An interdisciplinary exploration of collegiate internships: Requirements for undergraduate and graduate programs

Jeffrey Hoyle
Mark Edward Deschaine

To cite this document:
Permanent link to this document: http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/ET-10-2015-0098

Access to this document was granted through an Emerald subscription provided by Token:JournalAuthor:4285BA43-517F-4C67-9519-B80A5EB57E7F:

For Authors
If you would like to write for this, or any other Emerald publication, then please use our Emerald for Authors service information about how to choose which publication to write for and submission guidelines are available for all. Please visit www.emeraldinsight.com/authors for more information.

About Emerald www.emeraldinsight.com
Emerald is a global publisher linking research and practice to the benefit of society. The company manages a portfolio of more than 290 journals and over 2,350 books and book series volumes, as well as providing an extensive range of online products and additional customer resources and services.

Emerald is both COUNTER 4 and TRANSFER compliant. The organization is a partner of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) and also works with Portico and the LOCKSS initiative for digital archive preservation.

*Related content and download information correct at time of download.
An interdisciplinary exploration of collegiate internships

Requirements for undergraduate and graduate programs

Jeffrey Hoyle
Department of Marketing and Hospitality Services Administration, Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant, Michigan, USA, and
Mark Edward Deschaine
Department of Educational Leadership, Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant, Michigan, USA

Abstract

Purpose – Collegiate internships play an important role in the development of professionals. They provide students the opportunity to experience real world expectations embedded within actual vocational environments under the support of their collegiate faculty. Although there are a number of common reasons why internships are utilized in each academic area, the requirements for the experiences are substantially different across disciplines and level of coursework. The purpose of this paper is to explore some of the commonalities and differences that exist for internships across collegiate academic disciplines at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, and identify their salience for programs from an interdisciplinary perspective.

Design/methodology/approach – For this conceptual piece, the authors took an introspective qualitative look at both programs and compared and contrasted them based on internally available documentation and information. Although this was theoretical in nature, the authors utilized materials available for certification and accreditation purposes for each of their programs. Multiple data sources were stakeholder interviews and conversations, site visits/observations, and site artifacts/documents.

Findings – The authors found a great deal of both similarity and dissimilarity across programs, and these findings were utilized as grounds for programmatic introspection, evaluation, accreditation, and certification to better understand how stakeholder voice is involved in the processes. Table I provides an overview of items identified, and will serve as a guide for the remainder of this paper.

Originality/value – An inclusive awareness will consider the voices of the student, university, employer, and other stakeholders, including co-workers and employers that currently do not offer internships. Given the rising cost of tuition and the wealth of competition in the market, the pressure is on for institutions of higher education to up the ante when it comes to providing quality experiential learning opportunities. The next step should focus on defining expectations and tailoring each internship program, and for that to be accomplished, all stakeholders must be “all in.”

Keywords Voice, Workplace learning, Stakeholder analysis, Curriculum innovation

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Students that attend college do so because they want to gain the insights, information, and experiences necessary to meet the entry-level qualifications of their chosen profession (Sides and Mrvica, 2007; Weible, 2010). Coursework, theory and practice coalesce when a student reaches the point in their collegiate experience where they functionally have the opportunity to put all of those areas into practice in real work world environments.

Academic fields and professions have varying degrees of emphasis and requirements for a terminal internship experience. The focus of this paper is to
explore two rather distinct college programs to identify why their internship requirements exist, how the experiences are determined, and identification of the logistics and resources required to run the programs. Power and voice of stakeholders represent an opportunity to explore how and why people within organizations care and influence events that occur in their field. The literature on power and voice yields findings that vary on the topic of shared power and voice when discussing change efforts in curriculum. Some believe shared power and voice during collaborative discussions among curriculum decision makers leads to maintenance of the status quo as others believe equal power and voice among all relevant parties during discussions move curriculum change beyond the status quo toward meaningful change (Ylimaki and Brunner, 2011). It is hoped that this interdisciplinary orientation will provide insights to make both academic disciplines more salient and appropriate; both to their students, and to the overall fields of study.

