

Northwestern Externship Program (NEXT): The Power of Preparation

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Learning Outcomes

Students who participate in the NEXT program will (or will be able to)...

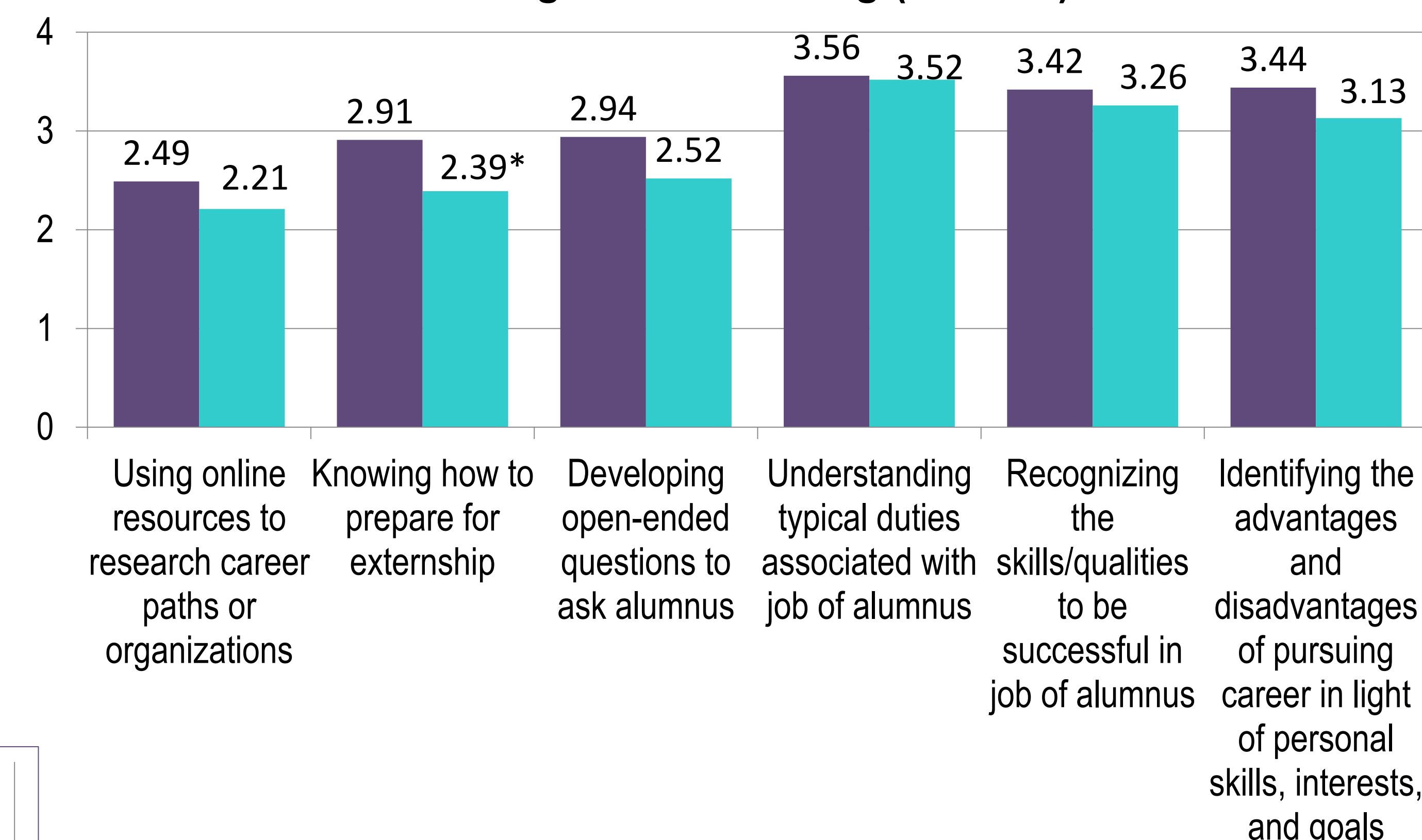
1. Use online resources to research career paths and/or organizations prior to their externship
2. List 3 things they can do to prepare for an externship
3. Formulate at least 5 open-ended questions to ask their alumnus during their externship
4. List the typical duties associated with the job of the alumnus they shadowed
5. Describe the skills/qualities needed to be successful in the job of the alumnus they shadowed
6. Articulate the advantages and disadvantages of pursuing a career in the industry they learned about through shadowing in light of their personal skills, interests and goals

Related to Division Learning Outcomes: *Personal Development* and *Cognitive & Practical Skills*

What is NEXT?

