

# XI. INTERNSHIP INFORMATION

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## **Introduction: What is an Internship?**

“An internship is a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in professional fields they are considering for career paths; and give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent.”

*-The National Assoc. of Colleges & Employers (NACE)*

An internship is a supervised work experience related to a student’s major or career goal for which he/she can earn academic credit. Important elements structured into the experience, which distinguish it from a short-term job or volunteer work, are an intentional self-directed learning strategy, reflection - both verbal and written, , and an emphasis on professional development.

Internships should:

Personally: Boost a student’s maturity and self-confidence; improve human relations skills; prepare for life after graduation; integrate faith and values with work; and promote a greater clarity about career decisions.

Academically: Integrate classroom theory with real-life experiences; understand the relevance of course work; increase motivation to learn;

Professionally: Explore a potential career field; develop career-related skills and abilities,; gain professional experience; observe professional people and behavior; build a network of professional contacts, potentially developing mentoring relationships; gain a competitive edge for employment or graduate school admission.

## **Why Experience An Internship For Academic Credit?**

- **Fulfillment of ELI requirement**
- Academic accountability - many sites only host students who are receiving academic credit for their experience
- Corresponding coursework helps promotes reflection on and development of personal and professional skills
- Notation on transcript
- Legal protection under Messiah University liability policy
- Support, advocacy and guidance from Internship Faculty Advisor

## **What’s the Difference Between a Practicum and an Internship?**

- Practica are conducted through academic departments and are supervised by faculty. Practica do not automatically meet a student’s ELI requirement. This should be verified with the sponsoring department.
- Internships for credit are conducted through the Career and Professional Development Center (CPDC) and are supervised by CPDC staff.

## **When Can a Student do an Internship?**

- Fall, Spring, J-Term, and Summer

## **What is the Credit/Hour Structure for Internships?**

1 Credit Hour = 40 hours of work over the semester

2 options: INTE 391 and INTE 394

- INTE 391 = 1-3 credit hours
- INTE 394 = 4-12 credit hours

Notes:

- 1) Internships are normally letter-graded (A-F). INTE 391 (1-3 credits) internships can be done Pass/Fail if the internship is not required by the student's major
- 2) No academic credit can be approved retroactively for any experience.

## **Who is Eligible?**

Students who meet the following criteria are eligible:

- 1) Maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or above. Students with a GPA lower than 2.5 may submit a petition form through the CPDC to be considered for participation in the program.
- 2) Completed at least a minimum of 24 credits

## **What is involved in the Internship Class?**

The internship class is primarily online and is meant to ensure that students reflect purposefully on their experiential learning. An internship faculty advisor from the CPDC facilitates the course over the semester. It involves:

- Learning objectives and outcomes for the experience
- Assignments involving work reflection logs, resume writing, building a LinkedIn profile, an executive summary of the experience
- Evaluations by on-site internship supervisor

## **Does the Course Look Different if a Second Internship for Credit is done?**

Yes, the course has some of the same components but no redundant assignments. Also, data shows increased personal and professional benefits to students who have more than one experience.

## **Why Would a Student Pay for Credits to do a Summer Internship?**

- The course component of the internship experience is delivered in the same way as other summer courses, with an instructor providing grading and feedback
- Students receive the benefit of the educational course content rooted in meaningful reflection as well as support and advocacy through the institution
- Credit price for summer course is reduced
- For an internship to fulfill a student's ELI requirement, it must be credit-bearing
- There are more geographic possibilities because the student doesn't have to be on campus

## **What are the Parameters that Comprise a Quality Internship?**

- The experience must be an extension of the classroom: a learning experience that provides for applying the knowledge gained in the classroom. It must not be simply to advance the operations of the employer or be the work that a regular employee would routinely perform.

- The skills or knowledge learned must be transferable to other employment settings.
- The experience has a defined beginning and end, and a professional-level job description with desired qualifications.
- There are clearly defined learning objectives/goals related to the professional goals of the student's academic coursework.
- There is supervision by a professional with expertise and educational and/or professional background in the field of the experience.
- There is routine feedback by the experienced supervisor.
- There are resources, equipment, and facilities provided by the host employer that support learning objectives/goals.
- \*Parameters defined by the National Association of Colleges & Employers (NACE).

