
Internship Program

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Internship Program: Frequently Asked Questions

What is an internship?

An internship is a formal opportunity for students to integrate classroom learning with practical experience in the workplace. Interns generally enjoy real-work projects, close supervision and mentoring, and the opportunity to learn more about a particular industry and organization. Internship experience is highly recommended in this competitive marketplace. Internships usually last a semester with students generally working part-time for spring and fall and either part-time or full-time for summer. Academic credit may be earned.

What is the value of participating in an internship?

Students who gain experience through an internship receive:

- An opportunity to “test drive” a career field
- Training in a professional setting
- Implementation of classroom knowledge
- New skills
- Work experience sought by employers
- Potential networking contacts for future employment

Can I earn credit? Do I have to earn credit?

You may earn academic credit if you wish, but remember that this means registering and paying tuition for those credits. If you would like to earn credit, follow the directions in the back of this packet. Submit your credit internship proposal as early as possible.

Will I need to pay for the internship credit?

Yes, you will be billed for these credits just like you would any other class.

Will I get paid?

This depends on the company. Typically, non-profit organizations may not be able to pay much (or at all) for interns. Larger companies are usually in a better position to offer competitive wages for interns. Check with each company individually to make sure.

Why would I work at an internship that is not paid?

As mentioned, some career fields simply do not offer paid internships. Some students have balanced an unpaid part-time internship with a paid part-time job. Keep in mind that employers value students who have both a degree AND practical experience, so an unpaid internship may be an investment in your future. Also, some unpaid internship may offer other fringe benefits such as reimbursement for transportation, free memberships, or complimentary lunches.

When do I apply for an internship?

Start your internship search process at least one semester before you would like to work. Larger companies may have deadlines in early spring for competitive summer internships. Some employers even have fall deadlines for summer positions. The Aspire Center recommends that you start as early as possible.

Internship Program: Frequently Asked Questions Continued

What is the difference between an internship and a part-time or summer job?

Typically, an internship refers to any para-professional experience allowing a student to learn in a hands-on environment while applying previous coursework. A job usually refers to any work in exchange for money. While this distinction is clear to the Aspire Center and faculty, many employers use these terms interchangeably.

Who is eligible for an internship?

Each employer has its own requirements such as major, GPA, or work eligibility status. If students wish to earn credit, they must be currently enrolled at Carthage, have completed their sophomore year, be in good standing with the College, and have declared a major.

Where do I begin?

Read through this booklet completely. Pick up a copy of the Resume Writing handout from the Aspire Center, draft a copy of your resume, and make an appointment with the Aspire Center staff. At this appointment, the Aspire Center staff will review your resume, explain the internship process, ask you to determine what type of internship you would like and in which geographical location, and together you will both form a “game plan” for helping you secure an internship site.

What about J-Term Field Placements?

For students wishing to earn J-Term credit for field placements, the process is similar to approving an internship.

My dad owns a business and would like me to intern for him. Is this possible?

Ideally, you want a supervisor who can evaluate your work objectively. As much as they try, family members are not able to provide that type of supervision. We recommend that your work be supervised by someone who can serve as a reference for you later on; family members are usually not able to provide references. Supervision by a family member for a credit-bearing internship is strongly discouraged.

I interned last summer at ABC Company. Can I earn credit for that experience?

Internship credit cannot be granted for work already completed.

I have already completed an internship at XYZ Organization. Can I earn credit for working there again for the next semester?

You can work at the same company, but your responsibilities should be vastly different. Some students have completed two internships at the same company but in different departments. Talk with the Aspire Center to discuss special issues like this.

In which department will my internship credits be listed?

Internship credit will be assigned in the department in which your faculty sponsor teaches. Examples: If your faculty sponsor teaches Business Administration courses your internship will be listed as BUSA 355. If your faculty sponsor teaches Exercise Sports Science classes your internship will be listed as EXSS 355.

Credit Bearing Internship Check List

- ✓ Obtain letter from site supervisor outlining your duties and responsibilities and confirming your hours and start/end dates.
- ✓ Secure faculty sponsor to evaluate your internship performance.
- ✓ Draft Learning Agreement with faculty sponsor and site supervisor using guidelines provided in this booklet.
- ✓ Turn in proposal paperwork to the Aspire Center. Proposals will be reviewed by the Registrar, the Aspire Center, and the Dean of the Academic Division. Decisions are usually made within a few days of receipt.
- ✓ Begin interning and complete the terms of your learning agreement.

