

From: James M Devitt [REDACTED]  
Subject: NYU  
Date: February 12, 2014 at 2:05 PM  
To: amanda.zamora@propublica.org

---

In recent months, there have been calls for NYU and other universities to stop listing unpaid internships.

First, it is important to note that the majority of internships listed by NYU are paid or give academic credit. Second, certain fields have long been understood to offer unpaid internships, such as the public sector and the not-for-profit sector. And, third, unpaid internships are and have long been common in certain for-profit sectors of the economy—such as journalism, the arts, and the non-profit sector—and eliminating these internships from our listings would have two significant disadvantages: 1) it would put our students at a significant disadvantage as they enter the job market in these fields, and 2) it would eliminate our career services offices ability to try to ensure the quality of these internships.

However, the university recognizes that not every employer's internships aid in NYU students' career development. This is why the NYU CareerNet job portal and the Wasserman Center have always included guidelines and considerations for both students and employers with respect to these opportunities. These efforts, which are aimed at ensuring that the time students spend is both productive and meaningful, require employers to abide by certain standards set by both the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) and the Department of Labor.

Moreover, in recent months the university has taken additional steps to strengthen this language and to heighten visibility of these guidelines—and to provide students with additional information to help them make decisions that can help ensure the best possible experiential education opportunity. These include:

- The creation of an internship directory that lists the internship coordinators and employment directors at each NYU school, which is designed to improve oversight of internships across the university.
- The implementation of language to clarify compensation arrangements; instead of only listing whether internships are "Paid" or "Unpaid," current options listed are "Paid," "Unpaid in compliance with NYU and Department of Labor guidelines," "Both Paid and Academic Credit," "Academic Credit," and "Stipend."
- Modification of the NYU CareerNet employer job form to ask employers to "agree" that they have read and comply with NYU and federal guidelines concerning internships. This is designed to heighten employer awareness of these guidelines and to encourage compensation for internships.
- Informing employers that before they seek to post an unpaid internship that they consider the guidelines from the [Department of Labor](#), which is the agency that determines the legality of an internship.



- The creation of a student NYU CareerNet link—“Is it an internship?”—which appears with every search result.

NYU also recognizes that while unpaid internships are important in pursuing jobs in certain sectors, these opportunities nonetheless place a financial strain on many students. To address this matter, the Wasserman Center Internship Grant was established years ago. It provides financial assistance to students pursuing non-paying internships within not-for-profits, the arts, education, public service, and other industries that do not traditionally pay their interns. The Wasserman Center now annually offers more than 300 \$1,000 grants.

Experiential education—notably, the internship—is an important part of a student’s time at NYU and often vital to obtaining employment in a range of fields. The Wasserman Center for Career Development’s survey of 2013 graduates, in which 94 percent reported working full time or attending graduate school, bears this out. It found that 15 percent of the class received a full-time job offer from the organization where they were interning at the time of the offer.

We’re confident these changes will not only enhance internship experiences for our students, but also make it easier for them to pursue opportunities that are invaluable in reaching their career aims.

\*\*\*\*\*

James Devitt  
Deputy Director for Media Relations  
New York University  
25 W. 4th Street, Room 513  
New York, NY 10012  
(212) 998-6808

[james.devitt@nyu.edu](mailto:james.devitt@nyu.edu)

@JamesDevittNYU

<http://www.nyu.edu/about/news-publications.html>