



# Experiential Learning Center

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **DENVER**

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## Faculty Guide to Internships



**CU IN THE CITY**

# Table of Contents

Elevating the Internship Experience.....	1
Defining Internships.....	2
What's the Value of an Internship.....	3
What Our Office Can Do For You.....	4
General Internship Guidelines.....	5
Student Eligibility.....	6
Internships vs. Independent Study.....	6
Guidelines for Screening and Approving Internships.....	7
Faculty Sponsor Responsibilities.....	8
Internship Experience/Learning Agreement.....	9
Examples of Academic Assignments.....	10
Student Developmental Stages During Internships.....	11
Internship Placement Issues.....	12
Appendix A - Academic Internship Policy.....	14

# Elevating the Internship Experience

Employers nationwide underscore the importance of internships, citing internship experience as a top criterion when screening candidates. In recent years more than 87% of new college graduate hires had internship experience. Internships provide opportunities for unique learning experiences and serve to cultivate community partnerships.

At CU Denver, the Experiential Learning Center (ELC) provides centralized coordination and administration of the Internship Program. The Experiential Learning Center (ELC) recognizes that faculty guide students' learning and development, and we appreciate the time and energy devoted to sponsoring interns. The ELC is committed to working closely with students, faculty, employers, and community partners to provide quality experiential learning opportunities that serve to enrich students' lives and promote the integration of theory and practice.

This guide provides general information about the Internship Program at CU Denver and will assist you in your role as the faculty sponsor of Interns.

# Defining Internships

Internships integrate academic learning with practical work experience in a professional environment. They are supervised, mentored, and evaluated experiences that help students test their interests, develop new skills, and learn first-hand about the workplace in their field of study.

## **Internship Components:**

- Students earn academic credit by combining work experience with academic assignments. Students must work a minimum number of hours to receive college credit. Credit requirement may vary by college department.
- Supervised, work experiences evaluated by Site Supervisor and a Faculty Sponsor.
- Directly relate to a student's major, minor, or certificate.
- Coincide with an academic term during the fall, spring, or summer semesters.
- May be part-time or full-time. During fall and spring semesters, work a required minimum of 10 weeks. During summer semesters, students work a required minimum of 6 weeks.
- May be paid or unpaid, as determined by the employer.
- Require measurable learning objectives and academic assignments documented on an Internship Experience/Learning Agreement (Appendix A).
- For-credit internships are tied to academic courses that are tuition bearing.
- The academic internship course fulfills major elective credit for course prefixes 3949, 3939, 4939, 5939, or 6939 –depending on departmental guidelines.
- Part of the student's academic record and are listed on their official transcript.

# What's the Value of an Internship?

Internships provide learning opportunities:

## **Academic**

- Enhance classroom learning by integrating academic curriculum and real-world experience.
- Require a variety of learning styles challenging students to use new ways of learning and thinking.
- May increase academic motivation and clarity about academic goals.
- Provide opportunities to work with equipment or technology that may not be readily available on campus.
- Improve critical thinking, problem-solving, and retention of concepts.

## **Personal/Professional**

- Increase research skills, teamwork, interpersonal communication skills, and self-confidence.
- Personalize learning by providing relevance, meaning, and context.
- Frequently challenge attitudes, beliefs, and world views.
- Help students grow emotionally by providing opportunities to learn from failure and success.
- Provide networking and mentoring opportunities.
- Increase employment opportunities.

## **Internships also benefit the University and academic departments:**

- Validates the University's curriculum in work environment.
- Broadens students' learning opportunities.
- Creates opportunities for faculty and employers to exchange ideas, research, and expertise.
- Contributes to student retention.
- Connects faculty to current trends within their professional field.
- Develops more competitive and employable graduates.
- Improves post-graduation statistics for the University.
- May accelerate corporate fund-raising efforts.
- Increases community engagement opportunities for faculty as well as the University.

## **Internships also benefit employers:**

- Offers a year-round source of highly motivated pre-professionals.
- Creates a pipeline of talent for a future work force.
- Provides opportunities to evaluate prospective employees, virtually risk-free.
- Bridges the gap between academic knowledge and professional skills by providing input to the education process of future professionals.

