

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Internship Packet

Updated April 2021

University College

DEFINITION OF AN ACADEMIC INTERNSHIP

A University College academic internship combines a supervised work experience with a structured academic learning plan for which a student earns academic credit. The student's substantive work and responsibilities within the work organization create a professional experience that supports academic and career goals. The faculty internship instructor and work-site supervisor collaborate to promote the student's critical thinking, through observation and reflection to foster intellectual, personal and professional growth.

The work-site organization determines if monetary compensation is available for the internship. The length of the internship varies depending upon academic and work-site minimum requirements. An internship is a work-based learning experience in a for-profit or non-profit or government setting. Some academic programs require an internship, while others offer students the option of scheduling an elective internship. At least forty-five (45) hours of work are required per credit (guided by Senate Policy 42-23 (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/42-00-acquisition-of-credit/#42-23>)). These hours may combine work-site activity and/or academic work such as trainings, journal writing, related research, and/or special projects. Internship instructors should be aware of any department specific guidelines for the awarding of credits for internship hours.

An internship offers a student the opportunity to apply academic knowledge in world-of-work situations, to explore a career choice, and to begin to establish a network of professional contacts. The intention of an internship is to acquire new knowledge and skills. If the student is already employed, they cannot use their current position for the internship. They must assume new responsibilities or obtain a new position that will demonstrate expertise in their field of study. Faculty instructors should work with the student to determine whether the internship experience (e.g., a new position or new responsibilities within a current position) is appropriate. If a pre-internship preparation course is required by the major, this course must be completed prior to registering for any internship credits.

For more information on careers and definitions of other experiential learning opportunities visit the following websites:

<https://studentaffairs.psu.edu/career/resources/internship-and-job-search>
<https://studentaffairs.psu.edu/career/virtual/policy>
<https://studentaffairs.psu.edu/involvement-student-life/service-leadership-opportunities/volunteer-opportunities>
<http://www.nsee.org/>

Please review the following websites for guidance on compensation, internships, and other employment related standards:

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/flsa>
<https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WHD/legacy/files/whdfs71.pdf>
<https://studentaffairs.psu.edu/employers/recruiting/policies>

Timeline of internship courses/credit

Students are only able to earn credit for internship hours that are taking place during the semester begin and end dates. These dates do not always align with class begin and end dates. Internship hours MUST only be completed during these dates to ensure financial and registration compliance. See: <https://www.registrar.psu.edu/faculty-staff/scheduling/class-scheduling/semester-begin-end-dates.cfm>

- Students may start an internship early or work beyond the boundaries of the semester at will, but those hours cannot count as internship hours earned for academic credit.
- Internship courses are treated like regular courses at Penn State and are subject to all course policies (e.g., deferred grades: <https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/47-00-48-00-and-49-00-grades/#48-40>)

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ACADEMIC INTERNSHIPS

Successful delivery of an academic internship occurs when an effective partnership is established among the key constituents: student, faculty internship instructor, work-site supervisor, Chief Academic Officer (CAO) or Director of Academic Affairs (DAA), Career Services professional and academic advisor. The roles that each one plays in the academic internship experience follow:

STUDENT:

- Register for the pre-internship course, if required for your major, during the semester preceding the planned registration for the academic internship and complete any other internship course prerequisites.
- With the assistance of the faculty internship instructor, the academic adviser, and/or the Career Services professional, investigate, identify and secure an internship experience that best meets educational and personal goals while adhering to University College guidelines, major prerequisites, and program requirements.
- Determine learning opportunities and educational objectives available through the internship and formulate your action plan with the assistance of the faculty Internship Instructor.
- Assess whether liability insurance is required and work with internship site to determine what type of insurance must be purchased.
- Adhere to professional and ethical standards as approved and required by the work-site and professional association.
- Students are responsible for registering for the required courses.
- Work with the faculty internship instructor and work site supervisor to complete and submit any necessary forms and/or documentation.
- Students are responsible for providing their own transportation to and from the internship site. *Students are strongly discouraged from transporting clients in their private vehicles and should understand the Penn State will not assume any responsibility in the event of an accident.*

FACULTY INTERNSHIP INSTRUCTOR:

In preparation for supervising student internships

- Guide students to do front-end exploration of internship opportunities, involving Career Services when appropriate for support.
- Collaborate with Career Services professional in an effort to curate and provide educational resources that might be helpful to the student engaged in the internship experience.
- Build strong work-site relationships, as appropriate.
- Teach pre-internship course as required by curriculum, if possible.
- Ensure that prerequisites are satisfied by the student prior to scheduling the internship course.
- Assist student in the identification of internship opportunities, although ultimate responsibility for locating a site resides with the individual student.
- Determine the appropriateness of a specific internship experience in the context of the student's academic major and career goals.
- Ensure that there is sufficient academic activity to merit the awarding of credit.
- Give final approval for internship, as determined appropriate by the internship instructor given departmental-specific guidelines.
- Coordinate necessary paperwork throughout the internship period including preparation of learning agreements and completion of evaluations.
- Work with the student and site to complete any necessary forms and/or documentation.
- Ensure that students obtain permission and register for internship credits per campus protocol (e.g., add form, email to registrar, etc.,).

