INTERNSHIP POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

GENERAL INFORMATION

An internship is an important part of career preparation. According to curriculum studies, internship experience and writing skills are the two most important elements in finding your first job.

Academic credit for internships is available by enrolling in PUR4940 – Public Relations Internship. The course is a Professional Elective that fulfills Block 2 requirements (Block 3 for students admitted prior to Summer B 2012). It can be taken for one to six credits. No more than six credits total are allowed for this course. Noncredit internships may be taken at any time and do not require department approval.

1 credit = 65 hours
2 credits = 130 hours
3 credits = 195 hours
4 credits = 260 hours
5 credits = 325 hours
6 credits = 390 hours

PUR4940 is offered every fall, spring and summer C semesters. The course is graded S/U (satisfactory/unsatisfactory) and the instructor is the Department Chair. To qualify for academic credit, an internship must be an on-the-job learning experience in public relations. The intern must be supervised by a full-time employee of the sponsoring organization who is knowledgeable about public relations.

ENROLLMENT

Upon submission of an internship application, the Department Chair will review and accept or deny your application. If the application is approved, you will be enrolled in the course by the Department. The student can’t register themselves for the course because it is department controlled.

We encourage students to submit applications early, which will allow for ample time to resubmit if any issue arises with the application.

REQUIREMENTS & HOW TO APPLY

1. You must be classified as a junior (60 credits or more) or a senior in the Public Relation Department and have earned at least nine semester hours of credit in professional courses, including PUR 3000 and JOU 3101; and have a 2.5 or higher GPA.

2. The internship must be an on-the-job learning experience in public relations. The intern must be supervised by a full-time employee of the sponsoring organization who is knowledgeable about public relations.
3. Submit a completed internship application*.
   a. Internship applications are due before the last day of drop/add for the corresponding semester.
   b. Before turning in an application, check ISIS for any holds. All holds must be lifted before you can be registered.
   c. The application can be found online on the Public Relations page in the College website.

4. Submit an acceptance letter* from your supervisor.
   a. Your supervisor must write an acceptance letter for you to submit with the internship application. The letter must be addressed to the department and written on organizational letterhead. It must explain that you were hired as an intern for the company or organization and provide information about your specific public relations duties. It MUST also have your direct supervisor’s official title and MUST be signed in ink by the person supervising your work for duration of the internship.
   b. An example acceptance letter can be found on our website.

COURSEWORK

Once approved for an internship, students will be enrolled into an online course on Canvas. Each week students will be required to submit a “quiz,” entering their total hours for the week and a description of the work they did that week. Because interns must work a select number of hours to complete the number of credits needed, it is crucial that proper tracking of hours and summaries are submitted weekly. If you have not started working and have no hours done then you must still submit a “quiz” and let the department know that you have no hours to report. All Quizzes must be submitted in order to receive a final grade.

At the end of the semester interns will be expected to submit a self-evaluation of their internship experience and have their supervisor submit an evaluation form and letter to the Department Chair. These requirements will be explained in greater depth in the course syllabus on Canvas.

GOOD TO KNOW

- More than one internship may be completed for academic credit in different semesters if each internship is with a different employer, or housed under a different department at the same company or organization. More than one internship may also be completed in the same semester as long as the internships are with different employers and do not exceed six credits combined. No more than a total of six hours of internship credit may be earned towards a
Bachelor’s of Science Degree in Public Relations, either from this department or any other departments at UF.

- Submitting an internship application signifies that you will complete the internship with the organization specified. **You may not change your organization without approval from the Department Chair.** If you wish to change your organization at any time, you must submit a new acceptance letter to the Department of Public Relations immediately.

- **The intern must physically work at the organization’s office, at the same location as the supervisor.** Internships where students will be working remotely may be considered, but are not guaranteed for approval.

- Credits are earned by working a set number of documented hours at your internship. A list of credits and their corresponding hours are below:

  **All hours that need to be completed to satisfy your requirement must be done before the last day of class.**

- This does not prohibit you from starting and ending your internship on dates agreed upon by you and your internship employer as long as you are registered for the course before the beginning of the semester in which the internship will take place and you fulfill all requirements, including submitting all reports and completing necessary hours, by the set deadline for the semester. **No hours completed prior to the start of the semester or following the end of the semester will be counted toward academic credit during the semester in which you are registered for PUR 4940.**

- It is important to keep in mind that academic credits cannot be increased or decreased after you are registered without dropping and adding the course with different credit hours and paying a late fee. Any changes made in the number of credits must be approved the Department Chair and documentation will need to be submitted to the Registrar’s Office for late registration.

  **Neither the Department of Public Relations, nor the department faculty, nor the University of Florida is responsible for any personal injury, loss, or death while you are engaged in the internship or while traveling to or from it.**
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Can I do an internship in the summer, but get credit for it in the fall, when my Bright Futures scholarship will pay for the tuition?
No, credit is not granted retroactively. It must be earned and tuition for enrollment in PUR 4940 must be paid the same semester in which the internship is done.

I live in Miami. Can I wait until I get home after spring semester to find an internship and then submit the paperwork for earning credit?
All summer internships must be approved before the beginning of Summer C, however a late registration may be considered on a case by case basis.

If I have a problem completing enough work hours to fulfill the number of credits for which I am registered can I request that my credit hours be reduced?
No. Credit hours cannot be changed. You must drop the course with the original credits and add this course with different credits. Doing so requires the Department Chair’s approval and your on-campus presence to process the necessary paperwork. Late fees may be associated with this type of change.

Do I have to find my own internship?
Yes. The Department announces internship opportunities to students via weekly announcement emails. The Knight Division in the PATH (Weimer 1060), MyCJC online, and the Career Resource Center in the Reitz Union may also provide help with finding internships.

Can I get credit for an internship that pays me a salary?
Yes. In fact, paid internships are strongly endorsed by the Department, as well as the National Commission on Public Relations Education. Because you have some training in public relations, your internship work will add value to the sponsoring organization.

Should I take an unpaid internship?
The decision is entirely yours. Pay is not a factor in approving internships. At the same time, keep in mind that you are paying tuition to do the internship.

Can I do an internship without having taken Reporting?
No. You must meet the prerequisites to do an internship for credit. It is important that you have the necessary skills to be successful which is why the prerequisites are required.

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