

## Preface

For years, managers at companies and organizations with which we have had long-term internship relationships have suggested that a book be written which describes the full-time, semester-long, unpaid professional internship that functions as the capstone graduation requirement for the Department of Communications Media at Fitchburg State College. This book is a response to those requests.

We take no false pride that the program described here is the only or even the best approach to providing professional experience to college students; we do know, however, that it has been successful for our students since the mid-1970s—long before the current interest in outcomes assessment, portfolio assessment, and other *en vogue* pedagogies. We also know from over 25 years of experience that internship programs of this breadth and depth are relatively rare in colleges and universities. A similar approach might very well work for the readers of this book and their institutions of higher education, too.

It is our belief that internships, as conceived in this book, are not particularly new; rather, they are a pedagogy that society, especially postindustrial western society, is returning to, as knowledge professions evolve more and more into what employees can do (*techne*), as opposed to a fixed set of information possessed by those employees (*episteme*). The distinction between these Aristotelian concepts is one of the foundations of this book. Teaching students the importance of lifelong learning has become a watchword at colleges and universities. Internships are one way of instilling the value in that practice early on in a young professional's life. This is another of this book's themes.

In many ways, this book is a beginning. We hope to provide a historical and theoretical foundation for internships as a valuable part of the academic experience. We also hope to provide useful suggestions to college faculty and administrators seeking to design

successful internship programs, as well as to corporate managers seeking to participate in the professional learning experiences that successful internship programs can provide. We realize, however, that this is an enormous task, and that one book-length work could never complete it. Accordingly, important work remains. Future research might inquire more deeply into the theoretical underpinnings of internships, particularly the roles of *techne*, *episteme*, *poiesis*, and *praxis* as they apply to learning and performance during internship experiences. Quantitative research might be designed that would provide cost-benefit comparisons between full-time and part-time internships, paid and unpaid internships, and internships that occur early in a student's academic career versus those that occur at the end. Other ideas, we hope, will be stimulated by reading this book. In closing, we bring our experiences to this book, and with them we acknowledge our biases. It is our hope that readers will evaluate the experiences, look past the biases, and find much here that they can use.

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