on your industry, you may already have skills’ profiles for your positions. Many industries rely on the Occupational Information Network (O*NET) to populate skills’ profiles. This is a free **online database** developed by the U.S. Department of Labor’s Employment and Training Administration that contains hundreds of personal requirements and professional characteristics. Consider including

a skills' profile on any job postings you share with Career Services offices. This will communicate to students the skills they will develop and/or improve upon through your internship program. Skills' profiles are sometimes called learning tracks or learning goals in internship job postings (see Appendix A for general examples and Appendix B for specific examples).

Advising students on the skills they are learning/improving will provide them with vernacular for

communicating to future employers, which will benefit you as students from other internships seek job opportunities with your business or organization. In a national study by the University of California, Los Angeles Higher Education Research Institute, most students surveyed identified "getting a better job" as the most important reason for attending college. Students who can articulate their marketable skills are better positioned to get a better job with you and other employers.



The Student Debt Goal

Your internship program also can help Texas meet the student debt goal. The THECB urges you to develop your existing internship program into one that pays students for their time, especially if you are a for-profit business. Student debt is a tool for students to use to reach completion, but if they also have an income while they are in school, that can offset their cost of living expenses and can allow students to borrow less, not borrow at all, or provide them with a financial cushion to address unforeseen emergencies. Offering your interns a salary can make a world of difference to them.

It also can make a difference to you **as their employer**. You will likely attract a larger pool of qualified intern candidates, allowing you greater selectivity in choosing the best candidate for your positions. Studies show that higher pay attracts more highly skilled candidates and elicits better work performance. Also, companies with paid internships

have a significantly higher chance of retaining interns as future employees. According to a **2009 study by NACE**, five years after hire, 39.1 percent of participating companies reported better retention among those they converted from their paid internship program than among other hires. Also, a **1995 Management Review article** reported employers save \$15,000 in training, hiring, and turnover costs for each employee they hire from their intern pool.

Paying minimum wage for a typical 10-week full-time intern costs employers around \$3,000. This is a modest amount when compared to the potential costs of expensive litigation and the value the company could receive by retaining more qualified workers. In any event, perhaps the most significant reason for companies to offer paid internships is that if the interns are paid a wage, they can perform any work the employer needs, including work that benefits only their employer.

“ We need to work with the business community to create vastly more paid internships. I do not like unpaid internships. They are grossly unfair to poor students who must work and earn an income to pay for college; they simply can't afford to work for free. The students who benefit from unpaid internships are largely affluent students. However, 60 percent of the students coming through the K-12 pipeline in this state are poor, and more than half of the students in higher education are poor.”

– Raymund Paredes, Commissioner of Higher Education

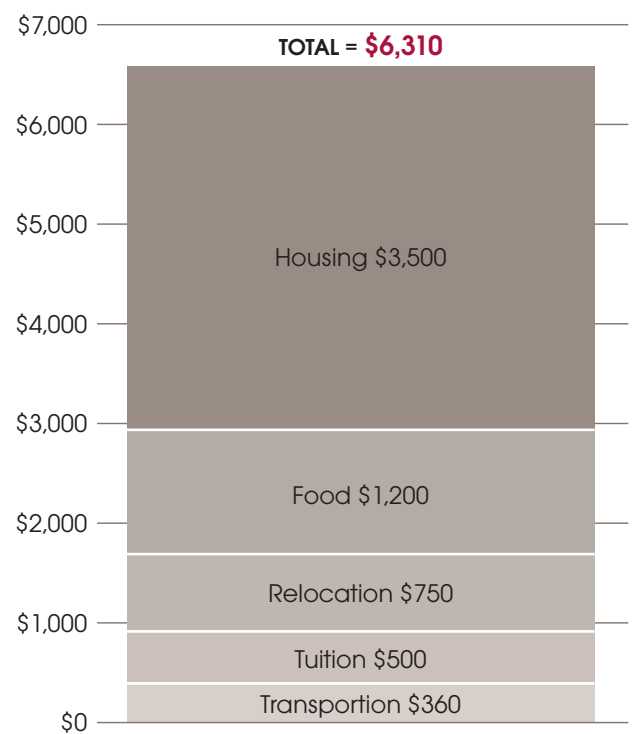


The marketable skills goal is intended to provide students with a clearer picture of how courses and curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities relate to workforce opportunities.

