



# Exploring unpaid internships: Issues of access, equity, and learning *A report of the online CCWT symposium* Thursday, April 7, 2022

## Introduction

On Thursday April 7, 2022, a group of approximately 330 gathered online as part of a symposium on unpaid internships hosted by the Center for Research on College-Workforce Transitions (CCWT) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. During the 5-hour event, attendees heard from researchers about the latest data on unpaid internships and their impacts on students, professionals in the field about their strategies for funding these positions, and advocates discussing ways to alter the landscape of internship compensation.

Overall, the panelists reported the following—a combination of both discouraging and optimistic news and ideas:

- Unpaid internships are extremely common, with estimates ranging from 30%-58% of all college internships being uncompensated—though this figure obscures the majority of students who never take an internship at all;
- Unpaid internships vary considerably by employer sector with for-profits (29.2%) offering the fewest, and government (66.9%) and non-profits (68.1%) offering the most, with students taking these positions being disproportionately female and students of color;
- Funding unpaid internships can be accomplished through a variety of approaches, including:
  - State-level appropriations to fund sector-specific internship programs (Maryland IT)
  - Federal- and state-level advocacy to fund government internships, such as recent allocation of \$4.5m to pay White House interns (Pay our Interns)
  - Using Federal Work Study funds to support off-campus internships (Iowa, Maryland)
  - Partnering with local Chamber of Commerce offices to raise funds among the local business community (Scranton, PA)
  - Partner with local employers to co-create student projects that are funded by philanthropy and local donors, which increases employer buy-in (Florida, Wisconsin)
  - Raise funds from alumni, philanthropy, and local business to provide stipends for students seeking unpaid internships (Wisconsin)
  - Partnerships across campus units (e.g., financial aid, employer relations, career services, service learning) are essential (Iowa, Maryland, Wisconsin, Florida, Illinois, Virginia, New York)
  - Elevate visibility and status of internships by featuring success stories on campus digital boards and promotional materials (North Carolina)


This report includes a summary of the event and key “take-home” messages from the day’s panelists and is intended to provide readers with a snapshot of the issues, ideas, and conversations surrounding unpaid internships in the Spring of 2022. Our goal at CCWT is to continue facilitating these conversations and partnerships so that eventually, this nascent community will be able to figure out ways to ensure that all college students have access to a funded work-based learning (WBL) opportunity, or a robust in-class work-integrated learning (WIL) experience.

For a deeper dive into the event, a recording of each panel is available at the CCWT website ([ccwt.wceruw.org/internship-symposium](https://ccwt.wceruw.org/internship-symposium)).


## CCWT Co-Director Matthew Hora Introductory Remarks

The Founding and current Co-Director of CCWT Dr. Matthew T. Hora gave introductory remarks at the beginning of the symposium about the widespread interest in the event, the rationale for organizing the symposium, and a vision for how the field can work together in partnership across institutional, sectoral, and professional boundaries to ensure that all internships are paid and/or subsidized.

### WHO IS PARTICIPATING IN THE SYMPOSIUM TODAY?



- 600+ registrants
- Mostly HE professionals
- Career services
- Internship coordinators
- Employer relations
- Service learning
- Parents, legislative staff, regional collaboratives, youth orgs, researchers
- Who is missing that is part of developing solutions?




### WHY ARE YOU PARTICIPATING IN THE SYMPOSIUM TODAY?

WHAT ARE THE COMPELLING ARGUMENTS FOR EMPLOYERS TO PAY THEIR INTERNS? WE NEED TO MOVE THE NEEDLE ON THIS.

MANY OF MY STUDENTS COMPLETE UNPAID INTERNSHIPS. IF THERE ARE INNOVATIVE WAYS TO REDUCE THE NUMBER, I'M INTERESTED.

I BELIEVE IT IS LONG PAST DUE THAT INTERNS BE PAID FOR THEIR WORK AS IT IS AN EQUITY AND JUSTICE ISSUE.



