

**University of Arizona**  
**Internship Policies for Undergraduate and Graduate Students**  
*Approved by the Faculty Senate, May 6, 2019*

## GENERAL INFORMATION

**Purpose of an internship:** The primary goal of an internship is to give students an opportunity to apply lessons learned in the classroom to a real-world experience set in a professional practice-oriented environment, with the intern's work preferably overseen by a professional. In addition to offering students the opportunity to demonstrate and develop their technical skills, it allows students to develop professional skills such as teamwork, effective communication, social interaction and professional networking, an understanding of business procedures, leadership, and critical thinking. Finally, it should provide students with work experience within a semi-formal academic framework that carries with it official course credit from The University of Arizona.

**Definition of internship:** An internship is a guided learning experience offered by an organization with the student's education and preparation for future employment in mind. An internship is a temporary practical assignment, usually lasting only 1-2 academic terms, with no guarantee of ongoing employment. When internships are pursued for academic credit, the academic unit is responsible for assessing assignments and awarding credit.

**College and Department internship guidelines:** All academic units offering internships for credit must publish and consistently apply guidelines for approving student internships. These guidelines should be available to all students eligible to register for the internship units, at all stages of their career. Guidelines should address:

- a. the maximum number of internship units allowed for credit by the academic organization;
- b. the required forms, process and associated deadlines for internship approvals;
- c. any additional criteria related to pre-requisites, learning outcomes, intern responsibilities, or site supervision that the department requires in order to approve registration for the internship units. This includes any policy regarding under what circumstances, if any, a student may intern with a current employer.
- d. Guidelines may state that employers are expected to follow all relevant federal, state, and local employment laws when students are hired as employees for paid internships.
- e. Guidelines may reference that the U.S. Department of Labor provides a seven factor primary beneficiary test related to unpaid internships. The guidelines updated as of January 2018 are available at:  
<https://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.htm>
- f. Guidelines may recommend that students planning to engage in internships abroad contact the consulate of the host country regarding applicable employment law and visa requirements.
- g. The department guidelines shall also reference and shall not contradict the following University policies.

## UA Internship Policies

1. **Definition of hour of work for purposes of academic credit:** The University and Board of Regents require a minimum of 45 hours of work for each unit of credit awarded. An “hour of work” in relation to an internship means 60 minutes of required training, required provision of services to the internship site, AND/OR independent work required to complete the course assignments that will be graded by the instructor of record.
2. **Consistent awarding of credit:** For each unit of credit awarded, hours of work on site for the internship may be supplemented by (1) additional course work within reason, which are not required to be performed at the internship site and (2) additional training or provision of service agreed to by the student, for which the student does not plan to earn credit. These additional hours may include commitment on behalf of the student to provide services outside the dates of the term for which the student is registered. However, academic departments may not require students to work significantly more hours on site than required by the minimum 45 “hours of work.”
3. **Determining number of units for registration purposes:** The number of internship credits must fall within the approved credit range listed in the catalog course description. **Note:** The number of credits that will apply toward a student’s academic program (major) ranges from 1 to 12. Department and college internship guidelines should state the maximum internship units allowed. Exceptions to the college or department limit are granted through a college petition process.
4. **Internship Content:** The content of an internship must not significantly duplicate material offered in a regularly scheduled course in the department. Any exceptions must be approved by the college dean.
5. **Required Form:** The **UA Student Intern Work Plan** form should be collected to document each student internship for credit. This form requires students to acknowledge provision of the UA Disclosure: Insurance Coverage for University Internships for Credit. The Work Plan may be customized by:
  - a. the addition of department/college logos;
  - b. references to the academic department/college within the language of the form related to goals and learning objectives;
  - c. inclusion of additional fields required by the department or college or an accrediting agency in regard to documenting the learning objectives and intended learning outcomes of the experience;
  - d. examples specific to appropriate learning objectives, goal statements etc. for the department’s internships.

**Note:** This template covers the requirements to document internships for credit as required by UA’s academic accreditation, reporting needs, and Risk Management protocols. Any additions to agreements signed by students or site supervisors should be specific to identifying and achieving the learning objectives of the experience. Language related to assumption of risks or liabilities, indemnification or other legalities should not be added to the template by departments. Fields should not be removed from the template when creating customized forms.

6. **Payment for internships:** The University of Arizona awards credit for paid or unpaid internships. Whether or not an internship is paid should not be considered as criteria by a department when determining whether an internship meets the learning objectives and other substantive requirements for academic credit.
7. **Internships with a student's existing and ongoing place of employment:** Department guidelines should address whether the department will consider awarding credit for an internship experience with a student's current employer. Departments may do so at their discretion, if the student demonstrates to the department's satisfaction that the work is outside the scope of the student's ongoing job requirements and meets the criteria for learning objectives and any other substantive requirements for academic credit.
8. **Concurrent enrollment:** All hours of work at an internship for credit must take place on or after the first day of the term in which the student will register and for which the student will receive credit, and be completed on or before the last date of the same term. A General Petition will be required for any retroactive requests for credit.
9. **Enrollment deadlines:** Students must follow regular enrollment deadlines and bursar's fee policies for the internship course and are required to register for credit during the term in which the student is engaged in internship work.
10. **Academic component:** Instructors must provide enrolled students with a syllabus that outlines the academic expectations and requirements. The instructor or internship coordinator must provide either a course syllabus or a project plan detailing: (1) learning outcomes, (2) expected reading, lab, or field work, (3) expected meetings, (4) expected work products, (5) criteria to be used for evaluation and grading, and (6) reference academic policies such as threatening behavior, code of academic integrity, and accessibility and accommodations.
11. **Grades:** The grades available for Internship courses are limited to S (superior), P (passing), F (failure), I (incomplete), or W (withdraw). While it is possible for a student intern to receive a failing grade for the course, S, P, F grades do not calculate into a student's grade-point-average.
12. **Internship completion:** If an Incomplete is awarded, the instructor must identify the person within the department who has agreed to evaluate the student's work upon completion, should the instructor become unavailable.
13. **Maintaining and providing data related to approved internships:** Upon request, departments should be prepared to provide to the Provost's Office or other University officials an electronic Excel file listing all approved internships for the prior three terms, beginning with the term following the date of publication of this policy and going forward. Fields within the file should include the student's first and last name, ID number, site supervisor's name and organization hosting the intern, location of the internship (i.e., city, state and zip code as separate fields, and country for internships outside the U.S. and its territories), academic term for which the internship was approved, and file location of the UA Student Intern Work Plan documenting the internship approval.
14. **Internships Abroad:** Students completing an internship abroad are required to register their travel with UA Study Abroad and follow policies and procedures related to international insurance coverage.

15. **International Student Internships:** International students must consult with International Student Services and follow all applicable processes and procedures to obtain appropriate work authorization related to their planned internship.