Commissioner Paredes is not a lone advocate for paid internships. There is a national campaign called **Pay the Interns** that lays out this issue with supporting data. The campaign website cites a **2016 article in the money section of Time.com** that explains internships can cost students a lot of money. The magazine modeled costs using the top 10 cities where students desired internship placements and came up with \$6,310 in out-of-pocket expenses for a summer internship. A wage or salary can offset this cost greatly.

Ideally, your internship also will offer semester credit hours. However, that is not up to your organization. Your higher education partner will need to determine if that is possible based on their internal policies. As mentioned earlier, Career Services staff can help you navigate the collegiate system of semester credit hours so that you have a liaison with your higher education partner and any academic or technical faculty. Your interns likely will have to pay for any semester credit hours associated with their experiential learning. If possible, consider offering a scholarship for your interns to offset this cost (see **NACE recommendation 5**).

FIGURE 1.
Student Expenses During an Internship



SOURCE: Money 2016.

NOTE: These data represent a rough calculation of average expenses for a semester-long (three-month) internship located out of town, in a major metropolitan area (i.e., New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, or Washington D.C.)

DEVELOPING A NEW INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Aligned with *60x30TX*

Online resources for designing a new internship program

Committing to offering experiential learning opportunities to Texas students is the first step. This section provides recommendations for developing an internship program that embeds the goals of *60x30TX* into the design. Much of what is recommended is based on the following sources: **University System of Maryland, Bridge** – a collaborative effort of Rhode Island colleges and universities – and the **Statewide Internship Program Toolkit** from Oregon.

The information here is focused on internships for resident students. If you want or need to expand your reach to offer internships to international students, you will need to work with your Human Resources department and Career Services partners. The hiring process for international students may require coordination with federal agencies.

There are five reasons why you should develop an internship program

Interns can . . .

- ✓ Provide freedom for current staff to pursue creative or advanced projects.
- ✓ Increase staff retention rate.
- ✓ Share the latest strategies and techniques in the field.
- ✓ Maintain and improve connections with colleges and increase visibility on campus. They are an excellent public relations tool and can help recruit other students.
- ✓ Create awareness of the field for future hires.

Benefits to your organization

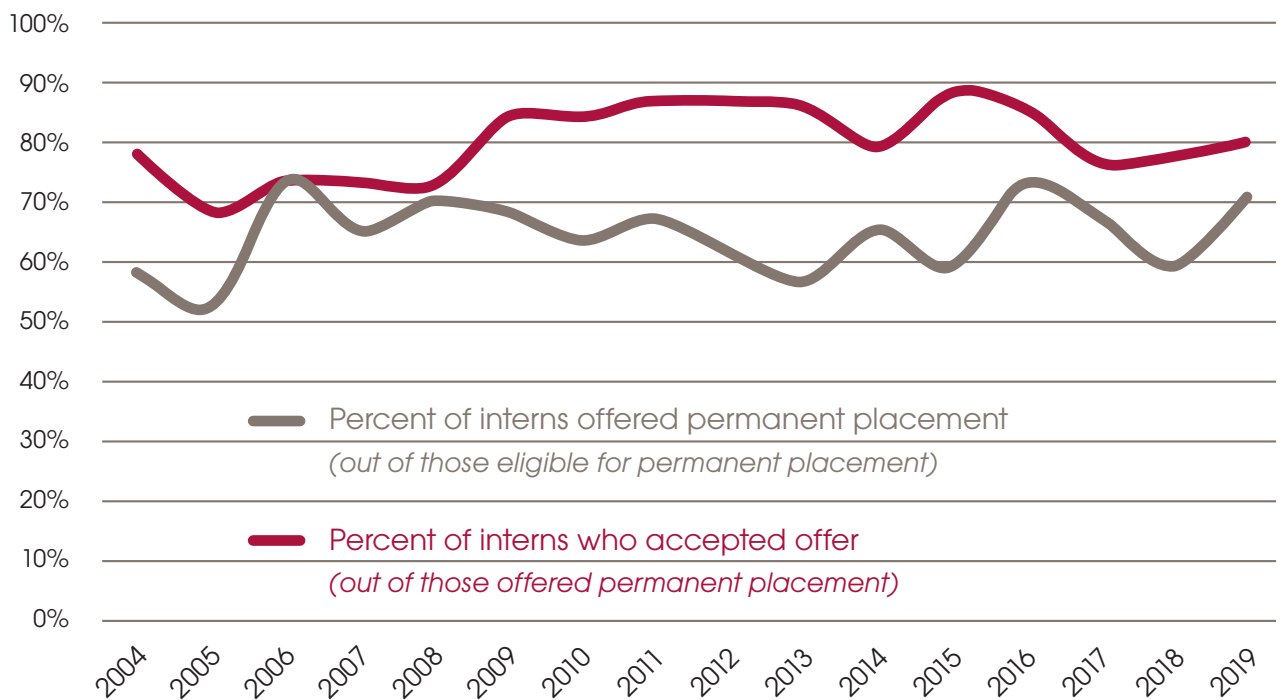
One of the more significant advantages to providing internships is the opportunity to develop your talent pipeline. You have the opportunity to evaluate potential employees before making an offer, which saves resources, both in time and real dollars. Employers have reported transitioning more than half of eligible interns into full-time staff. Interns assimilate quickly to their new roles and have shorter learning curves than external hires.

