



Vanderbilt-In-Hollywood
Summer Internship Program Handbook
2011



"I'm so proud of Vandy-in-Hollywood's incredible success, and I'm honored that this program has become such a model for other universities. The way people consume media and entertainment is changing before our eyes, influencing our lives in dramatic ways — from Mad Men and Avatar to cineplexes and cell phones. As such, a top-tier liberal arts university is obligated to convey the most current, relevant knowledge about today's media to both students aiming for a career in media, arts, or entertainment — whether they hope to be the next Steven Spielberg, Jack Warner, or Ari Gold — and to those exploring other fields. Vandy-in-Hollywood does just that... and it extends the same spirit of support and community that students feel during the regular school year. I'm thrilled that Vandy-in-Hollywood has become such a very special part of our university."

~ Chancellor Nicholas S. Zeppos



Dear Vandy-in-Hollywood Summer Internship Program Applicants and Interns,

This handbook is designed to help you and your parents evaluate and prepare for a terrific summer working in the real-world trenches of Hollywood. In here, you'll find tips, advice, and resources to help with internships, housing, local happenings, academic credit issues, and beyond. This handbook is a **MUST READ** for anyone considering or accepting a ViH internship.

Because Los Angeles is the entertainment capital of the world, most ViH internships take place in L.A., and so this handbook is primarily geared towards housing and happenings there. Every year, a handful of VU students accept ViH internships in New York or elsewhere, and most of the information in here will also be relevant to those with internships outside of L.A.

Note that much of the information in this handbook has been compiled with the help of former ViH interns, most of whom have been undergrads. Only in the past couple of years did ViH's Summer Internship Program open its doors to Owen MBA students. So if you are an Owen MBA student, please see the discussion about MBA internships towards the end of the handbook.

The ViH Summer Internship Program is constantly growing and evolving, and this packet is far from comprehensive, so **PLEASE** keep in touch with your fellow ViH students, the ViH folks on the ground in Los Angeles, your Vandy film professors, and the Career Center – all of them also have information on what's going on with ViH.

And don't forget the ViH website...

Website: www.vandyinhollywood.com

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#!/group.php?gid=4842900901>

In the mean time, we hope to see you soon!

Sincerely,



Chad Gervich



Rich Hull

...and all your friends at Vandy-in-Hollywood

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GENERAL INTERNSHIP ADVICE

HOW TO BE A GOOD INTERN

(IN SEVENTEEN EASY STEPS)

- | | | | | | |
|--------------|--|---------------|--|---------------|--|
| NO. 1 | Take your internship very seriously. (Seriously.) | NO. 7 | Understand that you don't know it all (even though you feel like you do). | NO. 13 | Look out for opportunities to demonstrate what you do know and how you can contribute (but don't push it—nobody likes a show off). |
| NO. 2 | Get in on time (without complaining about how early it is or how late you were up the night before). | NO. 8 | Turn off your cellphone (even if your ring is really cute). | NO. 14 | There are (almost) no stupid questions. (Ignorance is not bliss, just ignorant and it can be a major waste of time.) |
| NO. 3 | Listen very carefully and always take notes (just when people are giving you assignments, not during social situations). | NO. 9 | Don't smoke cigars. (Nasty habit.) | NO. 15 | Don't just follow directions. Think about what you are doing while you are doing it (so when the designer says, "but that's illegible" you won't have to say, "I know!"). |
| NO. 4 | Do more than is expected on every single assignment (unless more costs more). | NO. 10 | Do not unnecessarily distract others who are busy working (even though <i>Project Runway</i> was particularly great last night). | NO. 16 | Be eager to learn and people will be more likely to teach you. |
| NO. 5 | There is (almost) always something you can do (so let your bosses know when you are available; don't just wait until someone notices you are free). | NO. 11 | Bring snacks (sometimes sweet, sometimes salty). | NO. 17 | Understand that the success of the internship is (almost) entirely up to you. |
| NO. 6 | Show up. People are relying on you. (A school assignment is NOT a reason to "call in sick.") | NO. 12 | Be proactive. If there is nothing official for you to do, figure something out on your own. (Like get to know the book collection so when someone is looking for something you can be helpful. Or go through the portfolio so you can really study the company's work.) | | |

Did we leave something important out? Please e-mail us at all@number17.com and we will include it in our next installment of HOW TO BE A GOOD INTERN.

FORTUNE: YOU WILL BE A GREAT INTERN.

More Notes About Internships

The following tips have been compiled from bits of advice from previous Vandy-in-Hollywood interns, employers, and teachers... including Rich Hull, Will Akers, Ed Resetar, Bridget Tyler, and Chad Gervich.

- The goal of this internship isn't for you to be able to show your screenplay to Hollywood agents, producers, or executives. It's to meet people and FORM RELATIONSHIPS, to form a network of people who know you, like you, and will hire you once you graduate.
- Expect a drive. This is Los Angeles. You will have to drive everywhere... and most likely, this could be a long drive (sometimes an hour or more). If you can't handle this... YOU ARE NOT READY TO LIVE AND WORK IN L.A. (Last year, an intern accepted a position at a top-notch production company in Beverly Hills... but when she realized it was a 45 minute drive from her house, she quit after a week. This was a HUGE mistake. Not only did she burn a bridge with some of Hollywood's top producers, she sacrificed her chance to get in good with a company that may have hired her or served as a reference after she graduated.)
- Treat this as a job. You may not be getting paid, but you are forming relationships that may very well last a lifetime and lead to many paying jobs. In other words... if you accept an internship, take it and treat it as if you're making \$100,000 a year.
- Understand the hierarchy of where you work. Gauge who you can talk to and who is off-limits. The people above you are there to help and teach you, sure—but be respectful of their time, energy, and boundaries. (Last year, there was an intern hired at a major talent agency who kept walking in, uninvited, to senior-level agents' offices and introducing himself. He was fired after two weeks.)
- Always look for something to do. Even if you haven't been assigned a task... find one. It doesn't need to be something monumental or life-changing. Organize a chaotic closet. Clean the kitchen. Make a list of office supplies your boss needs. Put together a binder of nearby lunch restaurants. ALWAYS be doing something to make yourself useful and valuable.
- If you have questions for your boss or a higher-up... ask the assistant first. Assistants are the gatekeepers to their boss (and you'll be one someday), so not only are they there to protect their boss's time, but they often know the goings-on of their boss's office better than the boss himself! By posing questions and thoughts to the assistant first, you respect your boss's time, prove you understand the hierarchy of the office, and form an invaluable relationship with the assistant.
- Understand that an assistant job is a highly sought after entry-level position in Hollywood. You will find assistants with law degrees, MBA's and all sorts of other forms of higher

education. In Hollywood, there's not a school that can teach you about being on the front lines. Instead, you generally start as an assistant, learn the ropes, and work your way up. Likewise, internships are the gateway to being an assistant. Most internships in Hollywood are hard to get and require multiple interviews. Understand the great opportunity you have here.

- Keep a DETAILED to-do list of every task you're assigned. Unless you have the ability to remember and complete 49 things at once, always have your notepad in hand. It also makes you look like you're taking your position seriously.
- Follow through on all assignments. If your boss gives you something to do, don't just DO it... let him or her know when it's done and present him with a finished product. (Last year, there was an intern who kept getting assigned reports to type up. He did it... but never printed them or told his boss when they were done. As a result, his boss never thought he finished assignments.)
- Take ownership of projects. In other words, understand that the final result or product of a task reflects 100% on you. If the task is completed satisfactorily—and your boss knows it—you will shine. If it's only half-done, or 95% done—and your boss knows this—you will look incompetent and foolish.
- Assume everyone is deaf, blind, and stupid. In other words, if you have questions about an assignment... or delegate something to someone else... be sure you clarify EVERYTHING you or they need to know. If you don't—trust me—mistakes will reflect ONLY on you. You can't delegate something to someone else, then not take responsibility when it doesn't come out right. Likewise, if you fail to get all the information on an assignment up front... and something goes wrong... the fault does NOT lie with the person who failed to give you all the information. It lies with YOU, the person who failed to ask.
- Pay attention to systems, processes, and culture of the workplace around you. Hollywood has an office culture unlike other industries... and each office has its own mini-culture. Learn how things are done, both culturally and systematically, in your office and follow suit. Do not try to reinvent the wheel. Do not try improve processes. Push in the direction you're asked to push.
- Timing is everything in Hollywood. Projects fall apart all the time because one piece of an intricate puzzle didn't happen on-time. Understand this and know that when you're asked to do something, the default timeline is that it's urgent.
- If you're asked to mail something, always ask if it should be messengered, FedEx'd, regular mailed, etc. See note above about urgency and understand that it's ok to ask for clarification.
- Before coming to LA, network with the other interns from Vandy and trade contact info. It's a great idea to room together and split costs. See notes below for some housing options. A lot of interns cram as many people as possible into one apartment to cut down on costs.

