

Department of Mass Communication



MCOM INTERNSHIP
MCOM 494 (*1 - 3 credits*)

and

MCOM EXTENDED INTERNSHIP
MCOM 492 (3 credits) + MCOM 495 (3, 6, 9 or 12 credits)

OVERVIEW, EXPECTATIONS, AND PROCEDURES

Objective

The primary objective of any internship experience is to give students a hands-on experience of the inner workings of a professional mass communication-oriented organization in preparation for employment after graduation. In order to fully benefit from this experience you should:

- Exercise initiative at every possible opportunity and go beyond the minimum standards specified in the internship contract
- Show up for work on time and in accordance with your specified agreement
- Exhibit professional behavior at all times (remember you are acting as a representative of the Mass Communication department)
- Participate in the specified activities to achieve the specified objectives
- Schedule weekly meetings with your On-Site Supervisor to discuss your progress

It should be noted that several MCOM Student Interns were offered employment immediately after graduation based on their internship performance!

Basic Information

Student Intern	An FSU student currently declared as a Mass Communication major with a Junior or Senior standing and a minimum overall 2.5 GPA.
Host Site	A professional work site where the Student Intern will conduct the majority of their internship activities.
On-Site Supervisor	The Host Site employee designated to supervise the Student Intern. This person must have specific professional knowledge and experience in the field the Student Intern is studying.
Faculty Coordinator	The FSU faculty member responsible for overseeing the academic component of the internship. Also responsible for assessing the Student Intern and assigning a course grade.

What are an Internship and/or Extended Internship?

Both Internship and Extended Internship experiences are defined as educational learning experiences within a mass communication-related organization that is hosting the intern (the Host Site). Both experiences are typically unpaid, but university policy allows students who receive compensation for their work to also receive academic credit. In both situations the experience should provide for the application of theory and skill in a professional setting. Both experiences are overseen by the On-Site Supervisor who is employed by and working at the Host Site. The On-Site Supervisor and the Host Site cannot be work-at-home. The Faculty Coordinator will monitor the Student Intern's progress during the semester. There is a high degree of expectation that the Host Site and On-Site Supervisor possess appropriate professional facilities and expertise to guide and mentor the Student Intern in their chosen MCOM professional focus. Internship applications that do not meet these criteria will be denied.

What is the difference between an Internship and Extended Internship?

There is no fundamental difference between an Internship and Extended Internship. Both experiences can be identical. The only difference is the number of course credit hours you receive. The number of credits is based on the number of hours you work at the Host Site (see table below):

	MCOM class	Credit hours	Hours worked on-site	Note
Internship	MCOM 494	1, 2 or 3	40, 80, or 120	<i>Only internship option available for Intersession. Concurrent enrollment in MCOM 492 is NOT required</i>
OR				
Extended Internship	MCOM 495	3	135	<i>Concurrent enrollment in MCOM 492 required (see below)</i>
	MCOM 495	6	270	
	MCOM 495	9	405	
	MCOM 495	12*	540	
+				
Academic component	MCOM 492	3	N/A	<i>These credit hours are earned from the work you must complete for the MCOM department (i.e., timesheets, paper, evaluation, weekly journal, etc.)</i>

**This option available during spring or fall semester ONLY*

For example, based on the chart above if you want to do a 3-credit Internship you would enroll in MCOM494 and work a minimum of 120 hours at the Host Site. If you want to do a 9-credit Extended Internship you would enroll in MCOM495 for 6 credits and MCOM492 for 3 credits, and work a minimum of 270 hours at the Host Site.

How do I find an Internship/Extended Internship site?

Each student is responsible for researching, developing a contact strategy (with the assistance of the Faculty Coordinator), contacting, applying for and securing the Internship/Extended Internship. However, the Mass Communication department maintains a list of contact information for numerous mass communication-related organizations. You can find some contact information on the MCOM website (<http://www.frostburg.edu/dept/mcom/current/internship-information/>). Additional information is available in the department office (GC 119) and with individual faculty members. It is important to understand that some Internship/Extended Internship sites (e.g., Discovery Channel, Fox News, NBCUniversal, etc.) have their own internal application process that must also be adhered to in addition to MCOM procedures.

NOTE: Under no circumstances should you contact a Host Site **PRIOR TO** discussing the internship procedures and developing a contact strategy with your Faculty Coordinator.

How are grades determined?

Grading for a regular Internship (MCOM 494) is slightly different from grading for the Extended Internship since the Extended Internship course (MCOM 495) must be combined with the academic component course (MCOM 492).

- A regular Internship (MCOM 494) is composed of one course for a variable 1 – 3 credit hours
 - Graded A – F
 - Grades based on completion of required on-site hours worked, academic course work, and the On-Site Supervisor’s completed Student Intern Evaluation form
- An Extended Internship is composed of two courses: MCOM 492 (3 credit hours) plus MCOM 495 (variable credits hours of 3, 6, 9, or 12)
 - MCOM 492
 - Graded A – F
 - Grade is based on completion of required on-site hours worked, academic course work, and the On-Site Supervisor’s completed Student Intern Evaluation form
 - MCOM 495
 - Graded P or F (Pass or Fail)

Should I do an Internship (MCOM 494) or Extended Internship (MCOM 492+495)?

