

LAS INTERNSHIP CURRICULUM GUIDELINES

I. DEFINITION OF AN ACADEMIC INTERNSHIP

An internship is a short-term (semester or less) educationally valuable professional experience that one undertakes at a work site typically away from the university. Internship sites may occasionally be physically located at the university, but the work is primarily professional rather than academic in nature. Faculty-supervised research, apprenticeships, or work as laboratory or teaching assistants do not count as internships. Neither does participation in service learning or practicum courses.

An academic internship (or for-credit internship) is an internship which is accompanied by academic work and for which the student receives academic credit. Academic internships may be paid or unpaid. In an academic internship, the student's professional work is supervised by the **site supervisor**, while their academic work is supervised by the **faculty supervisor**. The faculty supervisor will coordinate with the student and the site-supervisor to devise an **academic internship contract** (essentially an individualized syllabus) that specifies the student's academic responsibilities and the criteria by which their performance will be graded.

II. ACADEMIC INTERNSHIPS AND LAS GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

There is no limit on the number of academic internship hours for which a Butler student may enroll, but a maximum of 12 credit hours may count toward the 120 credit hours required for graduation.

III. GUIDELINES FOR ASSIGNMENT OF ACADEMIC CREDIT

Because of disciplinary differences, academic requirements associated with an internship must of necessity vary across departments and programs; additionally, even within departments or programs, there may be considerable differences in the nature and organization of the academic component of an internship that are consequences of differences in the work performed at the internship site. Nonetheless, the College is obligated to award academic credit in ways that are equitable across programs and consistent with accreditation standards and best practices for internships.

The following guidelines provide general regulations concerning the sort of work that must be completed to award academic credit for an internship. Departments may articulate more specific guidelines, but they must meet the standards specified here.

1. To receive academic credit, an intern must complete all of the following:
 - a. **Time on site:** Interns must work a minimum of 42 hours for each Credit Hour awarded
 - b. **Internship Portfolio:** An intern must submit a portfolio documenting and reflecting on their activities at the internship site.
 - c. **Academic Project:** The intern must complete a final project that is connected with their internship work and which also reflects the academic techniques and standards of the academic area of their internship.
 - d. Any additional requirements specified by their department or faculty supervisor.
2. Each student must sign an Academic Internship Contract that specifies how these requirements will be met. Departments and programs may use the standard LAS form; alternatively, they may use their own Academic Internship Contract form, so long as it is labeled as an "Academic Internship Contract" and contains all information and signatures required by the LAS standard contract.

3. The number of credit hours awarded for an internship depends upon the number of hours on site together with the scope of the academic project. The following are minimum requirements for various numbers of credit hours.

1 Credit Hour:

- 42 hours on site
- Internship Portfolio
- Academic Project may be waived, so long as portfolio contains reflective component

3 Credit Hour:

- 126 hours on site
- Internship Portfolio
- Academic Project(s) of scope commensurate with a final project in a 300-400 level 3CH course in the discipline.

6 Credit Hour:

- 252 hours on site
- Internship Portfolio
- Academic Project(s) of scope commensurate with TWO final projects in a 300-400 level 3CH course in the discipline.

4. No internship may receive more than 6 hours of academic credit, except with permission of the Dean. Departments or programs may petition the Dean allow increased credit hours for internships at a particular site, if the academic and non-academic requirements exceed those of 6 hour internships.
5. A single internship can be used to satisfy curricular requirements in another department/program. However, a student cannot receive academic credit hours from more than one department or program for a single internship experience.

Guidelines for the Academic Project: The academic project should exemplify some kind of academic work that is done by students and professionals within the discipline awarding the academic credit. It might involve writing of a research paper, conducting an observational or experimental study, or developing a computer program. In some cases, the project may be undertaken as part of the work at the internship site. For instance, a sociology intern might conduct a survey-based study or a review of sociological literature as part of their on-site work. In other cases, the project would not be part of the on-site work, but would be informed by that work. For instance, a religion major working in a non-profit that provides services for economically disadvantaged children might draw on their experience as the conducted research on the role of religious organizations in providing assistance to such children.

The scope of the academic project depends upon the number of credit hours enrolled. It is typical that LAS programs have some 300 or 400 level courses in which the most substantial graded requirement is a final project – a research or seminar paper or presentation, an experiment or study presented in a poster session, etc. – that would typically be worth at least a third of the course’s final grade. Projects of this kind, whatever they may be, should be measuring sticks for the quantity and level of work involved in an intern’s academic project.

Academic supervisors have wide latitude to structure academic projects in the ways that best suit the needs of their discipline and of the particular internship. For instance, a supervisor might require multiple shorter papers rather than a single long paper. The actual requirements for any internship should be specified in the academic contract.

Guidelines for the Portfolio: The portfolio is a collection of documents and resources put together by the intern to describe, and sometimes reflect upon, their work at the internship site. The portfolio might be as simple as a single written report on those activities, but it might include many other things – links to web pages, photos, videos, copies of materials produced by the intern, etc. The portfolio should typically include a report from the site supervisor on the intern’s work. If the portfolio contains academic/reflective components (e.g., a disciplinarily informed journal or blog), this work may count as part of the academic project requirement. Departments are encouraged to use e-learning tools to facilitate the construction of portfolios.

Guidelines for additional academic requirements: Faculty supervisors may, via their academic internship requirements, require additional academic work. This might include reading assignments, research projects, in-person or online discussions with the supervisor and/or with other interns, etc. This academic work may be in addition to other requirements, or it may partially substitute for them.