

UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

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: in a non-profit organization, a government office, or a for-profit business. Internships 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. 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, a student's cumulative GPA must be at least 2.75; for a two unit internship, the GPA must be at least 3.0. Students with a GPA that does not meet the requirements and wish to receive internship credit must get permission from the Academic Advising office. If the petition is approved, the student may submit a completed internship application to Career Services. Students who do not meet academic qualifications to earn credit are encouraged to pursue a non-credit internship. A copy of your transcript must be included in your application.

FINDING AN INTERNSHIP

It is the student's responsibility to find an internship. A career advisor can guide you through your internship search and assist you with:

- Advice, research assistance, contacts, and internship leads
- Resume, cover letter, and interview preparation
- Students apply to organizations directly which typically requires a resume and cover letter.
- While 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 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.

Resources:

Start your search by logging onto the Career Services website: <http://www.clarku.edu/offices/career/> click on: “Clark Recruiter” to search for internships.

Refer to the Career Services handout entitled: “Web Resources” for additional search options.

As you search for internships, keep in mind these criteria that organizations must meet:

- The organization must be in a business-zoned area.
- You must have a schedule that allows you to work a minimum of 140 hours on-site for each unit you wish to receive (1 unit = one class worth of credit). Ten hours per week for a fourteen-week semester is typical. Only hours completed during the class schedule for a semester count.
- No more than 25% of your job duties may be clerical in nature.

You may be paid and still receive credit for your internship if all of the above criteria are met.

APPLYING FOR CREDIT

Step 1: Identify a Site Supervisor

Your 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.

Supervisor’s Responsibilities:

- Develops a concrete 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 in the summer)

Step 2: Identify a Faculty Sponsor

Your faculty sponsor must be a full-time Clark faculty member who works with you throughout the internship to ensure its academic validity and 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. The faculty sponsor does not have to be your advisor.

Faculty Responsibilities:

- Compiles a list of required readings to complement the internship.
- Reviews your assigned tasks and signs your internship application.
- 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

The academic component is assigned by your faculty sponsor. Although it should complement your job duties, it must be separate from, and in addition to, your work responsibilities.

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. A **weekly or bi-weekly journal or blog** should be part of the academic component. Typically, a faculty sponsor will also assign an **8 – 10 page final paper** 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.

Step 4: Complete the Internship Application and Proposal

The components of the proposal are described in detail on the back of the application.

Step 5: Obtain the necessary signatures on the Application Form.

Step 6: Read and sign the Policies and Procedures Agreement Form

Step 7: Include: a copy of your most recent transcript and the completed “Internship Sponsor Agreement Form”

Step 8: Deliver paperwork to Career Services by the designated deadline.

Step 9: Register for Credit

After your internship has been approved by Career Services, you may register for credit.

Spring or fall internships: The internship coordinator will sign a course summary form (add/drop). You must deliver this form to the Student Records office to complete the registration process.

Note: Please do this prior to the add/drop deadline.

Summer internships: register by paying the summer course tuition fee at the College of Professional and Continuing Education (COPACE) office.

CREDIT OPTIONS

Internships carry a course number of 298 in the academic department of the faculty sponsor.

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 below)

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 hour per unit). You will need to submit the Internship Hours Tracking Sheet 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. 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: 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 the Academic Advising Center.

Tuition: Academic internships are credit-bearing courses; therefore your tuition is assessed at regular academic year or summer rates. Summer internships are registered with COPACE under summer session II.

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 first need to 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 no later than **one week prior to the add/drop deadline** for the semester. The 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 COPACE (The College of

Professional and Continuing Education). 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 COPACE Summer II deadline (typically in late June).

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

International Students: must meet with the Director of the Office of Intercultural Affairs when planning to do any internship in the United States to ensure that the necessary immigration paperwork is completed.

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 Manager by submitting a letter from him/herself and a sponsoring faculty member for approval.

Continuation: 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 an extension of the completed requirement including new or progressively more responsible duties.

Problems: If you have a problem with an internship, you should inform the 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.