# What Our Office Can Do For You

By working with the ELC, you can reduce the time and effort required to manage intern placements and utilize a structured program based on national best practices. In addition, the ELC Internship Advisors are assigned to each undergraduate academic department to serve as the central point of contact between faculty members, organizations, and students.

## **ELC Services for Faculty:**

- Assist departments in developing discipline-specific internship syllabi for the department.
- Follow up on any employer leads you provide our office.
- Work with employers to create job descriptions that incorporate meaningful projects and learning opportunities for your students.
- Advise your students about the internship process and assist them with their search.
- Maintain Handshake, our online database that allows students to search and apply for internships.
- Coordinate students' course registrations once Learning Agreements are processed.
- Support student and employers as issues arise with the internship.
- Coordinate end-of-semester employer and student evaluation process.
- Coordinate and/or conduct site visits.
- Provide experiential learning and professional development class presentations.
- Maintain records on all current and former interns and internship placements by major and semester.

# General Internship Guidelines

In an effort to clarify, strengthen, and unify the academic internship program, several policies and guidelines have been adopted and are outlined in the Academic Internship Administration Policy (2011) for the University of Colorado Denver.

[www.ucdenver.edu/faculty\\_staff/employees/policies/policies%20Library/OAA/AcademicInternships.pdf](http://www.ucdenver.edu/faculty_staff/employees/policies/policies%20Library/OAA/AcademicInternships.pdf)

## Requirements for Internships:

- Directly relates to the student's declared major, minor, or certificate. Students can explore other areas of interest or professional goals with a not-for-credit internship.
- Provides for integration of academic and experiential learning.
- Are deemed academically viable by the department awarding credit.
- Include Internship Experience/Learning Agreement between the student, Site Supervisor, and University that clearly outline the roles and responsibilities of each party. This ensures the integrity of the internship experience and addresses legal and liability issues.
- An evaluation by the Site Supervisor and student intern at the end of the internship.

## Academic Credit Requirements:

- Each school/college determines the total number of internship credits allowed within the limits of their 120 hour degree programs, and also determines how internships are counted in a degree plan (elective credit, requirement of graduation, etc).
- Students may earn one to twelve hours of academic credit for each internship experience. Most departments offer a maximum of three credits for a single internship.
- The number of credit hours earned per internship experience is arranged between the student and Faculty Sponsor and is documented on the Internship Experience/Learning Agreement.
- Student interns must work a minimum of 45 hours per 1 academic credit (50hrs for Business students)
- During fall and spring semesters, students commonly work 8-20 hours per week for a required minimum of 10 weeks. During summer semesters, students work either full or part time for a required minimum of a 6 week period.
- Internship credit can NOT be granted retroactively for previous internship experiences.
- The duration of an academic internship is typically one-semester and coincides with the published semester calendar.
- Students are given a grade of 'Incomplete' if they are unable to complete the required internship hours and it carries over into the following semester. The Internship Experience/Learning Agreement must be modified to reflect the appropriate end date.
- Students may complete a second internship with the same organization; however, students must complete another Internship Experience and enroll in the academic internship course if they would like more credit. The second Internship Experience/Learning Agreement is required with updated learning objectives.

# Student Eligibility

Minimum requirements for students to participate in the internship program are:

- Students must be currently enrolled in a CU Denver degree program.
- Student must be in good academic standing at CU Denver.
- Student must have a declared major, minor, or certificate, and cannot only have a designee of “Pre” majors.

Undergraduate requirements usually include:

- Completion of a minimum of 15 credit hours at CU Denver.
- Minimum GPA requirement set by the department.
- Prerequisites set by the department.

Graduate student qualifications usually include:

- Completion of 6 graduate credit hours at CU Denver.
- Cumulative CU Denver GPA of 3.0.

Most school/college holds full authority to require additional eligibility criteria beyond these minimum requirements. The ELC can provide models and resources to assist departments in development of internship guidelines unique to their academic requirements. This information is provided to the student through the Internship Workshop all students are required to attend as an introduction to the ELC.

## Internships vs. Independent Study

Internships differ from Independent Study, Directed Study, and other academic or lab-based courses due to the central relationships with, and reliance on, the experience provider. Most schools/colleges currently have at least one course number specifically designated for internships (generally with the course number 3949, 3939, 4939, 5939, or 6939). Due to the supervisory requirements of the student/faculty/employer relationship, it is not appropriate to use Independent Study or Directed Study as internships.

