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# Employer Internship Handbook

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EMPORIA STATE  
UNIVERSITY

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CAREER SERVICES

# Welcome and Overview

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Thank you for your interest in creating and participating in internship experiences. Emporia State University Career Services is committed to creating experiential learning opportunities that support the goals of students, academic programs and organizations. Our goal is to create real-world experiences for students while supporting organizational recruiting efforts. According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), over 70% of interns receive a job offer after completing an internship. This shows that internships benefit both students and employers.

This handbook is designed to provide employers with the tools and resources necessary for creating and

completing high-quality internship programs that are mutually beneficial for students and employers. Topics discussed include paid vs. unpaid interns, employer best practices, roles and responsibilities of interns, employers and faculty members, workplace issues such as sexual harassment and discrimination, information and policies on international student interns, and many more topics. We strive to equip employers, students and faculty with the resources needed to complete successful internships.

For any questions or feedback regarding this information, please contact Emporia State University Career Services at 620-341-5407 or [career@emporia.edu](mailto:career@emporia.edu). We look forward to working with you!

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# Definitions

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## Internships Defined

### What is an internship?

An internship is a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in professional fields they are considering for career paths; and give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent (NACE).

### Attributes of Internships

- **Duration:** Internships have a pre-determined start and end date and are generally a one-time experience. They usually last anywhere from a month to a year, with many organizations offering internships for a semester or summer. Occasionally, employers will extend the duration or offer students the opportunity to intern again at a later time.
- **Mentorship:** Interns are typically assigned a mentor who help with their learning and growth.
- **Organization:** Internships are well-planned experiences for students.
- **Feedback:** Internships feature regular assessment and feedback for the employer, student, and academic advisor.

## Cooperative Education Defined

### Cooperative Education (Co-op) Programs

Cooperative Education (Co-op) is an academic program that is meant to complement the student's education through hands-on application in their field of study. It is a long-term plan that can start as early

as their freshman year, depending on the university, and can last the duration of the student's academic career. When participating in co-ops, students spend extended time away from campus exploring their chosen career fields while receiving academic credit. Co-ops are traditionally full-time, paid positions.

### Differences Between Internships, Co-Ops and Part-time Jobs

The primary difference between a co-op and an internship is the duration of the experience and often the level of planning that is required. A co-op involves a semester or multi-term work assignments with increased tasks and responsibilities as the student progresses through classes, obtaining in-depth work experience. Many universities require the student to remain with the same employer for the duration of their co-op position.

Internships are often project based and typically only last for a semester (or often a summer-only), and if they are local, there is potential for the student to continue working part-time during the school year. Internships can be full- or part-time, paid or unpaid, while co-ops are traditionally full-time, paid positions. At ESU, it is much more common that students participate in internships, rather than co-op programs.

Part-time jobs are different than both internships and co-ops because they may not be tied directly to the student's future career path. Internships and co-ops are directly tied to their future career, are much more substantial in terms of responsibilities and require more academic planning.

# Value of Internships and High Impact Learning

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## Benefits for Employers

- Internships help to increase organization visibility on college campuses.
- Interns bring original perspectives and provide new ideas.
- Interns help strengthen public relations and can provide positive messages about organizations.
- Internships provide organizations with a highly qualified applicant pool.
- Interns help foster leadership skills in current employees.
- Internships work as a low-cost, high-value training program.

## Benefits for Students

- Students gain valuable hands-on work experience that increase employability.
- Students get an opportunity to explore a career path and determine if it is a good fit.
- Students who have had an internship gain skills that give them an edge in the job market.
- On average, students who complete internships receive more full-time job offers after graduation than non-interns.
- Interns hired as permanent employees after their internships have higher retention rates than non-interns.
- Students with internship experience often have an easier transition into a permanent job.