Stakeholders of the internship experience
Stakeholders of the internship experience in both college programs come from unique perspectives: this offers a practical opportunity to see the internship as an object to be studied (Charmaz, 2000). Understanding stakeholder relationships is a critical part of stakeholder analysis, as it enables us to place relationships in the context of the playing field analogy (Field theory – Pierre Bourdieu, n.d.). An exploration of the fields in which the university, student intern (SI), and employer operate influences the expectations and contributions each group has for the higher education internship process because “in a given field, agents struggle to maintain their position by following the ‘rules of the game’ in that field” (Hinde and Dixon, 2007, p. 411). This allows for the identification of how each stakeholder contributes to the performance of the entire team, group, or organization (Bourdieu, 1990).

It is critical to have engaged higher education internship stakeholders to inform the process of how learning takes place in the program. This is of utmost importance because “although we have some crude information about what happens to a given input of knowledge, neither about knowledge nor, more emphatically, about his attributes do we know with any precision where, when, how, or to what degree change occurs” (Wilson, 1966, p. 71).

Educational significance of this study
Bernstein (2000) states an effective interns requires effectively trained, committed, motivated, and adequately salaried teachers with career prospects, sensible to the possibilities and contributions of all their pupils, operating in a context which provides the conditions for effective acquisition, and an education which enables reflection on what is to be acquired and how it is to be acquired (p. xxii).

Such an approach requires cooperation between internship stakeholders to assess how internship curriculum is designed, administered, and delivered (McEvoy, 2010; Snyder, 1999). The establishment of working relationships between the university internship director, SI, and employers is critical to understand what each stakeholder hopes to gain from the process and how that influences the design of the experience (Freeman et al., 2010; McEvoy, 2010; Snyder, 1999).

This paper reviews the programs and requirements of two training programs: an undergraduate program in Business Marketing, and a graduate program in educational
leadership. By exploring issues of commonality and identifying areas of uniqueness, a mutually supportive and interdisciplinary perspective will emerge to help drive programming in both academic disciplines and areas of study.

**Review of the literature**

The literature reviewed will focus on understanding the internship experience of an undergraduate marketing internship and a graduate-level school administrative program at Watershed University (a pseudonym for an actual Mid-West University in the USA, hereafter, WU), and the questions raised through the exploration of key stakeholder perspectives.

Higher education can help make sense of our society “if we look at the knowledge the school transmits we shall find that it is based on a distributive principle such that different knowledges and their possibilities are differentially distributed to different social groups” (Bernstein, 2000, p. xxi). The social groups that higher education is associated with inform this paper because it is critical to “understand that the unit of analysis should be something akin to stakeholders” (Freeman, 2011, p. 213) to better explore these relationships and how they influence the delivery of higher education.

**Background and history of internships in higher education**

Student learning in the classroom is relatively passive (Fisher and Grant, 1983; Tinto, 1997, 2012), whereas learning during an internship is considered active and learning by doing: students have the opportunity to relate classroom learning to practical applications (Dewey, 1926). These experiences allow for greater understanding when students can relate their personal experiences to course activities (Tinto, 1987, 1997, 2012). Internships also provide many benefits to its key stakeholders of students, employers, and schools (Hoyle and Goffnett, 2013).

Weible (2010) stated that “today 94% of colleges of business offer some form of internship opportunity for their students, but only 6% require students to participate in an internship program” (p. 59). Graduate educational leadership programs are mandated to offer all students an internship as part of their curriculum.

Advantages of internships for students are increased career opportunities, higher salaries, quicker job offers, faster promotion rates, job satisfaction, ease of transition from college to work, better communication skills, and application of the knowledge gained from the classroom (Clark, 2003; Gault *et al.*, 2010, 2000; Vygotsky, 1978; Weible, 2010). Sides and Mrvica (2007) argued that “not until would-be professionals begin to live the occupational life they have chosen (and we would advocate that they begin this as interns) do they really start to understand how their formal knowledge is applied” (p. 33). Developing a deeper awareness of stakeholder relations, although it is a complex issue, is essential in order sensitize our understanding of these relationships and how stakeholder voice and power impact the internship experience (Connor and Raile, 2015; Lucio and Connolly, 2011).

