Community Work Study Host-Site Handbook
Center for Campus & Community Engagement
Ohio University

Overview

This program is coordinated by the Center for Campus and Community Engagement and Office of Financial Aid. CWS is funded by the federal work study program and eligibility for the program is determined by the Ohio University Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships. For students, this employment and experiential learning opportunity is designed to assist with the cost of a student's college education without adding to student debt, reinforce educational and career goals, and provide an opportunity to meaningfully engage with the community. For partners, this program is intended to serve as a capacity builder resulting in meaningful outcomes for your organization.

This manual has been created to serve as a resource for our community partners to offer additional clarity regarding the program and best practices to help ensure organizations get the most out of their interns. The basis of the CWS program is community engagement, a mutually beneficial relationship for the community, the University, and students—and the Center for Campus and Community Engagement strives to ensure the needs of our community are being met.

I.   Program Details and Processes

Program Details

Typically, Community Work Study students are eligible to work the following hours:

- Fall Semester: 150 hours total, ~10 hours/week
- Spring Semester: 150 hours total, ~10 hours/week
- Summer I & II: Varies, ~25-28 hours per week (depending on enrollment status)

Community Work Study is compensated at $10/hour.

Work Study funding is awarded on a session-by-session basis following the academic calendar below:

- Summer II* (Mid-June—Aug)
- Fall Semester (Aug—Dec)
- Winter Break* (Dec.)
- Spring Semester (Jan—May)
- Spring Break* (March)
- Summer I* (May—June)

    *Funding over summer and holiday breaks must be specifically requested by the student as the respective term approaches.

If a student has unused funding from any session during the year, they are able to roll forward that funding into another session within the same academic year. Pending students and host sites are agreeable, a student can remain in a placement for multiple sessions or years.

Eligibility

CWS awards are based on the result of the student's Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and their "Cost of Attendance" at OU. Undergraduate, graduate, and professional students are eligible for the program, with final eligibility determined by the Ohio University Office of Financial Aid.

If a student's finances no do not meaningfully shift, it is likely they will remain eligible semester to semester and year to year. However, factors like a shift in income reported on the FAFSA, new scholarships, new loans, or a shift in their tuition costs (i.e. moving from full-time to part-time enrollment) are all elements that may impact a student's eligibility.

Prior to admitting a student into the private job listing on GivePulse, the CCCE collects their PID number to verify eligibility into the program.

Note: Students are often unaware of their Work Study Eligibility, so we encourage all interested candidates to reach out via email to Courtney at the CCCE at lefebvrec@ohio.edu to prompt an inquiry with the Office of Financial Aid.

Graduate students in particular are NOT automatically awarded Work Study funding by the Office of Financial Aid and MUST make an inquiry to determine eligibility.

Since this a federally funded program, the student(s) cannot take part in partisan or non-secular activity as part of their CWS job. A student may hold another off-campus job, but cannot hold two Work Study positions at the same time.

Application + Hiring Process

In order to verify student eligibility before connecting them to host-sites, the CCCE uses a private group on GivePulse to post position descriptions and manage applications. The steps to recruit a student are as follows:

1. Host site supervisors are admitted into the GivePulse group and post position descriptions: Find detailed instructions here.

2. As eligible students are admitted, they can search the job listing and apply via GivePulse. When a student submits an application, both the host-site supervisor and CCCE receive an email notification from GivePulse with the application materials attached.

3. Community partners are free to move forward and interview candidates at their convenience.

4. When ready to hire a candidate, alert the CCCE and we will confirm the placement with Financial Aid, begin the onboarding process with University Human Resources, and schedule an orientation* with the student and our staff. The student is able to begin work as soon as they submit all necessary paperwork to HR.

   *View the Student Orientation Manual here.

II. Best Practices for Supervisors

Once students and host sites are matched, the Center for Campus & Community Engagement asks that supervisors approve student timesheets each pay period by either sending the student's total number of hours worked via email to Courtney at lefebvrec@ohio.edu OR requesting that the student send their supervisor a screenshot of their finalized timesheet to forward on to Courtney with the supervisor's stamp of approval.

Beyond approving timesheets and not exceeding the total allocation of student hours allowed, the CCCE does not mandate any specific management practices in order to allow organizations freedom to implement the most effective strategies for their workplace. However, below are some best practice recommendations for managing student interns that may be useful.

