

## **Questions and Answers from OPCD P'22 Session 10/06**

***For more information and to learn about all of the resources provided by the OPCD, please visit [opcd.wfu.edu](http://opcd.wfu.edu).***

1. Q: My Junior is double majoring in Psych and Comms. I'd love to have specific perspective on Communications-driven internship direction as well as information on how Psych majors should be thinking about potential career experiences between now and grad school. The "internship" perspective feels different for those students who are pursuing a path in clinical psych given HIPAA and regulatory requirements.

A: There are a range of communications roles available across a broad range of industries including publishing, marketing, advertising, and PR, financial services, non-profit, government, and more. And because communications internships are varied, the application timeline is also varied - it will depend upon the student's interest to determine the industry to pursue for internship opportunities as the organizations to search for in the process. Our coaches will be happy to work with your student to identify opportunities, timelines, and the best way to approach the application process.

Psychology majors seek a variety of careers such as consulting, human resources, marketing, Psychology-based internships will depend upon the student's interest whether clinical or not. The experiences the students seek will depend upon the type of grad school they want to attend. If clinical, undergraduates need to seek opportunities in the field and population of interest they want to serve. Students can identify organizations such as non-profits and centers to develop skills in working with certain populations. Oftentimes, clinical internships seek grad students. It is important for students to think broadly about the opportunities they want to enhance and increase experiences. Students may also do research with professors to obtain research experience for grad school.

Students considering clinical psychology careers can gain relevant experience while in college, but are sometimes challenged by patient/provider confidentiality constraints. As a result, we often suggest that students seek experiences working with populations of interest or in organizations of interest, even if they are not directly providing clinical care. The experience your student gains in this environment often informs their next step.

2. Q: In the current virtual world, how can students best leverage in person on campus relationships in the interview search.

A: Students have several options to receive support for the [interview](#) process. We offer interview prep (individual and small group appointments-every Tuesday at 4pm) and [mock interviews](#) with career coaches. These appointments are virtual. Students have access to [InterviewStream](#) to practice interviewing through a virtual platform where students can record and review their answers. We offer in-person drop-ins from 9am to 5pm every day for quick questions. Here are some additional resources to help students prepare for [virtual recruiting](#). Furthermore, our coaches can help students with [networking](#) to search for and make connections with alumni in positions and industries of interest via [LinkedIn](#) and the [WakeNetwork](#), particularly related to specific interviews for the position/company.

All adults who are fans, friends, teachers and/or mentors of a student are part of a student's network. Most students forget that they have light connections to many people, some on campus but even many far from campus. To leverage in-person on-campus relationships, a student should reconnect with those people, let them know about their career/job interests, and ask specific questions asking for advice and connections to others who could be helpful to the student. The student should be appreciative, send a follow-up thank you note, and provide regular updates in the future.

3. Q: How has the job search/networking been impacted by Covid restrictions? How is Wake Forest adapting their guidance to graduating students to maximize their efforts for these roles?

A: The search process has changed - there are fewer face-to-face interactions at networking events and in interviews. With this in mind, we've worked with students to adjust their search tactics to make the most of online opportunities. The OPCD has hosted a number of networking events since the start of the pandemic on Zoom and we've structured these events so that students have the opportunity to build relationships with alumni in small groups. We've also encouraged students to broaden their online search for opportunities while still seeking personal connections through the highly supportive Wake Forest alumni network. And we're training students on how to best present themselves in a virtual environment - reminding them that their background, the angle of their camera, and other variables will make a difference

4. Q: Do you support students on a healthcare path? Understanding that my student will be going on for more education, there is still the need for summer internships, etc. What support is offered?

A: Absolutely, Our pre health career coach, Brian Mendenhall, works closely with the pre-health advising committee, employer relations, as well as the writing center to provide a broad range of resources to students interested in experiences, research, and employment prior to pursuing a career or more education in a health career. We also host a spring event called STEM Slam to connect students in the sciences to employers who may have research or internship opportunities. We also help with personal statements and mock interviews for employment and academic pursuits.

