

# THINKING OF AN INTERNSHIP

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**Tips & Strategies**



CAREER AND  
PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT CENTER

[Messiah.edu/internship](https://messiah.edu/internship)

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# What is an Internship or Practicum?

Internships and practica are credit-bearing experiential learning options at Messiah University that allow you to explore career options while gaining professional experience that is desirable by employers. All internships that are completed through the Career & Professional Development Center automatically fulfill a student's Experiential Learning (ELI) requirement (\*this applies to students who started attending Messiah beginning in the fall of 2015 and after). The website has more details on the differences between an internship and practicum.



## What are the benefits?

### Personal

- Boost maturity and self-confidence
- Enjoy greater clarity about career decisions
- Improve skills for life after graduation
- Reflect on ways to integrate your faith and values with work

### Professional

- Explore a potential career field
- Develop career-related skills and abilities
- 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

### Academic

- Integrate classroom theory with real-life experiences
- Understand the relevance of your course work
- Use resources that are not available on campus
- Experienced virtually anywhere in the world
- Prepare you for graduate school
- Potentially help you to finish college early by interning for academic credit over summer

## Why should I do it for credit?

1. Many sites require academic **accountability** so you are required to do the experience for credit
2. Think about, and develop, **personal and professional skills** which will help you succeed in your career and lifelong learning
3. Open doors to **graduate school** by having an internship recorded on your transcript
4. Protect yourself **legally** under the college's liability policy
5. Process **opportunities and challenges** through personal interaction with peers and faculty
6. Develop a Web Portfolio, which highlights your **self-directed learning** ability - great for job and graduate school interviews!
7. Internship Faculty Advisor is available to provide you with guidance, direction and help with resolving difficulties.

# How many credits can I earn?

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## INTE391 (Sophomores, Junior, and Seniors) – Letter graded or Pass/Fail

| <u>Credits</u> | <u>Hours per Semester</u> | <u>Coursework</u>  |
|----------------|---------------------------|--|
| 1 Credit       | 40 hours total            | One in-person class meeting; regular online coursework in CANVAS |
| 2 Credits      | 80 hours total            | One in-person class meeting; regular online coursework in CANVAS |
| 3 Credits      | 120 hours total           | One in-person class meeting; regular online coursework in CANVAS |

## INTE394 (Juniors and Seniors) – Letter graded

| <u>Credits</u> | <u>Hours per Semester</u> | <u>Hours/Week</u>     | <u>Coursework</u>   |
|----------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| 4 credits      | 160 hours                 | 13 hours/week minimum | For all 394 credits, there will be two in-person class meetings and regular online coursework in CANVAS |
| 5 credits      | 200 hours                 | 17 hours/week minimum |   |
| 6 credits      | 240 hours                 | 20 hours/week minimum |   |
| 7 credits      | 280 hours                 | 23 hours/week minimum |   |
| 8 credits      | 320 hours                 | 27 hours/week minimum |   |
| 9 credits      | 360 hours                 | 30 hours/week minimum |   |
| 10 credits     | 400 hours                 | 33 hours/week minimum |   |
| 11 credits     | 440 hours                 | 37 hours/week minimum |   |
| 12 credits     | 480 hours                 | 40 hours/week minimum |   |

**\*\*Sample Syllabi for INTE391 and INTE394 can be viewed online at [messiah.edu/internship](http://messiah.edu/internship)**

## Important questions to consider...

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**1. *I'm not sure what kind of internship I want. Where do I start? Answer the following questions to better direct your search:***

- What industries are most appealing to you (e.g. arts, healthcare, sports, business, human services, education, government, non-profit, technology, public relations)? Are there specific companies that pique your interest?
- What type of job functions interest you (e.g. accounting, case management, counseling, public relations, engineering, research)?
- Are there particular causes that you care about?
- What specific skills and experiences do you bring to the table?
- What type of work do you want to learn more about?
- What type of work environment/culture do you seek (e.g. small/large, for-profit/non-profit, urban/rural, modern/traditional)?

***To learn more about internship opportunities, gain ideas from:***

- Your academic advisor and other faculty in your major.
- Internship postings on the CPDC's job and internship board, "[Handshake.](#)"
- [Informational interviews](#) with professionals in your field of interest.
- An appointment with a career coach in the CPDC.

**2. *Do I need to have my own transportation?***

Not having your own transportation definitely impacts your pool of possibilities. Shuttle services may be available to and from the Harrisburg Campus. You can also check out availability of the campus Zipcar.

### 3. **What is my GPA and do I have credits to use toward an internship?**

In order to participate in an Internship through the Career and Professional Development Center (CPDC) your GPA must be **2.5 or higher**. If your GPA is lower, you might want to discuss the possibility of doing a practicum with your academic advisor.

At Messiah, you can use up to 16 credits toward experiential learning (internships and practica, specifically). Check your degree audit and discuss with your advisor how many credits you might want to use toward an internship. Also, find out if you need approval from your academic department if an internship is required for your major.

### 4. **Is my résumé ready to send out?**

If you haven't already done so, review the [Résumé and Cover Letter Guide](#) in the CPDC. After you have a draft ready, come by the CPDC for Drop-In Hours to have your document reviewed.

## More on finding an internship

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Many organizations have established internship programs. Start by looking on company websites in sections such as *Careers*, *Human Resources*, *Internships*, or *Contacts*.

If you are considering a company that has never hosted an intern before, you may introduce them to Messiah's internship program by sharing our guide for employers: [Starting and Maintaining an Internship Program](#).