The Northwestern Externship Program (NEXT) is a shadowing program that offers current NU students the opportunity to accompany alumni on the job (in all parts of the country and outside the U.S.) in order to learn more about different professional fields. **537** students were matched.

A Comparison of Learning By Level of Training: Some Training vs. No Training (N = 136)

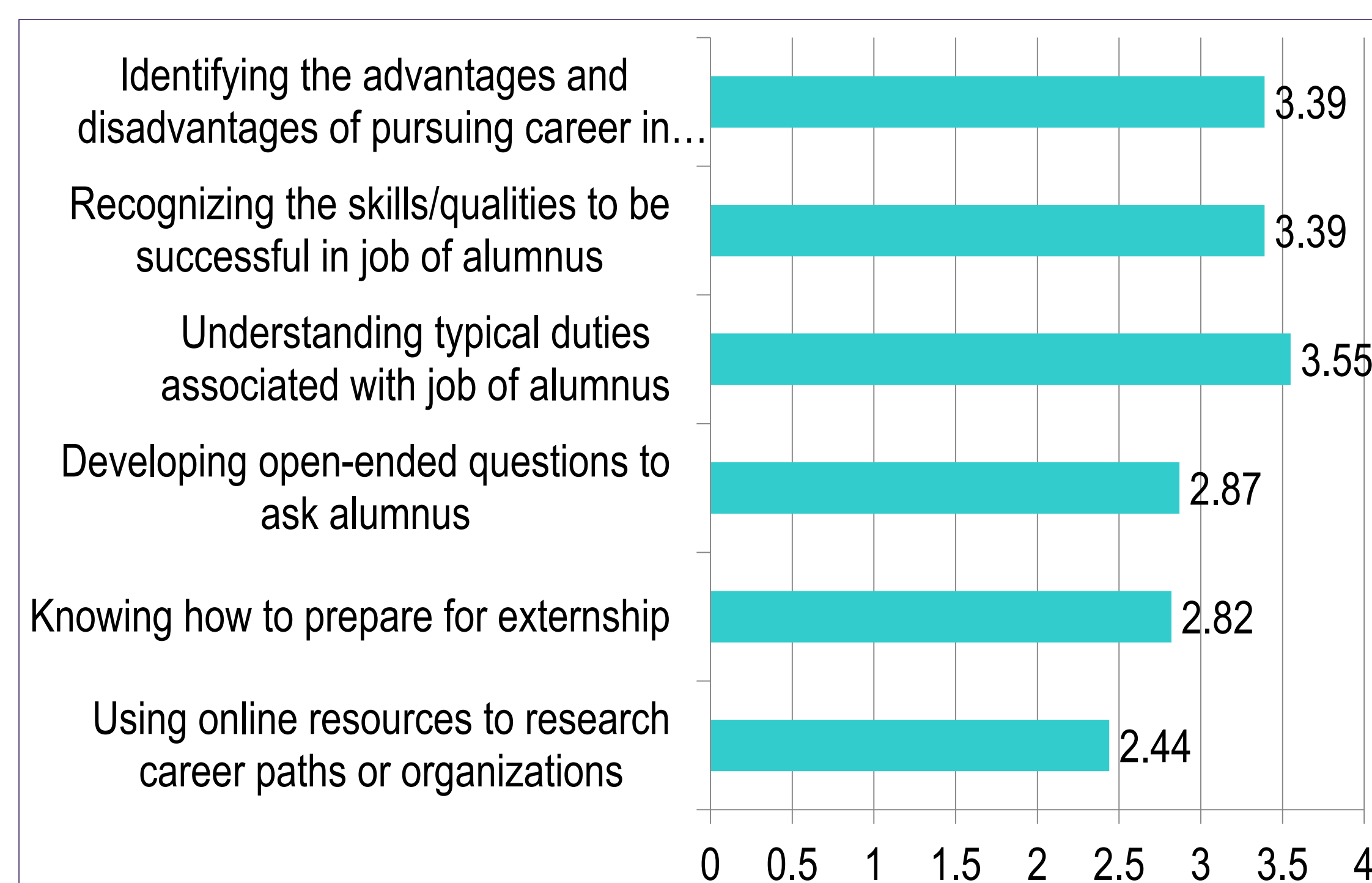


Demographic Characteristics of NEXT Participants & the Majority of NEXT Survey Respondents