**Power and voice**

Issues of power and voice have a relationship to the experiential learning that takes place in an internship (Dewey, 1926; Diambra *et al.*, 2004; Inkster and Ross, 1998). The nature of relationships among SI, employers, and universities in higher education internship programs has been largely ignored by researchers along with understanding how the internship is important to the college learning experience
(Sides and Mrvica, 2007; Vygotsky, 1978). Given the extensive use of internships in higher education, the absence of evidence of the influence internships have on the three key stakeholders of the colleges and universities, employers, and students is shocking (Joseph, 2006; Narayanan et al., 2010). For effective internships to occur, it is critical to incorporate the needs and objectives of all the three key stakeholders by allowing open, substantive discussions about the design of the program among the stakeholders to occur.

Inclusion of all voices is essential to improve the understanding of the expectations of each stakeholder and encourage continuous improvement in the delivery of the internship experience for the benefit of all (Bourdieu, 1990; Freeman et al., 2010; Mitra and Serriere, 2012). Stakeholder theory provides a conceptual tool that helps understand “the agency, power, and influence” of those with an interest or stake in an issue or program (Yu, 2009, p. 235). A stakeholder analysis that includes all stakeholders in the discussion about their goals and expectations about internship programs provides a process to incorporate meaningful change into an internship program to ensure they remain relevant for all stakeholders.

Key stakeholders investigated
The following section introduces three key stakeholders of the university internship program: the educational institution, SI, and employer. A workplace setting provides an excellent opportunity for institutions, employers, and students to apply the skills and assess learning through an internship program (Alpert et al., 2009; Divine et al., 2006).

Internship stakeholders
The concept of “stakeholders” has been a common term in organizational literature since around 1984, with no agreement on a common definition (Bryson, 2004; Mitchell et al., 1997). As organizations make strategic plans in a constantly changing, dynamic environment, it has become essential for planners to “take into account all parties who either affect or who are affected by the organizations strategies (stakeholders) by including them directly in the [planning] process” (Nutt and Backoff, 1992, p. 175).

For our purposes, “stakeholder” will follow the definition of any individual or groups who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization’s objectives (Mitchell et al., 1997). A clear understanding of the internship experience by all stakeholders is important to establish internship programs that are relevant and of sufficient quality to benefit all stakeholders needs (Dobandi, 1984; Swift and Kent, 1999; Westerberg and Wickersham, 2011).

Stakeholder 1: higher education institutions. The changing nature of work and education, employers’ need for flexibility, and changes in public policy regarding the workplace and higher education have led to changes in the nature and impact of stakeholder voice (Buren and Greenwood, 2008; Joseph, 2006). Emerging research suggests that institutions need to have a better understanding of why internships are provided to support students and the benefits they provide the institutions, employers, and SIs (Penuel et al., 2007; Selingo, 2011). The Change Management Toolbook (n.d.) illustrates the dynamics of stakeholder power and voice (Figure A1). The internship provides experiential opportunities that leverage the constructivists’ ideology, but there is still the need to understand how to assess the internship experience by university internship program decision makers (Brown et al., 1989; Dewey, 1926; Mayer, 1996). It is noted that institutions need to explore the fact that a major portion of
learning takes place outside the classroom to discover how institutions contribute to the internship experience (Kuh et al., 1991; Tinto, 2012).

Arum and Roksa (2011) suggested segments of society have a view of higher education simply as a process to sort and certify students for positions in the workplace after graduation. This depiction of higher education as a sieve that sorts students rather than providing activities and experiences that shape students in ways to facilitate learning has created tensions between the three key stakeholders of internships: higher education institutions, students, and employers. As colleges consider how much power employers should have in regards to developing programs and curriculum, higher education decision makers need to balance power and influence among all key stakeholders to ensure academic quality and integrity of their course offerings.

