

# INTERNSHIPS ~ FAQs



## **What is an internship?**

An internship is pre-professional work experience that helps you in exploring your career goals. Some students will be required to complete an internship to fulfill the requirements of a major (verify with FACULTY ADVISOR in regard to your ‘major’ requirements). An internship enables you to connect your education and the skills you have gained while in college to a ‘new’ world opportunity. While ‘trying out’ a possible career, you gain insights into the dynamics of the field in which you are working. In addition, you will foster the development of professional skills and learn the value of networking effectively. Internships can occur at any type of organization such as non-profit, corporations or government. An internship can also provide you with the answer to the question that is often asked: "What can I do with a major in \_\_\_?"

If your plans include **graduate school**, an internship can be helpful in making that decision as well. Many graduate schools look for evidence of experience in the field, and an internship can provide that experience.

**Note: Most students participate in internships that are not directly related to their majors. Always confirm with your FACULTY ADVISOR whether or not you need to do an internship directly related to your major.**

## **Who can do an internship?**

Students complete their internship during their junior or senior year; sophomores can do an internship with permission from their **FACULTY ADVISOR**. **First Year students can complete an internship for experience only, not for college credit** (see pg. 196 in the catalog).

## **Are internships done during the academic year or only during the summer?**

Internships can be completed during the fall or spring semester. To register, you are required to have your **FACULTY ADVISOR** sign a registration form. *You cannot register via my.coe.edu.* Another option is to do a **Summer Non-Credit Internship** (check with a **CAREER COUNSELOR** or Registrar about the cost) that will meet your practicum requirement.

## **What is the TIME LINE for planning my internship experience?**

**Plan at least one semester (4-6 months) in advance of the semester you want to do an internship in.**

For example, if you are planning for a spring internship, you should begin the process early fall semester. **For competitive internships, plan at least one year in advance.** Examples would include internships in professional sports, TV/radio programming, and anything that requires security clearances, such as the FBI, White House, and State Department, to name a few.

### **How do I get started with this process?**

You begin with focus. What do you want to ‘try out’ in regard to a career? Once that has been established, you then develop your targeted resume and submit it to internship sites and prepare for an interview so you are ready when an employer contacts you. You can start this process by registering for and attending *Intro to Resume* and *Interviewing* workshops or by meeting with a **CAREER COUNSELOR**. Call **319.399.8844** to schedule an appointment.

*An internship is a ‘practice’ professional job experience and students are expected to find their own internship.* **CAREER SERVICES** is available to advise students as are the **FACULTY** within their **MAJOR DEPARTMENT**. There are many resources available to you including Coe Connections, Coe alumni and the **CAREER SERVICES** website.

### **I am not sure what my focus is, now what?**

There are many ways a student can explore possible career options before doing an internship including taking the Strong Interest Inventory. For assistance and other ideas, call **CAREER SERVICES** to schedule an appointment, **319.399.8844**.

### **Where are internships located?**

During the academic year, internships are typically located in the Cedar Rapids/ Iowa City area unless they are part of an off-campus experience such as New York or Washington DC Term. During the summer, internships can occur anywhere you can find them. **Note:** *For internships located in a place in which you do not know anyone, you will need to consider living arrangements and budget.*

### **How much time do I spend working at an internship site? How many hours are required?**

**During the internship, you will work a minimum of 140-160 hours** (depending upon the academic department in which you do the internship). This does not include the time you spend preparing for the internship, writing your targeted resume, interviewing and additional required work.

### **Are there paid internships available?**

There are both paid and unpaid internship opportunities. *Students can be paid and receive college credit.*

### **How many internships can I do?**

**You can do one, one-credit internship to meet your practicum requirement.** For an extraordinary internship opportunity, a student can do a 2-credit internship as approved by your **FACULTY ADVISOR** and/or **CAREER COUNSELOR** (examples would be internships for a New York or Washington DC Term). **Note:** **You can do unlimited internships for ‘experience only’ which can be listed on your resume.**

### **If an internship is a course, will I have homework? Tests? Do I get a real grade?**

**The internship is graded S/U for this academic requirement whether it’s a credit or a Summer Non-Credit Internship.** Homework can consist of, minimally, developing learning goals and objectives; keeping a journal or daily log; completing a substantial project and/or writing a final paper; and being evaluated by the employer. *It’s your responsibility* to verify with your **FACULTY ADVISOR** what these requirements are for your department and/or meet with a **CAREER COUNSELOR**.

**Can I do my internship at my current job?**

You may do an internship at your current job site if you are **taking on a new project or job AND your responsibilities are significantly different.** **Note:** If possible, it is usually in your best interest to explore other organizations for an internship and make new contacts. Both your workplace Supervisor and **FACULTY ADVISOR will need to approve the internship *before you register.***

**How do I officially register for the internship?**

When you have your internship confirmed with the employer and approved (form signed by your **FACULTY ADVISOR**), you can register for the internship through the Registrar's Office. Be sure to confirm which catalog number you should use when registering.

**I did an internship last summer, however, I didn't tell anyone. Can I still get credit?**

**No.** Retroactive credit is not awarded for a past experience.

**I still have questions about the academic practicum requirement. Where do I go now?**

You can start with your **FACULTY ADVISOR**, review the college catalog or schedule an appointment with a **CAREER COUNSELOR** by calling **319.399.8844**.