

Internship Guidelines (COM 4990) for the School of Communication at Western Michigan University

(Required) **Journalism practicum:** Journalism majors are required to complete a 1-3 credit hour graded practicum. Please contact the current journalism practicum advisor regarding sites and requirements. Journalism majors/minors who wish to do an additional internship(s) for COM 4990 credit must follow the guidelines as listed below.

Introduction:

The School of Communication is pleased to provide eligible Communication and Journalism majors and minors the opportunity to complete for-credit internship(s) to count toward their major/minor or for general elective credit (overall hours needed to graduate) per the following guidelines:

- **COM majors** may complete a total of up to 12 hours of COM 4990/3980/JRN 4990 combined toward both the major and general electives to meet graduation requirements.
- **COM minors** may complete a total of 9 hours of COM 4990/3980 combined toward both the minor and general electives to meet graduation requirements.
- **Journalism majors/minors** may complete a total of up to 9 and 6 hours respectively of COM 4990 for either the major/minor or general electives to meet graduation requirements.

Major/minor	COM 4990 credits applied to major/minor	COM 4990 credits for general elective credit	Required practicum
COM Studies major	Up to 6	Up to 6	n/a
FVM major	Up to 6	Up to 6	n/a
Interpersonal COM major	Up to 6	Up to 6	n/a
Journalism major	Up to 3	Up to 6	1-3 credits (JRN 4990)
ORG COM major	Up to 6	Up to 6	n/a
PR major	Up to 6	Up to 6	n/a
TIM major	Up to 3	Up to 9	n/a
Com minor	Up to 3	Up to 6	n/a
Secondary Ed COM minor	Up to 3	Up to 6	n/a
Journalism minor	Up to 3	Up to 6	n/a

What is an internship?

An internship is a supervised, structured, work or training experience, directly related to a student's field of study. An internship is designed to give a student a solid foundation of professional skills and knowledge for which a student can receive college credit. The School of Communication offers two types of internships either pre-approved or self created. Please review the eligibility and requirements thoroughly.

This experience provides an advanced undergraduate student an opportunity to apply and expand upon what they have learned in the classroom. Internships are not required (except for Journalism majors), but are highly encouraged. Internships help students gain valuable skills and job experience, which is directly transferable to their first professional job. Students also begin to create a professional network, identify possible mentors, and narrow career options. Often times, students find that one or three internships provide the extra edge when interviewing for jobs after graduation.

Eligibility:

A student must meet the following requirements in order to complete an internship:

- ❖ Be a declared Communication/Journalism major (not PRCO) or minor
- ❖ Have or be in junior standing prior to start of internship (56+ credit hours)
- ❖ Hold a minimum COM GPA of 2.5
- ❖ Have completed at least 6 credit hours of COM/JRN classes at the 3000+
- ❖ Obtain written approval for an internship before starting
- ❖ Completed designated core courses in their major/minor* (specified below)

Major/minor	Class requirements
Communication Studies major	Six hours (2 classes) of 3000+ level COM classes
Film, Video & Media Studies major	COM 2570 or 3550 or 3560 or 3570
Interpersonal Communication major	COM 3320 or COM 3700
Organizational Communication major	COM 2800 and COM 3350 or COM 4800
Public Relations major	COM 3500
Telecommunications & Information Management major	COM 4480 or COM 5410
COM or JRN minor	Six hours (2 classes) of 3000+ level COM/JRN classes

*Please note: Depending upon the specific nature of an internship, courses other than the ones listed may be substituted or required by the undergraduate advisor.

Requirements for Pre-approved and Posted Internships by the School of Communication

Important Note - You must obtain written approval for internship credit before starting your internship. Credit will not be granted without approval.

If you would like to receive academic credit for your internship, you will be registered by a representative of the School of Communication, once approved, for COM 4990. You are responsible for any fees and tuition just like any other class. COM 4990 and the accompanying grade (C/NC) will appear on your University transcript.

1. Review the School of Communication internship guidelines to confirm you are qualified to participate in the internship program.
2. Review your schedule, including work, social, and extra-curricular commitments to make sure you can devote the necessary time to an internship (approximately 120 hours of work roughly 10 hours a week for three credit hours).
3. Review the pre-approved internship postings on the School of Communication Web site at www.wmich.edu/communication (click on *Internships* under the News Briefs heading)
4. Create a professional resume and cover letter designed specifically toward the internship you are seeking. Have your resume and cover letter critiqued by the staff at Career and Student Employment Services. To set up an appointment, call 269-387-2745. **(Not all internships require a resume, but you may want to prepare one, just in case).**
5. Review the opportunities and requirements for the companies/organizations you are interested in and apply for your top choices. Each internship opportunity may have unique application requirements, so review the requirements carefully.
6. Once you have a formal offer for an internship, meet with the School of Communication's faculty advisor to submit an internship application and signed position description: (<http://homepages.wich.edu/~kritzman>) click on "internship program" for the internship application. You can copy the approved internship position description from the School of Communication Web site and obtain the required signature.

7. Obtain a signature from your on-site supervisor either in person or by fax, on the bottom of your position description, which verifies that the site will accept you as an intern.
8. Once approved, the School of Communication will register you for your internship. Make sure your University account is free of holds (parking tickets, health center fees, and past tuition bills) so your internship can be added to your class schedule.
9. The School of Communication advisor will act as your faculty advisor during your internship. The syllabus will include the requirements to complete your internship, which include periodic reports, supervisor evaluations and a final portfolio. The syllabus is located at: <http://homepages.wmich.edu/~kritzman>
Click on "Courses I Teach"
Click on "COM 4990"
Click on the semester you plan to register for the internship
10. Complete your internship over one (or more semesters). If you are unable to complete the minimum number of required hours before the end of the semester, you may request an incomplete and finish your requirements during the following semester. Please contact the School of Communication undergraduate advisor prior to the end of the semester.
11. Internships are graded as credit or no credit (C/NC) with exception of students completing JRN 4990. A grade of C/NC will not impact your overall grade point average.