## Paid vs. Unpaid Interns: Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and Department of Labor (DOL) Laws

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### Guidelines to Determine Paid or Unpaid Internships

- The U.S Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) applies to all companies that have at least two employees directly engaged in interstate commerce and annual sales of at least \$500,000.00. FLSA severely restricts employer's ability to use unpaid interns or trainees. It does not limit an employer's ability to hire paid interns.
- The U.S. Department of Labor does not require employers to pay interns who qualify as learners/ trainees. There are six outlined criteria for determining trainee status:
  1. Interns cannot displace regular employees
  2. Interns are not guaranteed a job at the end of the internship. Although, employers do have the option to hire interns at the conclusion of the experience
  3. Interns are not entitled to wages during the internship
  4. Interns must receive training from the organization, even if it somewhat impedes the work
  5. Interns must get hands-on experience with equipment and processes used in the industry
  6. Interns' training must primarily benefit them, not the organization.
- Most organizations determine pay based on student class level and types of responsibilities. It is up to the employer to decide whether or not to pay interns and how much they will be paid.
- In the past, courts have used "primary beneficiary tests" to examine the "economic reality" of the intern employer relationship to determine which party is the "primary beneficiary" of the relationship.
- When considering intern pay rates it is recommended that employers consider carefully what the "average wage" for interns from a particular university or geographic area is, the cost of living, the opportunities for pay students give up when accepting internships instead of part-time jobs, and what kinds of candidates the employer would like to attract.

## Guidelines for Unpaid Internships

According to the Department of Labor, the following guidelines must be followed for an intern to be unpaid:

- The intern and the employer clearly understand that there is no expectation of compensation. Any promise of compensation, expressed or implied, suggests that the intern is an employee—and vice versa.
- The internship provides training that would be similar to that which would be given in an educational environment, including the clinical and other hands-on training provided by educational institutions.
- The internship is tied to the intern's formal education program by integrated coursework or the receipt of academic credit.
- The internship accommodates the intern's academic commitments by corresponding to the academic calendar.
- The internship's duration is limited to the period in which the internship provides the intern with beneficial learning.
- The intern's work complements, rather than displaces, the work of paid employees while providing significant educational benefits to the intern.
- The training and work of the intern must primarily benefit the intern and not the organization.
- The intern and the employer understand that the internship is conducted without entitlement to a paid job at the conclusion of the internship.

## Department of Labor & Employment Law Considerations

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### Workers Compensation

It is extremely important for organizations and students to understand Workers Compensation laws and regulations regarding paid and unpaid internships. These rules are subject to change, and may vary from state-to-state, so we encourage host organizations and students to discuss these matters with the Human Resources Department of the host organization as well as the Department of Labor in its state to determine these laws and regulations before the internship begins.

### Discrimination and Harassment

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is a federal law that prohibits employers from discriminating against employees on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin and religion. It generally applies to employers with 15 or more employees, including federal, state and local governments.

Title IX is a federal civil rights law in the United States of America that was passed as part of the Education Amendments of 1972. This law protects people from discrimination based on sex in education programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance. Title IX states that: No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or

activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

Laws and protections may differ between paid and unpaid interns. As an intern, it is crucial that you contact the Human Resources department of your internship host organization before the start of your internship to determine what protections and rights you have as an intern.

Interns should be advised of appropriate workplace behavior, the organization's discrimination and harassment policies, and reporting procedures. Both the internship host organization and the student intern should be diligent in communicating and understanding the rules, protections and expectations regarding discrimination and harassment in the workplace.

Click [HERE](#) to learn about Emporia State University's policies and procedures regarding Discrimination and Harassment in internship settings. The policies and procedures include information about:

- The different forms of discrimination and harassment that can occur in a workplace
- Your protections as a student—both by the University and the Employer
- Policies and Procedures of the University and Employer
- How to report an incident

- Resources that you can utilize in educating yourself about discrimination and harassment
- Steps to help you avoid an incident or how to proceed if one occurs

### **Income Taxes**

The employer is responsible for withholding all deductions required by federal and state income tax laws from the wages of all student-employees. The courts have ruled that compensation for work performed as a student-employee is remuneration for services performed for the benefit of the employer and, therefore, is a taxable income. International students on F-1 and J-1 visas are subject to withholding payment of federal, state, and local taxes unless they are exempt by provision of a tax treaty. In cases where a tax treaty applies, students must provide documentation to the employer on the appropriate IRS form. Information regarding tax treaties may be found in International Revenue Service publications.

