The College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, along with your individual Major Department or Center, recognizes the value of internships and encourages qualified students to earn internship credit through one of the courses available (CLCE 490, COMS 497, JOUR 492, COMS 639, ENGL 496, ENGL 628, ENV 492, FLAL 415, HIST 395, ILAS 390, or ILAS 602). Internships are intended to help provide a transition to professional life. The work experience offers opportunities to learn skills and concepts outside of the traditional classroom setting, while applying previously learned skills and concepts to an on-the-job setting. The Coordinator of Internships, the employer, and the student work as a team to make the internship a valuable learning experience for the student.

Students who have taken at least six hours of relevant courses and have a GPA of 2.0 or higher are eligible to receive internship credit.

**Students interested in internship credit should:**

1. Visit the Career Services office (CLB 240) and/or the Office of Professional Development (Reavis 306A) to learn of potential internships. Students may obtain internships through personal contacts or research, but may not use current jobs or jobs in which they work for a direct family member (parent, sibling, spouse, etc.) for internship credit.

2. Contact the company to learn more about the internship opportunity. It is up to the company to offer a student an internship position. Whether or not an internship opportunity will be approved for academic credit is subject to the review of the Coordinator of Internships in conjunction with the student’s Major Department or Interdisciplinary Department.

3. Complete the **Internship Application** and prepare a **Proposal for Credit**. Have the employer complete the **Employer Data Form** and submit all three documents to the Coordinator of Internships by no later than the end of the add/drop period for the semester in which academic credit is to be received. The Coordinator will only review complete applications.

   When filling out the **Internship Application**, please be sure to answer all questions and to include your email address, as this is how the Coordinator of Internships will communicate with you during the semester of your internship.

   The purpose of the **Proposal for Credit** is to justify the receipt of academic credit for the internship. In it, you should include a description of your internship and your sponsoring organization, along with the tasks you expect to engage in and any major projects you’ll be involved in. Include your goals for the internship - what do you hope to learn and accomplish? At the end of the semester, how will you provide evidence of what you learned– by writing an academic paper or by creating a professional portfolio? (Please see page 2 for more information on the paper and portfolio). Though you can use your company’s internship description and other company materials to help guide your proposal, the proposal itself must be in your own words. Any materials used from company information should be properly cited, and the primary text of the proposal should be your own original writing. Materials submitted that are found to not be original student work will be subject to University Academic Integrity guidelines as noted in the Undergraduate Catalog. When reading the proposal, the Coordinator of Internships will look for evidence that the internship is a professional-level position involving a learning experience worthy of receiving academic credit.

   The **Employer Data Form** must be completed by the sponsoring organization.

4. The Coordinator of Internships will review the application materials (Internship Application, Proposal for Credit and Employer Data Form) and will 1) approve the internship and register the student, 2) request more information from the student and/or employer, or 3) reject the internship for credit. Students will be contacted via e-mail if the internship is not approved.

   Students will also receive transcript recognition through NIU Career Services. The Career Services Office may send a contract directly to the employer. Please make sure the employer signs the paperwork for the College office (Internship Application) and the Career Services Office (Contract).

**Students must submit the application at the start of an internship. No retroactive credit will be awarded, meaning a student cannot complete an internship in summer and apply for credit for it the following fall.**

To avoid real or apparent conflicts of interest, and to help insure the internship is objectively evaluated, credit will not be granted for a position with a business owned or operated by a student’s family member. Additionally, the student cannot be supervised by a family member in any internship for credit.
Please note: you will be billed for internship credit hours for both tuition and fees.

Credit Requirements

Grading for Internships is “Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory.” A student must complete a minimum of 40 work hours per hour of academic credit earned. A 3-hour academic credit internship requires a minimum of 120 work hours with an employer. To receive more than 3 credit hours for an internship experience, prior approval from the Coordinator of Internships must be arranged. This cannot be applied retroactively.

Employer responsibilities as an internship supervisor:

- Complete the Employer Data Form and email it to the Director of Student Professional Development at jackking@niu.edu.
- Provide the student with a professional learning experience consisting of supervised training and on the job learning activities.
- Offer the student a minimum of 120 work hours during the semester for 3 hours of academic credit earned.
- Allow the student to apply theory from their course work to actual working situations.
- Provide opportunities for the student to gain new knowledge by performing tasks, working on projects, and completing other on-the-job duties related to the profession.
- Allow the student to create professional projects to include in a final portfolio, if applicable.
- Assist the student in developing a professional network and testing a tentative career choice.
- Call the Coordinator of Internships when any questions or problems arise.
- At the completion of the internship, complete an Employer Evaluation Form, which includes a verification of hours worked. This will be provided to the employer by the student and should be submitted directly to the Coordinator of Internships by the due date.

Student responsibilities as an intern:

Upon approval, registration, and bill payment, the enrolled student is responsible for the following:

1. **Performance** – Work at least 120 hours (per 3 credit hours) at the internship site during the semester. Collaborate with the employer to keep track of hours worked. If you will be working in a job where a great deal of your work will be done remotely/independently, please contact the Coordinator of Internships to receive a time sheet log to use during the semester.

