

The Harvard Guide to
Summer
Opportunities
2008



NBC websites. Local affiliates won't typically have their opportunities listed on the corporate website; contact them directly. While most internships in broadcast media will revolve around research and fact-checking, some may also become involve producing segments and programs.

Media employers often require that students receive credit for their internship experience. Any student in Harvard College who participates in a media internship and whose previous academic record is satisfactory is

eligible to undertake Independent Study for course credit (equivalent to four semester hours) for which their internship experience could serve as a foundation for thought, primary research, or context for questioning. Those students who participate in a media internship during the summer or while on leave of absence from the College may enroll in Independent Study during the next term in which they are enrolled in the College. Consult the Student Handbook for further information. The Office of Career Services can prepare a letter to the employer explaining this policy.

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LOIS BECKETT '09

SOCIAL STUDIES

INTERN, *THE ACCRA DAILY MAIL*,
ACCRA, GHANA

Search and Application Process

I set up the internship independently, by emailing editors of various newspapers in Accra. I had interned the previous summer with an American newspaper and worked for *The Crimson*. This gave me enough experience that I wasn't overwhelmed when they sent me out with a notebook and told me to find a story.

Practical Experience

I spent 11 weeks in Accra, Ghana, working as a reporter for a small local newspaper. The atmosphere was relaxed, and I had

WORDS OF WISDOM

Jason Stevenson, Associate Editor,
Backpacker Magazine

What do you look for in candidates?

Someone with a mature work attitude, who delivers what they promise, and is a consistent self-starter. Most media jobs alternate between busy and slow. The best interns can produce in a deadline time, and also generate a dozen new ideas to fill the void as soon as the latest issue goes to press.

I look for interns who dress well and are punctual. Magazines and newspapers are more relaxed and creative environments than investment banks—but how you present yourself is still important. If you've never worked in an office environment before, seek advice from mentors and friends about what separates the good employees from the bad ones. If you treat an internship like a real job, you'll be much closer to turning it into one.

What makes for a good/successful summer internship?

During your first week on the job, make a list of goals by asking yourself 'What do I want to leave here with?' That list should definitely include accumulating a thick pile of published clips and developing contacts within the industry. By the end of the summer you want editors approaching you with stories and assignments because they know 1) You can handle the job, and 2) You have special knowledge of a particular topic.

Unfortunately, summer interns are often tiny and temporary blips on editors' radar screens. To get noticed and develop contacts, find a "champion" on the staff to lend support to your ideas and introduce you to other editors. Ask editors out to lunch or coffee to discuss story ideas or review the latest issue. The goal of an intern or junior editor is to make the jobs of the senior editorial staff easier. If you do this well, you will become a valuable commodity.

Plus, the end of the summer doesn't mean the end of your work. As your time wraps up, explore ways to continue your relationship

with the publication during the school year.

How can students prepare for their internship?

Practice real journalism by writing for a campus publication, whether it's a newspaper, magazine, or website. Academic papers on the Punic Wars are not good stand-ins for an authentic media environment of deadlines, edits, re-writes, and fact-checking.

A Harvard-style liberal arts education is an ideal preparation for journalism. The best editors combine an in-depth knowledge or aptitude in a particular field with the mental quickness to become an instant expert in any topic that crosses their desk.

Review back issues of the publication where you will work, as well as their competition. Plus, learn from the best by reading the articles, columns, and essays that won the previous year's National Magazine Awards or Pulitzer Prizes.

What should student goals/expectations be, and where do internships fit into long-term career planning?

Make your internship as much like a real job as you can. Because clips and contacts are the keys to getting most journalism jobs, a good internship should supply you amply with both. If there's not enough work to keep you busy, canvas the edit staff to see if anyone needs help with research projects.

Journalism is a lifestyle as well as a career, and a summer internship gives you the chance to see if both are to your liking. Can you handle the "turn in your copy by 5pm" deadline pressure of a newspaper? What about the intensive re-writing process of a magazine's slow boil production cycle? An internship can also help you decide if a particular publication is appealing to you, and what kind of writing or editing you prefer. And bear in mind that journalism is a career with multiple entry points—from recent college grads to mid-career crossovers with professional degrees.