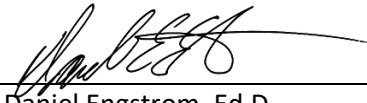


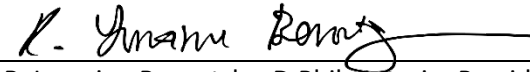
Policy AC070: Internships

Recommended for Approval by:



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A. Intent

To establish academic for-credit internship standards and guidelines at Pennsylvania Western University.

B. Definition(s)

Pennsylvania Western University applies the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) definition of for-credit internships.

For-credit Internship

An internship is a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting. Internships provide students the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in professional fields they are considering for career paths, and give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent.

To ensure that an experience—whether it is a traditional internship, or one conducted remotely or virtually—is educational, and thus eligible to be considered a legitimate internship by the NACE definition, all the following criteria must be met:

1. The experience must be an extension of the classroom: a learning experience that provides an opportunity for applying the knowledge gained in the classroom. It must not be simply to advance the operations of the employer or be the work that a regular employee would routinely perform.
2. The skills or knowledge learned must be transferable to other employment settings.
3. The experience has a defined beginning and end, and a job description with desired qualifications.

4. There are clearly defined learning objectives/goals related to the professional goals of the student's academic coursework.
5. There is supervision by a professional with expertise and educational and/or professional background in the field of the experience.
6. There is routine feedback by the experienced supervisor.
7. There are resources, equipment, and facilities provided by the host employer that support learning objectives/goals.

If these criteria are followed, it is the opinion of NACE that the experience can be considered a legitimate for-credit internship.

C. Policy

1. Pennsylvania Western University Internships

Internships are for-credit, paid or unpaid, and are supervised by the appropriate academic department or program. All for-credit internships must have faculty and academic department approval. This policy only applies to students participating in academic for-credit internships.

2. Internship Credits and Work Hours

The standard for-credit internship entails 37.5 hours of work per credit for most academic programs. The number of credits typically ranges between 3 and 15 for the fall, spring, and summer semesters. Winter term internships are three credits. Students should check with their departments to determine the requirements. Students must receive permission from the dean to intern for less than three credits. Students must be registered for their internship course before they can begin counting work hours towards the total hours required for internship credit.

3. Faculty Internship Supervisor's Role

Faculty internship supervisors will provide advisement and academic support before, during, and after a student's internship. Faculty responsibilities include assisting students interested in obtaining an internship, reviewing the internship course syllabus, and completing weekly contact with the student.

Individual departments can establish eligibility criteria, such as minimum grade point average, prerequisite courses, total number of credits completed, etc.

To prevent a conflict of interest, faculty should not be both the faculty internship supervisor and the site supervisor.

Determination of the academic merit of an internship and approval of internship credits remain with the academic departments, deans, and Provost.

The deans determine the faculty members' workloads as they apply for internships. The workload for faculty who teach internships is determined according to the Collective Bargaining Agreement. The deans are also responsible for monitoring and evaluating faculty supervisors.

4. Internship Registration

Before beginning any for-credit internship and before the end of the drop/add period, students must be registered for the appropriate internship course. Students must register for their internship credits during the semester in which the internship occurs. Retroactive credit for internships will not be granted.

5. Internship Agreements

The student agreement is included in the internship application, and all students must mark that they have read and agreed to the agreement. The Internship Center will secure internship agreements for internship sites.

Only the university president may sign an agreement and any other party specifically delegated by the President in writing. No employee should sign an agreement on the University's behalf unless they are specifically empowered, in writing, to do so. A person without delegation who signs an agreement acts outside the scope of their employment and can be held personally liable for obligations created by signing the agreement. No student should begin their internship without a fully executed agreement.

D. Procedure(s)

1. Internship Data

The Internship Center will collect data on for-credit internship experiences under their purview for required reports to the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education and Pennsylvania Western University. The Internship Center will provide information on out-of-state internships, and reports will be available from the Internship Center as requested. Departments and programs can collect or require additional data for a student's internship.

2. Internship Application Process

- a. Students will meet with their faculty advisors to determine the number of credits that fit into their academic plan, internship requirements, student eligibility to intern, and appropriate internship experience.
- b. Student secures an internship and submits an internship application on Handshake.
 - o Students must have their applications submitted on Handshake two weeks before the start of the semester.
- c. Internship Center reviews the internship application and communicates with the student if any updates are needed.
- d. Internship Center puts the student's application into an electronic workflow for approvals.
- e. Once the application is approved, the Internship Center creates a permit for the student to register for the internship course and sends registration instructions to the student.
- f. Internship Center secures an Internship Site Agreement.
- g. The Internship Center will collect internship evaluations from the site supervisor and student.

3. Faculty Internship Supervisor's Role

- a. Faculty internship supervisors meet with students interested in interning to discuss the student's eligibility and how the internship fits into the student's academic plan.
- b. The faculty internship supervisor reviews and approves the student's internship application in Handshake.
- c. Faculty internship supervisors meet with the student to develop learning objectives and review the course syllabus.
- d. Prior to or at the start of the internship, the faculty internship supervisor contacts the internship site supervisor to discuss the student's duties, learning objectives, and performance expectations.
- e. Faculty internship supervisors must contact the site supervisor a minimum of three times during the semester. Contacts can be a site visit, zoom, email, or phone call.
- f. The faculty internship supervisor keeps in contact with the student throughout the internship.
- g. The faculty internship supervisor assigns a grade for the student's internship experience.

4. Internship Agreements

- a. Internship agreements are sent to the employer once the student's internship application is approved.
 - i. The Internship Center obtains approval from PASSHE Legal Counsel for sites requesting changes to the agreement.
- b. Once returned, the University President or President's Designee signs the agreement.
- c. A fully executed internship agreement is sent to the employer and is in effect for five years.
- d. The Internship Center keeps a database of internship agreements.

E. Related Policies

Semester Credit Hour Policy AC016

F. Contact Information

Contact the Internship Center or the Center for Career and Professional Development for additional information.

G. Policy Review Schedule

All policies will be reviewed every two years or on an as needed basis if a change in BOG, PASSHE or Pennsylvania law would create the need for an immediate change.