2. **Final Paper or Portfolio** – You will determine at the beginning of the semester whether you’ll write a paper or create a portfolio for credit. The portfolio must be accompanied by a five to six page paper (Note: This length requirement varies by department – please work with the Coordinator of Internships to determine the length that your final paper will need to be). Additionally, Environmental Studies students may be expected to give a public presentation (open to other ENVS Students) regarding their internship experience. As with the Proposal for Credit, material submitted as a part of the paper or portfolio should be the student’s original work. Any materials used from company information should be properly cited, and the primary text of the final project should be your own original writing. Materials submitted that are found to not be original student work will be subject to University Academic Integrity guidelines as noted in the Undergraduate Catalog.

   **Papers** must be a minimum of 10-12 pages (Note: This length requirement varies by department – please work with the Coordinator of Internships to determine the length that your final paper will need to be), typed, double spaced, written with proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling. It should not simply be a summary or journaling of what you did, but an analysis of your work and its relation to your major. Please include:

   - Evaluation of how well you think you performed your job (strengths/weaknesses)
   - Evaluation of the job as an internship assignment – what was good, what could have been better?
   - Analyze the extent to which your learning objectives were or were not met during the internship (consult the original proposal form).
   - Analyze how your previous course work connected to the work you did in the internship, as well as what additional course work would have helped you in this internship.
   - What theories, methods, and knowledge from your major were useful in doing this internship?
   - Discuss how your internship relates to your future educational and career goals.
   - State whether you would recommend or not recommend this work organization to a friend. Explain your response. What recommendations would you give the organization for future intern placement?
**Portfolios** must contain the following:

- A collection of items that document the work you have done and the knowledge and skills you have acquired as an intern. Acceptable artifacts include: reports, brochures, memos, emails, newsletters, articles, original videos, scripts, storyboards, and press releases. Other items may be accepted. Check with the Coordinator of Internships for approval. For the items you choose as artifacts, they must be substantial contributions you made to the organization, and not simply basic evidence of day-to-day business communication expected of any job. For example, an e-mail you wrote to solicit donations as a part of a major fundraising campaign would be an acceptable example of an e-mail being used as an artifact. However, an e-mail thread where you are interacting with a supervisor, client, or colleague on a basic day-to-day issue would not be a sufficient artifact. As a general guideline, 4 to 6 artifacts tend to be an appropriate number to submit. In some cases, with larger/lengthier artifacts, fewer items may be submitted. If you are unsure, be sure to check with the Coordinator of Internships to be certain.

- A one-page summary (minimum of one page, can be longer) of EACH artifact explaining its purpose and the process you used to create it. (These artifact summaries do not count as a part of the final page count required for the 5 to 6 page summary.) These summaries should highlight which skills from your major you used in creating the artifact? What concepts from your courses did you apply? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the piece?

- A final five to six page summary of the internship (**Note:** This length requirement varies by department – please work with the Coordinator of Internships to determine the length that your final paper will need to be). This summary should include:
  - Evaluation of how well you think you performed your job (strengths/weaknesses) and whether or not you met the goals you established in the proposal
  - Evaluation of the job as an internship assignment – what was good, what could have been better?
  - Analyze how your previous course work connected to the work you did in the internship, as well as what additional course work would have helped you in this internship.
  - What theories, methods, and knowledge from your major were useful in doing this internship?
  - Discuss how your internship relates to your future educational and career goals.

3. **Site Evaluation Form** – The Director of Student Professional Development will email each student a copy of a Site Evaluation Form roughly one month before the end of the semester. This will be a chance for the student to formally evaluate their place of employment and what they thought were the strengths and weaknesses of the organization’s internship program. The student will be asked if they are willing to share this evaluation with future students interested in doing an internship with that employer, to help them better understand what the experience will entail. This evaluation form can be returned via mail, e-mail, or fax and is due no later than the final paper/portfolio submission deadline for the given term.

4. **Employer Evaluation Form** – The Director of Student Professional Development will email each student a copy of the Employer Evaluation Form roughly a month before the end of the semester. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure this form is given to the employer in a timely fashion, and the student’s responsibility to ensure that the employer is aware of the deadline for submission of this evaluation. This evaluation form is to be filled out and returned by the Employer via mail, e-mail, or fax.

The Coordinator of Internships must receive the final paper or portfolio AND the Employer Evaluation Form by:

**Summer 2017:** July 27, 2017  |  **Fall 2017:** November 27, 2017  |  **Spring 2018:** April 30, 2018  |  **Summer 2018:** July 27, 2018

If one of the above is not received, or if substandard performance is evident, the student may receive an unsatisfactory grade or an incomplete for the credit hours. All materials should be submitted to:

**Jack King**  
Director of Student Professional Development  
College of Liberal Arts & Sciences; Reavis Hall 306A  
Northern Illinois University  
DeKalb, IL 60115

Phone: (815) 753-1016; Fax: (815)-753-7950  
E-mail: jackking@niu.edu