What is an internship?

The Department of Communication and the Department of Digital Media and Journalism have developed an internship program to provide academic credit for professional experience related to your course of study. The goal is to provide you with a learning experience that allows you to synthesize your course work with experience in professional settings. An internship serves as a useful bridge from academia to the work world and will greatly enhance your job possibilities.

Most internships are unpaid positions. An organization offers you a learning experience in exchange for your labor. Internship credit is not given for doing clerical work or working in your family business. An internship is a structured learning experience; it is not a way to get academic credit for a job you would have anyway. Your internship placement is meant to provide both significant, professional experience that goes beyond the repetitive and limited tasks involved in most minimum wage jobs and with contacts in your chosen field.

Credits are not given retroactively. You must earn internship credits during the semester you are performing the internship. Internships are not possible over the winter break.

You must have departmental approval to seek an internship as well as for your internship placement, and you must enroll in a one-credit seminar that runs concurrently with your internship experience.

You may take more than one internship during your college career as long as the total credits do not exceed 15. In most cases, you will want to plan your internship for the last term of your senior year.
Requirements for departmental approval for an internship

- You MUST have a minimum GPA of 2.5.
- You MUST have completed 18 credits in your major. You also may be required to complete specific courses related to your internship.
- You MUST have completed one year in residence at New Paltz before doing an internship through us.
- You MUST be at least a junior (61 or more credits completed). We strongly encourage students to intern during their senior year.
- Journalism and Public Relations majors must complete two writing courses from the following list to be eligible for an internship: Journalism 1, Journalism 2, Feature Writing, Public Affairs Reporting, and Intro to PR.

You MUST apply for departmental approval to seek an internship before the following deadlines unless otherwise notified by the faculty internship director.

For Spring Semester Internships - The Second Friday in November

For Summer Session Internships- The Second Friday in March

For Fall Semester Internships- The Second Friday in April

Overview of the steps in process

**FIRST:** You must get departmental approval BEFORE you look for a placement. These are things the Director of Internships must have to approve you for an internship:

1. A completed application form
2. A one-page resume which lists local and home addresses
3. An up-to-date copy of your Progress Report

**SECOND:** You must register. If this is your first internship, you must sign up for both internship credits and the Internship Seminar. If this is your second internship, you do not need to take the Seminar again, but you must complete The Internship Agreement Form and Supervisor Evaluation Form. You may preregister for the Internship Seminar and the internship credits before you have actually secured an internship however, you must be aware of the number of credits and hours required to earn those credits (See below). The Seminar (DMJ or CMM491) is a 1-credit course. Register for the combination of Internship classes (DMJ or CMM490) that total the number of credits of your internship. Legislative Gazette interns do not need to take the Seminar and must register for JRN461, 462 and 463.

If your internship placement is not approved (see below), you will need to drop those courses.
**THIRD:** You must find an acceptable placement in an organization. Finding a placement is just like a job search. The Internship Director can help you by making suggestions, but the responsibility rests with you to be proactive. These are the things the Director of Internships must have AFTER you have a placement:

1. The Internship must be approved in writing by your advisor or by the Internship Director prior to starting the internship
2. Internship Agreement Form (Completed with on-site supervisor): due within the FIRST WEEK of the semester.

Often, intern sponsors require a letter from SUNY to confirm that you are a registered student approved for an internship. Contact the Director of Internships for the letter.

**FOURTH:** You must meet the requirements during your internship. These are some of the requirements to be completed DURING your internship:

1. You must keep regularly scheduled hours at the sponsoring agency. Failure to attend work, frequent tardiness or other unprofessional behavior will result in forced withdrawal from the course.
2. During the first week of your internship or sooner, you must complete the Internship Agreement Form.
3. During your first internship, you must enroll in the online Internship Seminar
4. You must regularly participate in Blackboard discussions and other assignments as specified in the Seminar Syllabus.
5. You will secure a final evaluation from your on-site supervisor.
6. It is your responsibility to keep in touch with the Internship Director if questions or problems arise, and to make sure you meet all requirements. Normally, email is the most efficient means of communication.
7. You will be required to complete an evaluation of your internship placement.
8. If you have questions or problems during your internship, contact the Internship Director right away. Problems might include: not being assigned to the types of activities described in the Agreement Form; being asked to spend more hours at the agency than indicated; not receiving feedback about your progress; or harassment. Don't let questions or problems wait.

