

Department of Communication

Boise State University

Internship Guidelines

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 commit to an internship until you have read the following and have completed the Internship Verification process.** 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: Who are the Department of Communication Internship Coordinators?

COMM 493: Dr. Moore is the coordinator for students who are pursuing Communication and Media Arts internship. His e-mail address is at the end of this information sheet.

PR 493: Dr. Casper is the coordinator for students who are pursuing a PR internship. Her e-mail address is at the end of this information sheet.

FAQ: What are the minimum qualifications for me to do internship?

To begin, understand 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 COMM, Media Arts or PR classes before registering for an internship, and the internship you seek should be related to your coursework. For example, we are not likely to approve an internship in media production if you have not taken any media production 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 COMM 382 Public Relations Writing to be eligible for internship credit. Additional courses that support the type of internship you wish to complete are recommended.

FAQ: When in my college career should I do internship?

Department of Communication internships can be completed 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. We recommend completing an internship in your final semester to provide yourself with a fresh, non-academic reference for your post-graduate job search. Also worth noting, you are only allowed a limited number of internship credits. Saving your internship credits until close to graduation—when you have a better idea of career interests—is a wise decision.

FAQ: What are the specific requirements for an acceptable site and/or supervisor?

1. **HIGH QUALITY INTERNSHIP.** You should aspire to do an internship at the highest possible level related to your professional goals. Ideally, you should find an organization in which you will be able to work with local, national, or international 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.

2. **ESTABLISHED ORGANIZATION.** An organization must have the ability to support, instruct, and mentor an intern. Therefore, we typically recommend seeking organizations or individuals providing internships that have been established for a minimum of 3 years.
3. **QUALIFIED ON-SITE SUPERVISOR.** Related to this, you need a formal, designated supervisor on site. The supervisor should be a college graduate with a degree in communication, journalism, media arts, public relations, or a related field. This person is in a position similar to that held by a professor and should be able to instruct and mentor you. If the person with whom you are working knows less about the area than you do, quality learning is highly unlikely. Therefore, we require internship supervisors to have either a) a communication-related degree and 3-years full-time post graduate experience in his/her current capacity, or b) 7 or more years of experience in his/her current capacity if he/she does not hold a degree. If the person is serving as a supervisor of a Communication Department intern for the first time, we may request a copy of his/her resume.

You will be asked to provide the supervisor's professional contact information, job title, education and related employment history for verification. *We will not approve supervisors who cannot provide a phone number and email address clearly associated with the organization providing the internship. For example, mysupervisor@yahoo.com would not be acceptable, mysupervisor@cityofboise.org would be.*

4. **YOU ARE NOT EMPLOYED THERE.** 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, you may not complete internships at organizations where you are currently or have previously been employed.
5. **APPROVED INTERNSHIP VERIFICATION FORM.** Department of Communication internships require pre-approval. 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 verification process protects you by ensuring your opportunity to have a valuable learning experience. The Internship Verification form is available on the Communication Department website.

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. The maximum allowed for a semester at a specific internship site 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. We feel an intern will learn much more by moving to a new setting than they would working with the same individuals a second time. Given this, we do not allow more than one internship at a particular site. Similarly, you may not complete an internship at an organization where you are or have been 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 university forms must be completed. The department requires that you submit a completed Internship Verification form at least one week (5 business days) before that date to increase the likelihood that all forms can be completed on time.

FAQ: When does the actual work for an internship need to be completed?

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 by the beginning of dead week of the term for which you are registered. The department needs an evaluation from the supervisor to post your grade, and that evaluation cannot be written until you meet your contractual obligations.

FAQ: Are there fees for internships?

Internships are considered equivalent to regular classes. 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 that a) all of the rules described on this sheet apply during the summer; and b) students who do internship in summer pay 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: I found an internship listing that asks me to complete a specific task for an organization and/or serve as their campus ambassador. Are these legitimate?

Unfortunately, many opportunities advertised as internships are actually volunteer or contract work. They ask students to work independently, using knowledge and skills they already have, often without pay. Interns work with an experienced supervisor to instruct and support them as they learn new skills and gain valuable experience. Therefore, we do not approve internships that ask students to serve as campus representatives or ambassadors, or to complete work not currently undertaken by the organization. Examples of ineligible "internships" include, but are not limited to: independently overhauling a website for an organization without a webmaster; creating social media accounts and establishing a social media presence for an organization that doesn't currently use social media; independently creating media content such as blogs, articles, and video for publications or outlets; promoting or distributing products on behalf of an organization; and/or door-to-door sales.

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 guidelines and are sure that you meet the basic qualifications for internship, complete and submit an Internship Verification Form. The form is available on the Communication Department website.

Note: Even if you have discussed an internship with the internship coordinator and have initially received a positive response, the verification process may reveal that the internship does not meet department requirements. ***Please do not make any agreements with the internship provider or commit to an internship until the internship verification has been approved.***

FAQ: If I am qualified for internship but don't have one in mind, what is the next step?

One good option is to check BroncoJobs. Check the websites of organizations you are interested in. You may also contact the department internship coordinators for advice.

COMM 493: Communication Internship Coordinator

Dr. Rick Moore

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PR 493: Public Relations Internship Coordinator

Dr. MaryFrances Casper

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or book an appointment at casper.youcanbook.me