



Academic Internship Program Guide

What Is an Academic Internship at Clark?

An academic internship is a credit-bearing, career-related work experience of limited duration in which an individual takes on responsible roles outside of the traditional university environment. Internships may take place in a nonprofit organization, a government office, or a for-profit business and must include training and supervision. Depending on the employer, some internship positions are paid. This valuable form of professional training provides students with the opportunity to test their career interests in an off-campus setting. Rising sophomores, juniors, or seniors may earn academic credit for internships during the fall, spring, or summer terms.

ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS

In order to receive approval for a one-unit internship, your cumulative GPA must be at least 2.75; for a two-unit internship, your GPA must be at least 3.0.

FINDING AN INTERNSHIP

It is your responsibility to find an internship. A Career Development staff member can guide you through your internship search and assist you with:

- Advice, research assistance, contacts, and internship leads.
- Résumé, cover letter, and interview preparation.

Does the Internship Have to Be Major Related?

While academic internships are usually done in an area related to your major, this is not required. Often, internship experiences may help you develop skills that bridge the gap between your major and a possible career choice. If you wish to do an academic internship that is not connected to your major, you will need to identify a Faculty Sponsor in the discipline most closely connected to the internship you wish to pursue.

Internship Resources:

Start your search by logging on to Handshake, clicking on “Resources” and reviewing the document titled “Job & Internship Search Strategies”.

Refer to the Career Services handout entitled “Career Resources” for additional search options, or go to the link here: <http://www2.clarku.edu/offices/career/resources/index.cfm>

Internship Organization Criteria:

- The organization must be in a business-zoned area, which means the internship is in a public setting and not a private home.
- You must have a schedule that allows you to work a minimum of 140 hours on-site throughout the semester for each unit you wish to receive (one unit = one class worth of credit). This is equivalent to approximately 10 hours per week for a 14-week semester. Only the hours completed during the semester will count. You must record all hours on the time sheet, and the cumulative hours must be approved by your Site Supervisor at the end of the semester.
- No more than 25 percent of your internship duties may be clerical in nature.

Can I Receive Credit if It Is a Paid Internship?

As long as your internship meets the internship organization criteria (above), you may be paid and receive credit for your internship.

APPLYING FOR CREDIT

Step 1: Identify a Site Supervisor

The Site Supervisor should be well-versed in your area of concentration, have professional standing, and hold, minimally, a bachelor's degree. It is usually in your best interest to have only one Site Supervisor. If this is not possible, try to negotiate for one primary supervisor to coordinate your work.

Site Supervisor's Responsibilities:

- Develops a clear description of your assigned duties.
- Assigns you challenging, progressively responsible tasks; teaches you about the field; discusses avenues of preparation and career paths; assists you in building a professional network; and, in general, serves as a mentor.
- Meets with you on a daily or, at a minimum, a weekly basis to critique and correct your work.
- Completes a mid-semester and final evaluation from Career Services, assessing your performance. (Only one evaluation will be completed in the summer.)

Once you have found a Site Supervisor, you will be asked to provide all internship information on your online application, in which case, an email will be sent to your Site Supervisor for verification.

Step 2: Identify a Faculty Sponsor

A Faculty Sponsor may be a full-time or part-time Clark faculty member who works with you throughout the internship to ensure academic validity and to evaluate the success of the internship from an academic perspective. The sponsor's academic specialty should be as close as possible to the area in which you are doing your internship. However, the faculty sponsor does not have to be your Faculty Advisor.

Faculty Sponsor's Responsibilities:

- Helps structure your academic component to complement the internship.
- Reviews your assigned tasks.
- Meets with you regularly, at least once for every 20 hours worked, to discuss your progress.
- Assigns and evaluates your academic component and submits a credit/no credit grade.

Step 3: Develop an Academic Component for the Internship with Your Faculty Sponsor

The academic component is assigned by your Faculty Sponsor, however, this is something you should discuss and develop with your Faculty Sponsor. Although it should complement your job duties, it must be separate from, and in addition to, your work responsibilities.

Academic Component

The academic component of your internship can take several forms, ranging from a number of short papers to a major research report to an artistic portfolio or videotape. There is certainly room for creativity on your part. For example, advertising interns often conduct mock ad campaigns, human services interns can present case studies, and brokerage interns can put together several mock portfolios, researching and evaluating the stocks chosen. A **weekly or bi-weekly journal or blog** should be part of the academic component. Although faculty typically assign a journal as one method of evaluation, a journal alone is not sufficient. There must be one or more additional projects/assignments that can be evaluated. Typically, a faculty sponsor will also assign an **8- to 10-page final paper or project** for a one-credit internship. The amount of work required will depend on the number of credits undertaken. For example, a two-unit internship will require the academic component to be doubled.

Academic Internship Proposal

In order to apply for academic internship credit, you must first consult Faculty Sponsor regarding your site and academic responsibilities, and then develop an academic component appropriate for the amount of academic credit requested.

Step 4: Complete the Online Academic Internship Application and Proposal

The Academic Internship application is a Qualtrics application that requires many parts/uploads. You can find the application and application preview here: <https://www2.clarku.edu/offices/career/internships/>. In order to register on time, give yourself ample time to complete all parts by the designated deadline, which is typically one week prior to the add/drop deadline. Once your application is complete and has been submitted, please allow 48 hours for application to process. Correspondence regarding your internship will be sent to you via your Clark email account.

