

## FAQ: GETTING STARTED/LOOKING FOR WINTER TERM INTERNSHIPS

### GENERAL QUESTIONS

**Q: Is the Career Development Center the only place I can go with questions about Winter Term?**

**A:** Although the Career Development Center has information and opportunities for Winter Term, you should first talk with your academic advisor first about your ideas and plans. In addition, the **Office of Winter Term** (<http://new.oberlin.edu/office/winter-term>) offers information regarding group and individual projects, faculty sponsors, requirements, deadlines, funding and more.

If you are considering an internship or a career-related project, the Career Development Center can help.

**Q: How do I choose a project or internship?**

**A:** Considering potential projects for Winter Term can be overwhelming. It's a good idea to talk with your academic advisor if you're having trouble narrowing down your options for a project. If you are interested in an internship or career-related project, you can visit the Career Development Center to learn about available internships or to discuss strategies for arranging your own internship.

Looking for ideas? Take advantage of the following opportunities to identify a Winter Term project:

- Search **Handshake** (<http://bit.ly/ObieWT-Intern>) - These internships are often hosted by Oberlin alumni. Most internships will be posted by the first week in October, but we will continue to post new internships on Handshake until the Winter Term Fair.
- Visit the Office of Winter Term website for information about individual, group, and international projects (<http://new.oberlin.edu/office/winter-term/projects/types-of-projects>).
- Attend the Winter Term Fair. Career Development Center staff will be there to help you search for internships by industry and geographical location.

**Q: When should I get started?**

**A:** Although it's never too early to think about possible Winter Term projects, October is a good time to start talking with your academic advisor and prospective project sponsors. If you plan to apply for an internship, search Handshake for opportunities starting early October and continue to visit Handshake for new postings until the Winter Term Fair.

It's also a good idea to use Career Development Center **drop-in hours** (<http://new.oberlin.edu/office/career-center/about/meet-our-staff/student-staff.dot>) to work on resumes and cover letters, as well as get familiar with Handshake if you haven't already.

Employers will consider applications on a rolling basis, so it's best to apply as early as possible. Although most internships will be posted by October 1, additional opportunities will continue to be posted throughout October, so don't get discouraged if you don't see anything that interests you yet.

**Q: How can the Career Development Center help me?**

A: The Career Development Center helps in the following ways:

- Searching for internships through **Handshake** (<http://go.oberlin.edu/handshake>)
- Guidance on your resume and cover letter
- Talking through your ideas for a Winter Term internship or career-related project
- Applying to internships and navigating the process of accepting and/or declining internship offers within a narrow timeframe

Stop by during drop-in hours, Monday-Friday from 3-5 pm, to talk with a Peer Advisor about these and other topics. Additional drop-in hours are posted on our website (<http://new.oberlin.edu/office/career-center/about/meet-our-staff/student-staff.dot>).

If you have questions about Winter Term internships or need assistance with Handshake, email [internships@oberlin.edu](mailto:internships@oberlin.edu).

**Q: Where does the Career Development Center find Winter Term internships?**

A: Each year Oberlin alumni working at various organizations contact the Career Development Center to share Winter Term opportunities. These internships are designed to reflect a shorter duration than a more traditional internship while providing the training, mentorship, and experience that make an internship substantive and meaningful. Most, but not all, internships are offered by Oberlin alumni and they may or may not serve as the internship supervisor.

As organizations' staffing, resources, and needs change, they may or may not offer Winter Term internships every year. However, we encourage students to continue searching Handshake for other opportunities that fit their interests. New internships will continue to be posted until the Winter Term Fair, so keep checking!

**APPLYING TO WINTER TERM INTERNSHIPS**

**Q: How do I apply to Winter Term internships on Handshake?**

A: Using an online system for applying to Winter Term internships is a great way for students to become familiar with the electronic process they may encounter on internships and jobs databases. Students must submit a resume and cover letter when they apply to each internship. Additionally, some employers ask for references, writing samples, a transcript or other materials. It's important to read internship descriptions carefully for application requirements and qualifications. We strongly encourage students to have their resumes and cover letters reviewed by a Peer Advisor during Career Development Center drop-in hours, Monday-Friday from 3-5 pm.

**Q: Should I apply to more than one internship?**

A: We encourage students to apply to more than one internship, since some internships in major metropolitan cities such as New York and Washington, DC are competitive. Students should only apply to internships that interest them, but also consider opportunities that offer exposure to new experiences in different cities. Many students apply to 3-5 internships.