**Stakeholder 2: student interns.** Joseph (2006) argues “that engaging students in student-voice activities [such as the internship process] strengthens their development and social skills, hence preparing them for the real world” (p. 34). Mitra and Serriere (2012) described how student voice could be integrated into the educational decision making process by simply allowing students to express their opinions by collaborating with employers and university stakeholders.

Walker (2011) noted the importance for students to have direct contact (voice) with a faculty member or internship coordinator during an internship program. Tinto’s (1987, 1993, 2012) academic and social integration model, Astin’s (1975, 1977) involvement model, and Joseph’s (2006) student voice and the systematic change process contend that this faculty contact and student voice should increase persistence, retention, and degree completion due to the involvement of a faculty advisor during the internship.

Factors in student persistence and retention move from social integration and involvement at the beginning of college to academic involvement in the junior and senior years (Neumann and Finaly-Neumann, 1989). Student involvement and a student’s view of the quality of teaching, advising, coursework, and contact with faculty provide significant predictors of junior and senior persistence (Joseph, 2006; Neumann and Finaly-Neumann, 1989; Tinto, 2012). Internships also provide academic involvement and contact with faculty, which may assist in increased collegiate degree persistence.

**Stakeholder 3: employers/supervisors.** Even though employers/supervisors are a critical component of the undergraduate internship experience, there is little research on understanding and developing meaning of this relationship and consequently, an understanding of employers/supervisors’ needs (Rothman, 2007). There is the need for employers/supervisors to be able to articulate the significance of integrating an internship program into their respective workplace settings (Buren and Greenwood, 2008; Rothman, 2007). To meet the need of a well-trained workforce, employers will need to work with higher educational institutions and SIs in order to balance the stakeholder attributes of power, legitimacy, and urgency, and to be able to meet the stakes of each segment of stakeholder (Figure A1).

**Internship stakeholder theoretical framework**
Stakeholder analysis has been the focus of much research to understand the nature of what stakeholder theory is and is not, as well as to define stakeholders’ ethical and moral obligations. (Bryson, 2004; Freeman, 2011; Freeman et al., 2010). To conduct an advanced stakeholder analysis, “the basic insight was the stakeholder relationship, rather than tasks of formulating, implementing, evaluating” (Freeman et al., 2010, p. 59) in order to understand why stakeholders are involved with an organization. The shared-power
dynamics present in the current status of stakeholders analysis (The Change Management Toolbook, n.d.) make higher education internships an ideal topic to make sense of how “property appropriates its owners, embodying itself in the form of a structure generating practices perfectly conforming with its logic and its demands” (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 57) to understand how and why stakeholder tensions exist.

Stakeholder analysis is used in this paper to fill the gap in the literature regarding the relevancy and connectedness of what is done on campus to equip students for the realities of the workplace. This transfer of knowledge into skills from the classroom to work environments can help discover common interests for students and employers to evaluate how knowledge is applied by students in the field (Alpert et al., 2009; Lave, 1988; Newcomb and Wilson, 1966).

Methods
For this conceptual piece, the authors took an introspective qualitative look at both programs and compared and contrasted them based on internally available documentation and information. Although this was theoretical in nature, the authors utilized materials available for certification and accreditation purposes for each of their programs. Multiple data sources were stakeholder interviews and conversations, site visits/observations, and site artifacts/documents. By doing this, findings were strengthened by comparing and contrasting multiple data sources (Corbin and Strauss, 2008; Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Patton, 2002).

Findings
The authors found a great deal of both similarity and dissimilarity across programs, and these findings were utilized as grounds for programmatic introspection, evaluation, accreditation, and certification to better understand how stakeholder voice is involved in the processes. Table I provides an overview of items identified, and will serve as a guide for the remainder of this paper.

Level of students
All of the students enrolled in the College of Business Administration – marketing internship (CBA-MI) at (WU) are undergraduates, usually in search of their first work position. They bring to the experience coursework, and are looking for practical applications to the theories they have learned.

All of the students enrolled in the College of Education and Human Services – school administration internship (CEHS-SAI) at WU are graduate students. Most are currently employed in the field of education as either teachers, teacher leaders, or administrators seeking school administrator credentials. Their coursework and practical internship experiences are intentionally designed for a seamless integration of content from the classroom to the workroom.