- The internship instructor should maintain copies of documentation as required by the University's Records Retention Policy (AD-35; <https://policies.psu.edu/general-retention-schedule>).

During Internship

- Supply work-site supervisor with evaluation forms/framework, as appropriate.
- After consultation with work-site supervisor, determine grading rubric.
- Track student progress throughout the semester, consider having students supply time sheets to ensure that the student stays on track for hours required during the internship.
- Schedule at least one personal or electronic contact with work-site supervisor to establish a working relationship that will benefit the student; visit on-site when appropriate or required by major.
- Collaborate with Career Services professional and University College colleagues throughout the duration of the internship experience, as appropriate.
- Evaluate student performance, assign grade, and post grade by grade reporting deadline.

WORK-SITE SUPERVISOR/COMPANY OR AGENCY:

- Participate in the selection of student interns.
- Collaborate with faculty internship instructor to establish specific learning objectives; identify outcomes or expected products.
- Work with the faculty internship instructor and student to complete any necessary forms and/or documentation and to determine grading rubric. Respond to any inquiries from the internship instructor (e.g., verification of internship and/or hours completed).
- Set goals for internship experience as supported by organizational leadership.
- Provide a professional environment conducive to student learning.
- Offer an orientation program and supply necessary resources to support student success.
- Help student build professional work-site relationships.
- Supervise the student throughout the internship experience at the worksite.
- Provide supervision, guidance, and feedback.
- Support the student in identifying and developing relevant professional competencies.
- Report immediately to the faculty internship instructor any student problem that develops.
- Work directly with the faculty internship instructor to evaluate the student performance; preferably multiple times throughout a 15-week experience to ensure student stays on track to accomplish learning and work objectives. Examples of evaluation timeline may occur (1) preliminarily during the first few weeks, (2) at a mid-point in the internship experience, and (3) at the end of the experience.

CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER (CAO) or DIRECTOR OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS (DAA)

- Keep abreast of the faculty internship instructor's involvement with internships.
- Work with other offices (e.g., Development, University Relations, Alumni Society) to identify possible internship placement sites and opportunities.
- Provide support for faculty internship instructor and assist with the management of the internship process.
- Enable appropriate scheduling of internship preparation course.
- Address student issues not able to be resolved by the Internship Instructor (Academic Integrity hearings, student concerns, etc.).

CAREER SERVICES PROFESSIONAL:

- Assist student with the identification of internship opportunities, although ultimate responsibility for locating a site resides with the individual student.
- On a limited basis and at the invitation of the faculty internship instructor, serve as a guest speaker in class on topics related to the internship search process.
- Educate student on the internship search process including researching potential sites and developing cover letters, resumes and interview skills.
- Promote job and career information fairs to students.

ACADEMIC ADVISOR:

- Check to be sure that course prerequisites have been satisfied before registering for the internship credits.
- Informally assist student advisee in identification of internship opportunities and procedures.
- Informally keep abreast of student advisee's internship progress.
- Continue to maintain contact with student advisee.

The role and responsibility of the University and the Office of the Vice President of Commonwealth Campuses:

Insurance and Affiliation Agreements

- If students need assistance in obtaining **professional liability insurance**, internship instructors are NOT allowed to make specific recommendations. They are permitted to suggest that students look into insurance offerings by discipline-specific professional organizations and/or the student's own private insurance carriers. Specific recommendations are not to be given.
 - For questions about insurance coverage needs, faculty instructors can contact Risk Management, Office of the Corporate Controller (814-865-6307; <https://controller.psu.edu/risk-management>).
 - Students should work with their work site to ensure coverage is sufficient.
- Faculty, advisers, DAA/CAO's, and Chancellors are NOT permitted to sign official **affiliation agreements** on behalf of the University. If a site requires an affiliation agreement, the internship instructor should work on behalf of the student with the Office of General Counsel (814-867-4088; eus18@psu.edu) to obtain the necessary approvals and signature.
 - Note that affiliation agreements are different than student-specific forms (e.g., registration forms, learning agreements).