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The School of Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences Internship Program

WHAT DEFINES AN INTERNSHIP

What’s distinctive about an Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences intern? The fact that our students come from an interdisciplinary program; our students are trained to look at problems from more than one angle…they have a broader perspective in how they approach challenges and create innovative solutions because they have studied across academic disciplines. The purpose of the internship program is to foster the effective use of experience as an integral part of education in order to enhance the professional and leadership development of our students. The development of a student’s capacities for integrative learning is central to personal success, social responsibility, and civic engagement in today’s global society. Internships help students to achieve competencies in essential critical skills; critical thinking, communication skills, collaboration and team building, and creativity and innovation.

The School of Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences values academic internships not only for the educational experience they hold for our students, but also because we value our alliances with the community. We believe an enduring and cooperatively supportive relationship between our program and the local and regional communities has the power to serve as a means for community transformation. We welcome innovative ways to create meaningful internships; it’s a part of what being interdisciplinary allows us to offer in meeting an organization’s needs.

What an academic internship is:

- Well defined learning objectives that are consistent with the student’s academic course of study.
- Consistent mentoring, training and feedback for performance.
- A clearly defined role in the organization.
- An opportunity to see realistic tasks representative of the industry or organization.
- An opportunity for challenge with a relevant project reflecting the work of the field.
- An opportunity to be a genuine part of the professional team.
- Exposure to as many parts of the organization as is relevant to gain a thorough understanding of the industry and the course of study.
- A work environment where productive behavioral dynamics can be observed and modeled.

In summary, internships combine academics and work at a site outside the classroom setting. Details about the academic and work expectations are outlined in a mutually-agreed-upon contract between the work-site supervisor, a faculty supervisor, and a student. In addition to working at the site, students are expected to complete academic requirements including a work log/journal, a final paper related to the work project and a self-evaluation of the internship experience.

Questions you should be able to answer before doing an internship:

✓ Why do I want to do an internship?
✓ What is my area of interest?
How does an internship fit with my graduation plan? For help contact the Academic Advising Center.
What do I want to learn from an internship?
How much time do I have to commit to an internship?

Academic guidelines for an internship:

• An internship is highly educational and will primarily benefit the Intern: it is a structured learning experience that provides opportunities to apply classroom knowledge in a “real world” professional environment.
• Learning objectives are established with the intern before beginning the internship and are revisited regularly to ensure ongoing objectives are being met
• Has a defined beginning and end: the intern is supervised and mentored throughout the internship experience
• An intern is not a consultant or on-site expert for any project or task that an internship site’s professional staff is not able to perform (e.g. create a website, write a grant, develop a marketing campaign) The employer derives no immediate financial advantage from the intern (i.e. no selling)
• An intern should not displace a paid employee
• No more than 30% of the intern's time should be spent on clerical or repetitive tasks
• An internship encourages the intern to develop and refine skills that are transferable to a variety of work settings and provides for supervision/feedback from a professional with expertise and background in that field
• Includes resources, equipment, and facilities that support learning goals
• The internship is a substantial learning experience; a faculty member must approve the internship as worthy of academic credit

IAS INTERNSHIP FAQ
How do I register for an internship?
The basic steps:

• Find an internship
• Find a faculty supervisor
• Fill out the internship learning agreement on Handshake

After all of the electronic approvals have been submitted via an email from Handshake, you’ll be given an entry code to register. You register for an internship though your UWT student account just as you would any academic course.
FAQs:

Does the SIAS program provide internship placements?
No, we do not provide formal placements. Students are expected to be proactive in finding an internship site. The SIAS Internship Program Manager may know of internship openings for your major, and if not, will help you with ideas.

Who should I ask to be my faculty supervisor?
A faculty member who knows who you are; it can be someone you have taken one or more courses from where you did well or your faculty advisor might be willing to supervise you.

What is the required number of hours to earn my credit?
Generally 3 hours per week for 10 weeks equals one credit, or a total of 30 hours.

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<th>Number of Credits</th>
<th>Average Hours per Week</th>
<th>Min. Hours Required for Quarter</th>
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How many credits can I earn for internships?
A student can receive 1-15 credits for an internship. Internship may be done for more than one quarter, but all of the credits may not count toward a student’s major; some of the credits may have to be counted as elective credits. It depends on what your major allows and what courses you already have taken. Please contact your academic advisor to see how the credits can be applied. You may contact the advisors through the Academic Advising Center web site.