Staff pipeline development is especially crucial when the job market is highly competitive for talent. The unemployment rate for Texas in October 2018 was 3.7 percent ([Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), 2018). Both the nation and the South region shared this low unemployment rate, suggesting Texas companies are not just competing with one another for top

ability. An internship program could be a market advantage for your organization.

Do not lose sight of the community service you are offering. You are still giving to your community by teaching the prospective workforce. You also are helping to motivate students to complete their credential, which will contribute to both the 60x30 goal and the completion goal in 60x30TX. We recommend you talk with other organizations at professional meetings about the benefits of internship programs. You will find they are widely used and lauded, especially in Texas. The [Texas Internship Challenge](#) website features 6,500 internship positions on average per month and has featured more than 78,000 internship positions since its launch in February 2017.

FIGURE 2. From Interns to Hires: Offers Compared to Acceptances



SOURCE: NACE Internship and Co-op Survey, 2004-2019.

NOTE: Internship offers declined from 2008 to 2013 during the economic downturn. However, acceptances of offers for permanent placement increased and remained level during this same time.



One significant advantage to providing internships is the opportunity to develop your talent pipeline. You have a chance to evaluate potential employees before making an offer.

Benefits to students

Students are seeking opportunities that match and invigorate their interests and provide meaningful experiences. A meaningful, purposeful internship program will do that for them. You can energize their interests by assigning challenging projects and tasks. Ideally, these projects will complement their academic programs and/or career interests. Internships also will provide exposure to your organization. Indeed, this may be a student's first time in a professional environment. You have a chance to shape a young person's view of what it means to be a professional – not just what it means to be a professional employee but also how to be a good colleague and peer. That is a major opportunity and responsibility. You can shape that view by providing adequate, reliable, and regular supervision and mentoring. This will ensure interns are staying on track toward accomplishing goals.

Also, as mentioned earlier, students will be gaining marketable skills. It is important for them to translate those skills into a narrative so they can communicate their skills to future employers. And while you may hire interns, you may also want to promote them later. Helping them communicate their skills will position them to apply for advancement in your organization.

The "learning goals" you state in your job posting are a good place to start identifying skills a student will gain in your internship. This will also help to address the "awareness gap," the phenomenon whereby college graduates have skills valued in the workforce but are not aware of how these skills connect to job postings.

Guidelines for designing a new internship program

Designing a new internship program should be a thoughtful collaboration between your hiring manager, your Human Resources department, and your Career Services partner. There are six steps in developing a new internship program. Be sure to engage Human Resources and Career Services every step of the way.

Step 1.

Select the best experiential option for your organization.

While this document is focused on internships, the ultimate aim of 60x30TX is for Texas graduates to be successful. Consider taking a step back with your Human Resources department and consider the best way you can contribute to student success AND benefit your company. What kind of experiential education is the best fit for your organization? If you are not familiar with these categories of student engagement, talk with your Career Services partners.

