

Choose your internship with care

The heated debate of the moment revolves around a subject that is very relevant to any college student. This subject is the internship.

Are college students really getting valuable work experience while interning or are they simply being used as cheap labor, doing the same work as the paid staff?

There is a fine line between a well-meaning internship and a company that is using the concept of the internship as a ruse for what is actually cheap labor. An internship stops being an internship when the intern has the same amount of responsibility and workload as the paid staff.

Once an intern has the same responsibilities as other paid workers, companies are putting a toe over this thin line. This question of exploitation of interns was debated heavily in a recent New York Times article. Many interns were outraged at what they call "exploitation" by companies that offer unpaid internships.

The conflict started after interns complained of doing hours of work, which benefits the company immensely, without earning any money themselves.

"These unpaid interns receive no benefits," writes Raphael Pope-Sussman, a news assistant at Law360 for The New York Times. "No legal protection against harassment or discrimination, and no job security."

An internship, according to an online dictionary, is "any official or formal program to provide practical experience for beginners in an occupation or profession." This definition does not include the aspect most focused upon: money.

"The internship is meant to be viewed as a chance to gain experience, network, get your foot in the door and apply classroom theories to real, practical, experiential learning," said Megan Corkery, coordinator of internships and career counselor. "Internships allow for people to do career exploration and see if their chosen field is really for them."

Internships can be both paid and unpaid. Both can be extremely helpful for college students in terms of work experience. They are also a great addition to any résumé and a way to show companies your past experience in the work place.

However, when taking into consideration that many college students are heavily in debt and in need of a paying job, these types of no-pay internships seem more and more frivolous. Yes, the work experience is very valuable, but money is a necessity and not to be gained with certain internships.

College students are looking for ways to not only get jobs, but to also gain experience and knowledge. It would be helpful to have more paid internships where college students can get both.

The harsh reality is that more and more college students are graduating in serious debt, but companies are not willing to hire an inexperienced newbie. They would rather hire a person who already has a few things on their résumé.

But getting an internship doesn't necessarily mean not getting paid. There are plenty of companies that offer compensation for their interns. If money is that much of a factor, this might be the better solution. There are plenty of opportunities out there to not only gain great experience in the work field, but to also earn some money doing it.

The bottom line is that college students do not have to compromise their time and money to an internship where they feel they are being treated unfairly. Money and experience can be found at the same time, through a paid internship.



By Kim Klemeier
STAFF WRITER



By Kite Gibson
STAFF WRITER

Fast food is gross.

Trust me. I've worked for McHeartDisease — twice — so I know that there are no true benefits to frozen patties and bagged lettuce from halfway across the world. Slow food and everything that it stands for — good, clean and fair foodstuffs — is an excellent concept and one that I fully endorse.

But this "new" emergence of the "movement" on campus via the Slow Foods club isn't new at all. Guilford has been practicing the principles behind the Slow Foods movement for quite some time and we brag about it to anyone who will listen. We just haven't had a hip label for this concept until now.

Local, seasonal vegetables are always close by at the Guilford farm. We have fields and a greenhouse dedicated to growing veggies locally, and Meriwether Godsey purchases these vegetables to help feed our student population. We even have a community garden with open plots where community members can grow their own organic munchies.

If you look around the caf on any given day, you'll see "local" labels on

a handful of dishes. The kind folks at Meriwether Godsey take care to buy local meats, fruits, grains and vegetables for our meals when- and wherever they can.

The Greenleaf's wares are almost entirely local and fair trade, from the coffee supplier in Durham to the baked goods from Spring Garden Bakery. The coffee shop also houses the Guilford Veggie Co-op, where students can purchase seasonal veggies grown in the Greensboro area.

We tell all of these things to our prospective students on tours and in information pamphlets, and we remind them in their First Year Experience classes. We're proud of our accomplishments and we have every right to be. Our actions show that we, as an institution and as individuals, are committed to being responsible for the environmental and economic impacts we have on this earth and its people.

So why do we need a shiny new label for something that we already do?

I can understand the desire to further promote the Slow Foods ideals, but we already have all of these preexisting initiatives with strikingly similar goals to the Slow Foods Movement. I don't understand creating a club to promote a concept that the college is already so thoroughly involved in.

Instead of creating this redundant entity, individuals interested in local, organic and fair foods can use their manpower to support one of the existing green initiatives.

Help out at the farm, promote the community garden or find new ways that the Greenleaf can become more environmentally friendly.

Then there's the money issue.

Budget cuts are coming, and student organizations will undoubtedly feel the squeeze, too. Now isn't the time to create redundant organizations because, come next year, there might not be enough funds to go around. If we preemptively consolidate where appropriate, hopefully we won't find ourselves spread too thin.

Slow Foods has taken the first step toward consolidation; the club was formed through a merger of the Food Justice Network and Forevergreen. I think that further amalgamation is possible.

If working for an existing cause does not provide enough autonomy for the members of Slow Foods, then the concept would be better served as a sub-committee under an existing club. I hear the members of Cooking Club are friendly, and I'm sure they wouldn't mind some extra company.

Plus, more members under one organization equals more student participation, a bigger voice on campus and a better chance at getting a sustainable budget from Senate, which will certainly come in handy for the future.

In short, bringing Slow Foods to Guilford is like bringing a bag of ice to the tundra — entirely superfluous. We've already got it, and it's integrated into our way of life. The only thing that's different is the brand name.

This week's debate: is Slow Foods good for Guilford?



By Laurie Eiseroad
GUEST WRITER

There are two things we agree on: one, Guilford is a fast-paced environment full of readings and churned-out papers; and two, food is a major stressor for Guilford students. The everything that centers around here. Clubs entice new members with promises of snacks, and ever-interesting potential guests by Meriwether Godsey catered breaks always promise healthy (some not-so-healthy) snacks. Parties are ubiquitous.

It may seem outrageous that Guilford students fall for the same promises every time, but it actually makes perfect sense. Food is a common denominator among us all. We need it for survival and, because we are fortunate enough to have an ample

amount at our fingertips, food has become the centerpiece of our social gatherings. However, not everyone is as fortunate as we. In fact, our fast-paced lifestyles exacerbate this food gap.

and enjoyable for everyone. Club meetings are opportunities for anyone in the Guilford community to take an hour out of their busy lives and slow down while celebrating ethically produced and delicious food. These

meetings serve as a chance to plan events meant to educate the community in creative ways. So far, we've included a community bike ride, Local Meat Week in the community, and another opportunity to share food together with dinner at College farm.

From its predecessors, Guilford is connected to a tradition of creating systematic student organizations. This chapter of Slow Food supports "good, clean, local" and "which links the food with a commitment to the community and the environment."

I see at least half of the reasons, on which Guilford is represented. So, within

this student organization, along with staff from Meriwether Godsey, brings awareness of the injustice caused by the current food system directly to Guilford. The club empowers students to take part in making food healthy

our fast-paced, food-loving college lives, why not slow down together and take a minute or an hour to at least learn about where our food comes from and what we can do to help? As consumers, we can create change.