

## Department of Communication Boise State University Internship FAQ Sheet

Students considering applying for internship credit should 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 one of the department internship coordinators.** 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. That can be very embarrassing.

### ***FAQ: Who is the Department Internship Coordinator for Communication?***

This is a good question, because the nature of the internship will determine who the student will work with to register for credit. Students who are pursuing a PR Certificate must register under the “PR” designation. To do that, they need to confer with Dr. Mary Frances Casper. Her e-mail address is at the end of this information sheet. Students who are *not* working on a PR Certificate will register under COMM designation. To do that, they need to confer with Dr. Rick Moore. His e-mail address is at the end of this information sheet.

### ***FAQ: What are the minimum qualifications for a student 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, students must have a cumulative GPA of 2.75 or higher to register for internship credit. GPA is visible in a student’s advising report on my.boisestate. Students may call the Registrar's Office if they do not know how to access that.

### ***FAQ: What classes should a student have taken before applying for internship credit?***

Internship should be an extension of classroom learning, not a substitute for it. Students should take many COMM classes before registering for internship and the internship they seek should be related to their coursework. To give one example, we are not likely to approve an internship in video production for a student if that student has not taken any of the video production classes we offer.

Also, students who are working on the PR Certificate need to have taken COMM 278, COMM 279, and COMM 382 before beginning their internship experience.

***FAQ: When in his/her college career should a student do internship?***

Internships should be taken in the junior and senior year, not early in the student's education. Internship is a good means of networking and gaining entry level career skills. Both of those benefits from the experience serve the student best if, at the time of graduation, they are recent. Also worth noting, students are allowed a limited number of internship credits. Saving them until close to graduation—when the student has a better idea of career interests—is a wise decision.

***FAQ: Are there specific guidelines for what makes an acceptable site and/or supervisor?***

Students should aspire to do an internship at the highest possible level related to their professional goals. First and foremost, an internship is a learning experience. Ideally, then, a student should find an organization in which he/she will be able to work with communication professionals who have formal education and demonstrate a proven professional track record. We do encourage students who are able to consider national or international internship opportunities to do so. We'd like them to learn from the best and also to be able to have names of prestigious organizations on their resumes when they graduate.

Related to this, each student needs a formal, designated supervisor on site. The supervisor should be a college graduate with a degree in communication or a related field. This person is in a position similar to that held by a professor. If the person with whom the student is working knows less about communication than the student, quality learning is highly unlikely. Typically, the Department of Communication expects that 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 COMM Dept. intern for the first time, we will request a copy of his/her resume.

***FAQ: How much credit may a student 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 one may not take the same class twice, one may not do the same internship twice. The goal in an internship is learning of new things, not mere earning of credits. We feel an intern will typically learn much more if moving to a new setting rather than working with the same individuals a second time. Given all of this, we typically do not allow a student to do more than one internship at a particular site.

***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 an interested student should contact us 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 a student should not do any work on site before receiving a notification that the internship is officially approved. Related to this, a student 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.

Please note that interns need to plan to finish their required internship hours on site well before the end of the term for which they are registered. The department needs an evaluation from the supervisor, and that evaluation cannot be written if the student has not met his/her contractual obligations. So, a student should plan on finishing his/her 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 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 pay the same money per credit as those registering for classes. In other words, a three-credit internship costs the same as a three-credit summer class. So, don’t do summer internship unless you are willing to do summer school fees.

***FAQ: For students who are qualified for internship and are aware of a potential internship that appears suitable (given the criteria above) what is the next step?***

The next step is to send an e-mail to the department internship coordinator explaining that the student has carefully read this list of frequently asked questions, meets the basic qualifications for internship, and is interested in further discussing sites and supervisors.

*FAQ: For students who are 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 on it. The student may also contact the department internship coordinator for advice. Sometimes an earlier student in the department has found a good site that might be of interest to the one who is inquiring now.

For those students seeking general COMM credit for their internship, the coordinator to contact is Dr. Rick Moore: [rmoore@boisestate.edu](mailto:rmoore@boisestate.edu)

For those students seeking PR credit for their internship (to meet requirements for the PR Certificate), the coordinator to contact is Dr. Mary Frances Casper: [maryfrancescasper@boisestate.edu](mailto:maryfrancescasper@boisestate.edu)