Volunteer Program

Service Learning

Civic Engagement Work-Study

Externships

Internships

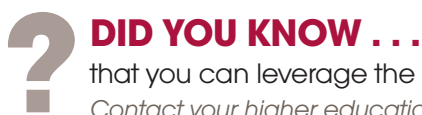
Student Employee/Texas

Capstone/Project-Based Learning

The THECB and its partners hope you choose an internship as the best fit. Note that any positions you give to interns should provide them with actual work assignments and meaningful work. This will

ensure the best experience for both you and the intern. Aligning the scope of work for an internship with your business need is an important step in making this happen. Selecting an internship for your experiential learning means you are committed to providing the resources, i.e., supplies, space, staff, for the intern(s) to maximize their performance. This will require thoughtful planning with your Human Resources department and your team.

If you determine that an internship is not the best fit for your organization, consider becoming a partner in the Texas College Work-Study Program. It provides part-time jobs to eligible students with financial need to enable them to attend college. This program was established by the 71st Texas Legislature in 1989. To be part of this program, you must enter into an agreement with a higher education institution partner. To be eligible, your organization must meet **certain criteria**. Your institution partners are now required (since 2017) to ensure that 20 to 50 percent of positions offered through work-study program are off campus, so they are eager to hear from you!



DID YOU KNOW . . .

that you can leverage the Texas Work-Study Program to create and subsidize a paid internship?
Contact your higher education partner's office of student financial aid for more information.

Step 2.

Determine your organization's ability to offer a paid internship program.

As Commissioner Paredes argues, paying interns will make your program more robust because it will allow for equitable access to your organization. In other words, students from all backgrounds can consider taking advantage of your internship opportunities. That being said, you must decide what is possible for our organization.

Be aware that the U.S. Fair Labor Standards Act restricts employers' use of unpaid interns. If you find you cannot pay your intern, you must meet seven criteria as determined by the **U.S. Department of Labor** (DOL). If you can answer NO to any of these questions, we recommend payment be part of your internship program. *Note, this is not official U.S. DOL language. Please consult your HR department or your legal counsel to determine if your internship satisfies federal guidelines for non-payment.*

The wage or salary for an intern varies widely, depending on your industry, the academic major or skillset of the student you are recruiting, and his or

her level of experience. Internships can range from minimum wage for some roles up to \$22 or higher an hour for more technical skills. Variation also is true for the number of hours your interns work. The THECB recommends you set the hours according to business need but allow for flexibility when or if needed. This is yet another discussion to have with your Human Resources department. Wages and hours may be guided by other factors beyond business need, such as state and federal policy. For example, if you are offering an hourly wage, it cannot be less than minimum wage for Texas.

As stated earlier, we advocate for paid internships. While student debt is a tool for students to use to reach completion, additional income can offset living expenses. A paid internship may allow students to borrow less or help them respond to unforeseen emergencies. Offering your interns a salary can be life-altering for first-generation students (students who are the first in their families to attend college).

U.S. DOL Seven-Prong Test	YES	NO
1. Do both you and the intern clearly understand there is no expectation of compensation?		
2. Will the internship be similar to training given in an educational environment?		
3. Will the internship be tied to academic credit?		
4. Will the internship correspond to the academic calendar?		
5. Is the internship limited to the time period in which the internship provides the intern with beneficial learning?		
6. Can you guarantee the intern does not displace regular employees?		
7. Do both you and the intern clearly understand there is no guarantee of paid employment at the conclusion of the internship?		

Step 3.

Define the learning goals for each internship position.

Create a skills profile for each internship position. This skills profile will communicate to students the skills they will develop and/or improve upon through your internship program. Those skills are sometimes called learning tracks or learning goals. Learning goals translate nicely to the marketable skills in 60x30TX and help a student flesh out their résumé. These learning goals also can help you structure a pathway for career advancement in your organization by connecting short-term employment, like an internship, to long-term employment and professional development.

Columbia College provides a great [outline for designing learning goals](#). They use a rubric called SMART, meaning learning goals should be: specific, measurable, attainable, results-focused,

and time-focused. Abbreviated learning goals also should be included on any job postings you share with Career Services offices (see Appendix A for general examples and Appendix B for specific examples).