5. Q: How are you preparing the students for the virtual interviews?

A: We are holding all the same career preparation opportunities for our students and welcome interview preparation especially for the virtual shift in interviewing. They can do a [mock interview with a coach](#) - and can just schedule an appointment either on Handshake or by calling our office. We have a software service on our website called [InterviewStream](#) that's on demand. Some employers also have tip sheets they share with students prior.

6. Q: Any suggestions with if you live in a smaller town how to help your children branch out to bigger markets?

A: The Wake Forest network is particularly strong relative to our peer institutions with people who want to connect students to opportunities. There are specific LinkedIn groups your student can join including: Wake Forest Career Connectors and Wake Forest Alumni and they can find the email for engaged alumni in specific cities using [Wake Communities](#). We can also teach your student how to reach out to people in your area. Encourage your student to meet with a career coach to learn how to use LinkedIn to network within your area and with alumni in larger cities.

7. Q: If your Wake student is premed how to they get the experience they need in hospitals when apply to med school if hospitals will not allow them in the door due to COVI.D

A: Lots of health services are still allowing shadowing and internships. Universities and Medical schools are still working with interns both remotely and on location. You are right, it is harder, but lots of our students are still finding opportunities. Because of this challenge, I would encourage your student to work with a career coach earlier than they have probably anticipated. Please let your student/child know we are happy to help them in finding an agency or institution

where they might gain valuable experience. Our pre health coach Brian Mendenhal is a member of the state Pre Health Advising Association and speaks with admission officers on a regular basis. Recently they have said they are aware of the scarcity of hands on opportunities and those requirements will not play as important a role as they have in the past.

8. Q: Do you have any advice for students who are pursuing a career in Psychology in terms of gaining experience or internships prior to graduate school?

A: Many graduate programs do appreciate professional, research or internship experience ahead of graduate school. It may depend on the program and talking with professors in the psychology department or the admissions office of prospective schools would be a great way to begin assembling information because it will vary by program. There are many opportunities to have internships in areas related to mental health or the “helping professions” including working with programs for young adults, health departments, agencies that support individuals with specific needs or even in after-school programs. Anything that shows an interest and experience working as a “helper”. Additionally, having an appointment with a coach or attending a group interviewing or resume appointment will help your student tell that story in interviews and applications.

Graduate programs in mental health services (such as clinical psychology, counseling, and social work) do not necessarily expect undergraduate applicants to have had experience performing counseling or other types of mental health therapy. Graduate programs look for applicants who have demonstrated use of helping skills, through activities such as volunteering, tutoring, coaching, or working as a residential advisor, student academic advisor, or camp counselor. For students interested in careers performing psychological research, research experience would be appropriate. Many Wake Forest professors look for and engage our students in research that makes them more attractive candidates and adds to their resume and body of work in that field or specialty.

9. Q: What is the expectation of WHEN WFU students engage the OPCD? My junior seems firm that he was counseled that it begins senior year. I find that hard to believe!

A: We encourage students to start working with the OPCD as early as they can and it's not uncommon for us to see first-year students who just want to know “how things work” in the office. The sooner a student starts working with a career

coach in the OPCD, the easier it will be for a coach to get to help them identify skills, interests, and opportunities that match their goals.

10. Q: My daughter is under the impression that the students in the Business School have their own personal career coach assigned to them and are offered job opportunities and interviews prior to the general student population. Is this true?

A: Wake Forest students have equal access to the same opportunities through Handshake and employers frequently choose students from a broad range of disciplines for interviews. Career coaches on campus work both in the OPCD and in the business school and have slightly different models. Students in the OPCD are encouraged to work with coaches assigned to their major departments, but they are welcome to work with a different coach if there is a better “fit.” Coaches in the business school are hired by the program and are tasked with working only with students in their program.

11. Q: If a first job is 100% online, what’s the best way to expand one’s network?

A: This is a great question. Since so many of us are working remotely and frequently autonomously, our networks are even more important than before. We continue to have a lot of success with LinkedIn, our alumni and affinity groups on LinkedIn, and in coaching students on how to use this tool effectively. We have group and 1:1 sessions prepared to do just that, virtually if that is preferred. Please have your student set up an appointment with our office.

