

**HONR 491 | Professional Field Experience – Internship**  
**West Virginia University Honors College**

**Contact Information**

Instructor: Dr. Ryan Claycomb  
Office: 126D Honors Hall  
Phone: 304-293-2100  
Email: Ryan.Claycomb@mail.wvu.edu

**Course Description:**

**HONR 491** provides students with an integration of professional and academic experience through an internship with external employers\*.

Students can earn 1, 2, 3, 4, or 6 credit hours by completing a 45, 90, 135, 180, or 270-hour professional internship and completing the academic components of the course. This course can be repeated if a student wishes to complete more than a single internship experience, *however, a student cannot earn more than 6 Honors credits from internship experience.*

\*Students may not complete an internship under any circumstance where a relative owns the business or will be their supervisor.

**Learning Objectives:**

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:

- Evaluate your internship experience, career options, professional strengths and weaknesses, and future occupation.
- Compare theoretical ideas learned in the classroom with the hands-on experience/real-world practices used during the internship.
- Prepare an internship portfolio that demonstrates an in-depth reflection of the internship experience.
- Deliver a public presentation about your internship experience.

**Key Dates:**

- Friday January 22: Deadline to make initial appointment with Dr. Claycomb
- Friday February 26: Deadline to schedule mid-semester check-in
- Week of April 18: Internship presentations. Time to be scheduled with all 491 students
- Friday April 29 4pm: Final deadline for all work due.

**Evaluation/Assessment:**

Students will be evaluated by hours devoted, level of responsibility assigned to the student, and completion of the following:

- Internship experience 300 points
  - Hours completed and documented (200 points)
  - Supervisor Evaluation (100 points)
- Internship portfolio 400 points
  - Journal (150 points)
  - Internship report (100 points)
  - Professional materials (150 points)
- Research paper 150 points
- Presentation 150 points

The grading scale is as follows:

A	at or above 90% (900-1000 points)	D	60 – 69.9% (600-999 points)
B	80 – 89.9% (800-899 points)	F	at or below 59.9% (599 or fewer points)
C	70 – 79.9% (700-799 points)		

**Assignments:**

The academic assignments in the internship course are specifically designed to enhance the learning experience through in-depth reflection and critical analysis of the work environment. Therefore, students earn course credit for learning, not just for working.

**Journal:**

Journal writing fosters learning in a multitude of ways. The activity helps you stay actively engaged with your own learning and creates a ready-made space to reflect, evaluate, synthesize, and connect new information to knowledge you've already gathered.

Your journal should be typed. Each entry should be approximately one page, double-spaced. You should create an entry for each day you spend time at your internship site. All entries should be numbered and dated.

Your internship journal should be used as an opportunity for you to examine your internship experience, discuss new knowledge and skills you are gaining, discover professional strengths and weaknesses, compare the theories you learned in class with the experiences you have during your internship, and to reflect on your learning.

You may use your journals to add additional academic resource information. Also, please remember this is an academic journal. This is not a private or personal journal. Do not merely record that day's events. Your impressions are meant to be more than merely likes and dislikes.

**Internship report:**

You are required to write a 5-page (minimum) internship report summarizing your internship experience. Your report must include:

- Header
  - Student name
  - Internship Site
  - Start date – End date
- Internship Site Background
- Explain why you selected this internship
- Description of internship and responsibilities
- Knowledge/Skills Learned/In what ways did I meet my goals and objectives?
- Challenges faced
- What classroom experiences prepared me for this internship?
- What coursework or experiences do I need to continue my career preparation?
- Lessons I Would Apply to Next Experience or Advice I Would Give Others in My Field
- Summary/Conclusions

**Research Paper:**

You should first choose a topic that connects internship experience to your field of study. Perhaps it is an experience that you've had on-site that makes you think of classroom content in a new way, or a subject you cover in your class that sheds light on the work you've been doing. You should be able to make a case for how this topic is relevant to your field or will help you reach your long-term goals.

The length and depth of the paper depends on your purpose for enrolling in the internship course. If this is to be used as the senior project, the paper must be substantial quality and depth, totaling roughly ten pages of formal academic writing. If you do not intend for this to count as your Honors thesis/ senior project, aim for five substantive pages.