The differences in the level of student, as well as their current employment situation, make it difficult to look at curriculum specifically from a student perspective since graduates tend to bring a more worldly view to the program than do undergraduates. In both cases, the stakeholders involved here are the Institution of Higher Education (IHE) and the SI. Although the IHE stakeholder impact is similar for both programs (with nuances being discussed in more detail later), the SI stakeholder impact needs to be discussed and explored further. At the undergraduate level, SIs might need more direction and support in the development of internships since they most likely have not
already experienced the world of work into which they will be venturing. The graduate interns are usually engaged in the educational organization while they are completing their internship activities. Consequently, they might be more sophisticated in their orientation and expectations for the program.

**Program requirements**
The students enrolled in the CBA-MI must take a three credit hour internship, working a minimum of 480 hours onsite. This is a full-time work experience occurring within a marketing or logistics organization, and the experience must be paid for by the host site. Detailed documentation of activities such as written journals, assignments, and an employer evaluation are required to assess the rigor and quality of the undergraduate marketing internship at WU.

The CEHS-SAI at WU have a total of three semester hours of credit. This part-time experience is unpaid, and the requirements call for a minimum of 240 clock hours of experience. Detailed written plans developed by the intern, their mentor, and university faculty provide support for the goals and objectives of the experience. Detailed documentation of activities, evaluations, and materials provide the documentation necessary to develop an evaluation of the intern’s progress toward the goals and objectives.

### Table I.
Overview of the internship programs compared at WU

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>College of Business Administration – marketing internship</th>
<th>College of Education and Human Services – school administration internship</th>
<th>Stakeholders involved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level of students</strong></td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>Higher education institutions/student interns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Program requirements</strong></td>
<td>Determined by the university faculty, the site mentor and the student</td>
<td>State Certification and National Accreditation Standards for the program are primary. These are interpreted by the university faculty, the site mentor and the student</td>
<td>Higher education institutions/student interns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time requirements</strong></td>
<td>A minimum of 480 hours</td>
<td>A minimum of 240 hours</td>
<td>Higher education institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>State certification requirements</strong></td>
<td>Nothing specified</td>
<td>Determined by the State Department of Education</td>
<td>Higher education institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Program accreditation requirements</strong></td>
<td>Nothing specified</td>
<td>Determined by the National Accreditation Agency for the program</td>
<td>Higher education institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mentor requirements</strong></td>
<td>Must be at a minimum an instructor within the College of Business with at least a master’s degree</td>
<td>Determined by the State Department of Education – must have a master’s degree, hold State Administrative Certification, and have a minimum of five years administrative experience</td>
<td>Higher education institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compensation of the intern</strong></td>
<td>Paid by the host site</td>
<td>Unpaid</td>
<td>Employers-supervisors/higher education institutions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The students enrolled in the CBA-MI must take a three credit hour internship, working a minimum of 480 hours onsite. This is a full-time work experience occurring within a marketing or logistics organization, and the experience must be paid for by the host site. Detailed documentation of activities such as written journals, assignments, and an employer evaluation are required to assess the rigor and quality of the undergraduate marketing internship at WU.

The CEHS-SAI at WU have a total of three semester hours of credit. This part-time experience is unpaid, and the requirements call for a minimum of 240 clock hours of experience. Detailed written plans developed by the intern, their mentor, and university faculty provide support for the goals and objectives of the experience. Detailed documentation of activities, evaluations, and materials provide the documentation necessary to develop an evaluation of the intern’s progress toward the goals and objectives.
The requirements for both programs are established by the IHE. Even though the IHE requirements are fairly invariant, the individual nature of the internship experience allows for areas of emphasis in the development of the goals for each student. In this case, the (SI) as well as the employer-supervisor (ES) have a say in the development of the program’s objectives, in conjunction, and consultation with the IHE faculty representative. All three of the identified entities are considered to be the major stakeholders, with any or all having the potential to radically realign the requirements for the on-the-job experience.