- Make sure the ViH powers-that-be have your email address. They arrange several ViH gatherings during the summer, including a “kick-off” meeting early in the summer. (You can find their contact info on the ViH website and/or Facebook pages...

Website: www.vandyinhollywood.com

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#!/group.php?gid=4842900901>

10 COMMANDMENTS OF THE ViH PROGRAM

The following commandments are adapted from Boston University's 10 Commandments for their aspiring screenwriters program. Thanks, BU! (So even though they are geared toward writers, they apply to everyone...)

1) WRITERS WRITE!

- a. *Being a writer does not mean waiting for the right time to write. In a program as demanding as the Vandy-in-Hollywood, in addition to your internships, you must MAKE time to write.*
- b. *Even if it's just a page a day. Twenty minutes a day at lunch. An hour before work. You MUST make time to write.*

2) NEVER WAIT!

- a. *Your time in Los Angeles is limited. A mere three months. Use that time wisely! There should never be a moment in your internships where you are "waiting" for something to do. If you have nothing to do, ASK SOMEONE!*
- b. *The same applies with writing. It is stated in Commandment 1 but bears repeating: NEVER WAIT FOR TIME TO WRITE.*

3) INTERNSHIPS ARE JOBS!

- a. *Even though you're not being paid, it is crucial to approach your internship as a JOB. Remember, an internship is a THREE MONTH JOB INTERVIEW. Treating it as "just an internship" is a huge mistake. You must make yourself useful. Find things to do. Meet people. Get to know your bosses.*
- b. *Interns usually have a very loosely defined role in their companies. It's on you to make your role defined. Do not be afraid to broaden the scope of your duties! If you see something you can help with, HELP! Make yourself indispensable!*

4) PRIORITIZE YOUR TIME!

- a. *In the next three months you will have many exciting and important opportunities, but it will be up to you to judge what is the priority. You will have to make decisions to attend certain events at the expense of others. The only way to do this successfully is to understand what you want to get out of the program.*
- b. *The Vandy-in-Hollywood sponsored events are perhaps the most important and you should make sure to attend EVERY SINGLE ONE. They are incredible networking opportunities with some of Hollywood's biggest power brokers. Not to mention, there are free drinks! Any internship related opportunities (parties at executive houses, set visits, cool job related opportunities) should be prioritized above everything else but ViH sponsored events ... even CLASS.*

5) YOUR FRIENDS WILL FIND YOU JOBS!

- a. *Above all else, these three months are a great opportunity to build your network. Both socially and work related. This means taking the time to get to know people at your internships – don't be a fly on the wall! Mingle! Interact.*
- b. *At the end of the day, the best job leads will come from your friends in the ViH network or the ones you make while interning. These three months are invaluable. Make the best use of them!*

6) BE PROFESSIONAL!

- a. *There is a deceiving casualness to the Industry. What, with everyone wearing t-shirts and jeans and going by their first names you might think it's a casual town. It's not. At the end of the day this is a HUGE business. Don't mistake being casual with a casual work ethic!*
- b. *Remember Commandment 3: Internships are JOBS. Treat them as such.*

7) NEVER ASK TO BE READ!

- a. *You are going to find yourself working with some of the best people in town, people who may have the power to buy your script, buy your TV spec, recommend you to an agent. This will tempt you to ask for a read. Be VERY careful with this request. You only get ONE chance, they will only read something once, if it isn't up to par then you will lose that opportunity. The worst thing you can do is shove your script down their throats. This is not professional.*
- b. *The better approach is to NEVER ask to be read. Rather, make them ask YOU to give them your script! How? Just remind people you work with (in a non-annoying way) that you're a writer. Keep it fresh in their minds. There will come a time when they will ASK you if you have anything. That is when you give them material. Or, better yet, WAIT and tell them you want to polish it first, then send ONLY when it's the very best it can be. Don't become the annoying guy who is always asking to be read! It's death!*

8) BROADEN YOUR PORTFOLIO!

- a. *Your TV writing portfolio should include: 2 if not 3 feature scripts, 2 spec TV scripts, (one half hour and one hour) and 2 original pilots (one half hour, one hour). If you consider yourself to only be a feature writer, break out of the mold! Some of the best writing is going on in TV these days and the easiest way to get an agent or manager is to show the ability to work in multiple formats. Plus, people are far more willing to read a 60 page pilot than a 110 page spec!*
- b. *Having over 7 scripts requires a TON of time. Which brings us back to Commandment 1: WRITERS WRITE! Make sure you are always writing!*

9) READ, READ, READ!

- a. *To succeed in this town as a writer, you need to know the competition. Not only to know what ideas are already out there, but to know exactly how your stuff stacks up to the pros. At nearly every internship, you will have access to libraries of*

scripts. TAKE ADVANTAGE! You can learn more by reading 2 scripts a day, every day, than you can in 4 years of classes. You will learn structure, dialogue, pitfalls to avoid. Most importantly, you'll be IN THE LOOP on what's hot around town. What ideas sell. What writers are up and coming and which are fading. This is CRUCIAL to your success as a writer.

- b.** *You have to become your own harshest critic. The only way to know if your script is good enough to sell, good enough to compete in the marketplace is to line it up side by side with other pro scripts and compare. You will improve your own writing ten fold.*

10) HAVE FUN!

- a.** *You may never have an opportunity like this again, so enjoy it! You will be working long hours with high stress, but at the end of the day, the job you're doing is fun. You're making movies! Television shows! You get to be a fly on the wall and maybe even contribute in some small way!*
- b.** *Make time to enjoy the city. Los Angeles is easy to hate, but if you take the time to get to know it, you will find all sorts of fun and exciting things to do. Figure out if it's a place you could see yourself living and working. And what better way to determine that than to go have fun exploring?!*

ADVICE FROM FORMER ViH INTERNS...

Vandy-in-Hollywood internships are unlike any other internship you're likely to find. Not only does ViH often arrange internships unavailable to other students, but you'll find yourself working on the front lines of the entertainment industry.

These are very, very coveted roles.

Hear from some of our former interns exactly how unique and valuable these internships are... and how to make the most of them to help launch your career.

The Do's and Don'ts of Being a Hollywood Intern

By: Stacy Greenberg (VU '10)

Disclaimer: the following statements are based on my personal experience after two Vandy-in-Hollywood summer internships in Los Angeles. Every company is different, as is every boss, as is every intern, so perhaps not everything I say here will work for everyone.

Pre-Internship

Vandy-in-Hollywood will help you with the hardest part: getting the interview. You will then have to interview with the company's recruiter to secure the position. These internships are extremely competitive so *do research*. Know what shows, movies, your company makes/has made. But also, *figure out a response to the question: why do you want to work here that doesn't include "I like insert name of show or movie."*

Know what you want to do but be open. We're too young to know *exactly* what we want to do even if we think we know. After my interview, the company intern coordinator matched me with my supervisor based on personality type, not interest in the field. Relationships are more important than anything else. I was skeptical at first to take a position in unscripted TV because of my interest in scripted. In fact, I almost turned down the position in hopes of finding a scripted internship elsewhere. Luckily, the intern coordinator (a Vanderbilt alum) assured me that this person would be the best mentor regardless of my interests. She was right. Not only did my boss show me the ropes of being a good assistant, something I will absolutely need to do after graduation, but outside of work, she brought me to "industry parties," meetings with lawyers, clients, and other friends in the business. It turned out, as an intern at this specific company, my duties would not have been much different if I had been a scripted intern vs. non-scripted.

Getting Started

A suggestion: *start as early as possible*. They'll want free help as soon as you can give it to them. Go out as soon as you can. That way, an employee will train you instead of another intern. It's kind of like in the movie "Multiplicity." When Michael Keaton clones himself, it's fine. When the clone clones himself, the newer clone is mentally disabled. This is not to say that if you aren't the first intern there you will be mentally disabled, it's just to say that Vanderbilt gets out earlier than most schools. Take advantage of that and start as early as you can.

When you finally get there, you'll be introduced to everyone. You will soon forget what everyone does, but *ask the intern coordinator for a list of everyone and their title*. It's important to know who is who, and more importantly who is their assistant.

During Your Internship

Be friends with the ASSISTANTS. They are the key to the boss's door. They will also be the next generation of executives, and the ones helping you get jobs in the future. If you help them, they will help you. The bosses won't always have time to answer your questions but the assistants can help. You will also meet really interesting people by doing this. Most

assistants are assistants because they aspire to be producers, directors, writers, actors, etc. They are not there to be secretaries but rather to learn from the best.

