



American College of
Healthcare Executives
for leaders who care®

Internship Handbook

Summer Enrichment Program

*Advancing the Next Generation
of Healthcare Leaders*

Jump Start Your Career

The Summer Enrichment Program is the premier internship program for energetic and innovative graduate students pursuing an advanced degree in healthcare or a related field. Students are paired with a healthcare organization where they benefit from experiential learning, mentorship, networking and learning from experts in the field. Experienced executives serve as preceptors and mentors, providing support and career advice as well as important early-career connections.

The Summer Enrichment Program seeks students to strengthen the leadership pipeline and build the next generation of healthcare executives. While students benefit from experiential learning, host sites gain the experience of mentoring, educating and collaborating with new and future leaders. Each year, more than 30 host sites commit to making a difference in the lives of graduate students from across the country.

Since its inception in 1994, more than 1,500 interns have successfully completed the Summer Enrichment Program. Former interns are serving as C-suite leaders of hospitals and healthcare organizations throughout the United States.

The Placement Process

Profile Completion: Submit your completed SEP application. You will not be considered for placement until all materials have been submitted. The ACHE staff will evaluate your profile to make sure everything is in order.

First Interview: ACHE will contact you to set up your video interview. They will review your profile and if needed, suggest edits to make it more attractive to host sites. They will also poll you for information about your geographic region and explore possible host sites for you.

Promotion: When the matching phase begins, ACHE will send the host site a short profile of you, explaining why they think you are a good match. Usually, the host site will request two candidates per internship to give it options. ACHE will notify you that a host site is considering you for placement.

Second Interview: The host site representative will review your online profile and then contact you to set up an interview. Please be patient with this process, as they often have to coordinate schedules for themselves, Human Resources and your preceptor. Treat the interview like a job interview. **Be punctual and professional. Research the host sites that are considering you for placement.** In a previous year, a candidate found out one of his interviewers wrote a book about healthcare. The student located and read several chapters of the book by the time the interview began. He was chosen for placement that summer.

Selection: After all the interviews are conducted, the host site will make its selection. If you are offered an internship, you have 72 hours to accept or decline.

If you accept the internship, the second candidate will be notified and go back into the candidate pool for consideration for other internships. If you decline, the second candidate will often be offered the internship.

Note: If you accept the internship, you MUST maintain that commitment. Do not accept an internship if you think you may not be able to participate.

Travel Planning: Now that you have secured a host site, you should make your travel and housing arrangements. Focus on answering these important questions:

- How will you get to the internship and return home?
- How will you get around the location of your host site?
- Where will you stay during your internship?

You can check with your host site's HR department about housing options. Corporate housing may be available through the organization, or they may have a list of temporary housing options. Once you have finalized your travel and housing arrangements, notify the SEP program administrator. They will be tracking your progress.

Preparation: Before you begin the first day of your internship, research your host site and its senior staff. This will make it easier for you to navigate the organization.

- Check with your school to see if your internship qualifies you for any additional educational credit.
- Get to know the location of your host site three or four days before the internship begins, so you can get settled and acclimated to your surroundings before your internship starts.
- Coordinate with your host site representative or preceptor to identify your special project. You may even be able to begin researching it before you arrive.

Travel: Organize your travel to your host site with extra time before the internship begins. When you arrive, please notify the SEP program administrator and your host site's point of contact.

Things To Do Before You Start Your Internship

- Send a thank-you note to your host site representative.
- Contact your preceptor to further introduce yourself, finalize your start and end dates, and inform them of the dates for ACHE's mandatory check-ins. Be sure you inform ACHE of your schedule.
- Clarify any additional steps that need to be completed to ensure you are formally processed through the HR department at your host site. Many host sites will process your forms during the first or second week of your internship, but it is important to be fully aware of the process and any additional paperwork or documentation that you may need to bring.
- Visit your host site's website to review all materials (e.g., mission statement, hospital statistics, etc.), services and programs that the hospital or health system has available for patients and families. Make certain you understand the areas/departments/clinics that your preceptor is responsible for.
- Engage in current news and announcements regarding your host site, other local hospitals (e.g., competing services) and major changes in the healthcare field that may impact the organization.
- Speak with other people you know who currently work or have worked at your host site. These individuals can provide you with good information about the history and culture of the organization.

Things To Consider During Your Internship

There are three goals for interns during the SEP. The first goal is to gain tangible experience working on a project that is of significance to the hospital or health system. The second is to broaden your experience by working in different departments and with leaders of various areas of the organization. The third goal is to develop formidable mentoring relationships to help guide you successfully through the program and your career.

Gain Tangible Work Experience

- Identify projects that allow you to work with various departments, leaders and staff.

Broaden Your Experience

- Experience as many aspects of the hospital as possible. For example, make time to experience a day with the emergency response team or observe bariatric bypass surgery.

Develop Mentoring Relationships

- Get to know your preceptor/mentor. Preceptors are your supervisors. However, one of the goals of the on-site training experience is to give students the opportunity to develop mentoring relationships with healthcare leaders.
- Many students also develop mentoring relationships with other leaders throughout the organization who may also become long-term mentors. Identify at least one other contact or mentor at the organization. One way to identify potential mentors is to spend at least one day shadowing the heads of various key departments.
- Get to know other interns or fellows who are working in the organization. They can often serve as your best allies. Depending on how much time they have already spent with the organization, they will be able to help you understand and navigate the organization's culture and practices. Ask current fellows about their fellowship experiences. Also, keep in mind that fellows often sit on the selection committee for the upcoming year.