Can my internship be more than one quarter (for example summer and fall quarters)?
Yes, if your faculty supervisor and site supervisor agree to it. You can earn the same number of credit each quarter, for example 5 and 10 to equal 15 total credits, or split the number of credits any way that it makes sense for your internship project. Each quarter requires a new internship contract. For example, if you do an internship for Summer and Autumn quarters you need to fill out a contract and register for the internship for each of those two quarters.

How do I decided what the learning objectives should be on the internship learning agreement?
When you meet with your faculty supervisor to discuss the internship you should talk about the learning objectives. The objectives will outline what you and your faculty supervisor set as your educational goals.
for the internship. They will reflect what tasks the site supervisor has assigned to you; “task A will help me to learn, understand, and develop skills in …”

**Can I earn credit for an internship I have already done?**

Retroactive credit for an internship will not be granted. Internships must be set up as a learning experience ahead of time so that the work can be academically approved and guided by a faculty supervisor.

**Do I have to pay tuition for an internship?**

Yes. An internship that earns academic credit is the same as taking any other academic course.

**Can I do my internship this summer and register for the credits this fall?**

We strongly discourage this, but if it is a financial aid hardship it can be done with the approval of the faculty supervisor and the SIAS program.

**The internship I am applying for requires a resume and cover letter. Where can I find help writing these documents?**

The [Career Development office](#) on our campus in MAT 106 can help you with a resume and/or cover letter.

UW Seattle offers students online help with resumes and covers letters. On the Seattle Campus Career Center web page click on the Career Guide and Online Streaming Workshops icons:


**ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS**

**Meetings:** In addition to the initial development meetings, students are expected to confer on a weekly basis at a specified time, with the site supervisor and the faculty supervisor to review and assess the student's performance and progress in the internship. Meetings with faculty should be on days when they have office hours. Conferencing via email is also encouraged. Students should meet with their site supervisor during their regular internship hours.

**Course Assignments:**

**Work Log:** Students must maintain a weekly work log in which they keep a record of their work and their comments and reflections on it. The log should be submitted to the faculty supervisor at least twice during the quarter and again with the final paper.

**Final Paper:** Students must submit a paper at the end of the quarter. The paper should provide an analysis of an issue or issues related to the field work experience, and should use relevant books, articles, and other reference sources suggested and approved by the faculty supervisor, to give depth and a broader perspective to work experiences. The paper will vary in length according to the number of credits being earned: 1-2 credits = 4-5 pages, 3-4 credits = 7-8 pages, 5 credits = 10-15 pages. At the discretion of the faculty supervisor other projects may substitute for the final paper.
**Self-Evaluation:** Students must submit an evaluation of their internship, 1-2 pages in length, indicating whether their goals were met, how they performed their responsibilities, and whether their ideas and attitudes changed as a result of the experience.

**REGISTRATION PROCESS FOR AN INTERNSHIP**

The student is responsible for finding an internship site: the student should determine the type of work desired and identify the learning objectives to be accomplished by engaging in this type of work.

The student searches for an internship site and identifies a site supervisor. Local businesses, government, non-profit agencies, and educational institutions regularly utilize interns. There are links on the SIAS Internship web page and Handshake to help start the search for an internship site. Student may also contact the SIAS Internship Program Manager for suggestions; SIAS does not provide internship placements, although a referral may be made. A referral does not guarantee an internship. In cases of referrals, students are responsible for submitting any requested documents such as a cover letter and resume.

Finding a faculty supervisor; if the student was not referred by a faculty member for an internship, the next step is to ask a faculty member to be the faculty supervisor. The faculty member supervises the academic component of the internship. The faculty member must have academic expertise in the area of the internship. Students are encouraged to approach a faculty member with whom the student has taken at least one course so that the faculty member is familiar with the student’s academic skills and abilities. Faculty supervision of internships is at the discretion of the SIAS faculty.

**The SIAS Internship Learning Agreement:** The student meets with the faculty supervisor to agree on the learning objectives.

In conversation with the faculty supervisor the student determines the number of credits to be earned. Please see the chart under FAQs for a breakdown of credit hours earned per site hours each week. Students are encouraged to check with an SIAS academic advisor about appropriate placement of these internship credits in the student’s program of study.

If the faculty supervisor is a lecturer, rather than a tenured professor, SIAS policy requires the approval of the chair of the student’s degree program.

TIAS 496 is the course number for an elective internship. If a student is seeking internship credit for a specific major or minor, please see the SIAS Independent Study web page for an updated list of internship course numbers and information.

