

INTERNSHIP REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES

Department of English, Florida Atlantic University

Internships are extremely important for students pursuing careers related to English studies. Our internships provide English majors with practical career opportunities in venues that allow them to apply skills learned in the classroom. The Department of English has developed a diverse internship program that allows students to gain practical experience in a wide range of settings.

Internships for credit are subject to the policy guidelines set forth in this handbook. Students must first meet the eligibility requirements to qualify for admission to the English Internship Program. Enrollment in **ENG 4940: English Internship** is a privilege reserved for majors who distinguish themselves as above-average students. The Department is able to provide better quality placements because employers are interested in carefully pre-screened candidates. Students are evaluated on the basis of academic merit, and limited enrollment allows for careful internship supervision.

Please read this handbook carefully; it contains important information that student interns will be held responsible for knowing.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Please note that the following requirements reflect departmental policy for internships. Students not meeting ALL of these requirements should not apply.

- 1) The student must be an English major at Florida Atlantic University.
- 2) The student must be of junior or senior standing.
- 3) The student must be residing in Florida and available for frequent on-campus meetings at the university.
- 4) The student must have no less than a 3.00 overall grade point average AND a 3.00 in the English major.
- 5) The student must submit one letter of recommendation from an FAU English faculty member from whom s/he has taken a course. The recommendation should be emailed from the faculty member directly to the Internship Director.

** Please note: Some of our internship agencies require a cover letter and writing samples.*

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

- 1) Fill out and submit the completed application form and the signed legal waiver for the Director's review. You must also submit a professional resume free of errors and ready to be received by prospective internship agencies. If you submit a resume that is incorrectly formatted or has multiple errors you will be required to meet with a career advisor from FAU's Career Development Center to have your resume reviewed.

The application and all materials must be submitted by the posted deadline for Fall, Spring and Summer.

- 2) Once your application has been verified and approved, the Director of the English Internship Program will contact you to schedule a meeting.
- 3) During the meeting with the Director, professional objectives and placement opportunities will be discussed. You will be given information on contacts for possible placements and interview introduction forms.
- 4) Schedule and complete a Mock Interview with the Career Development Center.
- 5) The student will coordinate and schedule interviews with one or more agencies. Once a student interviews with a particular placement, s/he must contact the Director of the Internship Program advised regarding the status of the placement.
- 6) Upon successful completion of an interview, the internship agency will email the Director of the Internship program and formally acknowledge their acceptance of the student as an intern. Following the receipt of this official notice, the Director will sign an add/drop form, which the student will submit to the Office of the Registrar in order to enroll in the English internship course, ENG 4940.

CREDIT, ARRANGING PLACEMENT, AND ASSIGNMENTS

OBTAINING AND USING INTERNSHIP CREDITS:

Eligible students may be enrolled for one (1) section of **ENG 4940: English Internship** as an additional course to the English major requirements. Each student approved for an internship must provide the Director of the program with an add/drop form in order to register for this program. This course may count towards the 120 credits required for the B.A. degree.

Student may **only obtain one (1) placement per semester**. Furthermore, the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts & Letters considers fifteen (15) credit hours of academic coursework, including the 3 credit hours of the internship course, to represent a substantial semester load. Students taking internship credit should not exceed this 15-hour limit, unless

the student requests and receives special approval by the Director of the English Department Internship Program.

PAID INTERNSHIPS AND ARRANGING INTERNSHIPS AT CURRENT PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT:

Internships are intended to represent *new* learning experiences. They are also intended to involve the student in the complete employment process. Students are thereby strongly encouraged to choose their internships based on the perceived value of the learning experiences. However, internships cannot involve monetary payment of any kind and as a rule, the internship program does not approve paid internships. Additionally, internship credit is not given for current or past employment activities. Furthermore, internship credit is not given retroactively for previous internships that the student may have completed.