For some organizations, the learning goals may be a challenge, not because you don't have them at the ready but because your internship program is designed to capture multiple applicants for varied positions with a single job posting. If your internship advertisement is geared toward your program rather than individual positions, the THECB recommends you choose the five most common learning goals across your organization and include those in the posting.

Designing a new internship program should be a thoughtful collaboration between your hiring manager, your Human Resources department, and your Career Services partner.



Step 4.

Work with your Human Resources and Career Services partners to develop a recruitment and hiring process.

Your hiring process for interns may look very different from your hiring process for regular staff. Your Human Resources department can help you determine this. You may choose to post on job sites, such as Indeed, LinkedIn, or Monster.com, but you should also work with your Career Services partners to determine how best to reach your target audience on campuses, especially if you are a regional employer.

The timeline for recruitment and hiring may vary from regular staff, too. Many companies choose to host interns for the summer because a lot of students are available during the summer months. And that is true, but it is not a rule. Consider expanding or offering your internship program year-round. Your workflow may provide more learning opportunities for fall, winter, or spring that would be a better fit for an internship. A low-income student may opt for an internship instead of a part-time job during a regular semester, provided it is a paid internship. If your business needs are focused on the summer months, however, the **Oregon Statewide Internship Program Toolkit** provides a comprehensive timeline on page 15. This timeline can begin as early as December the preceding calendar year.

Recall, you also can help with our completion goal by bolstering your efforts to recruit diverse interns. A **2014 Forbes article** reported several studies that demonstrated the benefits of a diverse workforce, including research from McKinsey & Company and Harvard Business School. Texas became a majority-minority state in 2005, but our completions do not reflect this population shift. Consider this shift as you build out your internship program. You can help your organization and the state by encouraging applications from traditionally underserved students.

Part of making an internship program work is finding the right match. Your job posting will be the first step toward attracting talent you want to recruit and grow. If you are not sure how to attract the right talent, consider finding an established network to connect you to students whose academic and professional interests align with your business mission, such as **Inroads**. The Inroads model is built on strong relationships with business partners and with student participants. This program specializes in training and developing talented underserved students to understand the corporate work environment.

Step 5.

Develop an onboarding process that engages your interns.

Your Human Resources department likely has a standard process for orienting regular staff. That process is a good place to start for designing an orientation for your intern(s), but it should not be exactly the same. Remember, this may be your interns' first "real job." You have an opportunity to be an example of what a professional organization is and how it presents itself.

To begin with, you may be hiring more than one intern. The THECB recommends onboarding them together (as a **cohort**) so they can meet each other and build a network of support within your organization. Cohort onboarding and training will help your interns launch their own professional network. Other resources are available to help you design this process. For example, **NACE recommends**

that interns have a mentor; this could be the manager. **The Texas Internship Challenge** recommends the process be at least one week.

Also, your Career Services partners may have suggestions on how to model your onboarding.

Step 6.

Consider an exit process that will inform your program.

Your Human Resources department also may have a standard process for exiting regular staff. Again, that process is a good place to start for designing an exit process for your intern(s). Your exit process should include feedback for the intern and their performance. This feedback should tie directly back to the learning objectives included in your job posting. Ideally, your exit process also will include a reflective exercise for your interns, to help them think through what they did well, what they learned, and how they can continue to improve. Your Career Services partners can help you create this exit process.

You also may want to use the exit process to learn how to improve your program by asking your interns what you can do to enrich their experience. This likely will increase your return on investment by improving the alignment between your internship program and your business needs. Here are some suggested questions to ask:

- How would you describe our company culture?
- What did you learn?
- What were the weak points of your internship experience? The strong points?
- What was your least favorite part of the internship? Your favorite part?
- Was there anything that was not covered that should have been covered in the internship program?
- If you had any aspect of your internship to do over, what changes would you make?
- Would you recommend this internship to other students?

This last question is critical to growing your program. Also, if your onboard process is designed for a cohort, consider exiting them as a cohort, too. Instead of an exit interview, you could host an exit focus group. As with all other steps in developing your internship program, your Human Resources and Career Services partners can help with exit questions.

? DID YOU KNOW . . .

The **Mickey Leland Environmental Internship Program** (MLEIP) is a resource available to assist public and private sector employers in Texas in identifying college students interested in securing a paid, full-time summer internship assignment. Hundreds of students from across the nation, primarily science, technology, engineering, and math majors, apply to the MLEIP for an opportunity to learn valuable skills and prepare to launch their career.

