

Internship Information for School of Communications Students (revised November 2019)

Internship Purpose

The primary purpose of an internship in the School of Communications (SOC) is to provide a student with real-life work experiences related to the student's major. An internship is part of the student's total academic experience and is not a job per se; it is a learning opportunity having direct relationships to the student's program of study and career interests.

SETTING UP THE INTERNSHIP

1. Read the Internship Policies

2. Get the internship

- Use Career Services' Handshake database to find internship opportunities specific to communications fields.
- Check other resources on the SoC Internships group on Blackboard.
- Work your own network and call sites where you would like to do an internship to ask about opportunities.
- Use the internet to search for other opportunities.

3. Fill out the Internship Agreement

Once you have secured an internship, you must fill out an online Internship Agreement. Once your Internship Agreement is approved by the Internship Coordinator for your major and by the internship supervisor, you will receive an email confirmation.

4. Register

You will need a permit to register for an internship. Either request this permit in Banner after notification that your internship is approved, or see your major's internship coordinator.

Once the registration permit is issued you must then go into Banner and register for the appropriate section of 490, given your major and number of credits* (your major prefix) 490 (ie. CAP 490, COM 490, CAP 490, CMJ 490). Register in the semester that you will COMPLETE the internship. Internships can happen at any time but you must register BEFORE completing the internship to receive credit.

*Check with your major advisor regarding the number of credits for which to register. Internships may be done for anywhere from one (1) to six (6) credits. **For each credit registered**, interns are expected to perform 50 hours of work in an internship setting. So a three (3)-credit internship registered for equals 150 hours spent working at the internship host location.

**Note: Notification that your internship has been approved does NOT automatically register you for credit. This separate step MUST be taken in order for you to receive credit for your internship.

5. Complete the Internship

There is no class to attend. Simply complete the internship as a job experience. Please check BlackBoard regularly for possible helpful information during your internship.

6. Evaluations

Shortly before the end date of the internship (which you indicate on your Internship Agreement), you and your employer/site supervisor will receive an email asking you to complete an online evaluation.

7. Essay (Internship Experience Report)

You must write a 1,000-word report about your internship experience--discuss your overall impression of the experience and location, what you did, what you learned, and how the internship experience related to your classes. (Your internship coordinator may have additional specific requirements for this essay which should be included.) This should be emailed to the internship coordinator FOR YOUR MAJOR prior to exam week in the semester in which you are registered for the internship. Communicate with your internship coordinator well in advance about expectations, requirements, and due dates. Please be sure to include a cover sheet with your name, the course (COM, CAP 490 etc), section number, internship coordinator, and the semester (e.g., Fall 2018).

Once the evaluations have been received online and the essay has been submitted and reviewed, the appropriate School of Communications Internship Coordinator will enter a grade. Internships are graded

credit/no credit. If any of the above are not turned in when grades are due, you will receive an “I” (incomplete). Step by step instructions for the [Online Internship Process](#) [PDF].

Share Student Intern Experiences

Share your internship experience and read about the internship experience of other students at [Experience Matters](#).

Internship Coordinators for specific majors:

- Advertising & Public Relations Professor [Yasmin Gopal](#)
- Communication Studies Professor [Lin Tian](#)
- Health Communication Professor [Lin Tian](#)
- Multimedia Journalism Professor [James Ford](#)

Other contacts:

- Deb Barko in The School of Communications office 616-331-3668
- [Career Services Office](#), 616-331-3311

Career Services Internship Award

The Career Services Office of Grand Valley State University is committed to increasing student participation in internships, practica, and co-ops. As a result, this award has been established to help off-set the costs of working in unpaid internships, for students who have demonstrated financial need. [Award Criteria & Application](#)

Internship Policies

Purpose

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- The Student: SOC internships are initiated by the student, who plans the work experience with their academic advisor, the SOC internship coordinator and the work supervisor at the work site.
- The Faculty Internship Coordinator: Each major has a faculty member dedicated to internships for students in that major. The coordinator approves the internship as a part of the student's degree program, works with the student to ensure that internship duties have a direct connection to the curriculum, and awards credit/no credit for the experience. (Students should see their major advisor for questions about required credits needed in major.)
- The Field Supervisor (employer): The supervisor is the contact person at the internship site who is responsible for the day-to-day activities of the intern and who evaluates the student's performance prior to completion of the work experience.

Policies

1. An internship is a supervised experience directly related to an academic discipline. It typically lasts for one semester, and it must be planned and approved **before** it takes place. With **prior approval**, students may begin an internship at any time and enroll for credit in a **following** semester.
2. Internships vary from one (1) to six (6), with three (3) credits being the most typical. Unit guidelines require **50 work hours per regular semester for each (1) internship credit enrolled**. For example, students must work 150 hours during a regular semester to satisfy a 3-credit internship.
3. Six (6) credits is the maximum allowed at a single internship site.
4. Per GVSU Policy, **Fifteen (15) credits is the maximum number of internship credits that may be applied toward graduation from the university**. Please see your academic advisor of your major program to be approved for these credits toward specific graduation requirements.
5. The internship may be full or part time, and may or may not be a paid work experience. Unpaid internship opportunities, however, may discriminate against students with little or no financial reserves. The intern should be paid in some manner, if possible. Ways to accomplish this include: (a) an hourly or weekly wage; (b) tuition reimbursement for internship credit(s); or (c) a single payment. This is up to the employer.
6. A single work experience may not be used by a student to generate both internship credit and other forms of credit, i.e. independent study credit.
7. Students are generally eligible to take an internship after they have successfully completed at least 60 academic credits and taken specific preparatory course work, usually at the 300-level in the major program. Internships are to be the application of skills and concepts learned in class and also demonstrate to the community what you have learned in your major; when you are an intern you are representing the School of Communications, your major program, and Grand Valley State University - the proper foundation helps you achieve success in these objectives.

Therefore, it is strongly recommended that you complete the following courses per major before you apply for internship credits:

- Ad & Public Relations: CAP 105, 115, 210, 220, 315, 321
- Communication Studies: COM 101, 295, and at least 12 other credits
- Health Communication: COM 101, 209, CAP 219, AHS 340 or BMS 222
- Multimedia Journalism: All students should complete CMJ 256 News Reporting. Students pursuing internships in television must complete CMJ 184, and students completing internships in radio should have CMJ 265 finished. Student media experience is highly recommended.

8. School of Communications interns in every major program must write an Internship Experience Report, which is the required academic component.

9. Academic credit for internships is awarded on a "Credit/No Credit" basis. See the current GVSU Undergraduate and Graduate Catalog for information concerning the maximum number of credit/ no credit courses permissible.

10. Internships may be done anywhere in the world, including other US states and other countries, provided they are supervised by a working professional who will provide meaningful feedback to the student.