All Mass Communication majors are required to do MCOM 494 or MCOM 492+495 **or** an additional MCOM elective (review the Undergraduate Catalog for your year to be sure of your individual requirements). Even if an internship is not required for your specific catalog, it is highly recommended. Both internship options should provide an invaluable experience in a mass communication-related industry. An Extended Internship (MCOM 492+495), since it can earn you more credits, is good for those students who need extra credits to count toward the 120 total required for graduation and/or for students who are in need of extra upper division credits (300 or 400 level courses) to count toward the 39 total required for graduation. There is no inherent difference in the value of the various internship options. The difference lies within your academic needs and professional expectations.

How do I register?

Students cannot add MCOM 494 or MCOM 492+495 through PAWS. Only the Department Chair or the Administrative Assistant can register a student for either internship option. You will be registered once the completed Internship/Extended Internship Contract has been submitted to the department’s Administrative Assistant and the Faculty Coordinator has reviewed it and confirmed that it meets all the guidelines listed above. Below is a checklist to help you through the process.

1. Decide in what area of mass communication you would like to do an internship (*e.g., video production, event planning, radio broadcasting/sales/marketing, graphic design, journalism, audio production, etc.*)
2. Read this MCOM Internship Packet several times. Ask the Faculty Coordinator if you don’t understand something.
3. Research companies and geographic locations that interest you.

4. Meet with your Academic Advisor/Faculty Coordinator to discuss/review your decisions (don't choose only one possible internship Host Site. Choose several so you have a backup.)
5. Meet with your Faculty Coordinator to develop a contact strategy before you make that first call to potential internship Host Sites.
6. Contact your selected Host Sites about doing an internship with them. **NOTE:** It is best to start looking early. If you want a summer internship you should start looking no earlier than January.
7. Ensure that your tuition bill is paid. Your internship credit hours will not count if you have a hold on your account. Billing questions should be directed to the University Billing Office (Pullen Hall, 148 or x4321).

IMPORTANT: Students **MUST** be officially registered for Internship or Extended Internship credit **PRIOR** to beginning the internship. **NO EXCEPTIONS!**

Host Site Agreement

On the following pages you will find a sample of the "Internship Host Organization Letter and Agreement." This must be completed and signed by the On-Site Supervisor and returned to the MCOM Administrative Assistant by fax or mail. You can find this document on the MCOM website (<http://www.frostburg.edu/dept/mcom/>) and you can email it to your On-Site Supervisor. **NOTE:** Your Faculty Coordinator will not approve your internship until this document is completed in full, signed by your On-Site Supervisor, and returned to the MCOM office.



Internship Host Organization Letter and Agreement

Dear Internship Host Site:

Thank you for considering one of our students for an internship at your organization. Below you will find the roles and responsibilities of the Student Intern, Faculty Coordinator, and the host organization's On-Site Supervisor. Please read this document before completing and signing the internship contract at the end.

The Department of Mass Communication believes that a successful internship experience is dependent upon the cooperation of all parties involved: the student, the faculty coordinator, and the host organization. There must exist the common understanding and agreement as to the purpose of the internship as well as to the separate roles and responsibilities of each party. *The student must gain valuable knowledge in their chosen mass communication discipline that they can use in their future professional career. The student should not be solely used as a "gopher" or to carry out menial tasks; however, it is recognized that some of this type of work may be necessary.*

Critical elements to a successful internship experience are:

1. Establish objectives for each experience, i.e., identification of ways for achieving the integration of academic knowledge and practical application.
2. Establish a means for monitoring and evaluating the progress of the Student Intern, which may include on-site visits by the Faculty Coordinator.
3. Clearly define and agree upon the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved.

Responsibilities of the Host Organization and On-Site Supervisor

1. Provide a detailed job description to the Student Intern.
2. Identify any special preparation required of the Student Intern prior to start of internship.
3. Identify the On-Site Supervisor and include contact information.
4. Orient Student Intern to:
 - a. Job expectations (general and detailed)
 - b. Relevant policies and procedures of the organization
 - c. On-going monitoring and evaluation of student
 - d. Establishing a work schedule
5. Sign Student Intern's weekly timesheet
6. Provide necessary support for student, e.g. work space, equipment, supplies, etc.
7. Work with the Faculty Coordinator as needed
8. Provide regular feedback to student regarding progress and performance.
9. Submit a final evaluation of the Student Intern's performance to the Faculty Coordinator.



Internship Host Organization Letter and Agreement

INTERNSHIP HOST SITE AGREEMENT

(Completed by the On-Site Supervisor)

Name of Student Intern:			
Company Name			
Company Address/State/Zip			
On-Site Supervisor – Name			
On-Site Supervisor – Email			
On-Site Supervisor – Phone	<i>Work</i>		<i>Cell</i>
Proposed internship dates	<i>Start</i>		<i>End</i>
Proposed work hours per week			

Duties and activities to be undertaken by the Student Intern

(Please be specific and brief. Must be professionally based to prepare student for future employment.)

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

(On-Site Supervisor – Fax or mail a printed copy with original signature – see information below.)

The undersigned have read the responsibilities listed herein and agree to the conditions set forth in this contract for the internship/practicum and all parties will uphold this agreement within FSU and designated company employment policies.

On-Site Supervisor: _____

Date: _____

Faculty Coordinator: _____

Date: _____

Student Intern: _____

Date: _____