**Time requirements**

The University program for the undergraduate marketing experience mandates a minimum of 480 hours over a 12 week period. There are no outside requirements for this program from state or accreditation organizations. However, this is dramatically different for the graduate educational leadership program. A minimum of 240 hours for the internship experience has been developed to comply with state certification and accreditation expectations for the program.

The University is the major stakeholder in this area for both programs since they are the “gatekeeper” for compliance, certification and credentialing processes. It is incumbent upon the faculty representative for the IHE to understand the impact that the internship schedule has on the successful completion of the internship, and it becomes the responsibility of that individual to convey the importance to the SI as well as the ES.

**State certification requirements**

Although no specific state requirements currently exist for certifying the CBA’s undergraduate marketing internships, consequently WU’s CBA does not have to deal with any state mandates.

The field of educational leadership has found itself caught up in the school reform movement, with the administrative internship receiving close scrutiny. The school reform movement has created a political impetus nationally to meet the governmental demands for increased student achievement. University personnel in charge of principal preparation programs are trying to meet these new political realities as they work closely with state-level policymakers. These relationships exist to determine the most effective elements necessary for successful principal preparation programs (Huber, 2008). Consequently, there exists a great deal of oversight on the part of the IHE staff to insure that state credentialing requirements for the internship are met.

In this case, the undergraduate program at WU is exempt from state certification requirements. However, for the graduate educational leadership program, the IHE is the solitary stakeholder. There are a great deal of accountability checks at WU’s graduate program to ensure and support their compliance function for the state certification process. Without this supervision by WU’s faculty, the integrity of the program could suffer, thus placing the program and the state certification of such in jeopardy.

**Program accreditation requirements**

No specific state requirements are currently in existence certifying the CBA’s undergraduate marketing internship. The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, which accredits the CBA’s curriculum, is involved with professional development, certification of business societies and other student organizations, and providing internship opportunities through national industries. With the graduate
The educational leadership internship, the accrediting agency for WU’s program has specific requirements through the national accreditation guidelines. WU’s state Department of Education relies heavily upon these accreditation processes.

In this situation, the IHE, once again, is the primary stakeholder, and this is consistent across the two programs: the IHE plays a prominent role in maintaining the integrity of the program for accreditation reasons. It is incumbent upon the IHE faculty to not only monitor compliance of accreditation standards, but to articulate these standards to both the SI and the ES.

**Mentor requirements**

The only mandated requirements for undergraduate marketing mentors are being an instructor in the CBA at WU, and a Master’s Degree. Mentors are critical to making the internship experience a positive transformational event for students (Walker, 2011). Therefore, an employer that regularly seeks interns from the CBA figured out they can help themselves by recruiting the best and brightest talent by offering successful internship experiences. The decision to invest in guidance, for this employer, implies that they would offer an array of mentored internships and full-time options for students to find an opportunity tailored to their interests and expertise.

The mentors for the internship for the educational leadership program, by state certification standards, must have a minimum of five years professional experience as an educational leader, and must hold state school administrator credentials.

Once again, the IHE is the primary stakeholder, and once again, this situation is not consistent across the two programs. It is only in the graduate educational leadership program where the IHE plays a prominent role in maintaining the integrity of the program for mentor requirements. Finally, once again, the graduate program faculty supervising the internship program must articulate this requirement to the SI and the ES.

**Internship compensation**

The CBA requires internships to be paid. Nationally, there are conflicting reports as to the number of paid and unpaid internships that range from an average 98.6 percent of internships being paid to over 90 percent being unpaid (Grasgreen, 2011; National Public Radio, 2010; Perlin, 2011; Westerberg and Wickersham, 2011). For internship programs to become more vital for employee recruitment, the number of paid internships offered by employers is likely to continue increasing.

For WU’s graduate internship for educational leadership, the internship is an unpaid experience, due to certification requirements from the state. Since there is an unpaid component to the graduate educational leadership experience, with the program considered to be an extension of the educational program, the university mandates an elaborate process whereby the students’ internship organizations must complete a required affiliation agreement with the university before any on site work may commence. This agreement is a legal document between the two organizations, and is put in place for legal and support issues.