Application Components and Required Forms:

- Professional résumé
- Copy of your most recent transcript; unofficial is acceptable
- Faculty Sponsor Approval Form

Step 5: Register for Credit

After your internship has been approved by Career Services, you may register for credit. Internships typically carry a course number of 298 (or 2940 over the summer) in the academic department of your Faculty Sponsor. **Pay particular attention to the directions below regarding the next step to complete the registration process** depending on which semester you will be registering the internship. Please allow 48 hours for application to process and remember to check your Clark email for correspondence.

Spring/Fall Internship Registration

Once your application has been approved, the Career Services Internship Coordinator will sign an Add/Drop Form, which **you must deliver to the Registrar's Office to complete the registration process**. This must be done prior to the add/drop deadline. Please be sure to include the name of your Faculty Sponsor as well as the amount of credit approved.

Summer Internship Registration

Once your application has been approved by Career Services, **register by paying the Summer & Evening Division (SED) tuition fee**. Once completed, the Registrar's Office will send you an email with a CRN# so that you can register and pay online.

CREDIT OPTIONS

Credit Limit

You may complete a maximum of 4.0 units of internship credit in the course of your undergraduate studies. (*Management majors: see special circumstances*)

Partial Credit

It is possible to do an internship for less than one unit of credit. The number of hours and the academic component requirements would be prorated accordingly.

Major Credit

The department chair has the option of allowing internships to fulfill elective and/or required credit toward your major. Consult with your department chair for specific information.

Your Obligations to Receive Internship Credit:

- It is your responsibility to ensure that your internship application has been approved before beginning your internship.
- You must meet your on-site time commitment (minimally 140 hours per unit). You will need to submit the Academic Internship Time Sheet with your total hours approved by your Site Supervisor to Career Services at the end of the semester.
- You must complete your site responsibilities satisfactorily. Your site supervisor will formally evaluate you at the mid-point and end of the internship—unless you are conducting a summer internship, in which case, only one evaluation will be conducted. While working under the auspices of the agency, you are expected to adhere to its personnel policies, such as dress code and work schedule.
- You must meet regularly with your faculty sponsor.
- You must fulfill the requirements set for you by the faculty sponsor.

Fifth Course

Sophomores, juniors, and seniors may, with the permission of the College Board, add a fifth course to their program at no additional cost. Eligibility criteria must be met before permission for a fifth course is given. Fifth course petitions are available at Academic Advising.

Tuition

Academic internships are credit-bearing courses; therefore, your tuition is assessed at regular academic year or summer rates. Summer internships are registered with the Summer & Evening Division (SED) and will require a fee of approximately \$2,000 per unit.

GRADING

Academic internships are graded on a **credit/no credit** basis. Your faculty sponsor will review your site supervisor's evaluation of you and your academic component and submit a credit/no credit grade. **Letter grades** are occasionally approved for internships that are highly academic in nature. If you wish to receive a letter grade, you must first obtain support from your faculty sponsor. You then petition the Dean of the College for approval of a letter grade. You must do so **no later than two weeks** following the beginning date of your internship.

Your petition letter must include:

- A discussion of what is exceptionally academic about your internship
- A copy of your internship application and proposal
- A letter of support from your faculty sponsor indicating why he or she supports your request as well as information on how your internship comprises an exceptional academic experience
- A copy of your bibliography showing required reading for the internship

APPLICATION DEADLINE

The internship application and proposal must be submitted online no later than **one week prior to the add/drop deadline** for the semester or designated deadline. The Career Services Internship Coordinator will need to review the materials for approval. This will allow time for any corrections to the application or proposal.

SUMMER ACADEMIC INTERNSHIPS

The application procedures for summer internships are the same as those for the academic year; however, you will register and pay the tuition for your internship credit through the Summer & Evening Division (SED). All summer internship proposals must be submitted at least one week prior to the start of the internship; only hours that take place after the internship approval count towards the academic credit. Summer credit proposals are not accepted after the Summer & Evening Division (SED) Summer II deadline (typically in early July).

Planning for summer internships should take place throughout the academic year to ensure that you will have a full-time faculty member willing to sponsor you and have ample time to prepare your internship application.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

For Students Who Do Not Meet GPA Requirements:

Students who do not meet these requirements may still apply. If your GPA does not meet the requirements, you must get permission from the Academic Advising Office. If the petition is not approved, you are still encouraged to pursue a non-credit internship.

International Students

International students who plan to undertake an internship in the United States must ensure that the necessary immigration paperwork is completed before beginning work. After completing the online Academic Internship Program application, approval will be sent to the ISSO Office who will complete the immigration paperwork.

Management Majors

GSOM has developed the following regulations for management internships:

“Management majors and minors may qualify for a credit-bearing internship. Management internships are limited to one course credit per internship and two internships during a student’s undergraduate career. If a student wishes to complete a third internship for academic credit, the student may petition the GSOM Program Director by submitting a letter from him/herself and a sponsoring faculty member for approval.”

Continuation of Internship

If you wish to continue an internship for an additional semester, you may do so on the condition that the first semester’s requirements have been successfully completed and will not be duplicated. Grades of “I” or “NC” are not acceptable criteria for extending an internship for a second semester. You must demonstrate, in a second proposal, that continuation will benefit your academic program, and that the work to be undertaken represents new or progressively more responsible duties.

Problems

If you have a problem with an internship, you should inform the Career Services Internship Program Coordinator immediately. We will not take direct action without your permission, and anything you tell us will be held in strict confidence. We will, however, work with you to explore possible courses of action and, if you wish, approach the supervisor or faculty sponsor to negotiate a solution. If the sponsoring organization finds your performance severely inadequate or charges you with misconduct, we will review both sides of the situation and attempt to arrive at a mutually acceptable solution. If the agency dismisses you with cause, a grade of NC will be entered on your transcript.

Questions? For further assistance, please contact Career Services at CServices@clarku.edu.