Requirements for Locating and Creating Your Own Internship

Important Note - You must obtain written approval for an internship before starting. It is not possible to obtain credit for an internship after it is over.

If you would like to receive academic credit for your internship, you will be registered by a representative of the School of Communication, once approved, for COM 4990. You are responsible for any fees and tuition just like any other class. COM 4990 and the accompanying grade (C/NC) will appear on your University transcript.

1. Review the School of Communication internship guidelines to confirm you are qualified to participate in the internship program.
2. Review your schedule, including work, social, and extra-curricular commitments to make sure you can devote the necessary time to an internship (approximately 120 hours of work roughly 10 hours a week for three credit hours).
3. Research internship possibilities through on campus resources such as:
 - ❖ the School of Communication Web site www.wmich.edu/communication (click on *Internships* under the News Briefs heading)
 - ❖ Bronco Jobs <http://www.broncojobs.wmich.edu>
 - ❖ Career fairs, COM Day, networking, and internet research
 - ❖ Job search resources located at: <http://homepages.wmich.edu/~kritzman> (link is on the lower left)
 - ❖ Michigan Works Web site which provides internship listings throughout Michigan at: <http://www.michworks.org/mtb/pages/seeker/Jobseeker.jsp>
4. Create a professional resume and cover letter designed specifically toward the internship you are seeking. Have your resume and cover letter critiqued by the staff at Career and Student Employment Services. To set up an appointment, call 269-387-2745. **(Not all internships require a resume, but you may want to prepare one, just in case).**
5. Contact the School of Communication's undergraduate advisor if you have any questions about whether your prospective internship will qualify for internship credit.

6. Review the opportunities and requirements for the companies/organizations you are interested in and apply for your top choices. Each internship opportunity may have unique application requirements, so review the requirements carefully.
7. Once you have a formal offer for an internship, meet with the School of Communication's faculty adviser to submit an internship application and position description: (<http://homepages.wich.edu/~kritzman>) click on "internship program." **You need to write an internship position description using the "create your own internship" template.**
8. Complete the required position description. The position description must include:
 - A. Specific responsibilities, remuneration (if any), location, name of on-site supervisor and their complete contact information.
 - B. Background information about the company, starting and ending dates, the minimum number of hours you will be able to complete
 - C. Obtain a signature from your on-site supervisor either in person or by fax, on the bottom of your position description which verifies the requirements and responsibilities, along with the internship site's willingness to sponsor your internship.
9. Once approved, the School of Communication will register you for your internship. Make sure your University account is free of holds (parking tickets, health center fees, and past tuition bills) so your internship can be added to your class schedule.
10. The School of Communication advisor will act as your faculty advisor during your internship. The syllabus will include the requirements to complete your internship, which include periodic reports, supervisor evaluations and a final portfolio. The syllabus is located at: <http://homepages.wmich.edu/~kritzman>
Click on "Courses I Teach"
Click on "COM 4990"
Click on the semester you plan to register for the internship
11. Complete your internship over one (or more semesters). If you are unable to complete the minimum number of required hours before the end of the semester, you may request an incomplete and finish your requirements during the following semester. Please contact the School of Communication undergraduate advisor prior to the end of the semester.
12. Internships are graded as credit or no credit (C/NC) with exception for students completing JRN 4990. A grade of C/NC will not impact your overall

grade point average.

Calendar information

Plan ahead. It may take several weeks to locate and finalize an internship experience.

The School of Communication requires your patience in processing your internship application and getting you registered. If you would like to have your internship appear on your class schedule by the first day of classes, please follow this suggested calendar:

Semester	Submit COM 4990 application by:
Fall	August 25, annually
Spring	December 15, annually
Summer I	April 20, annually
Summer II	June 15, annually

Note: The latest day to submit an application for an internship is the fifth day of the semester. After that day, an internship may not be added to a student's current schedule. **You must obtain written approval for an internship before starting. It is not possible to obtain credit for an internship after it is over.**

Late adding an Internship:

According to the Registrar's Office, a student may not late add an internship to their schedule after the last day to drop/add for the semester.

Special Note: Students completing both a **combined American Humanics and Communication internship** may complete the requirements for both the American Humanics (3 credit hours) and Communication (3 credit hours) internships at the same site by completing a total of 360 on-site hours. The intern is required to complete each department's application, be registered for academic credit, and provide each faculty adviser the documents to meet each program's internship requirements.

Reminders

- ❖ Internships may be paid or unpaid
- ❖ Obtain approval for your internship in advance; do not request approval after the fact.
- ❖ Internships can be completed in any part of the United States, another country, or as part of your Study Abroad experience. Talk with your advisor about this possibility.
- ❖ Declare, at the time of application, how many credit hours you wish to earn.
- ❖ You can receive up to six credit hours for an internship during a semester. For each hour of internship credit, you are expected to work at least 40 hours at your internship site. This is approximately 10 hours per week.
- ❖ For more information, contact the School of Communication Advising Office at (269) 387-3197 or send an email to marilyn.kritzman@wmich.edu .
- ❖ Good luck!

Create own internship guidelines