Ms. Natalie LUNDSTEEEN
Careers Advisor and Researcher of the Careers Service
University of Oxford

Presentation Synopsis:

Internships (short periods of work while undertaking study) are a popular activity for many university students and are often a university student’s first experience of the world of work. Therefore, student experience in internships may well provide an insight into how (or if) university prepares graduates for the world of work, and what higher education might provide to enhance or complement a student’s education in preparation for the workforce. Internships may also be viewed within the ‘employability agenda’ for higher education, whereby the development of transferable skills supposedly prepares university graduates for an effortless transition to the 21st century workplace.

This presentation describes the experiences of undergraduates in summer internships, with a focus on the transitions experienced by the students as they move from academia to internship. Their learning in the new context of the workplace is linked in some ways to their experiences of learning in academia yet is also completely fresh. The developing relationship between the students and their internship environment provides an opportunity for the students, over time, to find patterns, create recognition, and perhaps discover a new sense of identity.

Ms. Natalie Lundsteen has over fifteen years of experience in higher education student affairs in the United States of America, United Kingdom and Europe, with a focus on advising and preparing students for success beyond undergraduate study. She has spent eleven years advising in university career services, with expertise in internships and experiential learning.

Ms. Lundsteen is currently conducting doctoral research at Oxford University, on students’ experiences of transition from university to workplace. At Oxford, she is a member of the Oxford Centre for Sociocultural and Activity Theory Research (OSAT) and the Centre for Skills, Knowledge and Organisational Performance (SKOPE). Her research interests lie in the development of expertise in professional practice, and the relationship between formal education and the world of work. She is a member of many professional associations, including the International Society for Cultural and Activity Research and Pi Lambda Theta Educational Honor Society.

Bridging Co-curricular Activities in Secondary & Tertiary Education