In discussing the more than 650 registrants for the event from a wide range of professions, institutions, and roles in the internship ecosystem, Dr. Hora emphasized how internships are not a single, stand-alone program. Instead, they are complex learning spaces that are shaped and influenced by at least 3 actors—students, postsecondary institutions (especially faculty and advisors), and employers. Thus, figuring out how to fund these experiences implicates at least these three players, especially that of employers and higher education to figure out the funding problem.

Further complicating matters, however, is how internships are embedded in additional contexts that impact the programs and their funding—the pandemic, structural inequality, labor markets and recessions, and so on. This means that fundraising or legislative action at one point in time may not be tenable or sustainable a few years later. Thus, long-term solutions to the unpaid internship problem will require a more systemic and multi-party perspective, instead of “magic bullet” solutions like relying on philanthropy or legislative action alone. Instead, funding the large number of unpaid internships in the U.S.—which some estimate to be well over 1 million—will require creative partnerships and multi-pronged approaches.

Long-term solutions to the unpaid internship problem will require a more systemic and multi-party perspective, instead of “magic bullet” solutions like relying on philanthropy or legislative action alone.



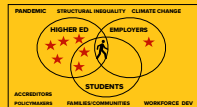
### WHY DID WE ORGANIZE THIS EVENT?

- 1. GROWING ADVOCACY FOR INTERNSHIPS/WORK-BASED LEARNING**  
14% MORE CALLBACKS    6% HIGHER WAGES    3.4% HIGHER GRADES  
CONSIDERED A HIGH-IMPACT PRACTICE (HIP)
- 2. BUT, WBL IS NOT EASY! A "LEGITIMATE INTERNSHIP" HAS:**  
CLEAR LEARNING PLAN    TRAINED MENTORS    HIGHLIGHTS TRANSFERABLE SKILLS  
ADEQUATE RESOURCES & FEEDBACK    HAS CAREFULLY SCAFFOLDED TASKS
- 3. LONG-STANDING PROBLEMS W/SUPPLY, ACCESSIBILITY, LEGALITY**  
NOT ENOUGH POSITIONS  
ACCESS LIMITED B/C TRANSPORTATION, TIME, HOUSING, \$\$    LABOR EXPLOITATION/UNPAID WORK

HITTING THE "PAUSE" BUTTON ON HIPs/INTERNSHIPS UNTIL WE KNOW MORE AND ADDRESS ACCESS ISSUE

### OK - SO HOW TO ADDRESS THE SITUATION?

- 1. RECOGNIZE THAT \$\$ IS BUT ONE ASPECT OF A LARGER PROGRAM DESIGN CHALLENGE**  
A COMMITMENT TO EQUITY- AND LEARNING-FOCUSED INTERNSHIP PROGRAM DESIGN  
WILL INCLUDE A FOCUS ON: PAY, ADEQUATE SUPERVISION & TASKS, LEARNING PLANS  
**BUT PAY IS AN IMMEDIATE PROBLEM THAT HAS TO BE ADDRESSED NOW!**
- 2. ACKNOWLEDGE THAT IN SOME CASES WIL MAY BE THE SOLUTION**  
PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING IN THE CLASSROOM    SERVICE LEARNING
- 3. APPROACH THE PROBLEM FROM A SYSTEMS-ORIENTED & LOCAL PERSPECTIVE**




Dr. Hora also spoke of the undeniable power and impact of an internship on college students, but how these programs are not dissimilar to a classroom activity in the difficulty required to design a high-quality experience. Complicating this design issue is the basic fact that too many internships are out of reach to low-income students who simply cannot afford to work for free. As a result, Dr. Hora argues that the field needs to hit the "pause" button on advocacy for "high-impact practices" (HIPs) and internships until the compensation and accessibility issue are addressed. This is why this symposium was organized.

### WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT INTERNSHIPS?

#### RESEARCH ON INTERNSHIP PARTICIPATION

- How many college students take an internship?
- How many do not? Why not?
- How many internships are unpaid?
- Does pay impact the outcomes of an internship?