While on the job, ask your manager for introductions to people to get to know the company and others in the company. These conversations can occur via Zoom. Then ask the people who they meet for references to others to learn more about their areas of interest. Join employee affinity groups that are often based on areas of interest or personal background or demographics. Join a local organization, a non-profit, and/or a professional association to meet other people with similar service interests, values, and/or professional interests.

12. Q: I would also like to know the extent of the help I can expect my daughter to receive from the OPCD as a rising senior. [sic] She had trouble securing a meaningful opportunity for the summer after her sophomore year - applied for over 50 opportunities!

A: You are right in believing that internships are important. They are often very competitive. We encourage our students to lean into the Wake Forest network. 70 - 90% of opportunities are landed through relationships and networks. We tell

students that if they are only applying through online portals, we are missing a great opportunity to ask for help from our alumni, friends and family inside the organizations. We teach students how to search, connect and engage with alumni who either can help from inside or recommend opportunities that may not yet be posted.

Students who land opportunities typically attend 5 - 7 career events (e.g. career fairs, information sessions with employers and career courses), have 6 coaching appointments and apply to 40 - 50 internships. It's very common for students to apply to 50 or more internships. We actually encourage students to apply to 50 or more internships! We also encourage students to use connections when appropriate to identify and secure internship opportunities. Though specific industries like consulting and financial services recruit in the fall, there are many, many organizations who will post internships all spring. We need your student at the Career Fair and engaging employers and alumni online. We can help her with this!

13. Q: Where are you seeing art history majors land?

A: Our art history majors have a wide range of destinations and can shape their stories on their resumes, LinkedIn profiles and in their interview preparation to help them explain why they are excellent candidates for many professional opportunities. Additionally, we have data that helps students and parents explore where our art history majors have landed (links below to our website). You and your student can also go to the Wake Forest University page on LinkedIn. There is a tab on the left hand side that says "alumni". Once there, you can sort by major and see where students have landed and the kinds of careers that appeal to them.

- <https://opcd.wfu.edu/explore-options/deacs-going-graduation/>
- <https://opcd.wfu.edu/explore-options/explore-majors/?tab=history>

14. Q: Can OPCD offer any guidance to students interested in law degrees-legal internships?

A: We can. Connect with an OPCD Career Coach or take a career course to begin exploring opportunities. We explore the student's area of interest as it pertains to law and encourage them to consider various avenues of pursuing those interests. Pre-law students may wish to seek research opportunities with professors. And because law is so specialized we encourage students to also contact the Pre-law faculty adviser, Patty Poole.

- <http://prelaw.wfu.edu/>

15. Q: In a normal year, what percentage of juniors receive internships and how does that compare to last year and this year's expectations.

A: This year, there are 31% more internships available to students (4,455 total) than last year. Total student applications to these 4,455 internships are up 104%. For comparison, full-time jobs are slightly down -1.9% (11,000+) vs. last year while total applications are up +73.6%. It's important to note that these opportunities are available to all college students, not just Wake Forest students.

Internship postings are higher in the West and Northeast perhaps due to the advantages of remote internships in areas where housing is expensive, and the availability of cheap labor to bridge the crisis that furloughed and laid off many. Further, companies identifying as being in the Advertising, Marketing and PR industry show a modest uptick of 3.5% while applications to those internships are up 225% YoY. For brand marketing, internship postings are slightly down YoY -0.6% and applications spiked 413%. Sales internship postings are actually up 91% and students have responded with a 372% increase in applications to sales internships.

16. Q: What is the current expected timing for internships (i.e. interview period, offers extended, etc.)

A: There's a difference between the major F500 companies, financial services firms, consulting firms, and technology companies vs. the rest of the market. These major firms recruit intensively for internships each Fall (right now) and are trending towards recruiting students before junior year. Banks and consulting firms have been moving up their recruiting cycles to the summer to identify and secure the talent they desire as early as possible. We have one Fortune 500 company who already has a posting for Summer 2022 interns - the summer after next!

With the supply of internships at an overall lower level versus the number of students applying, students must apply NOW and not wait for Spring to come. It's difficult to predict what will happen during Spring semester.