**Please note the SLN to register for an internship changes quarterly for all internship course numbers.**

Completion of the internship learning agreement form does not mean the student is automatically enrolled in the course whether it is done on Handshake or in paper form. The entry code to register through your UWT student account must be used before the 10th day of the quarter.
INTERNERSHIP EVALUATIONS:

The SIAS Internship Program Manager will request feedback from students. These evaluation forms are not required to receive credit, but students are encouraged to complete them to provide the program with information regarding the quality of the internship experience.

Mid-term evaluation form for the student: This form provides the student a way to evaluate how the internship is evolving. Adjustments can be made to improve the experience at this point if needed.

Final evaluation form for the student: The student’s site evaluation provides the student an opportunity to give an assessment of the internship experience. This form is reviewed to assist us in making modifications for future interns.

Completing the learning agreement on Handshake will automate the sending of the evaluation forms to both the student and the site supervisor.

INFORMATION FOR SITE SUPERVISORS

Sites are strongly encouraged to provide a written position description and send it to the SIAS Internship Program Manager. This allows the position to be announced through social media and serves as a written form of the site’s expectations for the intern. Internship site supervisors are welcomed to contact the SIAS Internship Program Manager at any time with questions regarding the developing of internship positions, or during the course of an internship.

STANDARDS FOR A QUALITY INTERNSHIP:

An opportunity to participate from the beginning; the internship should have an openness about the learning goals and understand that this is meant to be an educational experience.

A well-defined position description; a detailed and specific description of what the intern’s duties will be makes all the difference in the student being able to be successful in the position.

Practical experience that relates to the classroom; the internship should allow the student to apply what has been learned in the classroom in a “real world” environment.

The work assigned should be meaningful; the intern should not be viewed as “free labor”. While all jobs have their rote and routine chores, a quality internship gives the intern a higher level of responsibilities. The intern is encouraged to be innovative in problem solving, is considered a part of the organization’s team, and is learning new skills.

The site supervisor should be a mentor; the interns should receive guidance and be given feedback that contributes to the intern’s growth.

Academic internships are required to adhere to the Fair Labor and Standards Act regarding internships. Below is a link to the United States Department of Labor webpage that outlines the criteria for unpaid internships under The Fair Labor and Standards Act.
SIAS ACADEMIC INTERNSHIP POLICIES

INTERNSHIP DEFINED: An internship is an academic independent study course and therefore is governed by all academic courses polices of the University of Washington Tacoma and the School of Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences. The course numbers for internships are found on the SIAS internship web page. Internships are for Credit/No Credit with the exception of TPOLS 496 which is a graded capstone for PPPA majors. PPPA (PPE) internships are managed by PPPA faculty.

Credit hours earned: SIAS students may earn up to fifteen (15) independent study credits. Internships may account for fifteen (15) of these credits, however internships over ten (10) credits to be earned within one (1) quarter require the approval of the Dean of SIAS.

Year level: It is recommended that students do an internship during their junior or senior year within the last ninety (90) credits of their degree program. Exceptions to this must have the approval of faculty. It should be noted that internships are four (400) level courses and students are expected to perform academically at upper division course work level for an internship.

Retroactive credit: Retroactive credit for an internship will not be granted. For example, if a student completes volunteer work or a non-academic internship over the summer, and then requests credit for an internship it will not be approved. Internships must be set up as a learning experience ahead of time so that the work can be academically approved and guided by a faculty supervisor.

Paid/Unpaid: An academic internship can be a paid or unpaid opportunity. If an internship is a paid opportunity the pay is for the work the student performs; the credit is for what the student learns through the experiential educational experience. When a paid internship is to be credited for the student’s capstone project it must meet the criteria of the major; it is the student’s responsibility to obtain approval from faculty.

Federal Law pertaining to academic internships: Academic internships are required to adhere to the Fair Labor and Standards Act regarding internships. Below is a link to the United States Department of Labor webpage that outlines the criteria for unpaid internships under The Fair Labor and Standards Act.

Issues of concern: Student behavior and/or performance or issues of concern regarding the site not fulfilling their responsibilities within the learning agreement are managed by the IAS Internship Program Manager. Difficulties with the student achieving the learning goals described within the learning agreement are managed by the student’s faculty supervisor.

Withdrawal from an internship: Dropping an internship after the time allowed without penalty results in a Tuition Forfeiture. The process to request to waive tuition forfeiture can be found on the Office of the Registrar’s web page.

Tuition forfeiture decisions are made in the Registrar’s office with review and consultation by a committee composed of the Registrar, the Assistant Registrar, an Academic Advisor, and a Financial Aid Advisor.