STUDENT ARRANGED INTERNSHIPS:

Occasionally, students become aware of an internship opportunity that is not part of Florida Atlantic University's current agency pool. If a student is interested in arranging her/his own internship, this must be done **one semester prior to the start of the internship**. In order to give the Director of the English Internship Program sufficient time to assess the placement. Students may only arrange internships with agencies willing to take on other FAU student interns at a future time. All internships must be arranged and performed within the South Florida area. Students may **NOT** arrange internships at family-owned agencies.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Because students receive academic credit for internships, the English internship course requires that certain set of assignments be completed and that corresponding deadlines be met on time:

- 1) Once a student is approved for an internship by an agency, s/he should arrange a meeting with her/his supervisor to review the **Internship Job Description/Syllabus** on file from the agency, and submit a **Student-Agency Contract** formalizing the student's responsibilities and schedule. The Student-Agency Contract should be returned to the Director of the Internship Program during the first few weeks of the internship semester. If the student or the supervisor has any questions about the Job Description/Syllabus or Student-Agency Contract, the Director of the Internship Program should be contacted for clarification. The Job Description/Syllabus is designed to provide a structure for the internship, and the Student-Agency Contract finalizes the contract between the student and her/his supervisor. The student and supervisor must establish specific objectives to be accomplished during the internship and adhere to them as closely as possible. The Student-Agency Contract must provide a detailed timetable of the days per week and the number of hours per day that the intern is to spend at the internship site (the student should be assigned to a total of 12-15 hours per week at the agency during the fall/spring semester, and a total of 15 hours per week during the summer semester). Agencies are also asked to provide criteria for evaluating the intern's performance (see the midterm and final evaluation forms).

- 2) The timetable of the internship should correspond with the semester timetable of the University. The summer semester for internships runs from May until August, so students should be enrolled for the full Summer “C” term, not for Summer “A” or “B.”
- 3) At the midpoint in the semester, the student should arrange a midterm conference with the Director of the Internship Program. At this time, the student will turn in her/his completed midterm evaluation. The Director will also contact the agency supervisor at this time to assess the intern’s progress. The agency supervisor will also submit a midterm evaluation of the intern.
- 4) Student must select a **FINAL PROJECT** from the options listed below. The option selected must be the one that is most appropriate for the current internship. The student makes her/his selection **in consultation with** the Director of the Internship Program. Options may be modified or combined **with the approval of** the Director of the Internship Program. The options are:
 - a. The student assembles a **portfolio containing samples of work completed** during the internship. There should be a Table of Contents pages showing how the materials are arranged and an introductory overview statement describing the contents of the portfolio. The portfolio could include: *articles written or edited; correspondence written or edited; press releases written or edited; scripts written or edited; descriptions of interviewing assignments conducted; descriptions of research assignments conducted; descriptions of any other relevant activities that constituted a source of learning.*
 - b. The student keeps a **detailed daily journal** of her/his work activities. The journal must be kept up to date and contain the following information: *date and time of each entry; detailed descriptions of the work assigned and completed that day; description of any activities essential to the completion of work assigned; descriptions of any interactions with co-workers or with supervisors that seem relevant; notes on your personal strengths and weaknesses in relation to the tasks assigned; and reflections on the knowledge or skills you are acquiring through the internship involvement.* The journal should **not** simply be a listing of day-to-day duties. It should be a thoughtful integration of the student’s experiences with her/his learning objectives, showcasing the student’s critical thinking skills. All journal entries should be typed using **double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font** and with **1-inch margins**, and arranged in a **folder or binder**.
 - c. If, and only if, the entire internship is geared towards the production of **one very specific product**, the student can utilize this option for the final project. The option will be specifically tailored to meet the needs of a student intern and agency when necessary. An example might be if a student was involved in a **complete production** of a newsletter, a magazine, or a video. S/he could submit the finished product for her/his final project.

- 5) Students must turn in their final evaluation forms along with their final projects no later than three (3) days before the end of the Final Exam period for the semester.

GRADING CRITERIA:

Internships are evaluated according to the following point system to insure that work is completed in a timely manner.

- I. **50% evaluation by the Director of the Internship Program for the Department of English** based on the following point system.

Student-Agency Contract (total of 5 points)—This contract pairs with the Job Description/Syllabus and reflects the student’s communication with the agency supervisor about the requirements and expectations of the internship. It also records the student’s work schedule. The student **MUST** turn in a completed Student-Agency Contract prior to the end of the University’s drop/add period in order to earn these five (5) points.

Midterm Conference (total of 5 points)—Students will receive five (5) points for arranging a midterm conference with the Director of the Internship Program during the seventh or eighth week of the semester. Students contacting the Director for a conference in the ninth (9) week of the semester will receive three (3) points. Students scheduling conferences after the ninth (9) week will receive **NO POINTS**.

