

intern abroad

Madrid Internship Program: Opportunities for Health Science Students

International Internship Programs

All Boston University International Programs internship placements are:

- Personalized
- Guaranteed
- Project-based
- Academically directed

Personalized Internships

Boston University International Programs internship coordinators sit with students to understand and assess the student's career goals, prior work experience and skill set, as well as their study abroad and internship expectations.

They then contact potential providers and customize an internship placement to the individual student. Each semester, approximately 30% of our internship placements are from new providers.

Madrid Internship Program

List of Past Science, Health & Human Service Internship Providers

(Please note: These are examples of past internship placements only. While we guarantee an internship to program participants, specific placements vary from semester to semester.)

- Hospital de la Zarzuela
- Instituto Nacional de Sanidad Carlos III

- Merch Iberica
- Sharp
- Dohm Laboratories
- PharmaGen
- Consejo Superior Investigaciones Cientificas
- Instituto de Derecho y Medio Ambiente
- Sanitas Rehabilitation Center

Comments from the Madrid Internship Program

"In the past we have placed students at the Instituto Nacional de Sanidad Carlos III (the Spanish equivalent of the National Institute of Health in the United States). It is responsible for investigations within the healthcare system. A few years ago, a student of ours participated in an internship that involved working with a team that was investigating tropical diseases brought into Spain by tourists returning from their vacations, as well as from immigrants from Africa.

We have also placed students at the Escuela Nacional de Sanidad - Instituto de Salud Carlos III (the National School for Health), a public institution that forms part of the Spanish Ministry of Health. Its mission is to develop and offer scientific and technical services of the

Guaranteed Internships

All students are guaranteed an internship placement while abroad with a Boston University international internship program.

Project-Based Internships

Students will work on a project (or projects) while at their placement during the semester. Past students with pre-med interests have worked in clinical, research and administrative settings, and in a wide variety of healthcare related fields, populations and communities.

Academically Directed Internships

During the internship phase, students will be required to maintain a daily journal about their internship experience. By the end of the semester, all students will produce a comprehensive, academically directed portfolio about their internship project and their experience working with the placement provider.

highest quality. Its work is aimed at the National Healthcare System and at society as a whole.

Several pre-med internship placements have been in analytical lab settings, such as working with in-vitro and in-vivo fertilization, and at labs with Merck, Sharp and Dohm. Many of our past students contact us when they have been accepted into medical school, so we are quite pleased to hear about their continued success after their internship, through us, in Madrid."

Aden Hayes
Internship Coordinator, Madrid
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Student Testimonial

"I am doing my internship at the Instituto Internacional de Salud, Carlos III. I like it very much because I've been able to help the professors of the Masters Program in International Public Healthcare with their courses. I've also been given the opportunity to attend some of the classes with the students. The students are doctors, psychologists, bioengineers, etc., in their home countries back in Latin America and Africa. Having international classmates has allowed me to gain a wider cultural and professional perspective on public healthcare."

Irving Z.
Cornell University

Irving was a human biology and health major at Cornell University. He did his internship in the emergency room of a private hospital in Madrid that provides primary healthcare to both private and state-supported patients.

The following comments and observation are directly from Irving's questionnaire evaluating his internship placement:

What do you do in your internship?

In the hospital I mainly played the role of a medical resident or intern. All the doctors were very aware of my desire to learn so they took it upon themselves to introduce me to the patients and to ask their permission in order to involve me in the medical care processes.

What do you need to succeed at this job?

The main things you must have to succeed as a medical intern anywhere, I think, are motivation and initiative. Mainly, you must be self-driven and self-directed so that you take it upon yourself to get involved in the action. The doctors and nurses are really busy taking care of patients, so you must make your presence known by asking questions, talking to patients and offering to help the medical staff in whatever way possible.

What skills are helpful for your job?

I would say it is almost imperative that one has a solid background in anatomy, physiology and the basic sciences, because it would be very difficult to benefit from this experience if one does not have a foundation of the basics the doctors use to explain things.

What are the challenges of the job?

There are several, but in my opinion they make the job interesting. First of all, keeping up with the pace of the emergency room can be very draining. But if you stay focused and motivated throughout the day, the time passes very quickly. I think another challenge is understanding some of the Spanish medical terminology, which may make the learning process confusing until those words are clarified for you. However, this is hard to do in the middle of a medical treatment process. So, you must have patience and a pen and notebook in hand at all times to write things down that interest or concern you, so you can ask later in the day, perhaps during a break or in between patients.

How does an internship in Spain differ from an internship at home?

I think that an internship like mine, in the medical sciences, is much more liberal here than it is in the states. I have done several internships back home but none was as permissive as this one, in terms of dealing with patient information, and helping with patients in the treatment rooms. Also, the attitude of the medical staff is much more amiable and relaxed than in the US. I was on a first name basis with every doctor I worked with here, which has been one of the most interesting differences between Spain and the US at the professional level.

What did you learn at your job?

I learned so much during this internship that I can not begin to get into the specifics. But I can say that my patient interviewing skills, my bedside manner and my knowledge of physical explorations have increased tremendously through my experiences here in the hospital. I have also gained a greater understanding of the nurse's role in the ER and I learned many of the practical skills in patient care such as blood pressure, heart rate, breath rate, blood drawing, temperature, oxygen administration, intravenous medication treatments, and soothing patients via listening and conversation.

What did you like most about your internship?

I really enjoyed feeling like part of the team in the ER. I got to know all the doctors and nurses that worked during the same shifts I did, and for the three months I was there they treated me like part of the team. Moreover, many of them have told me that they will miss me being around and that I should make plans to return to Madrid. That sense of belonging and feeling important has been essential to the development of my confidence as an intern.

How has your internship helped you formulate career plans?

This internship has helped solidify my goals of one day becoming a physician. I know now that this is absolutely what I want to do, and I hope to one day be helping the Hispanic community of the US by providing culturally sensitive medical care in our common language, Spanish.

Has the internship helped you to improve your Spanish? How so?

Well, I started out with a good level of Spanish... this internship has helped improve my Spanish at many different levels. Not only have I been able to improve my conversational Spanish by speaking with the patients and their families, but I have also highly improved my professional Spanish especially when it comes to medical terminology. I feel much more prepared to deal with Spanish speaking patients now that I can express myself like a Spanish-speaking medical professional.