

WVU Honors College Internship Journal and Project Guidelines

The Honors College at West Virginia University encourages students to pursue opportunities to enrich their education. Internships are advantageous to students in numerous ways both during the college career and upon graduation. Students benefit from completing an undergraduate internship by:

- Gain career relevant knowledge, skills, and experience before graduation
- Network and establish invaluable connections in your field
- Receive a job offer before you graduate
- Increase your competitive-edge as you develop your resume
- Enhance your sense of local and global communities
- Improve your self-awareness and self-assurance
- Acquire perspective on your future - learn if this industry, career, company, and/or occupation is right for you!

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.

Academic Journal Requirements:

Why we keep journals:

Journal writing fosters learning in a multitude of ways. Students are actively engaged with their learning and have the opportunity to reflect, evaluate, synthesize, and connect new information to knowledge they already possess.

Your journal should be typewritten. Each entry should be approximately one page, double-spaced. You should create an entry for each day (or nearly 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 the day's events. Your impressions are meant to be more than merely likes and dislikes.

Internship Report Requirements:

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

- Cover page (does not count as one of the pages)
 - Student name
 - Internship Site

- Start date - End date
- Internship Site Background
- Explain why you selected this internship
- Description of internship and responsibilities
- Knowledges/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

Portfolio Requirements:

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 than an elementary teacher's.

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)

Presentation Requirements:

Students will be required to deliver a 15-20 minute presentation. Your presentation should be as interactive as is possible; you should 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 perspectives?
- Share samples of work completed during internship (examples: reports, photographs, brochures, proposals, etc., should be included in the presentation)

Research Paper:

Students will be asked to explore a topic that relates to both their internship experience and their field of study. They should be able to make a case for how this topic is relevant in the field or will assist them in achieving their long-term goals. If enrolling in a departmental course, the student must work with the advisor/department mentor to determine an appropriate topic. Students enrolling in HONR 491 will work directly with Honors College staff to determine how the paper will be developed.