Visit the MLEIP website for more information:

<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/jobs/mickeyleland/sponsors.html>

APPENDIX A

Checklist for designing an internship program

Below is a quick checklist for designing your internship program. These steps are taken from the narrative on pages 16-19 and are connected to the Texas strategic plan for higher education, *60x30TX*.

Step 1.

Select the best experiential option for your organization. Is an internship program right for your organization? Other experiential learning options include: volunteers, service learning, civic engagement, externships, capstone/project-based learning, and student employees (i.e., the Texas Work-Study program).

Step 2.

Determine your organization's ability to offer a paid internship program. The Texas Commissioner of Higher Education, Raymund Paredes, argues paying your interns will allow for equitable access to your internship program. Ultimately, a paid internship program can contribute to two of the strategic goals in *60x30TX* – the completion goal and the student debt goal. It will also contribute to your bottom line by saving you training, hiring, and turnover costs in the long term.

Step 3.

Define the learning goals for each internship position. Create a skills profile for each internship position called learning goals. A skills profile will communicate to students the skills they will develop and/or improve upon through your internship program. Learning goals translate nicely to the marketable skills in *60x30TX*, and help a student flesh out their résumé. These goals will also help you connect short-term employment to long-term career placement in your organization.

Step 4.

Work with your HR and Career Services partners to develop a recruitment and hiring process. Your hiring process for interns may look very different from your hiring process for regular staff. You can contribute to the completion goal by bolstering your efforts to recruit diverse interns.

Step 5.

Develop an onboarding process that engages your interns. This may be your interns' first "real job." You may be their first example of what a professional organization is and how it conducts business. Consider onboarding your interns (if you have more than one) as a **cohort** so they can meet each other and build a network of support within your organization.

Step 6.

Consider an exit process that will inform your program. Your exit process should include feedback for the intern and their performance. Ideally, your exit process also will include a reflective exercise for your interns to help them think through what they did well, what they learned, and how they can continue to improve. You can also use this exit process to learn how to improve your internship program.

APPENDIX B

How to write a job description for an internship

This template was developed by reviewing internship positions posted on Indeed.com for Texas and the **Employers Internship Toolkit** from InternInMichigan.com. A job description helps students to learn about your organization and your available opportunity. Here are some suggested sections and tips for completing the sections. This template also includes a sample list of learning objectives since those are likely unique to internship postings. Be sure to consult your Human Resources and Career Services partners to finalize your job postings for internships.

Job Title (Function)

Examples: *Marketing Intern, Research Intern, or Museum Acquisitions Intern*

Organization Name

About Organization

Describe your organization's mission and what your organization does (sometimes you can copy from your website).

City Name, TX

Hours per week/Days/Times

Specify morning, afternoon, evening.

Internship Duration

Begin date to end date

Number of Openings

Indicate how many positions you have available for this specific job.

Compensation Details

Examples: Paid (hourly rate), unpaid, stipend, other

Résumé Receipt

How would you like applications to get to you, i.e., email, online, or by other means? List any requirements for the résumé as well. Since you may be the first "real" job a student has applied for, it may be helpful for them to know what information you want emphasized. Also, do you even want a written résumé? Some organizations are moving towards using alternative methods and media. Be sure any alternative methods you consider meet your standards for Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and are equitable for potential applicants.

Job Description

This is your chance to get the student excited about working with your organization. Describe projects or other tasks that the intern will perform. Also mention who will supervise the intern.

Job Function

What area(s) should the student be studying and/or have knowledge in to perform the internship?

Required Qualifications

List specific knowledge, skills, and qualities expected/desired. You may also have an additional section called "Preferred Qualifications."

Examples:

- An interest in _____ (fill in any job-related interests)
 - Preferred GPA, academic major, degree
-

Internship Learning Goals:

Describe the skills or knowledge learned that will be transferable to other employment settings. How will the internship experience relate to the professional goals of the intern?

General Examples:

By the end of this internship, student will have learned or improved their skills in:

- presentation design and public speaking,
- project management,
- digital and social media, and
- account management.

