Thank you for your interest in hosting a UCI student in the Career Center’s Job Shadow Program, for Spring Break 2016. While you have a great deal of latitude in tailoring the job shadow day to fit your needs and workload, the following suggestions might help to make the experience go more smoothly.

1. **Discuss the student’s job shadow day schedule.** Students have been asked to call you to discuss the exact date(s), structure, and other details of the visit. Be sure to confirm the exact hours you expect them to be with you. The student has been informed of the job shadow duration, which you originally indicated. However, if you feel that a longer visit would be more beneficial to you and the student, please suggest a more extended externship period. A job shadow of any duration that is convenient for you and the student is fine.

2. **Learn about the student; brainstorm activities.** Discuss the student’s interests in advance and inform the student about possible activities, so that both of you can agree on an agenda. Please remember that the only information the student will have about the job shadow is the brief written description printed on your host form.

3. **Tell the student about your organization.** If you think it would be helpful, send the student material about your organization in advance. You might also suggest other readings if you think it is appropriate.

4. **Advise the student about office dress code.** If your office environment requires a dress code, it is appropriate and advisable to mention that when the student calls.

5. **Clarify the job shadow’s goals.** Please meet with the student when s/he arrives to clarify the goals for the job shadow day and to provide a written or verbal agenda for the time period. If the student will be expected to do a project, please explain it clearly and describe how it fits into your work. If the student will be shadowing you or meeting with others, it will be helpful for the student to know what your expectations are.

### How to Structure a Job Shadow

**Key Elements in Planning Successful Job Shadows**
- Seek student input concerning career objectives, interests, and goals for the visit
- Prepare a written schedule to provide structure and clarify time commitments
- Arrange informational interviews with colleagues for the student to learn about other areas of the organization and to obtain a variety of career perspectives
- Assign a short-term project for visits lasting longer than two days
- Arrange a tour of the organization

Please keep in mind that most students participate in the Job Shadow Program to learn more about a specific career and the options available within a career field. They want to know what your workday and work environment is like. Many students are also seeking advice on strategies for obtaining a job in the field or information about the background and experience needed to enter the field.
Four Possible Approaches to Structuring a Job Shadow:

Shadowing

In some professions, e.g. medicine or journalism, having the student observe a typical day at work provides a great deal of information and insight. Answering questions, providing commentary throughout the day, and meeting with the student to discuss your field at the beginning and/or end of the day may be sufficient.

Observing Activities and Meeting with Colleagues

In many fields, particularly those in which the job shadow host deals with confidential information or spends most of the day doing research or writing, the sponsor may wish to develop an agenda of activities for the student. It is helpful to find out the student’s interests in advance and then arrange an appropriate schedule. The schedule might include: 1) meeting with the host to gain an overview of the organization and the career field 2) a tour of the facility 3) individual appointments with colleagues at different levels and/or performing different functions in the organization 4) observing activities, such as a meeting, a public hearing, a sales call, or court proceedings.

Involving Colleagues in Hosting

If hosting the student is delegated to other staff, it is helpful for the initial host to meet with the student at some point – at lunch, for example. It is also helpful to ensure in advance that a schedule of appointments and activities have been planned for the student.

Hands-On Experience

Even a small amount of career-related, hands-on experience, when combined with the observation and activities described above, can be valuable to a student. A small project, in which the student gathers or analyzes information, can help the student learn something about the organization or field.

For additional information contact:

Denise Khaw, Employer Outreach Specialist
PH 949.824.4643 Email: dkhaw@uci.edu

Connie Wong, Job Shadow Program Coordinator
PH 949.824.6881 Email: jsp@uci.edu