# Guidelines for Screening and Approving Internships

The ELC uses the following screening criteria to approve internships.

**The Faculty Sponsor has authority for grading and approving an intern for academic credit:**

- The position must provide a learning experience directly related to the student's declared major, minor, or certificate.
- At least 80% of the position duties must consist of professional or pre-professional work assignments directly related to students' professional goals.
- The company/organization must be a legitimate established business and cannot be home based.
  - \*See page 6 of Employer Guide
- An experienced professional with expertise in the content area must be assigned to supervise.
- Interns may not be considered "consultants" or experts, or be expected to provide a service/function that the organization's professional staff does not have the skills to perform (e.g. create a company website, write a grant, develop a marketing campaign).
- Interns must be given an orientation to the organization, safety procedures, training, ongoing supervision, and evaluation.
- Interns must have an appropriate workspace and tools with which to perform their duties (e.g. access to a computer, software, etc.).
- There is NO requirement for the student to pay the employer, in any form, for any part of the experience.

Experiences that DO NOT qualify as Internships:

- Commission-based positions.
- Internship located in home-based businesses.
  - \* Home-based businesses pose higher risks for students. Exceptions may be granted if faculty members verify they have direct knowledge of and experience with the employer of a home-based situation
- Positions in which an intern would displace a regular employee in accordance with The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).
  - \* See pg. 12 of Employer Guide
- Positions that require more than 20% clerical/unrelated duties. Positions that require door-to-door canvassing, cold-calling, or petition gathering.
- "Independent Contractor" relationships that require the intern to set up their own business for the purpose of selling products, services and/or recruiting other individuals to set up their own business (e.g. multi-level marketing).
- Businesses owned by the students' family or positions supervised by a family member
- Telemarketing positions.
- Positions in which the employer requires the student to pay a fee or fees in order to work at the organization.
  - \* See pg. 6 of Employer Guide

Note: The ELC works closely with CU Denver Legal Counsel and Risk Management professionals in the internship approval process. The ELC is here to consult with Faculty Sponsors who request partnership and development in internship experiences.

# Faculty Sponsor Responsibilities

## Before the Internship:

- Only CU Denver faculty may serve as Faculty Sponsors.
- Assist with student appeals and questions regarding eligibility. The Internship Advisor will verify the student's eligibility based on department requirements.
- Review the internship job description to ensure it qualifies as a learning opportunity that augments the student's academic discipline.
- Assist the student in developing realistic, measurable learning objectives. Discuss with the student how the learning objectives will be used as the basis for assignments and for determining the final grade.
- Notify the student of specific academic assignments, the grading rubric, and due dates.
- Establish dates for a regular meeting pattern (in person, phone, and email).
- Designate the type of grading (letter grade or pass/fail).
- Most departments have established grading policies regarding internships.
- Approve Internship Experience/Learning Agreement through Handshake.

## During the Internship:

- Maintain regular contact with student intern(s) to ensure they are making appropriate progress toward meeting their learning objectives.
- Communicate as needed with Site Supervisor and Internship Advisor.
- Participate in a site visit when deemed appropriate. ELC Internship Advisors can assist you in arranging a site visit.
- Identify any problems as they arise. Keep in contact with the Internship Advisor at the ELC to assist in mediating/resolving issues.
- Evaluate all academic assignments and provide feedback to students to help them integrate theory and practice.

## End of the Internship:

- Review performance evaluation from the Site Supervisor (provided via email from the ELC).
- Collect intern's time log and final assignments.
- Determine final grade and submit according to your academic unit's process for grade sheets.

# The Internship Experience/Learning Agreement

The Internship Experience/Learning Agreement is completed by the student in collaboration with the Faculty Sponsor and Site Supervisor. The Internship Experience/Learning Agreement serves several purposes, including:

- To provide a framework or structure for the internship experience.
- To document the intern's work duties and learning objectives.
- To serve as a reminder to all parties (student, Site Supervisor, and Faculty Sponsor) of the purpose, activities, and responsibilities of each.
- To outline the conditions for academic credit and to confirm the experience merits University credit.
- To provide a basis for evaluation and validation of the learning experience.