APPENDIX C

Sample job description for an internship

Here is a sample description using the template in Appendix B. This job description was developed by reviewing internship positions posted on LinkedIn and StartWire and using learning objectives from **Grand Valley State University**. The learning objectives include suggested action words from **Cal Poly Pomona**. *Note: all of the names and contact information in this example are fabricated.*

Job Title: Accounting/Finance Intern

Organization Name: Perkins Hadrovic LLP

About Organization

Perkins Hadrovic LLP (www.perkinshadrovic.com) is one of the largest public accounting and consulting firms in the United States. Under its core purpose of “Building Value with Values,” Perkins Hadrovic LLP (PH) assists public and private company clients in reaching their goals through audit, tax, advisory, risk, and performance services. With 26 offices and 2,400 personnel, PH is recognized by many organizations as one of the country’s best places to work. PH serves clients worldwide as an independent member of Perkins Hadrovic International, one of the largest networks in the world, consisting of more than 140 independent accounting and management-consulting firms with offices in more than 400 cities around the world.

City: Austin, TX

Hours per week/Days/Times: 15-20 hours/week

Internship Duration: One academic semester – 14 weeks

Number of Openings: Two

Compensation Details: Paid \$12.00-15.00/hourly rate

Résumé Receipt

To apply, forward email application to Ms. Sandy Driscoll - sandy.driscoll@perkinshadrovic.com

Job Description

Are you looking for a meaningful internship? At PH, we believe that the primary function of a finance/accounting internship is to familiarize students with public accounting and finance through meaningful participation on a variety of engagements. Your primary function will be to participate in the examination, review, and compilation of financial statements; prepare and review tax returns; consult with management of businesses; report on internal financial controls; and assist with special reviews relating to acquisitions, mergers, and sale of businesses.

Also, interns will have the opportunity to work as a team member on diverse client engagements to include manufacturing, not-for-profit, government, healthcare, education, construction, dealerships, food and agriculture, and financial institution clients. PH has constantly remained on the leading edge of our profession by developing new tools and techniques to deliver value to our clients. Building Value with Values is our core purpose. Our team of professionals continually strives to achieve value for our clients, our people, and our firm, while at the same time adding value to the profession and the public trust. We want you to be part of our team!

Job Function

To be a strong candidate for this internship, you should possess an understanding of accounting and financial principles and a positive attitude. You should be collaborative, trustworthy, receptive to feedback, and eager to learn.

Required Qualifications

- Pursuing a Bachelor of Science/Business Administration of Science degree in accounting or related field
 - Satisfactory completion of introductory accounting courses and a basic understanding of accounting and financial principles
 - Aptitude for math, proficient with computers, proficient with Excel
 - Demonstrated effective verbal and written communication skills
 - High level of efficiency, accuracy, and responsibility
 - Strong academic track record (minimum GPA of 3.0)
-

Internship Learning Goals

- Learn and adopt professionalism within a CPA firm and working with clients.
- Develop an understanding of the accounting software the firm uses.
- Learn methods of analyzing the general ledger and how information is integrated into the financial statements.
- Develop techniques to reconcile accounting on the general ledger and how to resolve discrepancies.
- Develop skills needed to communicate with customers and the public regarding settling accounts or discrepancies.
- Improve understanding of the accounting systems and the monthly accounting and reporting cycle.
- Improve understanding of the audit requirements and assist auditors with workpaper requests.
- Learn the process of documenting work performed on projects and communicating effectively with supervisors and other company personnel.
- Understand how a firm trains its personnel and how training enhances work requirements.
- Develop a skill set of gathering questions and asking appropriate personnel for assistance.
- Develop skills required to interact with other professionals at varying levels throughout the company.
- Demonstrate time management skills and the ability to be responsible for more than one project at a time.

APPENDIX D

60x30TX matters for Texas and for your organization

The strategic plan for higher education, *60x30TX*, is firmly founded on the critical need for Texas to produce an educated workforce that can adapt to change and compete at the highest levels, nationally and internationally. The plan emphasizes all forms of post-high school education – undergraduate certificates, associate and bachelor’s degrees, and graduate and professional education. *60x30TX* also provides latitude for two- and four-year institutions and encourages local creativity in pursuing the plan’s goals as institutions continue to pursue their own unique missions. The full plan is available [online](#); a brief summary follows here.