#### ARGUMENTS FOR UNPAID INTERNSHIPS

STUDENTS ARE PAID IN EXPERIENCE

THE BENEFITS OUTWEIGH THE COSTS

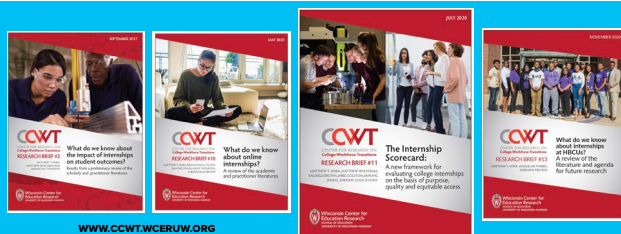
SOME EMPLOYERS (ESP NON-PROFITS) DON'T HAVE THE BUDGET & STUDENTS NEED THE EXPERIENCE/CONTACTS

MAY NOT BE ABOUT BANNING UNPAID INTERNSHIPS, BUT FUNDING THEM ALL


NACE STUDENT SURVEY  
NAT'L SURVEY OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT  
DOE BACCALAUREATE & BEYOND 16/17  
CCWT NAT'L SURVEY OF COLLEGE INTERNSHIPS

30.8% → 58.1%  
The percentage of unpaid internships ranges from 30.8% to 58.1%

### CCWT PUBLICATIONS & RESOURCES ON INTERNSHIPS



WWW.CCWT.WCERUW.ORG



Finally, Dr. Hora briefly reviewed the research literature on unpaid internships, including results from a recent CCWT policy brief ([available here](#)) that revealed studies have estimated that between 30.8% and 58.1% of all internships are unpaid. Given the scale of the problem, the goal of the event was to convene experts from across the internship ecosystem to learn from one another, share ideas, and brainstorm real strategies for funding all internships in U.S. higher education.

### GOALS FOR TODAY'S EVENT

- CONVENE EXPERTS FROM DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE INTERNSHIP ECOSYSTEM TO LEARN ABOUT DATA, PRACTICE, AND POLICY INITIATIVES RELATED TO INTERNSHIP COMPENSATION
- TO SHARE IDEAS, LEARN FROM ONE ANOTHER, AND STRENGTHEN LOCAL/REGIONAL/NATIONAL EFFORTS TO FUND ALL INTERNSHIPS
- TO GENERATE IDEAS FOR A NATIONAL GUIDE/ACTION PLAN FOR CAMPUS-BASED INITIATIVES

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## Key Take-Home Messages from 4/7/22 Symposium on Unpaid Internships

### Introductory remarks

**Matthew Hora, UW-Madison/CCWT**

- Work-based learning is justifiably a huge focus in higher education given the documented positive impacts they can have on students careers and career development, but the large number of students who don't pursue internships at all—and especially the presence of unpaid positions that are inaccessible for low-income and working students—is a major problem of equity, fairness, and social mobility
- The goal isn't to ban unpaid internships outright but instead to find cross-sector and multi-party solutions NOW to ensure that all college students have access to a funded internship experience or a course-embedded work-related learning opportunity
- Postsecondary leaders and campus career services units should immediately pursue a multi-pronged approach to funding internships that includes fundraising, Federal Work Study opportunities, partnerships with local Chambers of Commerce, active employer relations, working with legislators to appropriate funds for paid government internships, and on-campus learning opportunities.



### Panel #1: Research on unpaid internships

**Josh Kahn, NACE**

- Students who worked as paid interns received an average of 1.12 job offers in 2021, while unpaid interns got an average of 0.85 and those with no internship experience received 0.64 job offers.
- Non-profits & State/Local Gov't need help funding unpaid internships.
- Members of historically marginalized groups are under-represented in internship participation, particularly paid internships.
- Although more privileged students can more easily afford to take unpaid internships, they are not the only ones taking them. Many students of color, low-income, and first-generation students take unpaid internships.



