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Certified Internship Program comes to Gardner-Webb



Anne Mason is the internship Coordinator for Career Development's Certified Internship Program. She will act as a guide for participants in the program. Photo by Hannah Haggerty.

By: Chelsea Sydnor

Gardner-Webb students will soon have the chance to gain internship experience through a university-sponsored organization. The Center for Career Development is providing the Certified Internship Program to help students apply for and earn internships, as well as assist them throughout their internship period and prepare them for their future careers.

"It's an opportunity for students to learn about professional and skill development to help them with the next steps in their career," explained Anne Mason, Internship Coordinator.

The course will begin toward the end of the fall 2015 semester, which is when students will begin working to secure their internship positions. They will then use the next semester to enrich the experience by building their resumes, practicing for interviews and learning about networking through workshops and tutorials. Simultaneously, their internships will begin along with the spring 2016 semester.

The program does not offer course credit, but instead is a tuition-free certification program. Students will receive documentation to say that they have completed all of the requirements of the program. The internships that participants complete may, however, apply to requirements set by their majors.

"It's not based on their academics, it's more based on their goals," shared Mason. "We're here to help students have an internship directly related to what they want to do."

Participants of the program will receive valuable information from the instructors, including an introduction to the job market and environment they will be joining, as well as tips about dressing for the business world. Those enrolled in the program will also reflect upon their experiences, as well as receive feedback from their instructors.

Mason will act as a guide for the participants in the program, helping them connect with their possible employers. She plans to help students see the benefits the program has to offer them.

"We don't simply give them the internship," stated Mason. "We share our knowledge, tools, and resources. However, if we have existing partnerships, we'll give them the contacts."

The Center for Career Development hopes that faculty and staff will make an effort to be informed about the program in order to encourage students to participate and make it a success. It can sometimes be difficult to identify a quality internship, and the Certified Internship Program is designed to point out the characteristics of a beneficial one.

"While students are here, it is important for them to take advantage of the professional development opportunities available to them," explained Mason. "The more experience they get, the more occasions they have to network and mature in the professional world."

Applications for the Certified Internship Program will be available in the Center for Career Development on October 21, and will be due November 12.