The Texas Higher Education Strategic Planning Committee developed the plan and its four student-centered goals. The first goal deals with the level of higher education among the Texas population, or the percentage of those actually holding a degree or undergraduate certificate. The second goal deals with degree and undergraduate certificate completion at Texas colleges and universities. The third goal highlights the need for graduates to know the marketable skills they have acquired through their degree

programs. The fourth goal recognizes the need to address student loan debt. Supporting students through completion to strengthen the Texas economy means addressing college affordability and making explicit to students the workplace skills they obtain in their programs.

The first and overarching goal states that by 2030, at least 60 percent of Texans ages 25 to 34 will have a postsecondary credential or degree. This is a big percentage to shoot for because right now only about 43 percent of Texans in this age group have any kind of postsecondary degree or certificate. The best-educated societies in the world, however, have already reached 60 percent, or close to it, in this age group. We need to move the level of attainment for young Texans up dramatically to keep the state globally competitive and for Texans and their communities to prosper. Successfully improving the education level of young Hispanic Texans, who will make up the majority of the students between now and 2030, is critical to reaching this first goal.

The next goal states that by 2030, at least 550,000 students in that year will complete a certificate, associate, bachelor’s, or master’s from an institution



of higher education in Texas. This goal includes public, independent, and for-profit colleges and universities. If this goal is reached, Texas will award a total of 6.4 million certificates or degrees during the 15 years of this plan. *60x30TX* is focused on college success. It is not unusual for people to hear “four-year degree” or “university” when they hear the word “college.” Postsecondary success comes in all shapes and sizes. In the *60x30TX* strategic plan, college means enrollment and, ideally, completion at any institution of higher education in the state.

The third goal states that by 2030, all graduates from Texas public institutions of higher education will have completed programs with identified marketable skills. In a national study by the University of California, Los Angeles Higher Education Research Institute, most students surveyed identified “getting a better job” as the most important reason for attending college. Students who can articulate their marketable skills are better positioned to get a better job. The marketable skills goal pertains to all levels and all programs in higher education. The developers of the *60x30TX* plan felt the need to include a goal for marketable skills because of national discussions around graduate employability. Employers are looking for more than hard or technical skills. They need staff who can communicate, synthesize, and improve information – what we often call soft skills, which many liberal arts and humanities students accrue in their programs. Graduates who can market themselves to employers’ needs can feel confident their college degree was worth the cost and the time. Sometimes this is simply a matter of an “awareness gap,” where students simply don’t know what skills will apply to the workforce. Sometimes it’s a matter of calibration, where industry and education use different vocabulary to describe the same thing.

The fourth goal of *60x30TX* states that by 2030, undergraduate student loan debt will not exceed

60 percent of first-year wages for graduates of Texas public institutions. This is the only goal that focuses on undergraduates. We have an opportunity to limit student loan debt and improve how higher education is financed to reduce financial barriers that students and families encounter when pursuing any level of higher education. Texas could experience greater shortages in critical fields if student loan debt spikes to a point where a majority of students choose programs based entirely on potential income, without considering market need. The developers of *60x30TX* thought the best way to focus on financial issues was to set a statewide goal of maintaining debt load as measured against student earning power at graduation. Success in maintaining this goal will require collaboration among elected officials and higher education leaders and will probably require imaginative reinvention of the paths leading to completion, including reimagining methods for teaching and learning.

The goals are interdependent. The plan was designed so that all four goals tie work together. *60x30* is the overarching goal at the center of the plan, but the other three goals are what will get us to 60 percent in 2030. The completion goal counts the number of certificates and degrees conferred at Texas institutions. As mentioned earlier, completing a credential is key to boosting income potential. Also, completing the degree ensures students will gain full exposure to all of the skills available to them through academic programs. Students who can effectively market their skills to potential employers can secure employment that pays competitively. Higher earnings should position graduates to pay off their student debt without undue burden on them or their families. This will be especially true for any interns that you convert to full-time staff. Finally, student debt ties back to completion. Student debt is a tool, a resource for achieving completion and gaining marketable skills.

APPENDIX E

List of websites referenced

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This document is available on the
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
website: www.60x30tx.com/resources/reports/

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