

INTERNSHIP IN COMMUNICATION ARTS

Student Guidelines

What follows is a guideline for how to successfully complete an internship in the Communication Arts Department. Please remember that internships are an important part of your undergraduate experience and the more contact you have with your Internship Coordinator—the better. To begin with...

1. You must successfully complete the pre-requisite— 71.250 Media/Society/Self.
2. Next, complete the "Internship Application Form" (posted outside the Department Office) and obtain one or more copies of the "Internship Contract". Complete the Application and attach a resume and turn it in to the Department Administrative Professional.
3. The Department Administrative Professional will create a file folder for you and pass it onto the Internship Coordinator. Students who have completed their forms can then review the *Internship Binders* in the Department Library that contain a variety of internship opportunities.
4. You should select at least three internship opportunities and make appointments to meet and talk with the Coordinators at each site—dress for a job interview!
5. At the meeting, come prepared to closely question the Coordinator about the specifics of the job. Afterward, you should sit down with the department's Internship Coordinator and review each internship's potential.
6. Next, complete the front page of the "Internship Contract" and have the Internship Coordinator (or the Department Chair) complete and sign the back page. The entire document can be faxed to the Department or returned by the student. (The completed form goes in the Internship Coordinator's folder along with the student's resume and application.) Please note: the internship site may also require your departmental Internship Coordinator's signature verifying that you will receive academic credit for the Internship.
7. Begin the Internship based upon the agreed upon hours. Routine communications should be established between you and your Internship Coordinator. Requirements for additional paperwork, assignments, and readings will be established by your Internship Coordinator prior to signing the Contract.

What follows are requirements your Internship Coordinator may have for overseeing your Internship...

Required Text. You may have a separate text that is both comprehensive in its suggestions/guidelines for job preparedness and for conduct on the job. You may be required to give reports or papers on their research on texts that provide additional insight into the specific area—i.e., Advertising, PR, Graphics, Photography, Video, Multimedia, Film, and/or Theater, etc. of the internship experience.

Internship Contact Hours. An internship consists of a minimum of 160 hours in a local business, industry, or organization—roughly 10-12 hours per week. Students are expected to be involved in the organization administration and utilization of media where the experience is pertinent to the students' area of interest. (Single course credits students will sign up for COMM495; two-course credits will sign up for COMM496 and pay the double course fee during the Summer Session.)

Faculty/Student Meeting Schedules. The faculty Internship Coordinator may elect to meet with the student in person to review and discuss their progress to-date. Typically these occur during the 1:30 Meeting Hours, or during faculty office hours. One meeting per month is an appropriate minimum. *Student attendance and participation in these meetings should be mandatory.*

Weekly Activity Summaries or E-journals. *A weekly activity report or some other form of written documentation must be submitted by email or upload to the Blackboard to the Internship Coordinator on or before a specified date.* This is an integral part of the process, enabling the Internship Coordinator to evaluate the internship experience in a summary fashion. When referring to co-workers, students should use full names and titles. Students may keep a separate "e-journal" of their experiences stating activities, level of responsibility, material learned, problems encountered and general observations. At the discretion of the Internship Coordinator, these entries can be posted on the course Blackboard website, submitted by email or CD

What Should The Reports Cover? What and how students are doing in the internship as well as a description their duties. How have duties changed from day-to-day? What is a typical day at the internship? What contacts have you developed within the organization as well as affiliations with other organizations? How does your position and department, if pertinent, relate to other personnel and departments in the organization?

Informational Interviews. As part of the overall experience, students can be required to conduct an interview with an employee of the company who is not their supervisor. Ideally, this person would hold a position of particular interest to the student.

Professor's Site Visit. As time permits, your Internship Coordinator may schedule a visit to your internship site to meet with you and the site coordinator to discuss your progress and evaluate your work responsibilities and resources.

Final Self-Evaluation Paper. *Due on an agreed upon date, the student must submit a final paper, 5000 words paper detailing the internship experience.* The paper should evaluate the internship as a learning and growth experience and may explore specific experiences such as: main strengths, greatest areas of improvements, individual potential, areas which need further improvement, initiative, cooperation, dependability, tact, maturity, communication skills and acceptance of constructive criticism.

Frank responses to the following are also useful:

- Did you feel prepared for your internship educationally, emotionally and professionally?
- What courses were most beneficial?
- Where there any areas lacking?
- How can the department and the college improve in these areas?
- Would you recommend this internship to another Communication Arts major?
- What were the strengths and weaknesses of the internship?
- What advice would you give to a student applying for this internship?
- Do you intend to focus your career in the area of your internship?
- During the internship, what have you specifically done to seek employment in this area?
- Has the internship influenced your future career decisions?
- How have you thanked the most helpful people at your internship?

Intern Supervisor's Evaluation. *The site coordinator must return a "Supervisor's Evaluation" to the Internship Coordinator in advance of submitting the final grades. This document should be on company letterhead (and a copy will be saved in a folder kept by the Department Secretary).*

Final Grade. A final grade for the internship must be submitted by the Internship Coordinator that is, usually, based on the total percentage of assignments, meetings, papers, evaluations, etc. The grading system should be given to the student in writing before the Internship begins—preferably in a "syllabus" or "course outline".

A final note: all students should come away from their internship with some form of documentation of their work—be it a resume videotape, tear sheets, draft (or final) website, DVD or other media—these provide students with their first "professional credentials".