We will meet mid-semester to settle on and approve a topic for your research paper, and discuss further details.

A strong research paper is a piece of academic writing that requires you to gather and interpret quality information, document important details, develop and organize data and ideas, and express those ideas in a well-written, logically organized, and appropriately cited essay.

Your research paper should:

- present information from a variety of relevant, accurate, and reliable sources that have been gathered at the library, online, through interviews, etc.
- clearly state your thesis, support that thesis with evidence, and organize that evidence in a logical and compelling way.
- Feature edited prose, free of grammatical errors and punctuation mistakes.
- be formatted using the style guide of your field of study; the formatting must be consistent throughout the document.

**Internship Portfolio:**

Every portfolio is going to be a unique creation, just as each internship is a unique experience. Your portfolio should be created for your use – use at a future job interview or graduate school interview. Your portfolio may be submitted in a binder, on CD/DVD, or via a website. You should consider your portfolio a collection of artifacts that will thoroughly demonstrate the knowledge and skills you have acquired, and work you have accomplished. Your portfolio should demonstrate your knowledge and skills.

I advise every student to talk to professionals in your field to learn what items should be in your portfolio. A nurse's portfolio needs to look quite different from an elementary teacher's portfolio.

Your portfolio should include:

- Cover page
  - Name
  - Major
  - Expected Year of Graduation
- Table of Contents
- Important samples/examples of your work. These items will be determined by your major. An English major will most likely include very different pieces than will an engineer (examples: essays, reports, speeches, projects, designs, illustrations, poems, scripts, sheet music, etc.)
- Samples of work completed during internship (examples: reports, photographs, brochures, proposals, etc.)
- Other forms of documentation (examples: offer letter, letters of recommendation, newspaper articles, thank-you notes, etc.)
- Resume
- Cover letter (sample if necessary)

**Internship Presentation:**

Your 15- to 20-minute presentation should be as interactive as is possible; use a visual (PowerPoint, Keynote, Prezi, etc.), provide the audience with handouts, ask the audience questions, and use other techniques to involve the audience.

During your presentation you must:

- Introduce yourself
  - Name
  - Major
  - Year of study
- Introduce the Internship site
  - Provide a description of the site (mission statement, background, etc.).
  - Explain why you chose this site.
- Share your goals and objectives for the internship experience.
  - Did your goals and objectives change throughout the course of your internship?
    - If yes, explain how and what prompted the change (or adjustment).
    - If no, explain.
  - Were your goals and objectives met – how? (This may connect to the next bullet.)
- Describe your responsibilities (overview of all the projects you worked on).

- Share what methods, skills, and technology you used for your work and where you gained this knowledge. (What did you learn in the classroom that you were able to apply in the field?)
- Discuss the consequences of your internship – both intended and unintended: Were you hired? Did you determine this field is not for you? What new insight in the field did you gain? How has this internship changed your perspective?
- Display samples of work completed during internship (examples: reports, photographs, brochures, proposals, etc., should be included in the presentation).

**Academic Integrity:**

The integrity of the classes offered by any academic institution solidifies the foundation of its mission and cannot be sacrificed to expediency, ignorance, or blatant fraud. Therefore, I will enforce rigorous standards of academic integrity in all aspects and assignments of this course. For the detailed policy of West Virginia University regarding the definitions of acts considered to fall under academic dishonesty and possible ensuing sanctions, please see the Student Conduct Code at <http://campuslife.wvu.edu/r/download/180235>. Should you have any questions about possibly improper research citations or references, or any other activity that may be interpreted as an attempt at academic dishonesty, please see me *before* the assignment is due to discuss the matter.

[Academic Integrity Statement as adopted by the West Virginia University Faculty Senate: 2-11-08]

**Social Justice Policy:**

West Virginia University is committed to social justice. We concur with that commitment and expect to foster a nurturing learning environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. Our University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color or national origin. Any suggestion as to how to further such a positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated and given serious consideration. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise us and make appropriate arrangements with Disability Services (293-6700).

## HONR 491: Professional Field Experience – Internship

### Contract

Please **Print** Name: \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_, acknowledge that I have read and understand the syllabus for HONR 491 and I agree to abide by all course policies.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date