Colby College Career Center Job Shadowing Program 2014-2015

The Program
Job shadowing provides an important opportunity for career exploration and identification that allows Colby students to learn first-hand what it is like to work as a professional in a particular field. This is an opportunity to spend one to five days shadowing one of hundreds of alumni and parents in a wide variety of professions and industries around the country and the world. Job shadowing contributes significantly to identifying career paths and preparing Colby students for successful post-graduation careers. Most job shadow experiences will take place over break periods in January, March, and during the summer, but some one or two day shadows may be scheduled at any time during the year that is mutually convenient.

Student Expectations
Ideally, a student will complete three to five job shadows by the end of their sophomore year. Students are expected to arrive on-time, dress appropriately, have done in-depth research into the organization, come with substantive questions, and be prepared to spend the day learning. Students are not expected to have relevant job experience and come primarily from the freshman and sophomore classes. Students are responsible for their own transportation, accommodations (if necessary and unless otherwise offered by the employer), and food expenses.

Employer Expectations
Job shadowing opportunities allow participating students, to be better prepared for future internships and jobs. Employers will be providing a unique experience for a student who may be unsure of where their major or interests may take them. Depending on the employer, examples of activities during the shadow may be sitting in on meetings, conducting informational interviews with staff, taking a tour, learning about the organizational culture and resources, or taking on specific tasks (such as short research or writing projects). Employers should remember that students are not there to conduct administrative work; they are there to learn as much as they can about a particular career.

An employer should be expected to have their shadow present for the entire work day and if that is not possible, it is hoped that one or more other staff may be able to spend time with the shadow to provide additional perspective on their work experience. The employer may require the student to sign any necessary confidentiality, privacy, or liability statements as a condition of being within the employer’s operations. There may also be circumstances where the student must be excluded from some business activities for part of a day. It is hoped that any such periods can involve interaction with others that may also facilitate learning about the field.

Process and Timeline
Interested students fill out a survey and are matched with several employers by the Career Center staff. The student is responsible for reaching out to one of those employers to find a mutually convenient time for the shadow. Both students and employers will complete a very brief evaluation after the shadow has concluded.

Students are required to contact the employer at least two weeks before their planned job shadow. In order to plan for their schedules and any travel, it is hoped that employers can confirm a job shadow date at least one week in advance.

The Career Center understands that with a wide variety of employers and industry variations that there may be additional questions. Please do not hesitate to contact the Colby Career Center with any questions or concerns about participation in the program.

For more information please visit http://www.colby.edu/careercenter/job-shadowing/ or contact Sarah Whitfield '09 in the Career Center at (207) 859-4148 or smwhitfi@colby.edu.