### **What is an Advisor's Responsibility in Assisting the Student?**

- Assist student in identifying the type of internship for which they would be academically prepared
- Check Degree Audit to review if ELI requirement met, internship/practicum credit met, or if an internship can be done for elective credit
- Encourage a student to plan early for an internship (3-6 months, minimally), depending on their commitments and scheduling challenges (i.e. athletes, musicians...)
- Discuss layering of experiences and benefits of using internships to explore a variety of career options
- Ensure student's understanding about internship/practicum coursework
- Confirm minimum GPA of 2.5 – otherwise department must be prepared to provide an alternative if a student's petition is denied by the CPDC
- Collaborate with CPDC on identifying quality sites

### **What are Legal/Ethical issues Pertinent to Internships?**

Federal law says that if an employment relationship is deemed to be present, the intern must be paid at least the minimum wage and appropriate overtime compensation. However, new court rulings have also expanded protections for unpaid internships. But they still require unpaid internships to (1) be designed primarily for educational purposes and (2) benefit the intern first and foremost.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Messiah University is committed to making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For students planning an off-campus experience, such as a practicum or internship, the University does not have authority over cooperating agencies and cannot therefore guarantee that a student's unique needs can be accommodated. The University will make every reasonable effort to locate a suitable site that does offer the needed accommodations. Students for whom internships are being requested must demonstrate an ability to meet the essential skills of a specific assignment, with or without assistive technology.

### **How do Students Locate an Internship, and what Assistance is offered?**

- Personal network: faculty, friends and family, Messiah University alumni
- Employer connections through CPDC events: Career Expo, Pizza with Professionals series, Into the City, Mocktail Networking Night, etc.
- Personal assistance through career coaching appointments in the CPDC

- Employer directory and internship postings on Handshake, the CPDC’s job/internship portal
- Online Job Search Sites – see the CPDC website for internship/job search resources

### **How Does a Student Register for Credit?**

Students need to start the registration process through the Career & Professional Development Center. The internship registration link is on the homepage of the CPDC <https://www.messiah.edu/career> Once the site and student have been approved, the CPDC will submit and override in McSquare to allow a student to register for INTE 391 or INTE 394. After a student is registered, the course will open in CANVAS. The registration deadlines can be found at [https://www.messiah.edu/info/23064/internship\\_program/](https://www.messiah.edu/info/23064/internship_program/):

### **International Internships?**

Students are able to do an internship internationally. The approval process takes longer as there is more involved in approving a site. A student should ideally start the registration three months before the international internship.

International students may do an internship for credit during the summer semester in their home country

### **Can International Students do Internships for Credit While in School Here?**

An international student can participate in Curricular Practical Training: Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is a type of employment authorization for students in undergraduate F-1 status who wish or need to engage in off-campus employment in their field of study when it is an integral component of their curriculum. It is important for students to remember that CPT is a benefit of the F-1 visa status, not a right. Permission for international students has several more steps that are required and process is started with the Intercultural Office:

[https://www.messiah.edu/info/20703/immigration/2885/curricular\\_practical\\_training\\_cpt](https://www.messiah.edu/info/20703/immigration/2885/curricular_practical_training_cpt)

### **An Employer has contacted me directly about an Internship Opportunity – What Should I do?**

- Referral to CPDC staff for assistance
- Consider sharing from the CPDC website: “Starting and Maintaining a Quality Internship Program” guide

### **How can Faculty Access the Opportunities on Handshake – College’s Job & Internship Database?**

- Carol Hall, **Administrative** Assistant in the CPDC: [CHall@messiah.edu](mailto:CHall@messiah.edu) for directions and access

### **For More Information:**

Contact the Career and Professional Development Center [career@messiah.edu](mailto:career@messiah.edu); 717-691-6016  
 Joy Fea, Assistant Director for Internships & Faculty Partnerships, CPDC, [fea@messiah.edu](mailto:fea@messiah.edu)