When there is downtime (usually at the end of the day when the bosses go home) *ask one of the assistants (that you have befriended) to show you how to roll calls and how call sheets work.* This is a transferable skill. The phones are the key to Hollywood success and they are complicated. There are multiple lines and multiple phones/headsets. It can be stressful but it's something one must be able to do. *WRITE EVERYTHING DOWN.* A fellow intern did NOT write down the steps and instead of pushing "conference, line, conference," he pushed "line, conference, line." The result of this was dropping the call on the CEO of a major production company.

Now that you have *taken the initiative to learn the phones,* you will be the first person the assistant goes to when s/he needs someone to cover. The assistant will tell his/her boss, "I'm going out to get you something, insert your name is going to cover." Now the boss knows your name and if you wrote down "conference, line, conference" and don't drop a call with the important CEO, the boss will also know you are not a complete idiot.

Do mundane tasks with a smile. The beginning of my summer consisted of doing a lot of expense reports, entering contacts, sending flowers, etc. When you prove you can do those things, they will trust you with more responsibility. Soon, I was involved in creative projects such as, coming up with titles for shows, designing pitch power points, challenges for contestants, "here's a sponsor we want to work with, come up with formats," and going to screenings and shoots.

Always stay busy. Never get to the point where you are sitting around waiting for someone to tell you to do something. Either ask for more work, or find it yourself. Here is an example of what I mean: I found a huge organizational project that although not time-sensitive, would help my boss in the long run. I saw that her DVDs were completely unorganized and there would be no way for her to find one in a timely manner if she needed to send it out to a network. So, when I was in between tasks, I would organize them for her and created an excel spreadsheet so when I'm gone, and she needs a DVD she can go to the spreadsheet and find which binder the DVD is in. When I finished that, I made copies of those DVDs so if she had to send it out, she did not need to waste time making a copy at that moment. She can now send out the copy I made and still have her original copy. Then at her leisure (or that of the next intern), another copy can be made. Anything you can do to make your boss' life easier when you are gone will make him/her remember you once when you're back at school.

Don't be "that kid." "That kid" is the intern who does only the bare minimum. S/he comes at 10:00 and leaves at 6:00 when everyone else stays. S/he makes it look like s/he's doing work but is really on facebook or responding to personal emails. Even though sometimes the boss will not know "that kid" is doing this, the other interns do. The other interns may be network executives in 10 years and they will remember "that kid" as the one who made it look like he was doing work, but was really surfing the web. "That kid" is annoying to other interns because while s/he is doing less work, the others have to do more to pick up the slack. It's important to be able to work well with other interns because when there is no communication, things might get done twice or wrong. Although there is an aspect of competition, it is more important to view the others as your team, not your enemy.

Know who is important to your boss. I quickly learned that if certain people call, interrupt ANYTHING. This will be different for every boss but ask the assistants who is most important. Also, know who is important in the business. This can be done by reading the Trades: *Variety* and *Hollywood Reporter*, or Nikki Finke's blog *Deadline Hollywood*.

With great power comes great responsibility. When you do become friends with the assistants or junior level executives, still be cautious. Since it's a small business, and everyone knows everyone, *stay away from gossip*. Even if your boss is "venting" about someone, just nod and smile. They can get away with it, you can't. Even between interns, stay away from talking about anyone. It's a very competitive industry and you never know who will end up hearing what you say.

Another "*keep your mouth shut*" tip is, especially in development, to be VERY careful when talking about what you do. Take the following example: it's after work and you run home and have the following conversation with your roommate.

"Oh my God, GUESS who I met* today!" *Met= brought coffee
"Who?"
"Insert celebrity here."
"No WAY!"
"Yes, WAY."
"How? Where."
"At work. We're doing a show with her."

Seems innocent right? Well, then this could happen: your roommate is interning at a casting agency and someone is talking about casting that celebrity. Your roommate, trying to be the best intern s/he can be, offers the information "oh, she's already doing a show with insert your company." That is probably information your company doesn't want to trade 'for free.' Information trading is part of the business but as an intern, it is not part of your job description.

Although you cannot trade information, you can obtain it. *Listen in on phone calls* (with permission.) That is how assistants learn, and it is how interns can as well if they take the initiative. It is especially interesting to listen to conference calls with externals (networks, talent, etc) and then hear a conversation about the same show with internals. Chances are, there will be a very different conversation going on.

Take advantage of where you are. Most likely, you aren't getting paid, but you might be exposed to some of the most in-demand people in the business. If you are making copies and bringing someone coffee everyday, chances are they will be willing to give you half an hour of their time. Like I said before, I was in the unscripted department, but just one door away was the head of scripted TV. I asked him if he would have time to meet with me briefly so I could ask him a few questions. He said sure, no problem. After speaking with him and gaining great advice, he said, "you're the only intern who has asked to speak with me this summer." This is probably because the other interns thought he would be too busy, but if he were too busy he would say so. It never hurts to ask.

Work Outside of Work

Do work outside of work. This is not to say do expense reports on a Friday night, but take advantage of outside activities with other people you work with. For example, we did a 48-hour film challenge with the assistants one weekend. Without me self-advertising, "I want to be
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a writer” the assistants know I want to be a writer because I was on the writing team for the challenge. It was an intern’s idea to do the 48-hour film challenge. She sent out an email, and most people were interested. It never hurts to ask and take initiative.

Do things that will make the senior executives know you. If possible, baby-sit. If you know your boss has kids, tell his assistant you would love to baby-sit if ever needed. Then, you will go to his house, meet his wife, and talk to him when he is not in a crazy business setting. I babysat a senior executive’s son twice and on my last day of interning, the executive mentioned things we had talked about while we waited for his wife to get ready.

Relationships outside of work with the people you work with are important. But you must earn those relationships. The first few weeks it’s important to “know your role.” You are an unpaid intern. You are lucky to be there. **STAY LATE.** Technically we worked from 10:00am-6:00pm. Most days we stayed until at least 7 if not later. This is a great time to talk to people because it’s not so crazy. Just stay and talk to people, get to know them, let them get to know you. If you are not a social person and can’t strike up conversations with people you don’t know well, then, you might want to pick another industry.

Keep an eye out for opportunities. I read a news blog everyday and noticed a section where an SVP of NBC claimed she wanted a “twenty-something tech savvy mentor.” Although this may have just been a clever sign off, I took the opportunity (and guessed her email considering I knew the NBC email format from being an NBC intern) to offer myself as a twenty something tech savvy mentor. To my surprise, I received an enthusiastic email back. One thing led to another and now, I send a monthly newsletter to the entire marketing and sales department of NBC/Universal in New York City about digital media targeting young people. This could lead to infinite possibilities in the future.

*Go to **everything**.* This includes Vandy-in-Hollywood events and, some companies might offer events throughout the summer. Whether a networking event, resume workshop, “meet and greet,” you never know whom you will meet, but try to never leave a place without a new phone number or email address.

Some Afterthoughts

Keep in touch! E-mail, BBM, Gchat, AIM, Facebook, whatever you can do once you leave, do it! If you are a summer intern, there will probably be two rounds of interns before you head out again. Don’t be replaceable and don’t be easily forgotten. Don’t be replaceable: that is something you have to establish during the internship. Don’t be easily forgotten: that happens once you get home.

You must go out with the attitude: I’m here to work. There is no such thing as 9-5. If you go in with your first priority being the job, everything else fell into place. In just one summer you can make an enormous network of business contacts, but also friends. In the end, if you want a “Hollywood career,” you also need to be able to create a life for yourself out there.

Connections are EVERYTHING. Some people think that is unfair, but it’s not. The reason is because although it matters “who you know,” it matters who YOU know. It is possible to make it without having an “industry dad.” Vandy-in-Hollywood is your first connection that will lead you to a potential million more.

Interning is extremely important especially with our current job market. Making a positive impression at your internship could be the difference between employment and unemployment. Vandy-in-Hollywood gives you the opportunity to find out what you want to do and maybe more importantly, what you don't.

Enjoy LA, and good luck!

Feel free to email with questions: StacySGreenberg@gmail.com

**61 Days in the Biz:
Forty Things I Learned Interning in Los Angeles
By Hillary Schoezel (VU Summer Intern 2010)**

This summer, I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to intern for two months in the Department of Production and Development at Lionsgate. Going into the internship, I had had no real world experience in the film industry, but it quickly became apparent that if I wanted to succeed in that environment, I would have to learn and learn fast. My time in the office proved to be extremely educational as I learned everything from how to write good coverage to the importance of office conduct. I came away from my summer at Lionsgate having not only determined that I wanted to someday work in Hollywood, but also with a clearer understanding of how the film industry functions, and what would be expected of me as a piece within that puzzle. Below is a list of forty things—one for each day I spent in the office—that I learned about working in the film industry and hope to carry with me back to LA after I graduate.