Student Midterm Evaluation (total of 10 points)—Midterm evaluations must be turned in by the seventh or eighth week of the semester. Students will receive five (5) points for their own self-evaluation submitted by the time of their midterm conference. Students will receive three (3) points for evaluations submitted after the eighth week and **NO POINTS** for evaluation submitted after the ninth week.

Internship Final Project (total of 20 points)—Students must turn in final projects in a binder or folder at the time of the final conference. Projects turned in after this time will not be accepted and given a grade of “F,” unless prior arrangements have been made with the Director of the Internship Program. Projects will be evaluated based on their quality and completeness.

Student Final Evaluations (total of 10 points)—Final evaluations must be submitted to the Director at the time of the final conference. Late supervisor evaluations will result in student receiving a grade of “Incomplete.”

- II. **50% evaluation by the Agency Supervisor.** All supervisors will be asked to provide students with criteria for excellent, satisfactory, and unsatisfactory performance. These criteria may be based on, but not limited to, the following:
 1. Regular, prompt attendance at the workplace as scheduled;

2. Positive attitude towards associates, supervisors, and work assignments demonstrated by:
 - a) eagerness to learn new skills and information
 - b) preparedness to respond flexibly to emergent employer needs
 - c) willingness to take direction
 - d) readiness to assume responsibility,
 - e) openness to take criticism constructively, and
 - f) keenness to work cooperatively and in collaboration with others.
3. Timely, accurate completion of all work assigned at the workplace, reflecting thoughtful and careful effort demonstrating concern for content quality.
4. A professional appearance (including such factors as dress, grooming, and hygiene) as well as acceptable verbal and non-verbal behavior in the workplace.

Supervisors will be asked to give a letter grade at the midterm, but will be asked to assign the student at a final point total (1-50) at the completion of the internship, based on the following scale:

Letter Grade	Point Score	Letter Grade	Point Score
A	47-50	C	37-38
A-	45-46	C-	35-36
B+	44	D+	34
B	42-43	D	32-33
B-	40-41	D-	30-31
C+	39	F	29 and below

The student's final grade for the internship will be based on the following scale:

Letter Grade	Point Score	Letter Grade	Point Score
A	93-100	C	73-77
A-	90-92	C-	70-72
B+	88-89	D+	68-69
B	83-87	D	63-67
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	78-79	F	59 and below

CONCLUSION

While internships are a tremendous benefit to the students, there are a number of potential risks to both the student and the University. The intern is not expected to serve as a “gopher,” and “expert,” or a “volunteer.” The College of Arts and Letters and the Department of English are concerned that all interns be treated with respect and that their educational experience receive the utmost priority. It is understood that certain professions

require employees to do a reasonable amount of clerical work (i.e. emailing, photocopying, FAXing, stuffing envelopes, etc.). However, these tasks should not represent the bulk of the student's internship experience. From time to time, there have been reports of exploitation of student interns. The Director of the Internship program reserves the right to terminate the internship of any student where suspected exploitation and/or harassment is taking place. Students are strongly encouraged to report any type of exploitative or harassing behavior to the Director. Examples of this type of behavior might include: being asked to do additional tasks unrelated to the internship, pressure being placed on the intern to develop personal relationships with the agency supervisor or other members of the agency, or any type of sexual innuendo or overture being made towards the student by an agency supervisor or any of the agency members.

At the same time, students should realize that while they are participating in the internship program, they represent Florida Atlantic University, the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters, and the Department of English. The opportunities available to succeeding students depend on the record of diligence, achievement, and good will achieved by current interns. Students are encouraged to be particularly selective when choosing an internship agency. However, once a student assumes the responsibilities of being an intern at an agency, s/he should see the internship as a priority commitment. Many times, students drop classes when their schedules get too busy; dropping an internship, however can have severe consequences for the University and subsequent students interested in a particular agency. Such an action can also create a hardship situation for the internship agency. Students behaving irresponsibly at internships will forfeit their privileges to procure future internships through the Department of English and the College of Arts and Letters.

Students are encouraged to maintain regular contact with the Director of the Internship Program who will be available to discuss concerns related to the internship. If problems develop during the internship, they should be reported to the Director immediately.