### **Fringe Benefits**

The employer may or may not offer a fringe-benefits package to student-employees. Benefits may include as much as full benefits accrued on an equal basis with other employees in similar personnel categories. Many employers provide some vacation and sick-leave

benefits. Other benefits such as group life insurance, medical insurance, profit-sharing, and bonuses may or may not be available, depending on company policy.

### **The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

Student-employees are covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. This law protects disabled student-employees from discrimination in employment, hiring, transportation, and covers access to public facilities and services, and telecommunications. Employers are required to provide reasonable accommodation to all qualified student-employees with known disabilities.

### **Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA)**

All student-employees, regardless of their citizenship status, must abide by IRCA regulations by providing suitable documentation that will enable the employer to comply with this law. Employers are advised about appropriate documentation to establish both the student-employee's identity and authorization to work.

### **Social Security Tax**

Unless exempt under the Social Security law, employers must deduct Social Security taxes from the wages of all student-employees, except those with an F-1 or J-1 visa.

## **Internship Roles and Responsibilities**

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### **Host Site**

- Determine the parameters of the internship: the type of position, department that will be involved, who will supervise the intern, amount of pay, hours, duration of the experience, qualifications required, number of interns needed, etc.
- Verify and maintain compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)
- Strongly consider providing Liability Insurance coverage for the intern or have the student complete a Release of Liability and Hold Harmless Agreement waiver
- Ensure there is a physical working space for the intern
- Provide educational activities and support, such as orientation, training sessions, work projects/

activities relevant to the intern's career, meetings with the organization (staff, team, department, board), shadowing of other staff, mentoring, position rotations, professional meetings, site visits to other organizations, conferences and workshops

- Educate the intern about organization policies, rules, procedures and expectations before the internship begins

### **Host Site Supervisor**

- Collaborate with the intern to create a schedule, learning objectives, goals, incident reporting procedures and evaluation methods
- Assign the intern with responsibilities to complete a variety of challenging and career-relevant tasks and projects

- Teach transferrable skills to the intern that can be applied to their career
- Provide the student with supervision, oversight and consistent feedback related to learning objectives and goals
- Serve as a go-to person for answering questions and providing daily support to the intern
- Complete the **INTERNSHIP EMPLOYER AGREEMENT FORM** prior to the start of the internship
- Complete and submit evaluations of the intern required for academic credit

## NACE Principles and Best Practices

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There are many different considerations when it comes to hosting an intern, which can make it overwhelming for Employers to start the process. This section outlines some important considerations for all Employers when planning on hosting an Intern:

### NACE Ethical Principles for Professional Practice

- Practice reasonable, responsible and transparent behavior:
- That consciously avoids harmful actions by embodying high ethical standards.
- By clearly articulating and widely disseminating your organization's policies and guidelines
- That guarantees equitable services for all constituencies.
- That is commensurate with professional association standards and principles.
- When resolving differences and addressing concerns.
- By nurturing sustainable relationships that are respectful and transcend transactions.
- Act without bias:
- When advising, servicing, interviewing, or making employment decisions.
- When defining what constitutes employment.
- Ensure equitable access:
- Without stipulation or exception relative to contributions of financial support, gifts, affiliation, or in-kind services.
- In the provision of services and opportunities without discriminating on the basis of race, gender, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, disability, age, or economic status.
- By proactively addressing inclusivity and diversity.