1. Have an opinion. On everything.

One of the very first things I learned at Lionsgate was that people are always going to want to know what you thought of something and why. Doesn't matter if it's the screenplay you have just read or the pasta you had for lunch, always be ready with an opinion. (Note: Saying something is "interesting" does not count as an opinion.) At the end of my first day, Alli Shearmur, the President of Motion Picture Production, asked me what my favorite movie I had seen recently was. When I told her, she was quick to tell me how much she hated that movie: "There was no emotional content in that film whatsoever." I defended my choice, but worried that I had looked like a total idiot. Weeks later, I was at a work function where Alli was introducing me to some execs from a different department. I was mortified when she recounted our initial conversation for them until she complimented me for not backing down when she had disagreed. She had been genuinely impressed that I'd stuck to my opinion and it helped establish me in her mind.

2. You don't know anything. So educate yourself.

You might think you've seen a lot of movies. You might think you know every director, writer, actor. Well guess what? You don't. I was floored when I got to LA by how much more everybody seemed to know than I did. And they didn't just know directors and writers. They knew producers, cinematographers, agents, assistants. Everyone. If you want to be successful, you better start figuring out who people are.

3. Stay current.

In addition to knowing who is who in Hollywood, it is important to know what projects are in the works. Things happen fast in this industry and you definitely want to be ahead of it. Checking out headlines on blogs like Deadline Hollywood or SlashFilm every morning is an easy way to stay informed. Not only does it keep you updated, but it gives you something to talk about with other people. Having conversation topics other than the weather and bad traffic is key because...

4. Networking matters.

Nobody wants to go to a stuffy work function after sitting in the office all day, but a lot of times, you just need to suck it up and go play the game. Meeting new people and networking is super important because these are all people who can potentially help you/want to work with you in the future. You could be the most talented guy in the world, but unless you know people, it really doesn't matter. It kinda sucks, but it's true.

5. Introduce yourself to everyone in the office and make an effort to get to know something about them.

The same ideas that apply to networking apply within the office itself. Getting to know the people I was working with and working for definitely paid off. After the Executive Vice President of the Motion Picture Group and I bonded over the fact that we both spoke French, he would seek me out and personally ask me to work on a project for him instead of having his assistant pick a random intern to do it.

6. Always know where people are in the office.

It's really easy to get totally sucked into your work and lose track of where people are in the office, but it's smart to try to keep one eye on where everyone is and what they are doing in case you get asked to find them or deliver something to them. Nobody looks dumber than a clueless intern wandering around aimlessly in the office.

7. Always know what the climate is in the office.

There are times to joke around in the office and there are times to keep your head down with your mouth shut. It's important to know what the mood of the office is. It doesn't look good to be messing around while everyone else is grinding away. Always err on the side of being too serious.

8. Pay attention to detail.

Some people like to use a specific font. Others will only eat a certain pastry. It's nice to try to remember small details like this even though they seem trivial. People appreciate it when you go the extra mile to make sure everything is to their liking. It's also more efficient to just remember what everyone orders from Starbucks than to go around and ask everyone what they want twice a day.

9. Check and recheck everything.

Even if you think everything is perfect, whether it's a piece coverage you are writing or someone's lunch order, always double check. When I was organizing a big table read, Alli insisted that we rent white tablecloths and white napkins for the event. However, when the boxes with the linens were delivered and I cut them open just to make sure everything was accounted for, I discovered that the napkins inside were brown. Brown! I ended up having to drive across town to exchange them, but it was a hell of a lot better than dealing with Alli's wrath the next morning.

10. Work late.

A lot happens in the office after hours, especially once the senior execs leave for the day. Not only do you hear a lot of great stories, but the junior execs and assistants have more time to talk to you personally. It's worth sacrificing the extra half hour on your couch at home.

11. Do everything with a smile.

It doesn't matter if you are shaking hands with Taylor Lautner or cleaning out someone's jellybean jar, you should do everything as if it is a privilege to be doing it. I'm not saying you want to seem overeager (read "suck-up") to do menial tasks, but you definitely don't want to act like any job is ever "beneath" you. Newsflash: you're an intern. Nothing is beneath you. We had a whiney intern in our office and it was evident that nobody liked him because of his bad attitude. Not the impression anybody wants to be making.

12. Make friends with everyone. I mean, everyone.

Don't just be friendly to the people in your office or people who you think will help you get a job in the future; be friendly with *everyone* because you never know when it will pay off. Over a few weeks of ordering and picking up lunch for one of the senior execs, I got to know the people at his favorite restaurant, Huckleberry, really well. Later, when I was put in charge of organizing a luncheon for a big table read and desperately needed a rush catering order, I was able to call the people at Huckleberry, who I had already established a relationship with, and ask them to please help me out.

13. Anticipate what people need.

It makes everything go smoother in the office if you can start to anticipate what people are going to want. If an exec comes out of his office and tells his assistant to print something, you should head for the printer because you're the one who's going to get asked to pick it up. Efficiency is always appreciated.

14. Don't expect praise

The days of having your hand held and getting a pat on the head are over. People expect you to do a good job because if you're not, there are a lot of people who are willing to do a good job and can replace you. As a general rule of thumb, if you don't hear anything negative about the work you're doing, you can probably assume you're doing it right. People will be quick to tell you if you are doing something wrong.

15. Don't make excuses.

If you screw up, apologize. Don't make excuses. They make you look worse. If there is a problem, fix it.

16. Check your work e-mail often.

E-mail is a surprisingly important communication tool within the office. You don't want people getting up from their desks to ask you if you received the e-mail they sent you two hours ago asking you to do something.

17. Don't forget your keycard.

It's embarrassing to be taking a group into a conference room and have to yell to reception to buzz you in because you've forgotten your keycard. (Only had to make that mistake once.)

18. Save your receipts.

Everything gets expensed. Everything. Even things that shouldn't get expensed, people try to get expensed. So save your receipts for all the stuff you buy with someone else's credit card because they are going to try to write it off, and you don't ever want to start messing with other people's money.

19. Look good in the office.

I don't care what anyone tells you, presentation matters. I'm not suggesting that you dress a lot nicer than everyone else in the office, but all I know is that the interns who wore jeans and a t-shirt sat in their cubicles all day while the interns who dressed up a little more got to greet the directors and writers before they went in for their meetings.

20. Personality counts.

Interns, though expected to work hard, are not pieces of office furniture. So while in some instances it is best that an intern is seen and not heard, typically having a little personality is a good thing. As long as you are getting your work done and not being distracting, it's okay to chat with people in the office. Ideally, you want people to *want* to work with you and being personable helps with that.

21. See as many movies as you can.

You're in LA! Go see movies! Especially because on Monday morning, everyone is going to ask you if what you saw was any good. Don't be the guy that doesn't have anything to contribute. It's also probably a good idea to know who the directors, producers and writers are for all of the movies you see, as well as what other work they have done.

22. Read as much as you can.

The office is a goldmine for aspiring screenwriters. Why? Because it is chock full of old screenplays—for movies that got made and movies that didn't—as well as, old notes and coverage. Reading all of this is extremely educational for anyone who wants to be a writer because it gives him or her an inside peek at what kind of movies are getting made in Hollywood. Take advantage of it!

23. Write as much as you can.

Not only should aspiring writers read as much as possible, but they should also try to write as much as possible. This is often not easy after spending all day writing coverage in the office. I mean, do marathon runners go for a leisurely jog around the block after finishing a race? Probably not. That said, if you can carve out a half an hour to an hour everyday to at least jot down some ideas, you will make progress. It's clear that people don't have a ton of free time, so if you want to get writing done, you will have to purposefully make time for it.

24. Let (certain) people read your work.

Both of the junior execs offered to read my screenplay this summer, and it took everything in me not to run home and immediately send them my finished first draft. Instead, I sent it to one of the assistants who had been asking to read it. Boy, am I glad I did! The assistant was able to look over it with a fresh eye and gave me extremely helpful feedback on it. This has allowed me to go back over my screenplay and fine-tune it—a process I am still working on—before I give it to anyone else higher up in the food chain. Junior execs are very busy people so it is essential that you not waste their time by giving them a draft that you don't already consider your absolute best work. You might not get an offer to read anything again, so you don't want to blow it on a shaky draft.

25. Always be ready to pitch your idea.

When people hear that you want to be a writer, they will inevitably ask what you've written. Always be ready to give them a short, but engaging, summary of your screenplay. Try to boil the whole thing down into a couple snappy sentences. People are just looking for an overview, not a break down of every scene. Also, it's important to appear confident in your work. If you present your ideas like they are silly or sort of embarrassing to share, no one is going to take them seriously.