The Learning Agreement Process

Since an internship is a learning process, credit is granted for the learning that occurs while in a work setting, not for the work that is done. A learning agreement is initiated prior to the start of all internship experiences. The purpose of the learning agreement is to:

1. Foster communication among the student, on-site supervisor, and faculty sponsor.
2. Provide a solid foundation for dialog throughout the experience.
3. Clarify the learning objectives.
4. Aid in the evaluation of the student's learning process.
5. Provide the Aspire Center Director with criteria for determining if the internship can be credit bearing.

DEFINING TERMS: THE INTERNSHIP PROPOSAL

Credit Hours Requested: How many credits do you want to earn? Keep in mind that you work at least 2 hours a week for each credit hour earned. (4 credits = minimum of 8 hours per week during a fall/spring internship). You will be charged tuition according to your total credits.

Supervisor: This is the person who will be overseeing your work at your internship site and who will be completing your evaluation at the end of the term.

Faculty Sponsor: This is a Carthage faculty member who has agreed to evaluate your internship and assign a grade for the credits you earn. Ideally, you would like to choose someone in a department related to your internship.

Use the following guidelines when drafting your learning agreement:

I. JOB DESCRIPTION

The job description outlines the "basics" of the internships. Most often, the job description is a summary of the letter you will obtain from your site supervisor. The following information should be included in this section:

- scheduled hours
- total hours per week
- responsibilities and duties
- start/end dates of internship

Please be specific when describing your duties as an intern.

Example: Job Description

I will work Tuesday 7 – 11 am, Wednesday 2 – 5 pm, and Saturday 7 – 1 pm for a total of 12 hours per week at the Oak Creek Animal Hospital. I will be assisting veterinarians in exams and treatments, performing basic diagnostic tests, making phone calls to labs and clients, interacting with clients, and putting my biological and chemistry knowledge into practice. I will also contribute to the hospital by performing other specific assigned tasks and work one-on-one with clients and doctors. Analysis of a radiographs and case studies including their pharmacological aspects will also be a daily activity. This experience will give me first-hand knowledge of the functions within a veterinary hospital. This internship will begin September 6, 2001 and continue until December 12, 2001.

The Learning Agreement Process *continued*

II. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The “what” of the experience should be identified and defined to the work assignment, the student’s discipline, and his/her individual goals. Learning objectives should neither be vague nor so broad that they cannot be measured. The learning objectives should be stated as *specific, measurable, attainable, reasonable, and time related* goals.

The student, with the assistance of the faculty sponsor, and/or the Aspire Center Director, should refer to the following categories:

1. Gaining technical skills by learning to implement new procedures or use new equipment
2. Applying theoretical concepts from the classroom to the work setting
3. Utilizing excellent interpersonal skills in both the written and oral media, and involving oneself in the group process while managing tasks and time on site
4. Exploring career opportunities in the student’s field or in related fields
5. Developing or improving research skills in the student’s field or a related field
6. Broadening cultural awareness
7. Establishing and testing one’s values and professional ethics

Example: Learning Objectives

Through observation, experience, and case studies, I will gain an understanding of the functions within a veterinary hospital as well as radiology and pharmacology. An emphasis will be placed on the problem solving aspects of veterinary medicine using the case analyses and one-on-one discussions with my site supervisor. These experiences will help me further determine and define my career goals in the veterinary field. The knowledge obtained through my daily activities and the case studies will also further my understanding in the areas of radiology and pharmacology as diagnostic and treatment tools.

III. LEARNING ACTIVITIES

The “how” of the learning objectives constitute the learning activities or the specific steps the student will take to accomplish the stated objectives. In what activities will the student be involved? How will the activities help the student gain knowledge and experience? Under what conditions will the learning occur? Activities might include:

- Seminar attendance
- Supplementary reading
- A special project for the employer
- Writing a personnel handbook or operations manual
- Formal interviews with co-workers, clients, supervisors
- Scholarly projects
- Specific research
- Field observation

Example: Learning Activities

I will keep a daily journal of my activities and reflections on my internship experience. I will also use my journal to track case study analysis and hands-on experience. I will also be writing a detailed report (approximately 7-10 pages) encompassing the knowledge that I acquired through the case studies and radiographic analyses. The main focus of my learning will be through these studies and the discussion sessions held with my site supervisor regarding the radiographic analyses and basic pharmacology. Overall, these experiences will utilize and further develop my problem-solving abilities as well as increasing my knowledge of the sciences.

The Learning Agreement Process *continued*

IV. EVALUATION

The purpose of the evaluation is to demonstrate the learning has occurred. Quantifiable criteria such as amount of work done or level of accuracy of performance, though sometimes subjective, can be used as evidence to demonstrate that learning has taken place. In order for an intern to receive academic credit for the experience, academic work must also be completed. A student is eligible to earn between 1 and 8 credit hours for an internship.

