

RESPONSIBILITIES: INTERNSHIPS FOR CREDIT

Academic internships can truly enhance your education by expanding skill sets and exposure to real-world situations. In order for an internship or an experiential learning activity to be eligible for academic credit, several individuals must work together: the Student, a Faculty Sponsor, Career Services and the Site Supervisor (and Academic Advising/Registrar). The process, prerequisites, and requirements vary by major.

Below are general guidelines that are helpful in getting started:

❖ STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- The process of securing an opportunity and completing all of the necessary paperwork to register for academic credit can take several weeks or longer depending on your interest and/or company. Do not wait until the last minute!
- Not all internships are eligible for academic credit.
- In most cases, the student will be responsible for identifying the opportunity. We recommend that students work with Career Services for preparation and help with identifying opportunities.
- Students are responsible for identifying a faculty sponsor and working with them to understand the additional projects, papers, or meetings that may be required.
- Students are responsible for completing all departmental paperwork before registering for the academic credits, as well as meeting all of the financial responsibilities related to taking a course at the University.
- Students may only receive credit when enrolled for the internship course within the same semester they are performing the internship. Internships cannot be backdated.
- Minimum numbers of credits within a department are required in order for a student to be able to earn credit from that department. (*1 credit=40 hours, therefore a 3 credit internship=120 hours*).
 - MIS and IT students: 1 credit=50 hours, therefore a 3 credit internship=150 hours
- Note: If any student questions the legitimacy of an advertised internship (questionable interview practices, the expectation of investing personal money in an opportunity, being asked to work in a private residence, etc.), he or she should notify a Career Services staff immediately before committing to an opportunity.

❖ INTERNSHIP SITE SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- Your primary responsibility as an internship provider or supervisor is to provide an educational and professional opportunity for a student that will enable him or her to learn more about the career options and skill sets in your organization or industry. Think of yourself as a career mentor.
- Not all internships are eligible for academic credit. Contact Career Services for clarification.
- Your organization is responsible for abiding by policies set by the U.S. Department of Labor (*Fact Sheet #71: Internship Programs Under the Fair Labor Standards Act*) with regard to internship compensation.
- In some instances, academic departments may not allow a student who is earning academic credit to also receive compensation. (*Psychology*)
- If a student is seeking academic credit for your internship, he or she will be responsible for asking you to complete any necessary paperwork prior to the start of the internship in order to be eligible to register for the course credits. You may be asked to provide a signed letter for proof of employment.
- The student will also share with you and review forms that are requested by his or her academic department for mid-point and/or end-of-internship reviews/evaluations.

❖ FACULTY SPONSOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- Faculty sponsors abide by your departmental internship policies, guide students through the learning process, and supervise all assigned coursework, in addition to providing a final grade (S/N or letter grade)/credit. For some majors, the S/N grade is the only option.
- Faculty sponsors will be expected to sign off on the Internship Agreement Form & Class Permission Override before the student can register for the course.
- Faculty sponsors should be in contact with the Internship Site Supervisor on the intern's professionalism, performance and for consistent communication purposes.

- Complementary assignments may help to gauge how an internship is proceeding and provide an overall summary of the learning experience, as well as the skills obtained or enhanced. Faculty sponsors typically also require the student to submit a log of their hours (possibly signed) and any additional assignments you provide (ex. Journaling, written paper on overall experience, presentation, etc.)
- We recommend utilizing the Employer Evaluation Form of the student. This can be a resource for the student's performance and helpful feedback for the student's overall professional growth.

❖ CAREER SERVICES/INTERNSHIP COORDINATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide career guidance and assistance in the process of searching for internships along with when it makes sense to complete one, if it's required for your major, different types of experiential learning, if it should be done for experience or credit, etc.
- Can provide information on where students have interned previously, as well as student internship stories.
- Assist in the networking process between employer contacts and/or faculty.
- Provide support through the preparation process: assessments, creating accounts in job posting systems, resume and cover letter writing, interview preparation, professionalism and communication with employers.
- Facilitate the paperwork process prior to registration, including: Class Permission Override Form, Internship Agreement and any additional resources (Hours Log, Experiential Learning Charts, Internship for Credit Instructions, Internship Responsibilities, what to expect with additional coursework).
- Answer any questions and work individually with each student related to their interests/options.
- Provide support/guidance to faculty members or employers if questions arise.

❖ ACADEMIC ADVISOR/REGISTRAR RESPONSIBILITIES

- Your Academic Advisor, through reviewing your current transcript, can let you know where an internship would fit into your remaining course load. (ex. Requirement, elective, capstone)
- The Registrar will add the internship to your schedule once they receive your completed Class Permission Override Form and Internship Agreement (with ALL signatures) from you or electronically through Career Services.

For questions, contact Internship Coordinator, Kristen M. Stratton: kms298@pitt.edu, 724.836.7575