17. Q: Given the schedule for this 2020-2021 school year is there any focus on internships for students during the extended break between 1st and 2nd semester, i.e. December?

A: There are no plans for special internships during January 2021, but we are currently working on offering some virtual career education programs to help students with career exploration and readiness for the job/internship search. Students may be able to secure small projects, job shadowing opportunities, and do valuable online certificate and skill training via LinkedIn Learning or Coursera.

18. I have a current junior in the Business School majoring in finance and a son in the MSBA program, who should graduate in May. What are the statistics of kids who have internships after junior year being offered a full time spot upon graduation?

- We are in the process of collecting information from this past summer, so our data is not yet comprehensive. Through the surveys to-date, of the 53% of business school students in the Class of 2021 who have provided information, 39% have received offers. We are still gathering more information to determine if those offers are full time upon graduation, continuation of the internship, or internship-to-hire.
- By business school major:
  - i. BEM knowledge rate of 80% of which 30% received offers.
  - ii. Finance knowledge rate of 21% of which 75% received offers.
  - iii. Mathematical Business knowledge rate of 54% of which 46% received offers.

19. Q: Is it acceptable to negotiate the pay and/or benefits for an internship if you have multiple offers?

A: Other than asking for some compensation rather than not being paid anything at all, it's not typical for students to be able to negotiate pay or benefits for an internship. If a student is considering negotiating their summer internship offer, they should first contact a career coach for perspective and advice.

20. Q: Do you have suggestions for keeping internship offers open so that you can let other company internship processes play out to see your options before you commit?

A: This is difficult to do but still worth trying. You can ask for time. You can ask to interview the people you will work with in the company to get to know them - and that may take some time. Either way, they don't want to lose you, so they want you to decide. Talking with a career coach for perspective and advice can help a student fully evaluate their options and determine the appropriate action



steps.

21. Q: If a company requires you to respond quickly to an internship offer and you accept, is there an acceptable way to go back and decline the offer if you prefer to accept another later offer that is a better fit?

A: Not really. Reneging on an accepted job offer is a very serious decision. It will have a negative impact on the student's reputation and relationship, Wake Forest's reputation and relationships with the employers, and also the reputation of the Wake Forest alumni who work at that organization. There will also likely be impact on the student's access to the career center and ongoing career coaching support. If a student is considering negotiating their summer internship offer, they should first contact a career coach for perspective and advice.

22. Q: Is OPCD equipped to assist the Engineering students?

A: Yes, the OPCD supports engineering students just like all other majors. In fact, STEM+ analytics is a dedicated career pathway for students to stay informed about relevant career activities and opportunities. In general, engineering students are very employable for a wide range of internships and jobs given the skills and competencies they acquire through their academic experience.

23. Q: Any sense of internship trends in the world of nonprofits, social service, public interest—areas where budgets might be hit but need is high?

A: In general, the large non-profits that typically recruit students each fall were active recruiting again this year. As long as the non-profits are receiving funding from outside sources (which many have even during the pandemic), they will be hiring.

24. Q: Could you repeat the areas suggested if a student wants Marketing (tangential areas)?

A: Sales and account management is hot. Typically, brand, advertising and PR is what most marketing students desire, but there are limited opportunities in the market right now. The bulk of opportunities are in sales.

25. Q: What are the job prospects for students with a four-year degree in computer science? Is a summer internship recommended for those students? My son is double majoring in Japanese as well and is supposed to do an eight-week study

abroad in Japan next summer. Might that be a strike against him regarding a summer internship for computer science?

A: CS degrees and skills are in very high demand. He just needs to apply to lots of opportunities. If he knows how to code (Python, R, etc), there are many opportunities.

26. Q: What does OPCD do specifically to help non-business school students? There are a lot of events that seem specific to business school students. How do you ensure equitable treatment?

A: The market is looking for talent regardless of major. Liberal arts students have and are going into the same positions business students are.

27. Q: Does Wake have resources to identify the small, medium and large companies in a given vertical - banking or whatever, then map that to the alumni base?

A: Career Shift is a software database on the OPCD website that can help students research all types of companies. Through LinkedIn, students can find many alumni at their companies of interest.