

# *College of Liberal & Applied Arts*

## **Undergraduate Internship Policy**

Internships are educational programs that allow students to gain practical work experience and academic credit at the same time. These are supervised programs of work and study. An internship is intended to provide students with the opportunity to apply what they are learning in academic courses to real-world situations. Please note that departments may have additional criteria for internships than those established at the college level.

As a general rule, fifty hours of work are required per unit of credit. Internships are appropriate for advanced undergraduate students working in fields that relate directly to their career or academic interests. Completing tasks for the academic portion of the internship (e.g., writing in the journal, identifying and completing readings, researching and writing the final paper) do not count toward the required internship hours.

### **Criteria used in approving internships:**

- There must be a clear and specified relationship to an academic program.
- Placement must be at a professional level of responsibility appropriate for university credit. This does not imply that interns are exempt from routine work.
- Internships are intended as new learning experiences that broaden student knowledge and skills. As such, internships will typically not be approved for students' existing workplaces. The internship site should enable students to develop and hone new skills.
- Internships involving potential conflict of interests are not appropriate, such as working in a small family business.
- Internships require prior approvals of the advisor, chair, and dean.
- Sponsoring a student internship is not required of the faculty and is solely based on the discretion of each individual faculty member.
- An internship may not normally substitute for other courses on the student's academic plan.
- Internships may be paid or unpaid.
- Credit will not be approved for any work performed prior to registration for the internship.

### **Internship Pre-Requisites**

1. Ordinarily, the student must have a cumulative 2.0 GPA or above, completed at least two upper-level courses in the major, and be of junior or senior standing.
2. The student must have the consent of a faculty member who is willing to serve as the sponsor for the internship. The faculty member, in consultation with the chair, may require the completion of specific supporting courses as pre-requisites to the internship.
3. Internship guidelines must be completed and signed by the student, the internship supervisor, and the sponsoring faculty member. At a minimum, the guidelines must set out the objectives, the work requirements and timetable, and the grading option and criteria. The chair and dean must approve the guidelines before the end of the registration period for the semester.

### **Procedures for Site Supervisors and Faculty Sponsors**

1. During the semester, the site supervisor and the faculty sponsor will communicate about the student and his or her learning experience.
2. Prior to start of the internship, the faculty member will provide a syllabus that addresses topics such as assigned readings and the required academic components of the course (e.g., journal, paper). Readings and other assignments must provide a theoretical basis for the academic integrity and integration of the internship experience.
3. The supervisor must agree to complete an evaluation of the student's work performance.

### **Intern Expectations**

1. The intern typically will consult with his or her faculty sponsor 3-4 times during the semester to discuss the internship experience and relevant academic reading materials and assignments. The intern will also notify the sponsor immediately of any concerns about the internship.
2. The student is required to keep a **weekly journal** that records activities, reactions, insights and linkages to theoretical perspectives or best practices. This journal/log should be shown to the faculty sponsor on a regular basis. No confidential information from the internship site should be included within the journal.
3. The student should complete a substantial project or paper as part of the internship.
4. The departments should encourage students to complete an assessment of the internship experience.