The Internship Experience/Learning Agreement is required for all internship placements and must be approved by all parties: student, Site Supervisor, and Faculty Sponsor, and ELC Internship Advisor prior to starting the internship or enrolling in the internship course. The ELC submits course enrollment instructions to the student to enroll via the UCDAccess portal. Late adds, if allowed, require a special form and cannot be completed online. The fully executed Internship Experience/Learning Agreement will be accessible online.

## Learning Objectives

Learning objectives describe clearly and precisely what the student intends to accomplish during the internship. The learning objectives reinforce classroom learning by focusing on specific skills, information, and applications related to the student's career goals. The Internship Advisor and/or Faculty Sponsor assists the student in developing appropriate learning objectives that serve to shape and deepen the student's learning. It may also be appropriate to identify learning objectives that align with your department's assessment plan.

We recommend that each student has 3 – 5 measurable learning objectives. Each objective should comprise a component or statement of what the student expects to achieve through the work experience. Objectives can involve skill acquisition, knowledge integration, personal and professional development.

## Specific Objectives Examples:

- Learn the methods involved in researching legislation for committee assignments.
- Develop communication skills needed to respond to constituents' letters.
- Analyze political theories used in campaign planning.
- Study wage and hour laws.
- Learn to develop appropriate test items for employment tests.
- Gain an overall perspective on insurance and benefits provided by employees.
- Study the methods of cost accounting used by this firm.
- Learn to apply the principles of accounting to tax preparation.
- Determine if working for an accounting firm is an appropriate career goal for me.
- Learn to administer and interpret personality inventories.
- Develop my potential as a facilitator in group counseling.
- Research teenage alcoholism and identify at least five factors that contribute to the problem.

# Examples of Academic Assignments

## **Daily/Weekly Journal or Log**

Journals help students to purposefully reflect on their work, integrate their experience, and recognize the value of what they are learning. Students record activities, impressions, new skills, professional relationships, and areas of growth.

## **Midterm Progress Reports**

The progress report summarizes how the student is moving toward achieving their learning objectives and academic assignments. It is also an avenue to identify and address any difficulties the student may be having.

## **Assigned Readings and Annotated Bibliography**

Assign relevant readings to help your intern deepen their academic and professional learning. Reading examples include: professional publications, newsletters from professional associations, academic journal articles, etc.

## **Portfolio**

Portfolios illustrate what students have learned and how they have contributed to the organization. Portfolios include: samples of work, photographs, videos, reports, interview transcripts, certificates of training, reference letters, and other documentation that illustrate skills and knowledge.

## **Internship Presentation**

Students present their internship experience to a group of faculty or other students explaining their duties, academic integration, skills, professional development, etc. This type of assignment can encourage other students to participate in internships. Some employer sites provide opportunities for students to present at professional conferences, associations, or to the staff at the employer site.

## **Term Paper**

Students integrate the internship experience with one or more topics related to specific courses or academic interests. Reference citations are required to support conclusions. Topics are generally selected by the student and Faculty Sponsor.

## Final Reflective Report

A final reflective report addresses many different aspects of the student's internship, including:

- A thorough review of the learning objectives with a description of the progress the student achieved for each objective.
- A brief description of the organization's history, function, products, and/or services.
- Strengths and weaknesses the student discovered about themselves as a result of the experience. Action plan for continued professional development including specific steps to expand their personal strengths and address weaknesses.
- A discussion of a problem the student encountered and the process they employed to solve it and the outcome(s).
- A workplace conflict either observed or experienced, with a description of how the student dealt with the conflict.
- A reflection on how the internship affected the student's attitude about self, career decisions, and educational choices.

# Student Developmental Stages During Internship

Predictable stages can be identified as students complete their internships. Marijean Suelzle and Lenore Borzac (1981) identified four skill stages – entry, initiation, competence, and completion.

Interns have found it helpful to view the semester-long process through this framework as a way to remain cognizant of what they should be learning and how they are doing at each stage.

H. Frederick Sweitzer and Mary A. King (2008) identified five emotional stages that interns experience –anticipation, disillusionment, confrontation, competence, and culmination. This model provides a useful tool for interns and faculty to understand the student's journey and to anticipate and deal with problems that often arise after the initial excitement of the internship has passed.

# Internship Placement Issues

Internships and other off-campus learning activities may involve additional problems, risks, or hazards to students, and may create liability for the University. The Experiential Learning Center staff assist Faculty Sponsors with any difficulties, or problems their interns may face.