Suggested Sep Weekly Planner

Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize paperwork and any necessary details with Human Resources. Participate in one-on-one meeting with preceptor to discuss organizational priorities, initiatives and expectations for the internship. Host site organizational orientation. Select a special project, which is intended to be completed by the end of the summer that will benefit the hospital after you leave. Schedule introductory meetings with senior management team and other key staff members.
Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend second one-on-one meeting with preceptor to review personal goals that align with special project opportunities. Review list of additional activities at host site and upcoming scheduled events. Write a detailed special project proposal with deliverables, key metrics, timeline, key resources, potential challenges and barriers. Identify other hospitals/health systems in the area that you may visit. Ask your preceptor to help schedule additional site visits with partner hospitals.
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend biweekly meetings with preceptor to review projects and clarify deliverables, key metrics, timeline, key resources, and potential challenges and barriers. Hold special project meetings to identify resources and begin detailed project analysis. Schedule and begin additional activities at host site. Attend general senior management and departmental meetings and individual meetings with the senior management team and other key staff members.
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold special project meetings. Continue biweekly meetings to discuss project challenges and barriers. Continue general senior management and departmental meetings and individual meetings with the senior management team and other key staff members.
Week 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue site visits at local hospitals and health systems and additional activities at host site. Continue special project meetings. Attend weekly SEP educational webinars. Continue general senior management and departmental meetings and individual meetings with the senior management team and other key staff members. Mid-internship review with preceptor to discuss performance and identify any additional opportunities for professional development.
Week 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue special project meetings. Continue site visits at local hospitals and health systems and additional activities at host site. Continue general senior management and departmental meetings and individual meetings with the senior management team and other key staff members.
Week 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue special project meetings and begin wrap-up analysis and/or recommendations. Continue site visits at local hospitals and health systems and additional activities at host site. Continue general senior management and departmental meetings and individual meetings with the senior management team and other key staff members.

Week 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Schedule final meetings and/or lunches with members of the special project team to outline conclusion of special project process. ▪ Biweekly meeting with preceptor to review draft of the special project report. ▪ Hold meeting to present a summary of the special project to the host site leadership. ▪ Continue general senior management and departmental meetings and individual meetings with the senior management team and other key staff members.
Week 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Resume review and career advice session with preceptor and/or senior leadership. ▪ Continue final meetings and/or lunches with members of the special project team to thank them before the internship ends. ▪ SEP Graduation Webinar—Time and Date: TBD (90 minutes) ▪ Schedule meeting with project lead if different from preceptor to review final draft of key deliverables or project work. ▪ Plan travel to return home or school at the end of the summer. Finalize exit strategy to leave your summer housing.
Week 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Finalize all special project work and assist with plans for any training and/or transition work to ensure project success upon your departure. ▪ Continue with final meetings and/or lunches with members of the project team to resolve any outstanding issues. ▪ Send special project final report to ACHE program manager.

Broaden Your Experience

Start thinking about additional activities to maximize your internship experience. Although each student is matched to an organization where an assigned mentor monitors and advises the student on a well-defined project, there are many different activities for interns.

Experiencing different sides of the organization will help round out your experience, identify other potential mentors and validate your key areas of interest. Take a look at the list below and check off at least five activities that look interesting to you.

Executive Level

- ☐ Executive-level meetings
- ☐ Board meeting
- ☐ Leadership retreats
- ☐ Travel to corporate office, where applicable
- ☐ Organizationwide activities (e.g., community service events, recreational and social activities for staff)
- ☐ Departmental visits (e.g., Emergency Department, Quality Department, Finance, Human Resources)

Clinical Activities

- ☐ Clinical chairs committee meeting
- ☐ Medical staff office
- ☐ A day in surgery
- ☐ A day with a physician liaison
- ☐ Physician rounds
- ☐ Rounds with patient transport

Other Enrichment Experiences

- ☐ Local healthcare-related conferences and meetings (e.g., ACHE, American Hospital Association and other professional associations and groups)
- ☐ Visit state legislature or city council meetings on key topics related to healthcare
- ☐ Site visits at other local hospitals and health systems

DEVELOP MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS

Establish relationships with formal and informal mentors. You will have an assigned preceptor who will serve as your mentor. Continue to develop this relationship throughout the SEP experience. In addition, consider developing relationships with others in the organization who can also serve as key contacts and/or informal mentors, regardless of their title or position in the organization.

Developing the right mentoring relationship can fast track you to the C-suite level. Think about your interview process or any information you gained during your research experience and write down the names of two or three people who you would like to get to know better during your internship.

Name/Title

Name/Title

Name/Title

THINGS TO CONSIDER AFTER YOUR INTERNSHIP

- Revise your resume and ask for references for administrative fellowship and/or job opportunities.
- Provide your employer and all key contacts with your address.
- Keep your host site's leaders (e.g., president/CEO) and any preceptors or mentors abreast of your goals and activities. Strategically plan at least one or two times throughout the next six to 12 months to contact each person individually (e.g., holiday season, graduation, etc.).
- Stay abreast of any professional activities, such as conferences and symposiums, that may bring leaders from your host site to your university or location. Use those visits to make a connection and expand your contacts.
- Submit your SEP Success Story to ACHE.