1. Orientation & Expectation Setting – Convene an initial meeting to introduce your organization, set goals, and discuss mutual expectations

- Focus on job description and how it relates to agency mission & goals. Will the intern be interacting with your partners and service population? How will they be expected to act in those situations and what should they be prepared for?
- Set your specific expectations for your student. Describe the workplace culture, processes, and norms they will need to engage with.
- Allow student to describe what they expect from a work environment and what they think they will need to be successful.
- Discuss how they will be evaluated. How will they know when they have been successful?
- If helpful, please use our [template work plan](#) to document activities and deadlines, this is a useful tool to guide weekly check-in meetings.

2. Maintain regular communication and opportunities for feedback.
   - Share your expected method of communication with the student. Be sure to set clear guidelines about how they should contact you if they cannot come to work.
   - Allow student to share their preferred method of communication and if they have any barriers to being able to use your agency's method of communication.
   - Discuss the bi-weekly timesheets and communication with the CCCE.

3. Provide training to student specific to their role at your agency.
   - Utilize the job description provided to the CCCE as a starting point—if you both decide to edit the original job description, make sure to document those changes so the student's new responsibilities are clear to all parties.
   - Provide access and orientation to the work location and expectations.
   - Introduce other team members.

4. Provide real, meaningful work experience.
   - Outcomes improve when students feel they are engaging in meaningful tasks they can connect to their academic or career goals. It is okay to present them with challenging work.

5. Facilitate interaction and team involvement.
   - Opportunities to meet colleagues and partners can help students feel a sense of belonging, accountability, and commitment to your organization and mission.
   - Team projects are valuable opportunities for students to grow professionally and develop important soft skills.

Remote Internships

Remote Work Study placements are acceptable, and while they can pose challenges, they also have demonstrated benefits for both employers and employees and serve to break down geographic barriers--expanding accessibility to Work Study students and organizations across OU's five regional campus communities and e-Campus. Overall, we have found that increased structure is frequently helpful to successfully manage remote student interns and, in addition to the recommendations above, the CCCE also suggests that supervisors:

1. Ensure student has necessary tools needed to effectively engage remotely.
   - If a student lacks reliable broadband access or personal technology needed to facilitate a virtual internship, remote work is likely not a good fit.

2. Require more frequent communication/check-ins.
   - For some students, this placement may be their first professional experience, and they may find it challenging to navigate in a remote environment. Implementing more frequent check-in

meetings and open lines of communication, such as via email or apps like Teams Chat, Google Chat, or Slack, is important to being an accessible supervisor and ensuring are meeting goals.

3. Develop and maintain scheduled student "office hours" devoted to the internship.
   - Maintaining regular work schedules can give needed structure to students working from home. Work with the intern to determine a weekly schedule and the hours they will be devoting to accomplishing work tasks each week and accessible via email, video call, text, or phone.

4. Set weekly milestones for long-term projects or tasks.
   - In addition to structured hours, breaking down large tasks into smaller milestones that can be used to gage weekly progress is a helpful way of ensuring projects are on track.

5. Intentionally create opportunities for the student to engage as a team / network.
   - Feeling connected to an organization, their mission, and people they serve can be difficult in a remote environment. Facilitating events such as virtual coffee hours or lunch breaks with other teammates can help students feel connected and engaged in your workplace, develop soft skills, and grow their personal networks.

III. Conflict Resolution and Termination

If a student is not fulfilling the responsibilities of their job description, or is demonstrating other inappropriate behavior, the CCCE recommends the following course of action:

1. 1st Verbal warning from Supervisor: The host-site issues a warning to the intern that identifies the specific challenges and areas of improvement, and expectations for correcting the student conduct on a 1-2 week timeline. Please document this warning and notify the CCCE that this has occurred.

   a. The CCCE recommends implementing specific, targeted weekly goals with deadlines using the Template Work Plan at this point to provide structure to check-in meetings, short-term task management, and document productivity week to week at this point if you are not already.

2. 2nd Warning: If no improvement, please inform the CCCE and we will issue a second warning, reiterating the identified challenges and immediate needed behavior change. This warning will emphasize that the consequences of failing to correct the inappropriate behavior will result in removal from the position, and potentially the program.

3. Termination: If the supervisor continues to see no improvement, please notify the CCCE and we will remove the student from the position.

Though committed to a progressive approach to corrective action, the CCCE considers certain rule infractions and violations of standards as grounds for immediate termination of employment. These include but are not limited to: violence, theft in any form, insubordinate behavior, vandalism or destruction of agency property, being on company property during non-business hours, the use of company equipment without prior authorization by Executive Director, untruthfulness about personal work history, skills, or training, divulging Company business practices, and misrepresentations of the CCCE or host site to the general public, or an employee.

This process is referenced in sections H and I of the Student Orientation Manual.

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