## **Hold-Harmless Agreements and Other Contracts**

Employers may ask students to sign various types of documents including: release/assumption of risk statements, non-disclosure statements, non-competing statements, and other contracts. Please advise students not to sign any documents they do not understand. Internship Advisors serve as advocates for students and will assist them in understanding the implications of such statements. Internship Advisors routinely contact employers for clarification.

## **Injuries**

Colorado State law indicates that students enrolled in credit-bearing internship shall be covered under a college or university Workers' Compensation Plan if the intern is not receiving remuneration. Internship Advisors provide instructions for unpaid students to follow in the event of a workplace injury. Paid interns are covered under the employer's Workers' Comp.

## **Behavioral Issues**

Internships offer a unique opportunity for students to experience real-world interaction in a professional environment. Most students seeking internships are prepared to enter the workforce. Occasionally, faculty may encounter a student who presents the following types of behaviors:

- Habitual interference with classroom environment.
- Persistent and unreasonable demands for time and attention both in and out of the classroom.
- Intimidating or harassing another person through words and/or actions.
- Refusal to comply with faculty or staff direction.
- Threats of physical violence.

It's important that you do not simply dismiss a student who acts out or is having difficulty adjusting to higher education. If you are dealing with a student who demonstrates the above behaviors, they may not be ready to represent the University as an intern. The Campus Assessment, Response and Evaluation Team (CARE Team) has specialized assistance available to assist in these types of situations. If you encounter a student who is having difficulty, please submit a concern so the CARE team can evaluate and assist the student.

[www.ucdenver.edu/life/services/CARE/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.ucdenver.edu/life/services/CARE/Pages/default.aspx)

## **Internship Placement Difficulties**

Occasionally, internship placements do not work out. If a student experiences problems at any time during the course of the internship, they must notify the Faculty Sponsor and Internship Advisor immediately by phone or email. An alternative placement may be arranged in the event the student feels the internship is inappropriate or if difficulties arise that create undue problems for the agency or the student.

If an employer creates an untenable situation for the student (i.e. an unethical, illegal, or dangerous situation or environment), the Experiential Learning Center Director will investigate the situation. In consultation with the Faculty Sponsor, the student may be removed from the internship and the University may sever the relationship with the organization.

If a student fails to fulfill their internship duties, the Faculty Sponsor will determine academic consequences and the Internship Advisor will work with the organization to salvage the relationship. If appropriate, the Internship Advisor will attempt to find another intern for the employer.

If the organization chooses to terminate a student's internship placement for cause, the Site Supervisor must disclose the reason to the student, the Faculty Sponsor, and/or Internship Advisor. The Faculty Sponsor will determine academic consequences.

## **References**

- Marijean, S. and Lenore, B. (1981). Stages of Fieldwork. In *Field Study: A sourcebook for experiential learning*. Ed. Lenore Borzak. Sage Publications: Beverly Hills, CA.
- Sweitzer, F. and King, M. (2008). *The successful internship: transformation and empowerment*. Brooks/Cole: New York, NY.

# Appendix A - Academic Internship Policy

## University of Colorado Denver

### Administrative Policy

**Title:** Academic Internships  
**Source:** Provost's Office  
Internship Taskforce

**Prepared by:** Roderick Nairn  
**Approved by:** Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs

**Effective Date:** July 2018  
**Replaces:** October 1, 2007  
**Applies:** University of Colorado Denver Campus

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#### A. Introduction - Academic Context for Internships

Internships support a fundamental purpose of the University of Colorado Denver Campus to provide students with learning opportunities that will enhance the quality of their lives, will make them well-educated citizens, will lead to rewarding careers, and will provide Denver and Colorado with a workforce able to compete in the global economy. Internships provide opportunities for unique learning experiences while cultivating partnerships with our metropolitan and regional communities; employers nationwide are increasingly hiring recent graduates with internship experience. Increasing and codifying the way in which we integrate internship experiences into the CU Denver educational experience is one concrete way to enhance the success of our graduates. The policies contained within this document apply only to Academic Internships offered by the CU Denver Campus.