**James Jones, Rutgers University-Newark**

- Congressional internships matter. These work opportunities are an expression of democratic citizenship that support the day-to-day operations of the federal legislature, train and socialize political novices to lawmaking, and provide a pipeline to paid employment and elective office
- White students are overrepresented in paid congressional internship positions. In addition, Black and Latino students are underrepresented in these same paid positions.
- Congress is a non-transparent employer, which makes it difficult to hold lawmakers accountable for not employing a diverse workforce.



**Rachel Lipson, Harvard Project on Workforce**

- Access to paid internships can help students forge, build, strengthen social and professional connections that will help them in the job search and post-college transition into the labor market.
- Interesting social enterprise models that are focused at the intersection of social capital and paid-work-based experience include Year Up; Braven; Handshake; and CareerWise



**Nidia Bañuelos, UW-Madison/CCWT**

- In addition to using their social networks, students are adept at combining various assets they possess from their families, cultures, communities of origin, and personal experiences—often described as their Community Cultural Wealth (CCW). Internships are spaces for students to use and grow their CCW. However, educators and employers need tools for recognizing and measuring CCW to best support students in this endeavor.
- Students discuss career values and work prospects (including internships) with family—even if their family members do not have experience working in their field of interest. Indeed, the qualitative findings from our research show that family members sometimes connect students to informal job shadowing or “internship-like” experiences through personal connections.



**Hongwei Yu, NSCI/CCWT/UW-Madison**

- Internships are critical experiences for student learning and professional success. Yet in our, we found that too many college students encountered significant barriers to internship participation.
- Of the 6,407 students without an internship in the Spring 2021 National Survey of College Internships, 67% had in fact wanted to pursue one but could not due to the lack of knowledge about how to find a position, pandemic cancellations, a lack of positions, and the need to work a paid job
- Unpaid internships exacerbates issues related to internship access and equality.
- Systematic efforts from faculty, student affairs professionals, and employers should be made to improve student experiential learning and promote student professional success at institutions of higher education and beyond.



## Panel #2: Funding unpaid internships

**Annie Weinschenk (Assistant Director, University of Maryland Baltimore County) on the [Maryland Technology Internship Program](#)**

- Work closely with campus partners who advocate for resources and funding at the state level. If there is a government affairs office on campus consider pitching them an idea for an internship pipeline that can be funded through the state.
- Providing all constituents (other campuses, colleges and departments on your campuses, tech councils or department of commerce and other important stakeholders) with outcomes that tell a great story about your program and the impacts it has on workforce development across your state.



**Jessica Klyn de Novelo, Associate Dean, Career Development and Civic Engagement, [Central College](#)**

- Participation in the [Federal Work Study Experiment](#) has provided both opportunities for creativity as well as extra funds to support students engaging in both non-profit as well as private organizations. One unique area of expansion has been with small businesses and start-ups to create new, paid internships. If you have capacity to more fully partner with your campus financial aid, there are MANY opportunities to leverage FWS funds.
- If you're not already partnering with community-based learning/service-learning offices, and [Campus Compact](#) you should be. There are opportunities, particularly with part-time AmeriCorps programs that can support students who tend to do unpaid internships at nonprofits engage in career related activities while earning an education award and sometimes a living stipend.



## Panel #3: Campus-based strategies

**Lana Farley, University of Baltimore (JLD Program)**

- JLD program is a win-win for students and employers. Students can gain hands-on experience, build their resume, engage their community, and make money. Employers can move their mission forward with increased human resources, develop a potential talent pipeline, and keep their costs low.
- If you work with student employment, there is an organization called NSEA (National Student Employment Association) and they provide training on JLD at a fairly low cost.



**Emily Pettinato, The Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce Small Business Internship Fund**

- The Chamber's Small Business Internship Fund reimburses member businesses half of what they paid to host an intern. This helps the small business be able to host an intern and develop a talent pipeline for students.
- It is important to ensure that students are aware of the opportunities at area businesses and prepare them to be career ready.