26. Always be ready to talk about your next project.

In addition to talking about what you've already written, people are often interested in what the next thing you are going to be working on is. One of the assistants at our office sold his TV pilot while I was interning there, and his big piece of advice to me was, "People in Hollywood are never interested for long in what you've already done if it's not going to make them any money. Always be ready to talk about what you've got in the works."

27. Use the telephone.

In this day and age, we like to think that the answers to everything are hidden somewhere on the internet. While the internet is a vital tool in doing research, sometimes it is a hell of a lot faster to pick up the telephone and call the source directly. For example, another intern and I were once asked to find the direct phone numbers for public relations at a number of different consulates in Los Angeles. Initially, we tried searching online, but soon found that it was a lot easier to call someone at the consulate's office and just ask for the direct phone numbers.

28. Don't snack all day in the office.

You will gain weight. I did.

29. Be prepared.

The boy scouts had it right on this one. Always be prepared, even on the little stuff. For example, if you have to ask someone for their lunch order, it's nice to have a menu for the restaurant already printed out for him or her to look at. Is it the most important thing you are going to do during the day? Hopefully not. But little things like that do make you look good and it makes things run more smoothly.

30. Know where you are going.

If you are sent on an errand and don't know *exactly* where you are going, print directions off or plug it into your GPS system before you leave the office. The traffic in LA will slow you down no matter what, so you don't want to sit in it for half an hour before realizing that you have been going in the wrong direction the whole time. This happened to one of the other interns when he was sent out to pick up lunch and it made him look incompetent. Never, ever make yourself look incompetent. That said...

31. If you don't know what you're doing, ask someone.

If you're given an assignment that you're not 100% sure how to do, don't be shy about asking someone to clarify what they want from you. It is better for them to take a couple minutes to explain it to you than it is to spend a couple hours redoing all the work you've just done the wrong way.

32. Don't freak out.

People lose their temper in the office all the time. It is definitely not uncommon to hear someone screaming into the phone through a closed office door. However, the right to freak out does not extend to interns. This seems like common sense, but I saw interns freak out on two separate occasions. Not pretty. They were asked not to come back.

33. Be cool.

Sometimes famous people walk through the office. It just happens. Try to act like it's not happening. We had an intern that would lose it every time Taylor Lautner came through the office, and it just made everyone uncomfortable.

34. Don't get involved with a coworker.

You've probably heard it before, but I am going to say it again. Trust me, it just makes things too weird. One of the assistants asked me out on a date and he was super cute and charming, so I figured, *why not?* Well here's why not: First of all, he was totally paranoid that other people in the office would find out and he didn't want people to think he was hitting on the new intern—which he totally was, but he just didn't want anyone to know. Then, at the end of the date, he asked me to go back to his place, and when I turned the offer down, he was not pleased. This then changed our entire relationship in the office because he started being a complete jackass to me. It was a minor thing, and didn't cause *too* much of a problem, but you can see how it could get out of hand if you let it. You also don't want anyone to have anything to hold against you in the future.

35. Everyone is insecure. Learn how to deal with people.

The film industry is all about making a product that an audience will like that will make you lots of dough. The stress comes from the fact that everyone is throwing around huge sums of money on projects where the success is largely subjective. I think this leads to a lot of insecurity in the industry because nothing is super concrete. In some ways it is as though everybody is trying to pitch themselves to everyone else *all the time*. For this reason, it is important to figure out how to cope with people's insecurities. I learned this primarily from the way one of the assistants dealt with his boss. There were times when he would be extremely sweet to her to boost her confidence, but there are other times when he would take advantage of her insecurities. It was hard to know which one of them was actually in charge of the other sometimes. The dynamics in the office were really fascinating to watch all summer because it taught me a lot about how to deal with different people in different situations; some have to be flattered, some have to be yelled at, etc.

36. Ask for more work.

Even if you've spent all day laboring over a really tedious piece of coverage on a screenplay that you absolutely hated, ask for something else to do as soon as you are finished with it. A lot of interns seemed to think that once they had finished a coverage, they were done with work for the day. Not the case. You want to impress the people you are working for. There is nothing impressive about working hard in the morning and facebook stalking your friends from home in the afternoon.

37. Doing work fast is good. Doing work well is better. Doing work fast and well is best.

This one is pretty self-explanatory. If people in the office figure out that you can do work fast and well, they are going to give you more legitimate assignments. This means you'll be spending more time working on actual projects and less time picking up dry cleaning.

38. Write thank you notes.

People really appreciate being appreciated. Anytime anyone does something nice for you, send him or her a well-written thank you note, even if it's just a few sentences. It's also a good idea to write thank you notes at the end of your internship, especially to the person who hired you. Be specific. Tell them what you learned. Tell them how much you enjoyed working with them. This is a great first step in an effort to...

39. Stay in touch.

After you've left the office, try to stay in touch with people. You don't want to be in their faces everyday, but an e-mail here and there is a great way to stay on their radar, especially if you are hoping to get a job with them in the future. Another piece of advice on staying in touch that someone gave me was to try and also keep up with the other interns. After all, you never know where everyone is going to end up after college and there might be an opportunity to work together again in the future.

40. Nobody gets discovered.

This was the best piece of advice that I received while I was at Lionsgate. A senior exec and I were talking about my interest in screenwriting during the lunch break one day and he said, "I don't know a ton about writing a screenplay, but what I do know is this: Nobody gets discovered. Getting discovered is an absolute myth. You have to put yourself in a position to get yourself discovered. Some doors might open for you, but a lot of doors you're going to have to work to force open yourself."

HOW TO BE THE PERFECT INTERN

A Manifesto by Charlie Kesslering
(*Vandy in Hollywood Summer Intern – 2010*)

"I'd rather be filming in Detroit, than be anywhere else in the world not making movies."

—My boss

"I'd rather be interning for free, than making ten grand not fetching coffee for people making movies."

—Me

An Introduction

Let's get one thing straight: I wasn't a perfect intern. For Christ's sake, I took a wrong turn onto the 405 during rush-hour with a seven-figure director, fresh off the redeye from Paris, sitting shotgun. A seven-figure director that a studio exec, casting director and producer (my boss of all bosses) were waiting for, anxious beyond comprehension, back at my office. A feature film was on the brink of being green-lit and I—a God forsaken *intern*—was holding the missing link hostage on the busiest freeway in the entire U.S. of A.

By the time I reached Wilshire Ave—25 minutes later than my employers, or my undergarments for that matter, would have preferred—the aforementioned boss of all bosses had ordered the office manager to "BRING THE FIRES OF HELL DOWN UPON THAT INTERN!" And while, bless his heart, the office manager may have tried to be gentle, the fact remains: Aaron Sorkin couldn't write dialogue to make the Fires of Hell burn any less hot. How'd it make me feel? Let's just say it beat that one time my parents got divorced.

But after all the tears on my pillow and letters home, I came to grasp a simple lesson: That's Hollywood, kid. Pick yourself up, brush yourself off, say "I'm sorry, it was completely my fault" (even if it *was* the GPS's fault) and move on. Because if you can't do that—as a God forsaken *intern* without anything more than a bit of pride on the line—there's no career for you in the thankless, pitiless, ass-kicking war of attrition that is show business. And trust me, there are thousands of film majors at UC something chomping at the bit to take your spot in killing fields.

Really though, it's *fun* in LA or, in the words of Bill Goldman, *out there*.

Prepare Yourself

If you're like me six months before *my* internship, you just Googled "Bill Goldman" and maybe even "Aaron Sorkin." (If you knew who they were, good for you. But remember: Nobody likes a showoff.) Truth be told, I alluded to these fine scribes to prove a point. People

in the industry speak the language of movies. Everyone name-drops. New projects are discussed in terms of old flicks. "THE DEER HUNTER meets 12 ANGRY MEN." And if *you* don't understand the conversation, no one will care but you.

When you're sitting in that room and your boss and his boss are throwing together a list of possible directors, you will want *desperately* to add something to that conversation. To quote Academy Award winner Eminem, "You only get one shot, do not miss your chance to blow." And he's right. To be **the perfect intern**, you'll need to educate yourself on the movie industry of today as well as its 100 year history. Lucky for you, I've created a breathtaking checklist of things you should do before making the trek *out there*:

- Read Deadline.com every day, starting immediately.
- Read "The Mailroom" by David Rensin.
- Read "Save the Cat" by Blake Snyder.
- Snuggle up with someone special and watch all the films your schedule can handle. If you need a starting point, try AFI's Top 100. Or go by director: Kubrick, Hitchcock, Scorsese, whoever. Then IMDB the flicks when you're done.