## B. Table of Contents

- A. Introduction
- B. Table of Contents
- C. Exclusions
- D. Definitions
- E. Policy Statements
  - 1. Internship Requirements
  - 2. Student Eligibility
  - 3. Experience Provider Eligibility
  - 4. Faculty Sponsor Eligibility and Criteria
  - 5. Academic Credit Requirement
  - 6. Internship vs. Independent Study
  - 7. Internship Administration and Coordination
  - 8. Out-of-state Internships
  - 9. Virtual Internships
  - 10. International Internships
  - 11. Internship Experience/Learning Agreement

## C. Exclusions

1. Practica/practicum and professional licensure programs are excluded from this policy.

## D. Definitions

1. Internships formally integrate students' academic studies with practical work experience in a professional environment. They are structured, supervised experiences involving intentional learning goals that support the student's educational and career interests while enhancing personal development and professional preparation. Students participate in two primary types of internships:

### **Academic Internship:**

A curriculum-based practical work experience in a particular field of study that enhances student learning and for which a student is enrolled and receives academic credit. In addition to the workplace supervisor, the student is also supported by a discipline-specific, chair/director/dean-approved faculty sponsor or department instructor who facilitates the academic aspects of the internship and monitors the student's progress. Every Academic Internship requires a Internship Experience/Learning Agreement, signed by the student, the faculty sponsor, the workplace supervisor and an Internship Advisor. Academic internships may be paid or unpaid.

### **Not-for-Credit Internship Overseen by the Experiential Learning Center:**

A Not-for-credit Internship (previously referred to as a co-op or cooperative education experience) provides a practical work experience related to a student's field of study and complements the student's academic training and promotes career development. Students participating in these types of internships may be paid by the employer for work performed but not always. Not-for-Credit Internships differ from part-time employment due to the learning nature of the experience. While no faculty sponsorship is required, a Internship Experience/Learning Agreement and university waiver, signed by the student, an internship advisor from the Experiential Learning Center and the workplace supervisor are required, and the student will be given an opportunity to participate in supplemental professional development activities.

**Unpaid/volunteer experiences not facilitated as internships through the University Experiential Learning Center are not covered by this policy.**

## 2. Internship Participants

Internships are a 3-way collaboration among a student, an experience provider (employer) and the University. CU Denver defines the role of each party as follows:

**Student Intern** – The student intern is a degree-seeking (or certificate-program requiring internship) student in good standing currently enrolled at CU Denver. Interns are responsible for adherence to all campus and program internship requirements. They are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with CU Denver guidelines for ethical conduct, meet their obligations at the internship site and meet the academic requirements as stipulated in the internship Internship Experience/Learning Agreement associated with the experience.

**Experience Provider** - The experience provider is a business or organization approved by the University to provide a work experience related to a student's field of study. The site supervisor within the organization is a qualified professional in the field who meets with the student on a regular basis to monitor work assignments, mentor the intern, provide opportunities for the student to accomplish identified learning goals, and provide a performance evaluation at the conclusion of the experience.

**Faculty Sponsor** - The Faculty Sponsor is the instructor of record under whom a internship course is registered. The Faculty Sponsor is responsible for monitoring the academic quality of the internship experience including: assisting the student in developing appropriate learning goals; providing academic assignments that will deepen academic knowledge in the discipline and foster integration of theory and practice; assessing the student's progress; providing feedback; and assigning final grades. These requirements will be articulated in the Internship Experience/Learning Agreement, which is approved and signed by all parties to the internship.

**Internship Advisor** - The Internship Advisor serves as a liaison between the student, experience provider and faculty, and troubleshoots any non-academic problems that arise. The Internship Advisor develops internship opportunities for students, educates students regarding internship policies and procedures, and handles all administrative aspects the internship.

## 3. Internship Experience/Learning Agreement

An internship Internship Experience/Learning Agreement is an academic department-approved document that codifies the responsibilities of all parties involved in the internship and clearly outlines the intern's work duties, learning goals, and academic assignments. It provides contact information for each party and identifies responsibility for liability/ workers-compensation insurance.

## E. Policy Statements

### 1. Internship Requirements

All academic internships offered by CU Denver:

- a. Are directly related to the student's field of study and/or professional goals;
- b. Provide for integration of academic and experiential learning;
- c. Are deemed academically viable by the department awarding credit;
- d. Include appropriate written agreements between the student, experience provider, and University that clearly outline the roles and responsibilities of each party to ensure the
- e. integrity of the internship experience and address legal and liability issues;
- f. Require an evaluation by the experience provider and student at the end of the
- g. internship; Require academic assignments.