**What type of Academic Credit will you get for an Internship?**

Internship credits are upper-division, non-liberal arts electives. Internship credits are graded as S/U, are considered upper division but not liberals arts credits; the Internship Seminar is given a letter grade and is an upper-division, liberal arts credit. A 6 credit internship is required for Journalism majors; and a 3 credit internship for Digital Media Production and Digital Media Management majors and Journalism minors. According to college policy, you may apply a TOTAL of 15 credits of Internship, Fieldwork, and Independent Study toward graduation. You may take more, but they simply will not count toward graduation. The number of credits you can receive is determined by the number of hours a week you work. The seminar is NOT included in
these totals. Also note, if you take two internships, you only have to register for the seminar the first time.

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**How you find an Internship placement**

Once the department has approved you for an internship, you can then begin to look for a specific placement related to your individual interests. However, the Director of Internships must approve your final placement.

The Internship Program maintains a Facebook page where there is an up-to-date list of internship opportunities. You can also open an account at through the Career Resource Center website which will help you search for placements. In my.newpaltz.edu, you can access HawkHire, which lists job and internship opportunities. Individual faculty members can also provide suggestions. It is up to you to contact sponsoring agencies and gain their approval for your internship with them. Passing the department's screening process does not guarantee placement.
What the sponsoring/placement agency must provide

The sponsoring agency must be willing to assign an on-site supervisor who will develop a specific description of the tasks for the internship (See Internship Agreement Form). We view an internship as a stepping stone to professional employment, so we prefer that you develop professional-level skills. While we know that stuffing envelopes and answering phones is a part of any entry-level job, we do not want you to be an unpaid clerical worker. This is also a violation of Federal law. The sponsoring agency must provide an on-site supervisor who will train you. We request that a supervisor provide a minimum of one hour a week in directing your activities. Good supervisors spend more time, particularly in the first weeks of orientation.

For more information contact:

Nancy M. Heiz, Director of Internships
Department of Communication
Department of Digital Media and Journalism

Phone: (845) 257-3460
Office: CSB 64
E-mail: heizn@newpaltz.edu

SUNY New Paltz
1 Hawk Drive
New Paltz, New York 12561-2443

REV: 9/29/15
Internship Application Cover Sheet

Name (Print)_________________________________Date ____________________

Major/Concentration________________________________

Campus email___________________________

Phone____________________________________

Internship Semester: Fall_____Spring_____Summer___Year ______

Checklist: I have included:

_____Cover Sheet

_____Application

_____Advisor Signature

_____Student Signature

_____One Page resume

_____Progress Report

Rev.: 8/19/15
APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL TO REGISTER FOR INTERNSHIP CREDITS

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION
DEPARTMENT OF DIGITAL MEDIA AND JOURNALISM

STUDENT NAME_________________________ BANNER ID _______________________

MAJOR/CONCENTRATION: _________________________ MINOR: __________________

ADVISOR ________________________________

INTERNSHIP SEMESTER: FALL____ SPRING____ SUMMER____ YEAR_____

LOCAL ADDRESS:
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

NEW PALTZ E-MAIL: _______________________ LOCAL PHONE_________________

HOME PHONE_______________________ CELL PHONE _______________________

# CREDITS TOWARD GRADUATION ________ (Include credits completed and in progress.)

OVERALL NEW PALTZ GPA: _________

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE INTERNSHIP INFORMATION PACKET_______

I UNDERSTAND THAT FOR EACH CREDIT EARNED, I MUST WORK 40 HOURS (Therefore, a
3-credit internship requires 120 hours of work per semester, a 6-credit internship requires 240 hours, etc.)

_____________________________________________________________________

STUDENT SIGNATURE ADVISOR SIGNATURE DATE

SUBMIT THIS FORM, ALONG WITH COPIES OF YOUR PROGRESS REPORT AND
A ONE-PAGE RESUME TO:

Director of Internships, CSB 51

_____________________________________________________________________

For office use
Approved______ Not Approved_______

Missing: Advisor’s Signature______ One-Page Resume_______ Progress Report______

REVISED 9/29/15