	2014 – 2015 NEXT Participants (N = 537)	2014 – 2015 Survey Respondents (N = 90) ¹
Gender		
Male	202 (37.6%)	30 (33.3%)
Female	317 (59.0%)	56 (62.2%)
Unknown / Missing	18 (3.4%)	4 (4.4%)
Racial / Ethnic Background		
American Indian / Alaskan Native	2 (0.4%)	1 (1.1%)
Asian / Pacific Islander	107 (19.9%)	11 (12.2%)
African American / Black	26 (4.8%)	8 (8.9%)
Hispanic / Latino	34 (6.3%)	10 (11.1%)
White / Caucasian	215 (40.0%)	34 (37.8%)
Two or More Races	22 (4.1%)	2 (2.2%)
International	97 (18.1%)	16 (17.8%)
Unknown / Missing	34 (6.3%)	8 (8.9%)
Status		
Undergraduate	406 (75.6%)	63 (70.0%)
Graduate / Professional	115 (21.5%)	24 (26.7%)
Unknown / Missing	16 (3.0%)	3 (3.3%)

¹Of the 136 NEXT Survey respondents, 90 provided their name, which allowed us to determine their demographic characteristics.

Overall Learning Attributed to NEXT (N = 136)



Response options: 1 = very little/none, 2 = some, 3 = quite a bit, 4 = very much

Attended NEXT Training...

Preparing for an Externship...

"[Had I not attended the training] I might not have asked about lunch plans, the schedule of the day, and asking the person where to meet."

Use Online Resources to Research...

"It would have been embarrassing not to [research alumnus] ahead of time... They reinforced that in the training session."

Did Not Attend NEXT Training...

Use Online Resources to Research...

