PR Internship FAQ Sheet

Read and understand the answers to these FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) before making any arrangements with a potential site or supervisor.

To reiterate, **do not make any internship agreements with any internship provider until you have read the following and conferred with the department internship coordinator.** Some students have made agreements to do internship and then found that they were not qualified for such, or that the internship was not acceptable.

**FAQ: What are the minimum qualifications for me to do internship?**
To begin, be aware that internships are a privilege for students, not a right. The department feels that students should demonstrate significant academic strength if they wish to participate in internship activities. On that basis, you must have a cumulative GPA of 2.75 or higher to register for internship credit. GPA is visible in your advising report on my.boisestate.

**FAQ: What classes should I have taken before applying for internship credit?**
Internship should be an extension of classroom learning, not a substitute for it. You should take many PR classes before registering for an internship, and the internship should be related to your coursework. For example, we are not likely to approve an internship in media relations if you have not taken any media relations classes.

In addition to the Communication Department requirements, PR students must have successfully completed COMM 278 Principles of Public Relations, COMM 279 Public Relations Campaigns, and 382 Public Relations Writing to qualify for internship credit.

**FAQ: When in my college career should I do internship?**
Internships should be taken in the junior and senior year. Internship is a good means of networking and gaining entry level career skills which serve you best when you are close to graduating. Completing an internship in your final semester also provides you with a fresh, non-academic reference for your post-graduate job search. Also worth noting, you are allowed a limited number of internship credits. Saving them until close to graduation—when you have a better idea of career interests—is a wise decision.

**FAQ: Are there specific guidelines for what makes an acceptable site and/or supervisor?**
You should aspire to do an internship at the highest possible level related to your professional goals. First and foremost, an internship is a learning experience. Ideally, then, you should find an organization in which you will be able to work with communication professionals who have formal education and demonstrate a proven professional track record. We'd like you to learn from the best and also to have names of prestigious organizations on your resume when you graduate.

Related to this, you need a formal, designated supervisor on site. The supervisor should be a college graduate with a degree in public relations or a related field. This person is in a position similar to that held by a professor. If the person with whom you are working knows less about public relations than
you do, quality learning is highly unlikely. Typically, the Department of Communication expects an appropriate supervisor to have been working full-time in his/her current capacity for at least three years. If the person is serving as a supervisor of a PR intern for the first time, we will request a copy of his/her resume.

We feel an intern will learn much more in a new setting than they would working in a place and with individuals with which they are already familiar. Therefore, in most instances you may not complete internships at organizations where you are already employed. This protects you from job creep, as well as from having your work as an intern, where you are learning new things and are bound to make mistakes, used in evaluations of your overall performance.

PR internships require an approved Public Relations Internship Verification form. This determines the acceptability of a particular internship by evaluating your readiness; the suitability of the organization offering the internship; the designated supervisor’s qualifications; the internship duties and terms; and the internship learning objectives. The pre-approval process protects you by ensuring your opportunity to have a valuable learning experience. Public Relations Internship Verification form is available on the Communication Department website under the “forms” tab.

**FAQ: How much credit may I earn in working with an organization for a semester?**
For each 45 hours spent working with an organization, a student may earn 1 credit. Typically, the maximum allowed for a semester is 135 hours of work for 3 credits.

Just as you may not take the same class twice, you may not do the same internship twice. The goal of an internship to extend your learning. We feel an intern will learn much more by moving to a new setting rather than working with the same individuals a second time. Given this, we typically do not allow more than one internship at a particular site. Similarly, we typically do not allow you to complete an internship at an organization where they are already employed.

**FAQ: What is the timetable for registering for internship?**
Each term there is a formal deadline for internship registration listed in the “Academic Calendar” section of the catalog. This is the date by which all forms must be completed. The department requires that you should have met with the internship coordinator and submitted their completed Public Relations Internship Verification form at least a week before that date to increase the likelihood all forms can be completed on time.

**FAQ: When does the actual work for an internship need to be completed?**
To begin, note that you should not do any work on site before receiving a notification that the internship is officially approved. Related to this, you may not receive internship credit for work completed in an earlier period. University policy forbids a student from doing work one semester and registering for credit in another.

Plan to finish your required internship hours on site well before the end of the term for which you are registered. The department needs an evaluation from the supervisor, and that evaluation cannot be written if you have not met your contractual obligations. So, you should plan on finishing your hours by the beginning of dead week.
FAQ: Are there fees for internships?
Internships are considered equivalent to regular classes, in regard to fees. Part-time students will pay for each internship credit. Full-time students will have internship credits considered as part of their normal load. If the internship credits push a student’s credits to “overload” (more than 17 credits), overload fees will apply.

FAQ: Is summer a good time to do internship?
Yes, summer internships are a good option for many students. Please note two things, though. All of the rules described on this sheet apply. And, students who do internship in summer have the same cost per credit as those registering for classes. In other words, a three-credit internship costs the same as a three-credit summer class.

FAQ: If I am qualified for internship and aware of a potential internship that appears suitable (given the criteria above) what is the next step?
Once you have carefully read this list of frequently asked questions and meet the basic qualifications for internship, schedule an appointment with the department internship coordinator to further discuss sites and supervisors. Following the initial discussion, you will be asked to complete a Public Relations Internship Verification form and submit it for approval. Forms are available on the Communication Department website under the “forms” tab.

Please note that even if you have discussed an internship with the internship coordinator and have initially received a positive response, there is no guarantee that the internship will be approved once the PR Internship Verification form has been processed. The verification process may reveal that the internship does not meet department requirements. Please do not make any agreements with the internship provider until the internship verification has been approved.

FAQ: If I am qualified for internship and don’t have a site and/or supervisor in mind, what is the next step?
One good option is to check BroncoJobs. Its listings are not limited to paid employment; potential internship providers also post opportunities. Check the websites of organizations you are interested in. You may also contact the department internship coordinator for advice. Sometimes previous students in the department have found good sites that might be of interest to you.

Public Relations Internship Coordinator is Dr. Casper: maryfrancescasper@boisestate.edu or casper.youcanbook.me to book an appointment
Communication Department Internship Coordinator is Dr. Rick Moore: rmoore@boisestate.edu