### 2. Student Eligibility

All students must meet the minimum requirements listed below to participate in a University-sponsored internship:

- Currently enrolled in a CU Denver degree, certificate or licensure program.
- Currently in good academic standing at CU Denver Downtown Campus.
- All eligibility decisions for an internship are made on a case-by-case basis and conduct violations may result in the loss of eligibility.

Each school/college holds full authority to require additional eligibility requirements beyond these minimums. All eligibility decisions for an internship are made on a case-by-case basis, and conduct violations may result in the loss of eligibility.

### 3. Experience Provider Eligibility

All Experience Providers must comply with the following requirements:

- a. The organization must be a legitimate established business entity, non-profit or government agency;
- b. The organization may not be a home-based business. Any home-based business granted an exception to this requirement must be evaluated for safety and liability, and approved by the faculty sponsor and/or chair/director and Internship Coordinator;
- c. The supervisor agrees to provide necessary orientation, training, and precautionary safety instructions for the student intern;
- d. The employer agrees to provide work assignments directly related to a student's CU Denver field of study that provide opportunities to accomplish the learning goals outlined in an internship Internship Experience/Learning Agreement;
- e. The student is directly supervised by a practicing professional in the field who agrees to provide the student ongoing supervision, performance reviews and a final evaluation at the end of the internship;
- f. The internship supervisor agrees to provide the minimum number of work hours required for the student to receive academic credit;
- g. The internship site supervisor agrees to provide timely notification to the internship coordinator if any problems arise during the course of the internship;
- h. The employer may not require student to pay the employer in any form for any part of the experience;
- i. The student must have access to an appropriate workspace and tools with which to perform their duties (see virtual internships D.9);
- j. The employer will disclose to the University any agreements requested that are in addition to the Internship Experience/Learning Agreement such as confidentiality agreements, etc. The University prohibits internships that require "hold harmless" agreements;
- k. The student may not be considered a "consultant" or be expected to provide a function the employer's professional staff does not have skills to perform. Interns may not be hired as "independent contractors."

#### **4. Faculty Sponsor Eligibility and Criteria**

Faculty sponsors:

- a. must be pre-approved by their department chair/director, or by college Dean's Office;
- b. must be CU Denver faculty or dually-appointed DC/AMC faculty;
- c. must hold at least the minimum rank of instructor;
- d. must be the faculty of record providing direct academic oversight and may not reassign academic oversight to another (including adjunct, lecturer, teaching assistant, graduate assistant, etc.);
- e. may not serve as both faculty of record and experience provider for the internship.

#### **5. Academic Credit Requirement**

- a. Each school/college shall determine the total number of internship credits allowed within the limits of its degree programs, and shall determine how internships are counted in a degree plan (elective credit, requirement for graduation, etc.). Students may earn one to six hours of academic credit for each internship experience as determined by departmental requirements.
- b. The number of credit hours earned per internship experience shall be arranged between the student and the Faculty Sponsor and documented on an Internship Experience/Learning Agreement or other college-sanctioned written agreement.
- c. Student interns work a minimum of 45 hours per 1 hour of academic credit. Internship credit can NOT be granted retroactively for previous internship experiences.
- d. The duration of an academic internship is typically one-semester and coincides with the published semester calendar. Students usually work part time, approximately 10 – 20 hours per week. Students may work multiple semesters, however, they must have clearly defined and different learning goals for each semester worked.
- e. Fall and Spring internships must last a minimum of 10 full weeks and must be added before the end of the 4th week of the semester. Summer internships must last a minimum of 6 full weeks and must be added before the end of the 2nd week of the semester. Under special circumstances, the length of the internship may be adjusted approved by the Faculty Sponsor and Experience Provider.
- f. The internship drop period follows regular University drop policies. Students must notify their faculty sponsor, internship advisor, and the employer prior to dropping an internship.

#### **6. Internship vs. Independent Study**

Internships differ from Independent Study, Directed Study and/or other academic or lab-based courses due to the central relationship with, and reliance upon, the experience provider. Each school/college currently has at least one course number specifically designated for internships as defined by this policy. (Some colleges refer to these courses as co-op or practica/practicum). Due to the supervisory requirements of the student/faculty/employer relationship, it is not appropriate to use Independent Study or Directed Study for internships.