- Comply with laws:
- Associated with local, state, and federal entities, including but not limited to EEO compliance, immigration, and affirmative action.
- In a timely and appropriate way if complaints of non-compliance occur.
- And respond to complaints of non-compliance in a timely and prudent manner.
- Protect confidentiality of:
- All personal information related to candidates and their interviews, and their engagement with services, programs, and resources.
- Student information related to professional plans.

### Internship Offer Challenges Rescinded Offers from Employers

Most positions are offered on an “at will” basis. However, if conditions change and require the employing organization to revoke its commitment to an internship, we advise employers to notify students of a rescinded offer immediately. The employer should consider a course of action for the affected candidate that is fair and equitable. This is in accordance with the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) Position Statement on Rescinded and Deferred Employment offers.

### Student Reneges

Emporia State University strongly discourages students from accepting and then turning down internship/job offers (also known as a renege) and makes efforts to educate students about the implications of taking this action. If a student reneges on an offer with your organization, please contact ESU Career Services immediately.

## Employer Best Practices

Whether you have experience hosting internships, or if this is your first time hosting an intern, there are some best practices any organization should follow when developing an internship program. Follow these steps to optimize the effectiveness of your internships:

### Step 1: Set Goals and Policies

Before hiring an intern, it is critical to carefully plan out the internship. Start by answering the following questions:

- What is the main goal and purpose for the internship or program?
- Have you considered your organization's needs and if an intern can help you meet them?
- Do you have enough work to justify hiring an intern?
- Who will be responsible for hiring and supervising the intern?
- Are you familiar with legal rights and protections of interns?
- How will the intern be compensated?
- Will you provide housing or relocation/transportation assistance?
- How long will the internship last?

### Step 2: Write a Plan

Developing an internship takes careful planning and discussion. When writing your plan, answer the following questions:

- What are the tasks and objectives of the internship?
- Is the internship based on learning about multiple parts of the organization, or is it focused on one department or completing a single project?
- What deadlines must be met?
- What hours/when will the intern work?
- Where will the intern work?
- How will the intern be trained/on-boarded?
- Will the intern be cross-trained?
- What experience or academic requirements should the intern possess?
- Will there be a specific person who will mentor the intern?
- What after-work activities will be incorporated?

### Step 3: Recruit and hire an Intern

There are several different steps involved when it comes to recruiting an intern.

1. Draft a Position Description. Be sure to include required and preferred qualifications, as well as

other general info, such as duration, expected hours, location, how to apply, required skills, pay, etc.

2. Recruit your intern by posting and advertising the position on Handshake and other formats. For more information on Handshake and recruiting ESU students, click [HERE](#).
3. Review your applications, conduct interviews and hire your intern.

### Step 4: Manage the Intern

Set Them Up for Success! At the beginning of the internship and continuing throughout its duration, consider doing the following:

- Appoint a dedicated intern supervisor to manage intern projects and daily tasks to ensure a successful experience for both the company and the intern(s) hired
- Assign interns a mentor – someone they can go to for career advice and questions
- Work with the intern to create goals and objectives, which helps set expectations and provides opportunities for future feedback
- Hold orientations for all involved to ensure that everyone starts with the same expectations and role definitions
- Provide interns with a handbook and/or website that answers frequently asked questions and communicates the “rules” in a warm and welcoming way
- Take interns on a tour of the facility and introduce them to employees in each department
- Show a commitment to fostering professional growth by providing time, management, and structure to interns
- Provide resources and projects to develop core professional skills
- Assist interns in articulating their work and accomplishments on their resumes and in interviews
- Provide interns with real, hands-on work related to their major that is challenging, is recognized by the organization as valuable, and that fills the entire work term
- Give interns company materials and information to read, such as newsletters, reports, organization charts, marketing materials and memos from the CEO
- Encourage interns to spend breaks and lunches in locations where other employees are
- Schedule regular weekly or bi-weekly one-on-

one meetings and “check-ins” to give and receive constructive feedback, as well as encouraging dialogue and answering questions

- Provide interns opportunities to observe and participate in professional meetings
- Encourage team involvement. Sponsor social or professional development events, and help to orient interns to your company culture
- Allow and encourage interns to interview company personnel
- Encourage interns to observe others at work

