

Proposed principles to allow for a limited number of “in person” summer internships in 2021

Background: There are many summer programs hosted by and/or are affiliated with OHSU to help students gain first hand experiences with the missions of an academic health center. In 2020, all of these were cancelled because the campus was on modified operations due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As we look towards the summer of 2021, many stakeholders are hoping that the university will allow in person activity so that students, many who are diverse or from populations underrepresented in the health sciences, may gain valuable experience and work with mentors to inspire and guide them in their future endeavors.

To that end, Susan Shugerman and George Mejicano led a discussion at the University Transition Taskforce (UTT) in March. UTT approved the concept of allowing a limited number of programs for visiting students to proceed with in person activity, based on a set of principles that will be formulated by the Visiting Learners Oversight Committee (VLOC). UTT members acknowledged the critical importance of these learning opportunities and delegated the authority to approve these learning experiences to the Visiting Learners Oversight Committee (VLOC). Further, UTT extended VLOC’s charge so that it will continue meeting through the end September and make decisions that extend to the end of the calendar year.

The proposed principles for making decisions related to summer internships in 2021 include the following:

- 1) OHSU will permit virtual experiences for all summer internships that are formally approved by the Visiting Learners Oversight Committee (VLOC).
- 2) OHSU will permit a limited number of summer internships (see item #3) to include in person activity on campus. These must also be formally approved by VLOC with the caveat that permission to proceed is conditional in nature and will depend on a number of factors such as the status of modified operations on campus, the availability of personal protective equipment, the risk category that the Oregon Health Authority has designated for each county in Oregon, and approval by the pertinent UTT committee overseeing each mission (e.g., the Return to Research [R2R] structure overseeing research operations under modified operations).
- 3) Internship programs that are designed to specifically promote the interest of diverse and underserved populations in healthcare and the life sciences (e.g., Equity Summer Research Experience, BUILD-EXITO, and Provost Scholars) will be allowed to include in person activity on campus through the summer of 2021.
- 4) Internship programs that do not specifically promote the interest of diverse and underserved populations in healthcare and the life sciences will not be allowed to include in person activity on campus through the summer of 2021.
- 5) All internships for high school students will remain virtual for the summer of 2021.
- 6) Individual requests for exceptions by faculty and unit leaders will continue to be considered on a case-by-case basis through the process put into place last summer by VLOC and the Office of Visitors and Volunteers (OVV).
- 7) All in person activity for visiting learners in the research mission must adhere to the R2R plan submitted by the lab’s principal investigator to research mission leaders.

[Note: Principles in this document were approved by VLOC on 3/23/21.]