

## What is an Internship?

An internship is a para-professional or pre-professional experience designed in close consultation with a faculty advisor which gives the student an opportunity to apply knowledge from the classroom in an employment setting consistent with the students chosen career field. Because internships most often include a rigorous academic component and assume that the student already has significant knowledge and experience, internships are usually undertaken by juniors, seniors and graduate students. Internships may pay a wage or stipend or may be unpaid. Students gain valuable career experience and the opportunity to see and be seen by possible future employers.

The Internship Program is a field-based learning experience where a student is in a job setting, learning skills that integrate career goals with their coursework and major. The Internship Program is designed for students as a means to incorporate qualified and supervised work into their educational program and gain academic credit while making valuable career corrections. Although internships are generally unpaid, exceptions can be made in circumstances where the student's status as a student, rather than an employee, can be protected.

## Why do an Internship?

A recent study discovered that a quarter of the new hires by prestigious Fortune 500 companies had participated in an internship program while a student. The number one criteria employers use in hiring is attitude and then **experience**. Internships allow you to apply what you are learning in the classroom to a work environment, build your career network and show a potential employer your abilities and skills. In today's job market, the experience an internship provides you is essential for your career development.

## General Information

Internship units are upper division. Each academic program determines the range in the number of units available for internship credit. While the usual range is 1-4 units, some departments grant as many as 8.

Internship work activities are pre- or paraprofessional in a field related to a student's academic or career goals.

## Field Experience-Internship Requirements

A minimum of 45 hours in an actual work situation per unit per semester is required. This averages out to 3-4 hours per week per unit at the Internship site.

Students are required to fill out the Internship Agreement Form and have it completed and signed by the on-site job supervisor, Internship Advisor, the Department Chair, and School Dean before registering for internship units.

Students are required to complete any work and academic requirements as indicated on the Internship Agreement Form.

Please contact Sandra Feldman at [Sandra.feldman@sonoma.edu](mailto:Sandra.feldman@sonoma.edu) or 707-664-2437 with any further questions.