

Internship Guidelines - West Chester University

Internship

An internship is a credit-bearing experience requiring students to provide discipline-specific, pre-professional work experience in a supervised setting. Internships consist of experiential courses offering hands-on experiences that occur in application-settings such as traditional work settings, research settings, and campaigns or private events. Internships are preplanned experiences, thus may not be granted after completion of a work experience. Internships shall be approved as either undergraduate or graduate courses through the CAPC course approval process and shall carry a designated department course number. Internships should be assigned as follows:

1 credit hour = 45 hours of student work per semester including site-based hours & related activities

A 3-credit internship should include 135-180 hours of student work per semester. These hours should encompass both the time spent on site and time spent on any additional internship assignments turned in to the faculty supervisor. Variable credit courses can be approved for internship experiences totaling less than 135 hours.

Prerequisites, Application, Grading, and Major Credit

Programs should identify course prerequisites in which critical content is necessary to support an organic relationship between the internship and major program. Programs should consider additional prerequisites to include minimum GPA and credit hours earned.

Programs should require an application for internship. Recommendations for the application include:

- A transcript
- A letter of intent identifying the internship site, job duties, and internship supervisor, as well as articulating that the student has met internship eligibility requirements and the number of credits the student will receive.
- A resume

Programs should identify common grading expectations of the internship including:

- Can the internship be taken pass/fail?
- Who grades; site supervisor or WCU faculty member?
- What is graded; logs, hours, skill demonstrations, summative reports?

Programs should identify the maximum number of internship credits that can be applied to the major program not to exceed 12 credit hours. Programs should determine if paid experiences are eligible for internship credit.

Supervision of Internships

Students taking an internship course at WCU should be assigned a minimum of two supervisors: one site-based supervisor and one faculty supervisor. Faculty assigned to internships should be qualified in the general area(s) of experiential learning to which the students will be assigned.

Departments should be able to justify the assignment of any faculty member to internship supervision in accordance with the criteria listed in its approved course syllabus. Site Supervisors are subject to the

approval of Programs. Programs should identify the responsibilities of each supervisor and faculty member. Considerations should include:

- Determining a mechanism and frequency of communication between faculty and site supervisors.
- Identifying the faculty member (or university official) as the liaison official between WCU and the cooperating agency regarding administrative and operating requirements of the program.
- Midterm and final reviews by the site-based supervisor.
- Grading assignments e.g., student field logs, skill performances, papers, and/or portfolio development.
- Using common site supervisor supervision and feedback forms.
- Using common faculty member supervision and feedback forms.
- Counseling students regarding their professional development relating to the internship.

Program accreditation requirements may affect elements of internships not outline above.