**Kathleen Rause, University of Wisconsin-Madison, [SuccessWorks](#)**

- [SuccessWorks Internship Fund](#) is available to assist students with the expenses of unpaid or underpaid internships, with the goal of increasing access to internships for students of all financial backgrounds.
- [Community Impact Internships](#) give students the opportunity to apply for paid internships with local nonprofits and small businesses. This program also allows organizations the chance to host an intern, even if they do not have a budget for intern salaries.
- Both of these programs are donor and/or grant-funded.



**Dwayne Peterson, New College of Florida, [Community-Driven Internship Program](#)**

- The number of internships is a predictor of early career outcomes for liberal arts undergraduates.
- Aligning college/university resources with local community workforce needs can be challenging and universities often do not consider community needs when designing internship experiences and programs. Community partners also rarely have an opportunity to shape student learning (and job training) with faculty in a way that meets their current and future workforce needs.
- A community-driven model invites employers and community organizations from industries that align with your campus strengths and student interests to submit internship projects and funds the projects to include intern salaries and administrative costs. This works particularly well with industries with crowded early career/entry-level labor markets, increasing access to opportunity (e.g., arts, nonprofits, behavioral health, laboratory research, journalism/communications, public health, education, humanities-related work).



### **Breakout Session: More ideas on fundraising and campus-based strategies**

**Patrick Green, Loyola University Chicago, Center for Engaged Learning, Teaching, & Scholarship**

- Funding opportunities to support students with unpaid internships exist by partnering with campus entities, including Office of Financial Aid, Career Center, Student Employment/Federal Work Study program, Advancement/Development, Community Service/Service-Learning/Community Engagement office, etc.
- Many institutions of higher education have developed innovative and creative programs to support students—this is an exercise in imagination to support student learning





**Ben Trager, UW-Milwaukee Center for Community-Based Learning, Leadership, & Research**

- Leverage existing models of internship programs to incorporate campus resources. Campus support in development of internship positions and recruiting adds value for employer partners, which may increase their commitment to financially supporting interns and the program.
- Centering the partnership and borrowing orientations from service-learning and community engagement supports development of co-educator status, facilitates communication and resource sharing, and supports reciprocity and mutual benefit



**Megan Hollis, Virginia Commonwealth University**

- Creating and/or embracing a culture of career support on your campus is essential. Our program has been successful because there was campus-wide support starting in the ideation phase.
- Do your research and share what you learned. So many institutions across the country were willing to sit and talk with my team and me. Those conversations absolutely informed the development and direction of our program.



**Sarah Rosenthal, New York University Wasserman Center for Career Development**

- Start by looking at successful existing programs and find ways to adapt them to the needs of new programs as it relates to the mission, stakeholder expectations, university priorities, etc.
- Extensive marketing across campus will not only draw more student interest but will enable other opportunities for growth such as attracting the attention of potential donors or partners.



**Andrew Miller, Loyola University Chicago Center for Engaged Learning, Teaching, & Scholarship**

- Make sure administrators across the University know about the need for internship funding—stay front of mind for when opportunities arise.
- Utilize various constituencies to increase your message. One of our scholarship programs only exists because students and our student government demanded it to address equity concerns for students.



**Kaytee Johns, Nevada State College Career Services Center, Kristin Schrader, Parker Dewey**

- Consider your student population and the impact that payment sources for internship funding may have on your students, particularly for students who may not have work authorization.

## Working session

The final session of the symposium engaged attendees in a period of reflection and brainstorming, with the goal of generating ideas that could be used to inform a national “campus-guide” to funding unpaid internships. This document and strategy is still under development, but some core ideas emerged from this exercise:

### 1. What have you learned that can be implemented on your campus?

#### *Data*

- Importance of aligning survey of current interns with identity groups. Provide data, not just impressions. Breakdown by industry as well as type of employer.
- Time to update our intern survey to include more questions about challenges faced during the search process as well as during the experience.
- Include nat'l data on advantages of paid internships for students, as well as the fact they value their education more in our annual report.