Why these? First, a healthy dose of Deadline.com and "The Mailroom" will give you a solid handle on The Industry, past and present. Next: "Save the Cat." I know what you're thinking. "Why would I want to read a screenwriting guide? I want to be *Ari Gold*." Well, hotshot, even agents have to start somewhere and, more than likely, it'll involve reading scripts and writing coverage (essentially a two-page book report on a screenplay). If you've read the late, great Blake Snyder's educational romp that is "Save the Cat," upon sitting down to write that inevitable first draft of coverage, you'll be familiar enough with story structure, character development, actual talent, etc. to stun the entire office with the utter *purity* with which your opinion splashes across the page. And damn, won't that feel good. Finally, after a good, semester long movie marathon, you'll know, first, what that producer was talking about when he said "THE DEER HUNTER meets 12 ANGRY MEN" and, second, that you can count on one hell of an intense jury room scene.

How to Succeed in the Workplace or **Making Their Lives Easier**

When to Start

As early as possible. If you're lucky, you'll be the only intern there for a week or two; I was. I started work on May 17, and, by June 1, there were four more rascals just like me. But my eagerness paid dividends; I got to know everyone in the office first and, as a result, was given more responsibilities, more difficult tasks, and more trust *throughout the summer* than any other intern. I got to really prove myself, to show them what I was made of, while at least two of

my esteemed colleagues did nothing but write coverage that a higher-up may or may not have read. Trust me, get *out there* ASAP.

When to Work

Everyday, full-time. This follows the same logic as above. If you're there every day, busting your ass not to tarnish the good name of everyone around you, they will notice you, remember your name—maybe even trust you. You may even be the intern they remember 10 months after you leave, when you need help looking for a job. If you work on Tuesdays and Thursdays, you'll be that "one kid" who runs the packages back and forth to Paramount, the packages that someone else puts together because, well, they just don't trust you.

There's an argument that goes "But if you work at two places, two or three days a week, you'll make more contacts." If one company will only take you three days a week, this is a great alternative. But don't confuse contacts for *relationships*. Contacts might get you a foot in the door, relationships will go out of their way to land you that first gig. And relationships are formed every day, full time.

Hell, work Monday through Friday if only to make sure they don't bad mouth you on your days off (it happens).

What to Wear

ASK. In a polite email, ask the company rep you've been in contact with what the typical dress code looks like. Whatever they say—suit and tie (likely at an agency), khakis and a polo (likely everywhere else)—wear the nicest version of that you own. Not flashy, but professional. For your first impression's sake. The whole "Fires of Hell" thing was rough, but I'd rather that than have that same producer refer to me as "sandals boy" for two months because I wore flip-flops on day one (it happened). Feel free to loosen things up as the summer progresses, given the atmosphere of your office (because, remember: Nobody likes a showoff), but dressing like you don't have a job will eventually result in just that.

How to Behave

Rule 1: Work your ass off. Rule 2: Smile while you do it.

If you do these two things, in glorious harmony, you're well on your way to being a *great* intern. If you want to be **the perfect intern**, there are a few more behavioral rules to follow: don't gossip; don't sigh; don't roll your eyes; arrive early, every day; be the last intern to leave; don't go on Facebook, even if the assistants do; say "sure, no problem," even when it hurts; don't complain; don't ask unnecessary questions; don't ask necessary questions that you can answer by

using logic, your creative faculties, or the internet; get plenty of sleep; drink plenty of coffee; always be doing something productive; if all else fails, err on the side of professionalism.

How to Interact

Observe the office's social dynamics. Chances are, the assistants will be in their mid-twenties and fun loving, albeit ambitious, people. They chose to work in the movie industry for a reason, after all. Talk to them, learn from them, and maybe—if you aren't a walking corpse and manage to form a friendly rapport—joke with them.

The higher-ups are a different ballgame. They didn't make two million dollars last year to talk to a God forsaken *intern* about the weather. Notice how the assistants interact with their bosses. If the man's *assistant* doesn't ask him how Hong Kong was, chances are you shouldn't either. However, if you've worked your ass off with a smile on your face, a higher-up may actually respond when you say "good morning." Then, the next day, he might ask you to drive him someplace. The next week, after a rousing and insightful conversation in the car during which you impressed him with your knowledge of The Industry, past and present, he might just accept that offer to buy him lunch. Or maybe not—but it will be because he's busy making movies, not because you're a God forsaken *intern*.

Sure, they're not paying you, but if you devote yourself to the gospel of **the perfect intern**, they might *pay attention to you*. And that's worth more than you know.

Learn, Learn, Learn

Notice I didn't say Ask, Ask, Ask. As alluded to before, asking too many questions is worse than not asking enough. Your one job on Earth is to make their lives easier. That's why they're letting you sit in their chairs, use their computers, drink their coffee. Not so you can interrupt them to ask something that could be answered by a few key strokes into Google, IMDB, or StudioSystem.com. And that includes the assistants. Despite their friendliness, those people are beat up and down the street on a daily basis. The last thing they need on their plate is to babysit a God forsaken *intern*.

But Charlie, if we can't ask questions, how do we learn a darn thing? I never said don't ask. I said don't ask *too many*. Honestly, most of your (and my own) questions would be answered if we listened the first time. So, in that spirit, I'll give you arguably my best piece of advice:

WRITE EVERYTHING DOWN

In a moleskin, a yellow pad, whatever. Just make sure you have it there, at all times, to consult. When someone tells you to do something, just put it on that paper. Trust me, you won't

remember it later. Just write it down. And no, asking a reasonable question won't make anyone upset. Asking the same question twice will. Write the answer down.

Understand: most successful people in Hollywood didn't learn how to do their jobs in school. Producers didn't learn how to charm studio execs from class. Writers didn't learn how to own a room from a textbook. Agents didn't learn how to bullshit from any professor. They all learned from *doing*. Just like you should. And the people that can learn the fastest, well, they get ahead.

Learn the phones, learn the language assistants use in their emails, learn what time things happen in Hollywood (for instance, lunch is always at 1 p.m.), and learn the phones again. Learn how to write a mean piece of coverage, how to compose a business letter, how to whip up a credit card authorization and an expense report. Read *Variety* every day and learn its unique vocab. Learn how your boss likes his coffee.

The more you learn, the less questions you have to ask, and the easier their lives become.

An Epilogue

I wasn't **the perfect intern**. But I tried hard to be. I smiled, multitasked eternally, and kept my sighs to myself. I even entertained an assistant or two with my keen wit. Take my advice (and steer clear of the 405) and you could just achieve the promise of this Manifesto.

And don't let these pages scare you. It's really quite fun *out there*.

SAMPLE INTERNSHIPS

ViH internships do not require you to have previous experience in the entertainment business. So we put together this list of internships in which previous Vanderbilt students have requested to work. The more information we know about your interests, the better job we'll do of helping to point you towards the right internship.

If any of these areas interest you, then do some further research to figure out if you might like to spend your summer in one of these roles.

This list is just a starting point. There are plenty other internships areas you may want to target...

SAMPLE INTERNSHIPS

Below is a list of sample positions, roles, or areas in which Vandy interns have requested to work:

Producer
Writer
Director
Television Network Development/Production
Cable Television Network Development/Production
Film Studio Development/Production
Independent Film Development/Production
Marketing
Public Relations
Online/Mobile Content Creation
Agent/Manager - Talent
Agent/Manager - Literary
Agent/Manager – Below-the-Line
Music Supervision
Music Licensing
Music Composition
Studio/Network Corporate Development/Strategy
Network Affiliate Relations
Production Accounting
Actor
Location Sound
Film & TV Editing
Post-Production Sound - Designer
Post-Production Sound - Mixing
Post-Production Editing - Picture
Theatrical Distribution
DVD Distribution
Digital Distribution
TV Network Programming & Scheduling
Theatrical Exhibition
Production Office
Art Department
Casting
Catering & Craft Services
Props
Script Supervision
Social Media Marketing
Film Trailer House
Special Effects
Wardrobe / Makeup
Documentary
Reality TV
On-Set Photography

Business Affairs/Legal
Production Legal
Location Scouting/Manager
Cinematographer
Assistant Director
Commercial Production
Line Producer/Unit Production Manager
Studio/Network Finance
Network Research/Ratings
Electronic Press Kit
International TV Sales
International TV Marketing
Ad Sales
On-Air Promotions
Foreign Film Sales
Entertainment Investment Banking
Entertainment Venture Capital
Film Finance

SURVIVING L.A.

Traffic, movie stars, surfing, paparazzi...

Los Angeles is unlike any city in the world, and it has its own rules and culture. Here are some helpful websites and resources to help you find housing, navigate the streets, and take advantage of L.A.'s social scene.

We've also included some actual budgets from previous ViH interns to help you plan out your summer.