### **Step 5: Conduct Final Evaluations, Exit Interviews and Follow-Up**

As the internship concludes, conduct Exit Interviews with interns, much like you would with full-time employees, and follow-up with them after they are finished with the internship. By conducting Exit Interviews, you can gain valuable information about your internship program, as well as important details about your organization. Don't forget to conduct Final Evaluations with your intern as well, especially

if they are enrolled in an internship course during the experience. Finally, you can increase your chances of converting an intern into a full-time hire by continuing to maintain contact with them in the months after their internship has concluded.

Here are some tips when conducting an Exit Interview:

- These interviews can be face-to-face or through a document that can be completed via email
- In addition to asking typical Exit Interview questions, consider asking critical questions, such as:
  - How would you describe our company culture?
  - If you could change anything about the internship/internship program, what would it be?
  - If you could change anything with the company, what would it be?
  - How did the internship match your expectations? Did it help you achieve your goals?
  - What is the next step in your career planning and how can we help you get there?

## **Top Ten Concerns of Interns**

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### **1. Give us real work!**

Interns want to work and learn. An intern can help you with projects and assignments that may not get accomplished otherwise. If you have hired an intern as a recruitment tool, the work produced allows you to assess their abilities. It just makes sense to utilize your interns well.

### **2. Do what you say, and say what you do!**

Be honest with your interns about what they can expect during their internships. If the job will require stuffing envelopes, then make that clear. But if you tell the intern they will be researching a project, and they spend 90% of their time doing “grunt work,” then bad feelings may develop. Honesty does not cost you anything, and it will make the interns feel that much more prepared and productive.

### **3. We like feedback!**

Remember that interns are students, and they may not have the business skills, experiences and workplace

behaviors that you already have. If your intern makes a mistake, use this as a “teaching moment” and pull them aside and explain how the situation should be handled in the future.

### **4. We want to be included too!**

Is there a staff meeting that they can attend? Can they quietly tag along to the next project meeting? Go to lunch with a couple of people in the office? Please include them in the daily life of your workplace. After all, if you provide a little more investment in the intern's work, the product will be much better.

### **5. Please explain.**

When you assign work, make sure you give a detailed explanation. While the work may seem trivial and obvious to you, it may not be obvious to someone who has never done it before. Patience and a few extra minutes at the beginning will pay off later when your intern can produce good work independently.

## 6. I want a mentor.

Make sure that interns have mentors and/or supervisors to provide guidance. Identify those who truly like to teach and train, and the experience will be even better. It is important to note that mentors and supervisors don't have to be the same person.

## 7. A minute of your time please.

Mentors and supervisors will not make the desired impact if he or she cannot or will not spend the necessary time mentoring and supervising. As newcomers, interns may not speak up if they are feeling ignored, so the burden of making sure they are okay is on the mentor and/or supervisor. If the busiest person in the office wants to be the designated mentor or supervisor, he or she should schedule regular times to meet with the intern.

## 8. Be prepared!

That wonderful day has arrived, and the intern begins their internship only to learn that no one knew they

were coming, and there is no work for them to do. Be prepared with a clear plan of what the intern will be doing when they arrive.

## 9. Um...I need a chair.

It is amazing how many employers hire an intern and do not think about the fact that they will need a desk, chair, phone and a computer to perform assigned tasks. It is no fun, and inefficient to move an intern from desk to desk as people are out one day to the next. If you want the intern to be productive, you need to supply them with the tools to do the job.

## 10. Show me the money (as best you can).

While each internship is different, and each industry has its own personality, remember that interns have expenses. Your organization may not be in a position to pay much, but anything can help. If you can't pay a good wage, you can help pay for their parking, housing assistance, take them to lunch when possible, or develop some other creative ways to assist them.