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR FINDING AN INTERNSHIP

#### 1. **Your Personal Network**

- ❑ Ask family, friends, and faculty to help you brainstorm opportunities in your target geographic area. Research tells us that between 60-80% of jobs/internships are found through personal relationships.
- ❑ **Messiah alumni** are a great resource for finding opportunities. Locate alumni working for companies of interest through [LinkedIn](#). Reach out and ask to do an informational interview.



#### 2. **The Career and Professional Development Center Web Resources**

- ❑ View resources in the "Job Search" section of the CPDC's website.
- ❑ Check out the CPDC's job and internship board, "[HANDSHAKE](#)"

#### 3. **Internet Search Engines**

- ❑ Type in a simple phrase such as "History Internship in Washington, DC"

#### 4. **Professional Organizations for Your Career Field** – ask for recommendations of associations from faculty.

# What to do after identifying potential sites

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1. **Make a list of potential sites you will be applying to and keep track of their important information, any contact you have had with them, and what materials you have sent them.**

◆ Important Tip: [HANDSHAKE](#) – Messiah University job and internship database allows you to track information and applications to all your potential sites within the system.

2. **Important information that you need to know about each organization you are applying for:**

| Be sure to read the organization's website thoroughly. |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Organization Information</b>                        | What is its mission? What are its goals?   |
| <b>Internship Availability</b>                         | Have they hosted interns? When are internships available?  |
| <b>Job Description</b>                                 | What do interns do? How are they utilized?   |
| <b>Requirements</b>                                    | What qualifications/eligibility criteria are desired?<br>What clearances are needed? – See Attachment "Clearances"         |
| <b>Hours</b>   | How many hours a week do they expect vs. what you need to work?<br>Is the organization willing to work with your schedule? |
| <b>Application Procedures</b>                          | What materials are needed? Deadlines?  |
| <b>Academic Credit</b>                                 | Will they work with the college's academic requirements?   |
| <b>Compensation</b>                                    | (Exercise caution when/how you ask about this.)  |

3. **Contact Employers – there are several situations in which you might need to contact an employer: See the website for [sample phone conversations](#)**

- You need more information about a potential internship
- You are following up after you have sent a résumé and would like to confirm that they have received your materials; checking to see if they need any additional information from you
- You are inquiring about the timeline of their internship hiring process

4. **Apply to internships by sending your résumé and any requested supporting materials**

## Accepting an offer, confirm details

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- Internship job description
- Proposed start and end dates; weekly schedule
- Supervisor contact information (Important! A supervisor cannot be a relative!)
- Appropriate attire
- Parking (if necessary)
- Compensation (if provided)



# How do I register my internship for credit?

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- Go to the CPDC’s website, and click on “Undergraduate Students”, then go to “Internship Info, Registration & Funding” and click “here”. Then go under students and click “[Internship and credit-bearing course registration – click here](#)”.

In order to register, you must have the following information for the internship you have obtained:

- ◆ All organization information including valid address
- ◆ Site supervisor name, title, phone, and email
- ◆ Firm start and end dates
- ◆ Number of hours you plan to work per week
- ◆ Number of credits you wish to earn

- Once your registration has been approved by the CPDC, you will receive an email with instructions about how to complete your registration for the credit through the Registrar’s office.

- When you register an internship for credit it automatically designates the ELI requirement.
- Within a few days of receiving your registration form, a confirmation letter will be emailed to your site supervisor from the Career and Professional Development Center.

**Make sure to check registration deadlines on the CPDC website homepage.**

*Because the internship is accompanied by a course, we must adhere to the College’s drop/add date deadlines.*

## SUMMER INTERNSHIPS

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### NOTE ON SUMMER INTERNSHIPS:

Because internships are academic experiences with accompanying coursework, there is a tuition cost for the credits just like any other course offered during the summer. During the fall and spring, the cost is part of your semester tuition (except for overload credits). During the summer, you or your parents will be billed for the cost of the credits you choose to earn.

- If you are doing an internship in the summer, the cost of credits is normally one-third the cost during the regular academic year; you will be billed for this separate from the normal academic year.
- Summer housing is your responsibility if you will be away from home.

# Final steps – you’re almost there!

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- Save the date for the **Mandatory Intern Orientation Class** facilitated by the CPDC.
- Ask your site supervisor for a job description, if you have not already received one.
- Watch on CANVAS for the internship course to open for the semester.

## When clearances are required for internships

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- Students applying for an internship with a significant likelihood of regular contact with children in the form of care, guidance, supervision or training are often required to obtain FBI, Criminal, and Child Abuse History Clearances.
- To obtain clearances, you will be asked to submit past and current personal information, including all previous addresses and names of people with whom you have lived.

### FBI Clearance

The Department of Public Welfare is utilizing Cogent Systems to process fingerprint-based FBI record checks. The fingerprint-based background check is a multiple step process. The Cogent Systems website <https://uenroll.identogo.com/>, allows individuals to apply online, as well as provides detailed information regarding the application process. The cost of obtaining the FBI clearance is \$28. After applying online you will be required to be fingerprinted. The Cogent website provides options for where to have the fingerprinting done.



### Criminal Record Check

Using the link below to PATCH, created by the Pennsylvania State Police, a requester can apply for a criminal background check on an individual (in this case, yourself). There is a fee, but the site accepts credit cards. If there is “No Record,” a certificate is returned immediately. Print this certificate.

<https://epatch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp>

### Child Abuse History Clearance

This form can be completed online at: <http://www.dhs.pa.gov>

There are directions on the website for paper submission if you cannot submit electronically.