

Princeton Internships in Civic Service (PICS)



Guide for Mentors

MENTORING is one of the most important aspects of the **PICS** program. Chosen from Princeton alumni and alumni spouses, a mentor acts as a friendly contact point and source of information for the Princeton student intern, and as liaison, if needed, to the sponsor organization. The mentor's presence and availability enhances the summer's experience for the intern.

MENTOR RESPONSIBILITIES:

- To initiate contact with the intern.
- To be friendly and available to be contacted by the intern during the internship period.
- To act as liaison, if necessary, to the sponsor organization of the internship.
- To be the field representative of **PICS** during the internship.

MENTORS ARE NOT REQUIRED TO:

- Be an expert in the field of the internship.
- Become involved in the intern's job.

MENTORS DO NOT:

- Act as a parent or supervisor to the intern.
- Press the intern for more contact than is comfortable for the intern.

Mentoring a PICS intern may be the most rewarding part of your summer!

The Community Service Funds of the Princeton University Classes of 1969 and 1977 and members of the Class of 1970 support the PICS program

The Princeton University Class of 1969 Community Service Fund administers the PICS program

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IF A PROBLEM DEVELOPS:

ASSIST YOUR INTERN TO ACHIEVE A SOLUTION

- Contact the **PICS** office immediately if a **serious** problem arises.
 - **PICS** does not tolerate harassment, non-payment of stipends, or dangerous working conditions and needs to know when a problem arises, even if you are able to correct it.
- Also contact **PICS** if a serious but not job-related problem occurs, for example: loss of housing or serious illness.
- Be sure your intern knows that you are available and ready to assist them.
 - Support the intern's own efforts to solve the problem.
 - Be diplomatic if you need to contact the intern's supervisor or sponsor organization.
 - The screening process for sponsor organizations is designed to prevent serious job-related problems, but in the rare instance that one occurs, you are the field advocate for your intern.
- Report promptly to **PICS** any situation that negatively impacts the suitability of the internship.

IN THE SPRING, AFTER STUDENTS ACCEPT INTERNSHIPS:

PICS WILL SEND OUT CONTACT INFORMATION

- The mentor will be given contact information for the intern and his/her host organization.
- The intern and the host organization will be sent the mentor's contact information.

AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER YOU RECEIVE NOTIFICATION:

CONTACT YOUR INTERN

- Send an e-mail or telephone to introduce yourself. Most students use e-mail as their main contact point.
 - Give the intern your name and Princeton affiliation. Confirm your contact information: home and business phone numbers and addresses, mobile phone number, etc.
 - Ask if your intern has any questions. Be prepared with general information about the locality if he/she is from out-of-town.
 - If there is an active Princeton Club in your area, let your intern know how to access its summer programs.
- Confirm the dates of the internship. Find out when your intern will arrive.
 - If your summer schedule includes time away, let your intern know the dates you will be gone.

If you wish, you may make personal contact with the intern's supervisor at the sponsor organization. This is optional.

- Introduce yourself to the intern's supervisor as the **PICS** mentor.
- Explain your role as a friendly presence for the intern during the summer.
- Find out a little about the organization and the coming internship.
- Confirm contact information together, both yours and the organization's.

JUST BEFORE THE INTERNSHIP BEGINS: CONTACT YOUR INTERN AGAIN

- Plan to meet casually with your intern as soon as possible after the beginning of the internship.
 - This creates a comfort zone at the beginning of your Mentor-Intern relationship.
 - If you cannot get together the first week, it is still very important to be in touch with your intern. Make a date to meet as soon as you both can.
- Find out any changes in your intern's summer schedule or contact information, and let him/her know of changes in yours.

DURING THE INTERNSHIP: MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH YOUR INTERN

- Give an occasional call or e-mail and find out how the summer is going.
 - Some interns are happily independent. Others appreciate more frequent contact.
 - Help your intern feel comfortable discussing his or her work environment experiences.
- All interns appreciate the offer of lunch or dinner or a social event.

AT THE END OF THE SUMMER INTERNSHIP: MAKE LAST CONTACT WITH YOUR INTERN

- Have a wrap-up conversation about the summer and the internship as you say farewell.
 - Remind your intern to send his/her report about the internship experience to **PICS** as soon as possible. **PICS** greatly values and **keeps confidential** these reports.
 - An offer of a last get-together is a lovely gesture, though not required. Be aware that your intern may be very busy closing out his/her job and not have time to socialize.
- Drop a line or an email to **PICS** of your own evaluation of the summer. Again, **PICS** greatly appreciates and **keeps confidential** this information. Your comments, insights, and recommendations are invaluable in maintaining the quality of the **PICS** program.