# International Student Information and Considerations

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There are many different words, phrases and abbreviations that can make it complicated to understand the different terminologies describing

international student visas and eligibility for internships and work experience. Click [HERE](#) to learn more about international student considerations.

# Internship Forms for Employers and Students

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Emporia State University requires a few documents that all interns and employers need to complete before the start of an internship for legal protections and liabilities. ESU Student interns must complete an **INTERNSHIP STUDENT AGREEMENT FORM** and employers must complete an **INTERNSHIP EMPLOYER AGREEMENT FORM**.

Evaluations of internships are also an important part of the internship process. Although not always required for each internship, there are two internship evaluation forms that can be used to evaluate the internship. The **INTERN PERFORMANCE EVALUATION FORM**

is the evaluation of how the student intern performed in the internship. The **STUDENT EVALUATION OF INTERNSHIP FORM** is the student intern's evaluation of the employer during the internship. These evaluation forms may differ by department on campus or by organization, so please follow the specific guidelines for your internship.

These forms may also be completed electronically through Adobe DocuSign. Please contact Career Services at 620-341-5407 or [career@emporia.edu](mailto:career@emporia.edu) for any questions about this process.

## How To Post Internships on Handshake

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If your organization is interested in promoting an internship to ESU students, there are a few quick and easy steps to follow. Emporia State University utilizes Handshake as our online Job and Internship database for students. Career Services is committed to promoting opportunities equitably to all students and alumni and following all NACE principles and guidelines: [www.naceweb.org/principles/](http://www.naceweb.org/principles/). Handshake allows ESU to promote opportunities equitably with all students. Therefore, employers should post all positions in Handshake first, then let Career Services know about your opportunities. Career Services can help you optimize your marketing efforts through our social media channels and connections with qualified candidates and faculty and staff in specific academic departments.

By posting your internship on Handshake, you are able to reach our entire ESU student population, as well as ensuring that positions are posted equitably. Handshake provides many benefits, including:

- An easy to use, intuitive interface with a modern and simple design that makes it easy to navigate
- Powerful search tools that allow organizations to easily identify and build candidate pools
- Built-in communication tools that allow you to message students directly
- Added data points that allow employers to send communication to the right students at the right time in the academic careers
- The ability to manage full-time, part-time jobs, and internship postings
- Tools to view applicants as well as search student resumes and profiles

- Features that allow you to manage your on-campus recruiting initiatives with Emporia State Career Services

To post a position on Handshake, follow these steps:

- Create a Handshake account, or log in to your existing account at [app.joinhandshake.com](http://app.joinhandshake.com)
- Join an existing company already on Handshake, or create a new one
- Connect with schools
- Post the position and create interview schedules if needed

Click [HERE](#) for more information on how to get started on Handshake.

If you are still needing more assistance or information, here are a few other links that will help you:

- For assistance with general account set-up questions, click [HERE](#). If you scroll down on this link, there is a link to setting up your account, among other things.
- Click [HERE](#) for help posting jobs.
- Click [HERE](#) for help with a variety of topics.

If you have any questions or want more details on recruiting ESU students, visit our Employer page on the Career Services website at [emporia.edu/alumni-careers/career-services/employer-recruiting/](http://emporia.edu/alumni-careers/career-services/employer-recruiting/). There, you can find the link to our [EMPLOYER GUIDE](#) and other Handshake FAQ's, such as how to post a job or set-up a Handshake account.

## ESU Career Services Contact Information

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If you have any questions about creating or posting internships, recruiting ESU students or any of the processes described in this handbook, please contact ESU Career Services at 620-341-5407 or

[career@emporia.edu](mailto:career@emporia.edu). More information can be found on our website at [emporia.edu/alumni-careers/career-services/](http://emporia.edu/alumni-careers/career-services/).

# EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY

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## CAREER SERVICES

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     @esucareer050

### **Professional Membership Affiliations**

Kansas Association of Colleges and Employers (KACE)

National Career Development Association (NCDA)

National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE)

Southern Association of Colleges and Employers (SoACE)