Every intern receiving academic credit must complete:

- A reflective journal (daily entries)
- A reflective capstone paper (5-10 pages) **OR**
- A capstone project or research paper

The more credit hours the student intern wishes to earn, the more additional academic work the intern is expected to complete.

Example: Evaluation

My experience will be evaluated on the basis of my daily journal, researched report, and progress reports from my site supervisor. The journal will include my daily activities, the objectives covered and accomplished, and what I learned from this internship through reflection. The journal will also be used to explain the integration of previous coursework with the hands-on experience. Within this internship journal, I will also include weekly summary statements that will be viewed by my site supervisor. I will also be required to turn in a final paper/report (7-10 pages), which will be a summary of the case studies analyzed during the internship. The initial analysis will be based on radiographic and pharmacological aspects, but through library research, will be extended into an overall view of the disease or ailment being studied. I will also be writing a brief summary (1-2 pages) of all my experiences and an analysis of how, and how well, my learning objectives were achieved. The journal will be turned in to my faculty sponsor on a weekly basis and my report and summary will be turned in the week before finals.

NOTE: These sample paragraphs are intended to guide students, not serve as a framework for future learning agreements. Since each internship experience is unique, each learning agreement should be original. Proofread your work carefully. Learning agreements should be free from spelling and grammatical errors.

Making Your Internship Successful

Although the relationship between intern and supervisor is basically the same as that between any employer and employee, the student assumes primary responsibility for making it a good experience.

First Week of Placement:

Become acquainted with your site, staff, and projects. Find out:

- ◆ Who does what? Who reports to whom? Who makes the decisions? What are your responsibilities?
- ◆ What are the goals or functions of your department and how do they relate to the organization as a whole?
- ◆ When are initial and special assignments due?
- ◆ Where are things kept? Where are specific resources located?
- ◆ How is the work to be accomplished? How often should your work be reviewed?

During Your Internship:

- ◆ Use good judgment. Think before speaking and acting. Consider carefully whether to act independently or ask for help.
- ◆ Express a positive attitude and a desire to learn.
- ◆ Show respect for co-workers, superiors, and clients.
- ◆ Exhibit initiative. Seek challenges and new ways to learn.
- ◆ Discuss problems as they arise. If the problem is on-site, speak directly with your on-site supervisor. If the problem is with the internship design and placement, speak with your faculty sponsor or the Carthage Aspire Center Director.

Final Week of Placement:

- ◆ Arrange an exit interview with your employer. Complete evaluation form.
- ◆ Work on your reflective capstone paper (if experience is for credit).

Following Placement:

- ◆ Gather letters of recommendation from site supervisors.
- ◆ Write letters of appreciation to all who mentored you while on site.

Expectations of a Carthage Intern:

- ◆ Punctuality. In the event of tardiness or absence, you should notify your supervisor in advance and, if necessary, arrange to make up the lost time.
- ◆ Dress appropriately. The way you appear reflects upon the College and you as an individual.
- ◆ Ask without being demanding. Do not expect anyone to read your mind if you are lacking information, confused, or bored. It is your responsibility to keep your supervisor informed about your progress and needs.
- ◆ Meet agreed-upon deadlines. Manage your time well. If a proposed time line seems unrealistic, discuss it right away with your supervisor.

Internship Proposal

STUDENT INFORMATION

Name: _____

School/Local Address: _____
Residence Hall Room or Street Address, City, State, Zip

School/Local Phone: _____ Email: _____

Student ID#: _____ Class Level: FR SO JR SR Cum. GPA: _____

Major(s): _____ Minor(s): _____

Internship Title: _____

Credit Hours Requested: 1 2 3 4 5 6 Semester Requested: Fall Spring
7 8 9 10 11 12 J-term Summer

INTERNSHIP PLACEMENT

Employer: _____

Address: _____
Street Address, City, State, Zip

Supervisor: _____
Name Title

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Hours/week at internship: _____ at \$ _____ per hour

Faculty Sponsor: _____ Ext: _____
Name Academic Dept.

TO APPLY FOR CREDIT YOU MUST HAVE ALL THE ITEMS LISTED BELOW.

- 1) This page completed with all of the information requested.
- 2) Attach a signed letter of acceptance from your site supervisor outlining your hours, start/end dates, and responsibilities/duties.
- 3) Attach a typed learning proposal explaining your job description, learning objectives and activities, and method of evaluation.
- 4) Faculty Sponsor's Signature - Internship credit will be assigned in the department in which your faculty sponsor teaches.

Faculty – Your signature indicates that you have read the student's learning proposal and agree to the terms of this document and the attached learning agreement.

Faculty Sponsor _____ **Date** _____