#### *Promotion*

- Utilizing our video boards to share intern success stories
- Update our internship guide for employers that emphasizes the fact that students have to pay for internship credit.
- Send more outcomes/stories to our external affairs so they have information for legislators.

#### *Coordination and Communication*

- We can provide clearer guidelines and instructions to employers asking to post unpaid internships. Also, we can take a stronger and clearer stance regarding approval of unpaid internships.
- Importance of involving the development team in this effort.
- We're a very decentralized campus—learned that having a coordinated and cross-college effort w/ employer relations, service learning, financial aid/FWS will be key.

#### *Practical guidelines*

- Having different rounds for unpaid internship funding

#### *Justice and Advocacy*

- Practical ways to realize the justice orientation into practice. (Nevada State College's efforts to support undocumented students' internship participation!)
- I really enjoyed getting to hear from Carlos from Pay Our Interns—I have admired the advocacy work this organization has done for the past few years.

#### *Finances and Funding*

- I would like to learn more about FWS and JLD on my campus.
- We need to better utilize federal work study for off campus experiences—which will be quite challenging in our siloed, huge University but it's a great resource!
- Hearing about Pell Grant recipients receiving extra funding to support their pursuit of internships (I believe it was with a particular program)—it is inspiring to think about how we solve the issues of underpaid interns.
- I'd love to educate the SMB community about ways they can find the funds to support an intern. FWS is not an option because we don't have a big enough population to support flowing organizations to that program.

## 2. Who do you want to talk to first on campus, and about what?

### Leadership

- Leadership Team within College or School or University/System
- My dean—about converting a fund I have to an Unpaid Internship Fund that would start out supporting 9 students. Then seeking more institutional support.
- Strategic Planning team

### Development and Finance

- Our development director—discussing how to do some fundraising around this!
- More work with financial aid for work study.
- Advancement—outcomes/data we can present fully.

### Faculty

- Faculty—data on #s of students engaging in career related work in their majors

### Career services

- Career Services and Employer Relations.
- Conversations with undergrad \*and\* grad internship coordinators. Re: What are their historical data?

### Other

- I don't know who in leadership sees the importance/relevance of internships ...
- Academic departments, TRIO, center for academic success, clubs/organizations
- Students
- Sophomores—gain insight into their understanding, their goals, and their concerns.

Use this space to share final thoughts about our event today.

I am at a small state institution with a staff of 1 - I would love to have a regular access to a community like this to ask questions and learn from what they do, that would be helpful.

THANK YOU FOR today's symposium! This brought to the forefront a number of issues and highlighted the interconnectedness of the challenges. We cannot help our students as silos in our respective institutions.

I wonder how the issue of investment, or lack thereof, impacts how many are offered fulltime roles after working as an unpaid intern. Are orgs/companies less likely to offer jobs when their financial investment is less?

Strong examples of effective programs nation wide. This is doable. Need to obtain buy-in through sharing stories of successes at other institutions.

We also implement a funding program similar to some discussed here (funds that get distributed as a campus work study) but can see some of the barriers discussed being a concern and am eager to share those with my team.

partnering with their area chambers of commerce. Perhaps a virtual session could be planned that features these chambers of commerce success with such internship partnerships. Other chambers of commerce could be

I would like to have a working group on International Internships

Cultivate faculty champions and include their voices, especially where you have shared governance on your campus.

Invite labor market analytics firms to discuss labor market and skill trends and how internships can fill those gaps (e.g., Emsi Burning Glass)

Would love time to break out and have small group discussions with folks in similar academic units or size/type institutions.

Invite labor economists (e.g., Federal Reserve) to discuss the economic impacts of internships.

success with such internship partnerships. Other chambers of commerce could be invited to hopefully encourage more to get involved across the country.

Would love to see/learn of more resources that employers can use to help pay interns (community-based, state, federal funding). While we as institutions are building capacity we can't forget them

I have learned a lot of valuable information today. As someone new to the role of internships, I welcome all the knowledge that I have learned today. So much good information. I am excited about what to do next.