The stakeholders primarily involved in the CBA undergraduate internship are the employers-supervisors (ES) personnel, since they are the ones that ultimately determine the compensation for the experience. The SI also plays an integral role, since they ultimately make the decision to accept or reject any internship placement partially due to the level of compensation being offered.
For the graduate educational leadership program at WU, the IHE and ES are both stakeholders in this area due to the affiliation agreement process. The legal discussions that occur between the two entities must be mutually respectful and responsive to insure that the intern has a safe and acceptable internship experience.

In the literature, there is tension between internships being paid or unpaid with the former perspective focusing on the need to value the work done by interns and the latter viewing the internship as an investment of time and training, rather payment to the intern, for the future benefit of student and employer (Grasgreen, 2011; Westerberg and Wickersham, 2011; The National Association of Colleges and Employers, n.d.). Understanding the tension between paid and unpaid internships will help employers/supervisors, who have been struggling with how to function in a complex and chaotic internship climate, to stake a claim in the internship process to access skilled talent available through university internship programs (Ashkanasy, 2007).

To facilitate communication, employers/supervisors must be willing to insert themselves into dialogue with both institutions and students to develop an understanding of internship outcomes (Penuel et al., 2007; Selingo, 2011). More research is needed to understand the role of employers in internships to understand how to structure the internship experience (Wasonga and Murphy, 2006).

**Summary**

The findings that emerged from analyzing the data through the theoretical lens of constructivist grounded theory provided meaningful and measurable insight into the internship experiences offered at the undergraduate and graduate levels at WU. Figure 1 was constructed using the concepts of reflective analysis (praxis) and

**Figure 1.**

Collaborate, create, and connect

Source: Adapted from Hoyle (2013), Figure 6, p. 134
stakeholder analysis, with regard to the process of understanding, managing, and evaluating an organization and its programs by looking at the relationships between and among stakeholders (Freeman et al., 2010). A funnel was used as the heart of the figure to symbolize the dynamic nature of incorporating diverse stakeholder voices that range from being empowered or silenced (disempowered). Figure 1 depicts a process to collaborate, create, and connect diverse stakeholders’ points of view to discuss, and/or adjust the design of an internship program.

The figure depicts the power dynamics among the key internship stakeholders. Figure 1 is used to show the filtering and aligning of internship stakeholders’ voices based on the power possessed during a specific activity of the internship program. Stakeholders, through honest dialogue, circulate through the funnel by engaging in stakeholder analysis and praxis (reflective analysis) to distill ideas into internship decisions that incorporate all stakeholder voices. The funnel symbolizes the playing field analogy (Bourdieu, 1984) with boundaries, rules, goals, and the internship stakeholders as players on the field. The figure depicts a cycle of reflective analysis (praxis) using stakeholder analysis to evaluate power relationships of key internship stakeholders and collaboration in creative ways in order to connect and create an environment that values input from all stakeholders. The creation of a safe place to collaborate considers input, whether critical or supportive, as potential sources of innovative ways to improve, modify, or change the creation of a safe, collaborative environment in which to consider all stakeholder input, whether critical or supportive, will foster collaboration and the potential to improve upon the internship experience for all involved.

Recommendations
Stakeholder analysis of WU undergraduate marketing and graduate educational leadership internship programs was a complex, frustrating, and challenging process; however the deep meanings that came from the study provided new insights and confirmed what Kaczynski et al. (2013) described as the improved benefits to research when data included feedback from people in the actual setting. When the authors first engaged in the exploration, it was assumed that there would be a great deal of similarity across the two programs from a practical and organizational perspective. This assumption was far from accurate. More differences than commonalities were identified, and this has the potential to support each program individually, while offering mutual support as enhancements and requirements change for program development. Systems in similar situations can learn from each other to enact positive changes.

The constructivist grounded theory approach to reflecting on data resulted in the Internship Field Model (Figure 2) to provide a new model which we used to describe key stakeholder relationships in the WU internship programs.

