

MC 481: INTERNSHIP FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **What qualifies as an internship?**

Working on the job, in person, as an apprentice for a full-time media professional. What an internship is NOT is some kind of job in which you provide media services for some business that needs free (or paid) help. Because experience always makes you better, get as many part-time jobs as you can doing this kind of work, but it's not an internship. If you're still not sure, contact the Internship Coordinator and ask.

- **How do I find an internship?**

Check the internship bulletin board in the hallway across from the TV studio for the latest internship handbills; go to siue.edu/MASSCOMM and click on "Internships/Employment" for a list of recommended internship venues; talk to your classmates who have/are on internships; check Web sites of companies where you would like to be employed to learn if there is an internship program in place.

- **Am I limited to the internship venues on the department's recommended list?**

No. We have built this list in part because students find their own internships and they work out well, giving us the confidence to add them to the recommended list.

- **I recently worked at a media company. Can I still get internship credit?**

Sorry, but no. No "ex post facto" credit. Prior to starting work, you must be registered in and approved by the Internship Coordinator for MC 481.

- **Can the internship be on-campus?**

Again, no. Our accreditation agency says that internships must be off-campus.

- **Can the internship be paid?**

Yes, but not that many companies offer paid internships. Be prepared to tighten your belt for a semester.

- **How can I get a form stating that the internship is for credit?**

If you request it, the Internship Coordinator can write a letter or e-mail/call your potential intern supervisor.

- **How many hours must I work to get credit for MC 481?**

You must work at least 225 hours to get credit for your internship. Scheduling of these hours is between you and the internship supervisor, and does not necessarily have to coincide with the beginning and the end of a semester.

- **What are the prerequisites for an internship?**

You must be a senior mass communications major. If you're in our Masters Degree Program, you may enroll and receive credit for an internship, but you can't apply the credits toward completing your M.S. degree. In other words, it'll be just for the experience. For undergraduates, certain internships, such as those in radio or TV news, require you to have completed MC332, Electronic Media News, and it's strongly recommended that you

also complete MC 324, Public Affairs Reporting, so that you have the requisite newsgathering, writing and producing skills. It's also strongly recommended that before considering a news internship, you should spend at least a year downstairs working at WSIE-FM News. News Director Tom Dehner will prepare you well. For a TV production internship, you must have completed an advanced production course, such as MC 332, 333, 334, or 431 prior to beginning the internship.

- **When can I enroll in the internship course?**

After you have been hired by an internship venue and have a start date, make an appointment to see the Internship Coordinator. You will then fill out the necessary form (it's also online and available for you to download from this site), and he will remove the "block" on Banner, allowing you to sign up online. From the first day of the semester on, you must also fill out an add/drop form, and after you get it signed, walk it over to the Service Center. Also, the last possible date you can sign up for an internship is the second Friday of the semester you wish to intern. After that, you'll have to wait until the following semester.

- **How soon should I begin active work to secure an internship?**

The sooner the better. For example, a few of the best TV production and TV news internships in St. Louis are filled as much as a year in advance. Certainly there are busier times of year: Summers are the worst, because so many are applying for internships. Fall is the least busy (read easiest to get an internship because of the reduced competition), followed by Spring. Some out-of-town internships are only offered in the Summer, and application deadlines are usually in the late Fall. Don't procrastinate about your internship. If you do, you probably won't be satisfied with the experiences you have or the contacts you make.

- **How can I get help writing my resume?**

Download the handout, "Do's and Don'ts of Resume Writing," available on this site. This handout also includes a sample resume for a Mass Communications graduate. It is highly recommended that you use the elements of this resume in preparing your resume for the first page of your senior portfolio.

- **Does my portfolio need to be completed in the same semester as my internship?**

No. Often students do their internship – for example – in the Summer, and turn in their portfolios in the Fall and graduate in December. In such a case, a student would receive an incomplete in MC 481, which eventually is changed to a letter grade when portfolio is turned in and earns at least the minimum grade. See syllabus for details on this.

- **How do I get information on how to create my senior portfolio?**

Detailed instructions are also posted on this link.