

## *Credit-Bearing Internships*

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As defined in the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) Position Statement on U.S. Internships (<http://www.naceweb.org/about/membership/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 [they also] give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent.*

To ensure that an experience—whether it is a traditional internship or one conducted remotely or virtually—is educational, and thus eligible to be considered a legitimate internship by the NACE definition, all the following criteria must be met:

- 1. 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.*
- 2. The skills or knowledge learned must be transferable to other employment settings.*
- 3. The experience has a defined beginning and end, and a job description with desired qualifications.*
- 4. There are clearly defined learning objectives/goals related to the professional goals of the student's academic coursework.*
- 5. There is supervision by a professional with expertise and educational and/or professional background in the field of the experience.*
- 6. There is routine feedback by the experienced supervisor.*
- 7. There are resources, equipment, and facilities provided by the host employer that support learning objectives/goals.*

Academic credit is awarded for internships based on the academic work done in support of the internship experience. Moreover, all credit-bearing internships must be overseen by an Allegheny faculty member who will design and grade the academic assignments for the internship.

**Credit Hours.** Internships may be taken for one, two, three, or four semester credit hours unless the course description states otherwise. To receive four semester credit hours of academic credit, a student must work a minimum of 160 hours for the partner institution over the course of the internship. For an eight-week summer program, this corresponds to 20 hours per week. During an academic semester, the

work required weekly will depend on the length of the internship but will typically be in the range of 11-16 hours per week. Internships worth fewer than four credits require proportionately fewer hours of work for the partner institution (i.e., 40 hours per academic credit awarded).

**Graded vs. Credit/No Credit.** All internships that are offered on a regular basis should have designated course numbers and descriptions in the *Allegheny Academic Bulletin*. If an internship *must* be taken on the letter grade basis, or if it may *only* be taken Credit/No Credit, the course description should so state. In the absence of a stated restriction in the course description, internships – like other courses – are assumed to be taken on a letter-grade basis unless a student opts to take the internship on the Credit/No Credit basis.

**Internship Approval.** Before the internship begins, the student, the instructor, and the supervisor from the partner institution should draw up an agreement that clearly sets out the learning goals and professional expectations for the internship. Each party should retain a copy (paper or electronic) of the agreement for at least the duration of the internship. If not included in the agreement, the instructor should also provide a course syllabus with the internship assignments, deadlines, and general grading criteria. Students must also register for the internship in order to receive academic credit. Registration for internships must be completed prior to participation in the internship; see Internship Registration under “Academic Regulations and Policies” in the *Bulletin* for details.

### **Academic Components**

The following guidelines list the *minimal* expectations for a student completing a credit-bearing internship; the expectations should be modified appropriately based on the number of credits to be awarded.

**Reflective Component.** The student should reflect regularly on the internship experience and how it connects with what s/he has learned at Allegheny. Evidence of such reflection may take the form of a written journal reviewed by the instructor, a blog, reflective paper(s) totaling at least three pages in length, or comparable assignments.

**Research Component.** For a four-credit internship, the student should read at least two academic books or ten scholarly articles (or the equivalent in the field of study) that relate directly to the internship focus. The works must be assigned or approved by the instructor. For internships worth less than four credits, this requirement should be adjusted proportionally. For example, a student completing a two-credit internship might read one book or five articles (or the appropriate equivalent).

**Presentation Component.** For a four-credit internship, the student should present a formal communication that integrates the research component with the knowledge gained during the internship. The presentation may take the form of written paper(s) totaling at least twelve pages, an oral presentation of at least 20 minutes, a Web site of comparable scope, or any other equivalent form. For internships worth less than four credits, this requirement should be adjusted proportionally. For example, a student completing a two-credit internship might write a six-page paper or give a 10-minute presentation, etc.