What's Going on Around Los Angeles

Citysearch - <http://losangeles.citysearch.com/> - the ubiquitous Citysearch. Good when you're in a pinch OR when you have no idea what you're searching for we recommend starting at their "Best Of" recommendations and going from there.

Flavorpill - <http://flavorpill.com/losangeles> - recommend signing up for the newsletter. Geared towards the art/culture scene of LA.

Goldstar - <http://www.goldstar.com/events/browse/90013> - recommend signing up for the newsletter to check out great discounts on events around town. Everything from deals on comedy shows to sporting events in and around LA.

LA Weekly - Weekly newspaper can be picked up for free all over LA. Features events for and articles about Los Angeles.

NFT - <http://notfortourists.com/LosAngeles.aspx> - become an Angeleno over night with the help of this "in the know" web site filled with insider information on all of LA's vast neighborhoods including links to other informative LA websites.

Thrillist - <http://www.thrillist.com/list/Los+Angeles> - recommend signing up for the newsletter. Great for clothing sales and bar/restaurant info and openings.

Finding Your Way Around Los Angeles

Thomas Guide - <http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Angeles-County-California-Directory/dp/0528870467> - great maps to help you explore your new city and when you (inevitably) get lost.

Intern Housing in Los Angeles

Vanderbilt and ViH neither arrange, nor endorse particular summer housing options for ViH-ers. So here are some suggestions for where to start:

In the past, most students team up with other ViH-ers as roommates. This saves on housing costs and has worked well in the past.

There are usually several groups of ViH-ers who live in multiple furnished apartments at the Oakwoods in Toluca Lake. (The Oakwoods also has another location in Marina del Ray, although we're not aware of any ViH-ers staying there in the past.) The Oakwoods is a huge, full-service corporate apartment campus that houses a large number of summer interns from other universities as well. The Oakwoods has been kind enough to extend a generous discount to VU students. Please let them know that you are a VU/ViH student when you call. Our special rates include furniture, their Intern housewares package, and all utilities. High speed internet, cable, and local phone service are also included. They also offer a partially furnished apartment at Oakwood Toluca Hills. This place is a summer intern's heaven and the swimming pools are packed with interns from other schools. Contact: Rebekah Travouillon, Regional Sales Representative, Oakwood Temporary Housing, PH: 1.323.878.2100, MOB: 1.818.251.6397, rtravouillon@oakwood.com

Another option is Westside Rentals - www.westsiderentals.com. LA doesn't use apartment brokers all that much. Instead they use Westside Rentals. Think about pooling some money with friends to gain access for \$60. This is a great way to find an apartment quickly.

The Palazzo West and Palazzo East are other options, however they are quite a bit more money. The rate for a fully furnished one bedroom apartment at these locations is approximately \$155.00 per day without housekeeping service (this is 2009's rate). The rate for a fully furnished two bedroom apartment is about \$192.00 per day without housekeeping (again, 2009, so it may be a bit more this year). These rates include a Signature Apartment, all utilities, and a washer/dryer in the apartment. High speed internet, cable, and local phone service are also included.

There are potentially options to get sublet apartments from UCLA students. And while we don't know of anyone who has done this, we've heard that UCLA opens certain dorms to summer students from other schools. We've also heard talk that some VU students have contacted the UCLA or USC chapters of their fraternities and sororities about living in the Greek houses there.

Craigslist is also a good option for finding summer sublets. Note that UCLA is in Westwood, which is a very "college" oriented neighborhood near great restaurants, movie theaters, bars, etc. USC, on the other hand, is close to downtown and, while it is beautiful on-campus, it is located in a challenging neighborhood, both in terms of location and safety. While a few students in the past have found cheap housing options near USC, we don't recommend it.

Heck, last year, someone even got a cheap summer sublet of a boat in Marina del Ray. So be sure to talk to previous ViH interns for their thoughts.

ACTUAL SAMPLE SUMMER BUDGETS

STUDENT #1

I lived/worked in LA for approximately 2 months, so that is what the totals will reflect.

Hey girl, whatchu paid for that?

1. Moving to/fro LA: \$730

Car maintenance: \$634

This is the cost of having a CAR in LA, which is costly but NECESSARY. The first cost reflects the gas/hotels/food it took to make the three-four day drive both ways between Monroe, Louisiana, and Los Angeles, which is about 1800 miles depending on the route. "Maintenance" is all the oil changes and tire rotations, brake repair, etc it took to keep my car healthy enough for cross-country driving.

[Mom & Dad flying out to help move-in/visit: \$1,078]

2. Living- Rent: \$1,793 [appx \$850/month]

Living- Other: \$255 [appx \$135/month]

I lived in a one-bedroom Oakwood apartment, which I shared with two other girls. It was tight, but definitely livable. We just all stuffed into the bedroom, where there was barely any room, but spent all our non-sleeping time in our nice, spacious living/dining room and kitchen.

The "other" category just refers to stuff like dish washer soap, paper towels, shampoo, laundry, etc. Though the best part about Oakwood is that it comes FULLY furnished, and they *mean* fully. Pots, pans, dishes, flatware, tv, appliances, you name it. So it helped not to have to really buy anything.

3. Food- groceries: \$338 [appx \$180/month]

Food- eating out: \$444 [appx \$230/month]

I tried not to eat out very much, because it was really expensive to do so. I would eat out for lunch with my coworkers about once a week (gotta be a little social after all) and other than that, I would typically bring a lean cuisine or leftovers of whatever pasta I cooked the night before, since who wants to get up earlier to fix a lunch?

4. Gas: \$183 [appx \$100/month]

I lucked out and only had about a 5 mile, 15 min, drive to work in Burbank. And I spent most of my time hanging out with people either living in the Oakwoods or some friends who lived in Toluca Lake, also about a 10 minute drive.

5. Fun & Misc: \$567 [appx \$300/month]

Yea, there's a lot of that. IT'S CALIFORNIA!! You HAVE to go drive out to 4 or 5 beaches, see a show at Disney Concert Hall or The Pantages (student rush!!), see a Hollywood Forever cemetery screening, visit Disneyland, tour the Getty, see the observatory, go out on the weekends. A big part of this cost is PARKING, ugh. And cabs. But it's worth it.

6. Academic Credit fee: ~~\$1,322~~ – WAIVED

See next section to learn how!

TOTAL (including Mom and Dad's visit): \$6030

Estimated monthly spending in Cali: \$1800 (plus of course the cost of getting there and back!)

Dang, girl, where'd you get all that money???

Yes, there were a lot of costs- and no income! So, since I didn't just happen to have a few G's lying around, I had to get the money somewhere. There are a few options that can really help!

Financial Aid

Just in the nick of time, my mom pulled through by calling up the Vandy financial aid office about a week before the spring semester ended asking whether there was any sort of financial aid available for me during my summer internship. We were stoked (and pretty darn lucky) to find out that there was \$6500 standard unsubsidized Stafford student loan that I qualified for under financial aid that I had not taken and (again, luckily) it was still the spring semester, so I could still appeal for it for that semester. Lesson learned: it's always worth asking!

Extra Job

This was my main plan and concern, especially before I knew I would qualify for a student loan. However, I was unable to get an extra job. None of the restaurants and coffee shops nearby me seemed to be hiring, and I found that once I had gotten to LA, and began working full time "until further notice" at my internship, I did not have time to go job hunting. So, granted, I did not invest *that* much time into searching and applying, but there were not an abundance of availabilities either. For someone looking to get a job, I would suggest arriving in LA at least a few days before scheduled to begin your internship.

Luckily, with my loans, I was able to make do without income for 2 months, and I'm glad that I went ahead and worked full time at my internship instead of getting another job, since that was what I came all the way to California to do.

Academic Credit Fee Waiver

Mid-summer, when we got the \$1,322 summer tuition bill for the one-hour academic credit I was to receive for doing this internship, we once again rang at the doorstep of the financial aid office, letting them know that I had not applied for summer financial aid. I then found out that the internship I was doing fell under such a category (as I'm sure any ViH internship would) that the College of Arts & Sciences may waive the summer tuition cost for any student who receives need-based financial aid during the regular school year. So the financial aid office sent my records over to the A&S Dean's Office confirming that I receive need-based aid during the regular school year, and the fee was waived! We did not have to do any additional paperwork or anything. [ViH Note: [Students who qualify for need-based financial aid are eligible to have their tuition waived for a one-hour internship course taken during the summer by contacting Aliceteen Morrow in Financial Aid.](#)]

STUDENT #2

Below you will find approximate totals of what I spent this past summer...I kept up with most of my receipts!