**Q: I applied to an internship; what's next?**

A: Some - but not all - employers conduct phone interviews with applicants. It is very important to check your email and voicemail daily and respond to employers' messages within 24 hours. Employers may contact you by email or phone as early as a few hours after you submit your application to schedule an interview. Visit the Career Development Center's website for interview tips (<http://new.oberlin.edu/office/career-center/ready/interviewing>). We strongly recommend sending a follow-up thank you email to the employer after your interview.

The Career Development Center has an interview room with a landline phone, which students may use for phone interviews during our office hours (Monday-Friday, 8:30 am-5:00 pm). Contact us at 440-775-8140 as soon as you schedule your interview for the best chance to reserve the interview room.

**Q: I've received an offer! What do I need to consider before accepting?**

A: The Career Development Center strongly advises students to research the organization, read the internship description thoroughly and ask questions during the interview to ensure the internship is a good fit. Before accepting an offer, consider all factors including housing, meals, travel and transportation expenses, especially if the internship is in an unfamiliar city. Please read the Career Development Center's Renege Statement (<http://new.oberlin.edu/office/career-center/go/job-search/renegeing.dot>).

**Q: I've realized that I cannot participate in the internship after I already accepted the offer! What should I do?**

A: As soon as possible, notify the Career Development Center at [internships@oberlin.edu](mailto:internships@oberlin.edu). You also need to contact the representative you spoke with during the selection process directly to inform them of your decision and apologize. You are not obligated to share details about your decision. The Career Development Center will follow up with the organization to resolve the situation.

**Q: I haven't received any offers, and the registration deadline is almost here! What should I do?**

A: Many Winter Term internships are competitive, and even the most qualified applicants sometimes do not receive an offer. We recommend discussing one or more backup plans with your academic advisor so that you will be ready to register for Winter Term by the Registrar's deadline (Friday, December 7). You may change your Winter Term project after you have registered, if necessary.

## HOUSING AND LOGISTICS

**Q: I accepted an internship; what's next?**

A: If another employer contacts you about your application, politely inform them by phone or email that you already accepted another internship offer. It is very helpful for the employer to know your status as soon as possible, so they can reach out to other applicants.

Any Oberlin faculty or staff member can sponsor your Winter Term internship. Possible sponsors could include your academic advisor or a professor in a subject related to your internship. The Winter Term registration deadline is Friday, December 7. For more information about sponsorship or registration, please contact the **Office of Winter Term** (<http://new.oberlin.edu/office/winter-term>).

**Q: Who pays for my internship-related expenses?**

A: Students are responsible for Winter Term-related expenses. If you need financial assistance to participate in the internship, apply for a Winter Term project grant through the Office of Winter Term. (<http://new.oberlin.edu/office/winter-term/projects/applying-for-a-project-grant.dot>). It is acceptable to apply for the grant with information about the internship and projected expenses, even if you haven't accepted and received an offer yet.

**Q: I plan to spend Winter Term in an unfamiliar city. What resources are available to help me find housing?**

A: Some employers may offer housing or assistance, which they will indicate on their posting in Handshake. For internships without housing offered by their employer, students have also used Switchboard (<https://oberlin.switchboardhq.com>) and other online resources (<http://new.oberlin.edu/office/career-center/set/summer-internships-jobs/tips-for-housing.dot>) to find Winter Term housing.

Students having difficulty finding Winter Term housing through these avenues may also contact the Alumni Association (<https://new.oberlin.edu/office/alumni/index.dot>) for assistance locating alumni that offer Winter Term housing.

## SPONSORSHIP

**Q: Who will be my Winter Term internship sponsor?**

**A:** Students may ask any faculty or staff member to sponsor their Winter Term internships. For help identifying a sponsor, students may contact their academic advisor or **Office of Winter Term** (<http://new.oberlin.edu/office/winter-term>).

**Q: What are my responsibilities before/during/after the internship?**

**A:** You must register your internship as a Winter Term project by **Friday, December 7**. Your faculty or staff sponsor will work with you to determine the requirements to receive credit for your internship.

### **MORE QUESTIONS?**

For additional help with Winter Term-related questions, please contact:

- Office of Winter Term: [winterterm@oberlin.edu](mailto:winterterm@oberlin.edu), 440-775-8540
- Career Development Center: [internships@oberlin.edu](mailto:internships@oberlin.edu), 440-775-8060