## 7. Internship Administration and Coordination

All internships offered at CU Denver shall incorporate an administrative function. This will include the coordination and administration of the internship policies, monitoring compliance with the legal process governing internships and the liability issues surrounding off-campus student involvement and the facilitation of the evaluation process for experience providers and students.

### 7a. Undergraduate Internships

The Experiential Learning Center provides the centralized administration and coordination of academic internships for all undergraduate programs at CU Denver. (Due to the comprehensive nature of the professional development school network in the Initial Professional Teacher Education Program and the requirement of closely integrated internships with program curriculum for teacher licensure, the School of Education and Human Development will provide the administrative support necessary to coordinate all undergraduate IPTE internship experiences.)

In addition to the responsibilities listed above, the Experiential Learning Center:

- a. maintains an online internship database and other related resources for students;
- b. in compliance with academic department guidelines, screens employers and internship postings to ensure a quality experience in a safe and appropriate work environment (academic departments have final authority to accept/reject internships based on the academic merit of the experience);
- c. develops internship opportunities for all majors;
- d. provides internship orientations to educate students regarding internship policies and procedures;  
screens students' internship eligibility based on college-specific requirements;
- e. ensures that a signed internship Internship Experience/Learning Agreement is in place for each student intern;
- f. troubleshoots non-academic issues between experience provider and intern (e.g. sexual harassment, inappropriate work duties, poor work habits, etc.), and notifies faculty sponsor of problems; administers and coordinates end of semester performance evaluations from experience providers and students;
- g. serves as a resource for best practices and standards for employers, students and faculty

### 7b. Graduate Internships

Internships for graduate students are typically administered by their specific school/ colleges. This is due to the primary educational role the internship experience has within the curriculum and the extensive number of field hours and academic credits assigned to the experience.

All graduate departments shall adhere to the policies stated in this document regarding the administration of their internship programs. Graduate programs may elect to use the services of the centralized internship office to provide administration and coordination of "elective" internships. These graduate-level internships shall use the course number 5939 and 6939. As with all academic internships, faculty supervision within the student's home department is required.

## 8. Out-of-State Internships

Out-of-state internships are bound by the same policies and guidelines as in-state internships.

## 9. Virtual Internships

Virtual internships involve work that is done remotely over the Web, email and phone. Given the flexible nature of virtual internships where there is potential for the intern and supervisor never to meet face to face, the following criteria must be met in addition to the requirements outlined in policy statements D.1 and D.3:

- a. The type and frequency of contact between the Experience Provider and intern must be determined in advance and documented on the Internship Experience/Learning Agreement.
- b. The Experience Provider must hold a minimum of one meeting per week with the intern (either face-to-face, on the phone, or using web-based technology) for the purpose of direct feedback and supervision regarding projects, assignments, deadlines, etc. Students engaging in virtual internships must have access to the appropriate tools with which to perform their duties.

## 10. International Internships

International internships are covered under a separate policy.

## 11. Internship Experience/Learning Agreement

To protect students involved in externally-sponsored university-administered internships, an internship Internship Experience/Learning Agreement is required for all internship placements, and must be signed by each partner before the internship commences and the course can be added.

## 12. Course Registration Status

Academic internships will generally be classified as State-funded instruction. However, internships may be offered as Continuing Professional Education (CPE) cash-funded credit as long as all established campus and program policies regarding cash-funded instruction and scheduling are followed.

Go to: <http://administration.ucdenver.edu/admin/policies/admin/UsingUCDFacilities.pdf>

## **F. Faculty Workload and Compensation**

1. Internships for academic credit must adhere to an appropriate level of documentation and academic oversight. As in all academic course offerings, the expectation is that faculty have adequate time and resources to plan, implement and assess internship experiences and that the faculty are fairly compensated and recognized for their work. The University acknowledges that variation in size, structure and intent among schools, departments and programs necessitates some flexibility in a faculty internship compensation policy. However, the University considers the Internship a legitimate academic learning experience, for which faculty can expect appropriate compensation and/or load consideration.
2. The rostering of student internships for the purpose of faculty load credit for Internship oversight is the purview of the academic unit(s).
3. When internship oversight is assigned as part of the faculty load, evaluation of internship courses and credits should be incorporated into annual merit and RTP Teaching evaluation.



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