Food:

(groceries) - \$176.00

(eating out) - \$170.00

Transportation:

(gas) - \$304.50

(parking) - \$60.00

Rent: \$3,290.00

Honestly I can't even imagine how much I spent on "fun" which really means SHOPPING! ...but Hey, I'm a girl so you can't blame me for that one.

I lived in the "Historic West Adams District" ... at least that's what the signs said. Near Washington and 8th. It was really convenient because the freeway was literally right around the corner, the house we lived in was nice as spacious...I worked at Levity & the Improv and it only took me about 10-15 mins. to get to either location from my home. I had one roommate who is an old friend... not from Vandy.

One word of advice to new ViH participants: READ the parking signs, and REMEMBER street cleaning days! ...I also spent about \$300 in parking tickets :(...please don't judge me.

STUDENT #3

My Expenses for 2.5 months in LA (breakdowns in parentheses):

Lodging: \$2000 (\$800/month)

Food: \$800 (\$50-75 for groceries, \$25-50 for restaurants/week)

Gas: \$250 (about \$20/week)

Transportation to/from Cali + Car Repairs: \$1200 (\$500 for a repair + \$300 or so for gas and lodging on my 2100 mile drive both ways)

Going Out/Extraneous Expenses: \$600

Total for the Summer: around \$5000

I lived right next to USC in a sublet student house with my own bedroom and bathroom. My roommate was a law student with an internship downtown, so our paths rarely crossed. The neighborhood I lived in wasn't the nicest area, but I never had a safety issue. If future participants are looking for housing, they should know that UCLA does not have the same semester schedule as Vanderbilt. Most UCLA housing isn't available for sublet until late June. USC has pretty much the same schedule as us, so the housing is easier to find earlier in the summer.

I drove on the 10 every morning from exit 10 to exit 5. The drive wasn't that bad—usually around 30-45 minutes depending on traffic. Traffic is always unpredictable, so I liked to leave at a fixed time every morning. A car is very helpful in LA, but public transportation is quite doable. My car had to get some repairs in July, so I had to take the bus to work for a week and a half. I had no problems getting to work on time. No reliability issues either. LA is a huge, spread-out city, and many commuters rely on the bus every day to get around.

INFORMATION FOR OWEN MBA STUDENTS

ViH's Summer Internship Program was built on the premise of providing summer internships in the entertainment business to Vandy undergraduates. However, after many years of growth, the program began also accepting applicants from the Owen school in the summer of 2010, and with your help, this aspect of the program will only continue to evolve.

A large amount of the ViH internships are naturally geared towards those who have an interest in pursuing creative areas of the entertainment business – producer, writer, development, music, talent representation, PR, marketing, and so forth. Accordingly, the types of internships which ViH offers have developed because of the interests of the applicants. In other words, ViH went out and found internships in these areas because that's what the students wanted.

ViH recognizes that the internship needs of MBA candidates may differ from those of undergrads, and so we encourage you to apply to ViH and let us know the sorts of internships and projects in which you're most interested. Your specific interests will guide us as we scout for the right internship opportunities for you, and it will help us develop more internships in general which may be better appropriate for MBA candidates. In the past, MBA students have had interest in working in finance, legal, corporate development/strategy and marketing roles at studios, networks and agencies, as well as interests in working with producers, talent reps, development execs, entertainment investment bankers, entertainment venture capitalists, and beyond.

One note about Hollywood internships: Most internships in Hollywood tend to be different than internships in other businesses, and we've found that MBA students sometimes have a bit of a disconnect with their potential employers in Hollywood because of this. Many summer MBA internships in other businesses are very regimented and planned in advance, with very defined projects and deliverables for the summer. Many internships in Hollywood, on the other hand, develop "on the fly" and so, often, the most exciting projects you'll work on are the ones that spring up on the spur of the moment once your internship has already started. Hollywood moves very quickly and it's a very competitive landscape with a lot of moving parts, so it's often not practical for companies to pre-plan summer projects for MBA interns.

Put another way, internships in Hollywood tend to be a way to get your foot in the door, and then the internship itself becomes what you make of it. We've found that some MBA students are anxious for answers and planning that Hollywood cannot provide upfront. But if you're smart, social, ambitious, an out-of-the-box thinker, and a good team player, you'll generally quickly rise to become a truly trusted, instrumental member of a company – an experience on the front lines very unlike most internships outside of entertainment. This is what will ultimately allow you to leave your summer internship with both knowledge to guide your career path and strong relationships with people who can help you get hired once you've graduated.

So, we need your help. If you think you might have an interest in a ViH summer internship, then send in your application and give us specific guidance about your perfect internship and/or a proposal for the types of projects you might want to work on. Due to sheer volume, it is rarely practical for the ViH Alumni Coordinators to meet with or speak to students who have not yet applied to the program. Making your application allows ViH to start its conversation with you. Good luck!

ACADEMIC CREDIT

ViH is not permitted to offer guidance on issues of academic credits. Instead, please contact your college directly as follows:

A&S students - contact Tiffany Franklin in the VU Career Center Tiffany.franklin@vanderbilt.edu

Peabody students - contact Dr. Vicki Davis Vicki.davis@vanderbilt.edu

Engineering students - contact Dean Cynthia Paschal Cynthia.paschal@vanderbilt.edu

Blair students - contact Dean Melissa Rose Melissa.Rose@vanderbilt.edu

There are many options for the types and amounts of credits you receive for your internship, and it can get kind of confusing. We've found that, while it may take a while and may require some outside-the-box thinking on your part, most of Vanderbilt's colleges will accommodate your wishes for many different types of academic credits for your internships. This isn't a promise of course, but it has been ViH's observation over the years.

We've noticed that, often, the answers you get from your college will depend on you asking the right questions, particularly because academic credit for internships differs so much from college to college and because a lot of people in the administration haven't had occasion to learn the in's and out's of all the many options.

So with that in mind, we've listed below some of the different options which previous ViHSIP students have taken advantage of. Again, these may not be the right fit for you and your circumstances may be different, so we urge you to contact the folks above.

ACADEMIC CREDITS COUNTING TOWARDS THE FILM STUDIES MAJOR/MINOR

Students who wanted their credits to count towards the Film Studies major/minor have taken two courses for the summer which work hand-in-hand: Film 280a (readings/research) and Film 280b (training--the actual ViH internship labor). Film 280a needed to be taken at the same time as Film 280b. This means that the bare minimum number of credits these students took was 2 – 1 for 280a and 1 for 280b.

In the past, students took Film 280b for 1, 2, 3 or more credits – whatever matched up with A&S's internship standard of 1 credit equaling 5 hours of onsite work per week. (Note that you could take fewer credits than would correlate to labor hours, but not the other way around. So, one can register for only 1 credit if one works 15 hours per week, but one cannot register for 3 credits if one only works 10 hours per week.)

Per the college's rule, only 280a credits counted toward the Film Studies major or minor – NOT 280b credits. However, students willing to construct a scholarly/research project to supplement their internships and who got it approved before the summer were able to earn more than one 280a credit. Of course, the student also had to pay for more tuition credits for summer session.

FINANCIAL AID STUDENTS

Note that, in the past, students who already received financial aid were eligible to receive one internship credit they don't have to pay for. Anything beyond the first credit cost them what it always does.

ACADEMIC CREDITS NOT COUNTING TOWARDS THE FILM STUDIES MAJOR/MINOR

INDS 280 has been the option for students of all majors within the College of Arts and Sciences to receive one hour of academic credit for their internship. This has not previously counted towards the Film Studies major or minor.

OTHER WAYS TO GET CREDITS

There have also been outside-the-box ways to get multiple hours of credit for ViH internships. For instance, a VU senior managed to arrange a semester-long, school-year internship in New York, interning at *The Colbert Report*. He received six hours of credit, counting toward his major.

Here's what he says...

It was difficult to arrange a school year internship, but after about 40 trips to Kirkland, I was able to work it out. The most important loophole that I went through was getting approval to leave Vanderbilt as a senior - I had to grab a form from the Kirkland that was titled something like "approval to study elsewhere for the final 30 hours of your degree." I submitted it with a 1 page essay explaining how being a Film Studies student and an aspiring writer/director who interned at The Colbert Report would help me further my career more than taking classes at school would. Afterwards, I set up my outside projects for the internship with the Film Studies program. Only with these projects would I be eligible to earn 6 hours of credit for the internship.

Then, the final step was getting approved to be a part time student from Kirkland. I basically rewrote the same document as I did for the first one stating how this internship is a crucial component to advancing my prospects in the field and how I will perform two coinciding Film Projects that will complement the internship and keep me busy.

Basically, I'd recommend starting to ask around early – very early the semester before – because new, unseen obstacles will constantly come up as you think you're all set. If I didn't start this process in late September for the following semester, I don't think I would have gotten it all together in time.



HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!