I know breakout rooms aren't for everyone, but I would've liked to actually brainstorm with people. Perhaps something to do at an in-person event.

Employers and students are key stakeholders. Let's find ways to encourage their future participation!

This was a great event, but it should've been over a longer period of time or more days. There was so much information.

I appreciate everyone sharing their thoughts and the plethora of links and resources provided in the chat!

In a future conversation, I'd like to discuss the implications of colleges/universities that have instituted "required" internships as part of the curriculum and how that creates multiple barriers to graduation.




In the coming months CCWT will be working with its partners to refine these ideas and develop a user-friendly, grassroots-based set of ideas and strategies for colleges and universities to begin developing a strategy for fund all college internships. The outline of a strategy for postsecondary institutions, however, is becoming clear, and this symposium brought a diverse set of experts together to share success stories about what works. The core elements of a cross-sectoral strategy for funding all college internships includes:

- 1 Collect more data on internships and use them to inform evidence-based decisions: participating in national survey efforts and/or internal data systems is crucial for continuous improvement
- 2 Work with your employer partners: encourage your employer partners to pay their interns, but for those lacking a budget (e.g., non-profits, small business), seek external funding or creative partnerships to subsidize these positions (e.g., with Chamber of Commerce offices)
- 3 Build partnerships across campus units (e.g., career services in different programs) and begin to leverage scarce resources, engage in strategic partnerships, and capitalize on efforts underway in specific offices (e.g., financial aid and Federal Work Study);
- 4 Work with your legislative affairs office and/or faculty-staff advocates to encourage state and local government to fund government internships and to appropriate funds to subsidize funds in targeted sectors
- 5 Fundraising: work with alumni networks, your development offices, and philanthropic organizations to raise funds to subsidize unpaid internships, ideally working in concert (and not in competition) with other units on campus

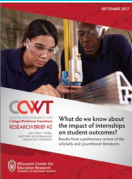


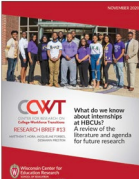
Stay tuned for a report that will build on these ideas and provide campuses with actionable, research-based guidelines on how to fund internship programs on your campus!

## WHAT IS THE CENTER FOR RESEARCH ON COLLEGE-WORKFORCE TRANSITIONS (CCWT)?













The mission of CCWT is to conduct and support **applied research, critical policy analysis, and create venues for public dialogue** on **student experiences** with the transition from college to the workforce in order to inform policies, programs, and practices that promote academic and career success for **all** learners.

## CCWT PUBLICATIONS & RESOURCES ON INTERNSHIPS

[WWW.CCWT.WCER.UW.ORG](http://WWW.CCWT.WCER.UW.ORG)



The Center for Research on College-Workforce Transitions (CCWT) at UW-Madison was launched in early 2017 at a time when student employability, skills gaps, and the future of work and its relationship to higher education were being discussed and debated around the world. Underlying these debates, which continue to this day, is a growing consensus that the postsecondary system needs to pay closer attention to ensuring students are provided with 21st century competencies as well as career guidance so that they can thrive in the workplace.

Yet absent from many of these debates were the voices and experiences of those most implicated in the future direction of higher education-workforce dynamics: those of the students themselves. Documenting students' experiences with teaching and training, career advising, and the hiring process are essential in order to inform the design and improvement of postsecondary programs aimed at helping them make the transition from college to the workforce.

This symposium on unpaid internships is part of CCWT's portfolio of education, outreach, and community building activities, and builds on two in-person research-practitioner symposia on internship research held in 2018 and 2019. Stay tuned for more webinars and symposia from CCWT as we help to create a venue for scholars, practitioners, and advocates to discuss student-centered solutions to the challenges facing college-workforce transitions today.



**WISCONSIN**  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

The mission of The Center for Research on College-Workforce Transitions (CCWT) is to conduct and support research, critical policy analysis, and public dialogue on student experiences with the transition from college to the workforce in order to inform policies, programs, and practices that promote academic and career success for all learners.

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