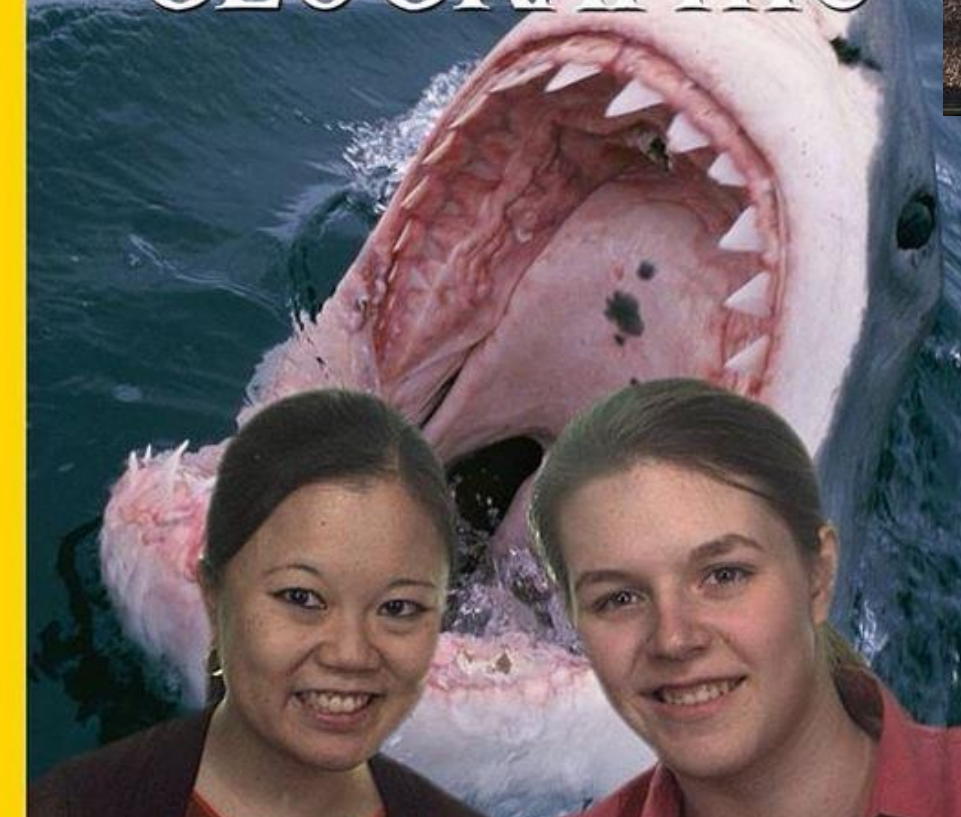
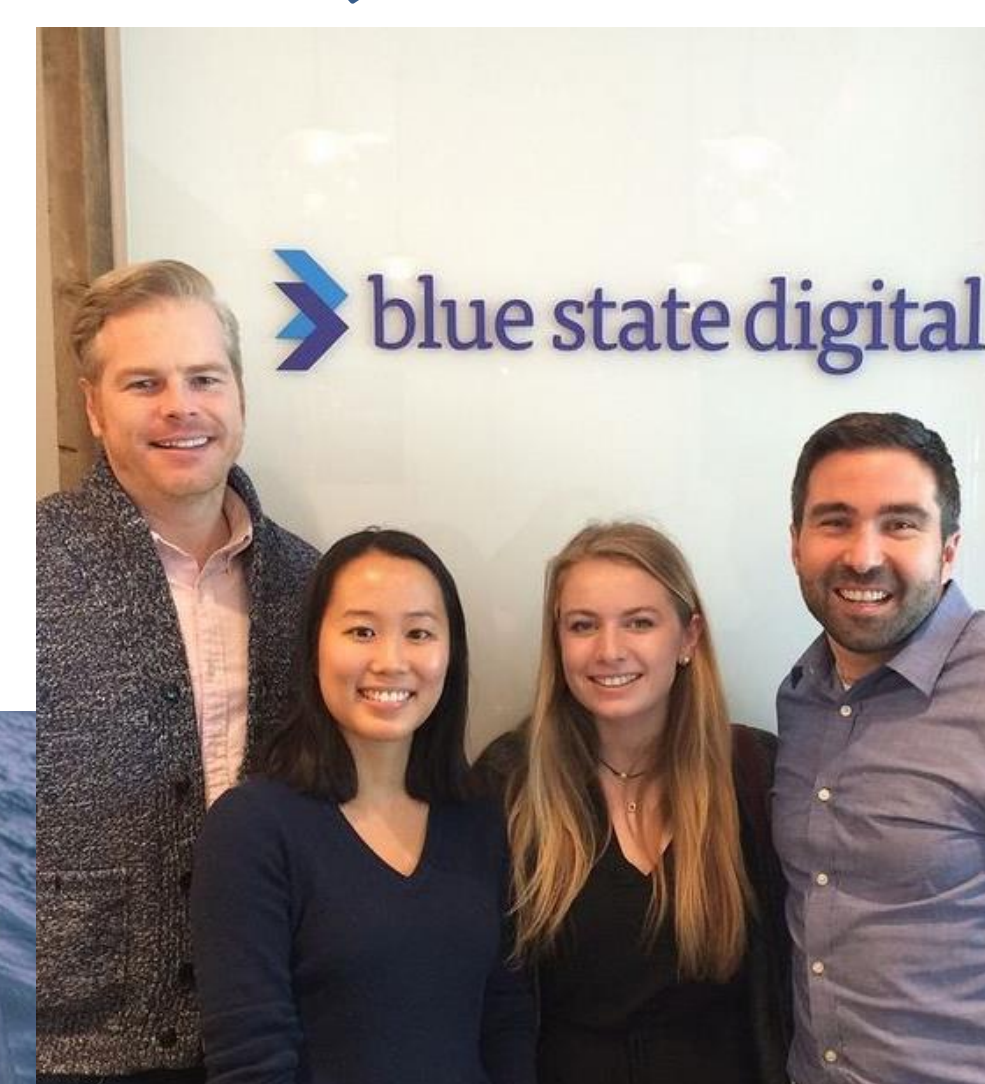
"I didn't use anything. Les Misérables doesn't really have a website."

Preparing for an Externship...

"The only thing that threw me off was I didn't know the structure of the program until I got there and realized I was meeting with almost every director level person in the company..."

"I learned SO MUCH from my externship... I can't believe how much I discovered from just one day."

"I had been feeling uncertain about what I wanted to do after college, and NEXT helped me see the different options I had professionally as a journalist with the skill sets I have."



"It has always been my dream to work at NASA, so this was a great opportunity to see what it's like to work there."

"My NEXT experience allowed me to see actual surgeries being performed, which strengthened my belief and desire to become a doctor."

Assessment Strategy

- Two Focus Groups 2 weeks after Externship
 - Groups divided by those who attended the in-person training and those who did not
- Post-Externship Online Survey

Teaching Strategy

- An Externship Training presented in-person (2 sessions, totaling 123 students)
- Externship Training materials sent via email

Next Steps

In planning for NEXT 2016, a few changes will be made to increase learning:

- There will be 4 training sessions offered (doubled from 2015)
- Recorded training session will be available on the website
- Staff will provide students with recommended alumni contact guidelines prior to the training