Circles were used in Figure 2 to represent a sense of completion and wholeness. A circle can imply a definite boundary but is used in this figure to project potential outward expanding paths of inquiry. The outermost circle contains the concepts of: experiential learning, evaluation, and design. These three concepts were placed in the outermost circle of the figure because: first, experiential learning emerged as being transferable to other course work and professional career growth, thus being a mutual win for all stakeholders; second, evaluation of performance ensures all stakeholders provide feedback regarding the internship program; and third, design represents the process of continual review and adaptation of the internship experience to keep it relevant to all stakeholders. The inner circle (Figure 2) contains the key stakeholders
being students, the university, and employers engaged in a cycle of observed performance, interpretation of reported outcomes, and future internship program decisions. Finally, the circular design of Figure 2 illustrates the necessity of continuous communication and feedback among all stakeholders to keep the process functioning effectively. The authors believe it to be true that even the harshest of stakeholder comments can spark potentially valuable change.

Implications for further research
Future explorations should continue to investigate the rich data gathered in this observation, with an open mind to alternative paths of inquiry; perhaps considering additional stakeholder roles and aspects of stakeholder salience, such as who holds which resources and how much.

Secondary stakeholders need to be considered in the internship discussion, as D’Abate et al. (2009) argued that internships should be structured to ensure that “the intern feels good about their job being performed and that the intern does a job that is of importance to other employees within the organization” (p. 536). An inclusive awareness will consider the voices of the student, university, employer, and other

Source: Adapted from Hoyle (2013), Figure 7, p. 154
stakeholders, including co-workers and employers that currently do not offer internships. Given the rising cost of tuition and the wealth of competition in the market, the pressure is on for institutions of higher education to up the ante when it comes to providing quality experiential learning opportunities. The next step should focus on defining expectations and tailoring each internship program, and for that to be accomplished, all stakeholders must be “all in.”

References


Bourdieu, P. (1990), The Logic of Practice (Trans by R. Nice), Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA.


Tinto, V. (1987), Leaving College: Rethinking the Causes and Cures of Student Attrition, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL.


Further reading


(The Appendix follows overleaf.)
Appendix

Jeffrey Hoyle has his EdD in Higher Education with concentrations in Assessment and Global Studies. Dr Hoyle is a Lecturer II of Marketing and Professional Sales in the Department of Marketing of the College of Business Administration at the Central Michigan University. Dr Hoyle, in addition to 15 years of teaching experience, also has his MBA combined with over 20 years of Marketing and B2B sales experience in the manufacturing, foodservice, healthcare, and forest products industries. Jeffrey currently teaches Organizational Selling, Dimensions of Professional Selling, and Marketing and Society in addition to being the Director of Marketing Internships and Marketing Department Academic Advisor. Jeffrey’s experience in Marketing and

Notes: Key to the 8 stakeholder groups:
(1) Dormant stakeholders (Power, no legitimacy and no urgency); (2) Discretionary stakeholders (Legitimacy, but no power and no urgency); (3) Demanding stakeholders (Urgency, but no legitimacy and no power); (4) Dominant stakeholders (Power and legitimacy, but no urgency); (5) Dangerous stakeholders (Power and urgency, but no legitimacy); (6) Dependent stakeholders (Legitimacy and urgency, but no power); (7) Definite stakeholders (Power, legitimacy and urgency); (8) Nonstakeholders (No power, no legitimacy and no urgency)

Source: Adapted Figure 23 from The Change Management Toolbook (n.d.), p. 155
B2B sales includes working with Boeing, General Motors, Healthtrax, Morbark Inc., General Electric, PepsiCo, Alcoa, and TVA. Jeffrey Hoyle is the corresponding author and can be contacted at: hoyle1ja@cmich.edu

Mark Edward Deschaine, PhD, is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Educational Leadership in the College of Education and Human Services at the Central Michigan University. He has extensive local, state and national experience in training and development of faculty in the integration of technology into their curriculum, special education issues and effective instructional practices. He holds Michigan certification and endorsements as a teacher, a special educator and building as well as central office administrator. Mark Edward Deschaine’s research agenda focusses on leadership issues, effective education, administration of special education, educational technology, professional development, and special needs transportation.