



COMM 368: INTERNSHIP GENERAL GUIDELINES

An internship is quite possibly the most important step in your academic career. In today's competitive job market, where nearly 50% of college graduates are not landing jobs after graduation, it is more important than ever to take advantage of this vital opportunity.

COMM 368 offers Communication majors and minors the opportunity to put their education to work—literally. And perhaps more important, it gives them the networking skills, professional experience and all-important connections that are essential to getting that crucial first job and to launching a career path to success.

Following are general guidelines and requirements for this course.

Internships coincide with one of ODU's academic terms, with the internship generally beginning the first week of classes and ending the last week of classes, for a total duration of 15 weeks during fall and spring semesters and 8 – 12 weeks during summer term. Students must work steadily throughout the semester (a job that does not span the entire semester generally does not qualify).

To qualify as an internship appropriate to the Department of Communication, the internship must provide supervised professional work experience in a corporate, research, or educational setting, where there is opportunity to apply and further develop knowledge and skills acquired in the student's Communication concentration's course work.

Students must enroll in COM 368 - Internship to receive academic credit for the internship. Eligibility criteria include:

- Students enrolling in COMM 368 must be juniors or seniors in good academic standing (GPA of 2.0 or higher), must be a declared communication major or minor having completed a minimum of 12 credit hours (six for minors) in the ODU Communication Department (some specific to their concentration), must have successfully completed a writing-intensive course within their major, and must have the permission of the internship coordinator.
- Work is expected to be substantive and varied (not clerical or gopher duties), and must be related to the Communication curriculum. Typically, this means work in media, public relations, employee training and development, or human resources fields

Note: Sales positions, telemarketing, and staff or management positions in non-communication related fields are not eligible for credit through the Department of Communication.

- Students must work in a position that is consistently designated as an internship. Internships can never be a job they currently hold.
- Students may not intern in a location where a family member supervises the department where the student is working or has ownership in the business.
- Students must work in an office/professional setting and not in a home (including their own).
- Students enroll in COMM 368 for three credits **once the employment situation has been confirmed.** These credits count toward the Communication major.
- Students who have successfully completed COMM 368 may repeat the course in a subsequent semester for three more **general elective** credits (for a total of six internship credits, maximum).
- Any student interested in enrolling in COMM 368 should apply to the internship coordinator well in advance of the semester, preferably by the pre-registration period in the preceding semester. Enrollment after the add/drop period is *exceedingly* rare and at the sole discretion of the instructor.
- Students must enroll in COMM 368 for the semester the internship is performed; credit is *never* retroactive.
- During the semester of enrollment, students must complete a minimum of 150 work hours. Most internships involve little or no remuneration.
- Students are required to enroll in “CareerLink,” the resume and job referral software service provided by ODU’s Career Development Services. This service is free.
- Students participating in the internship experience are expected to utilize effective communication skills, positive assertiveness skills, to dress professionally and appropriately, and to behave maturely and dependably.
- As with any course for college credit, COMM 368 has graded academic performances. Internships are graded on a Pass/Fail basis.
- Students and employers are expected to cooperate with the ODU Career Management Center when information or visits are requested during the course of the semester.

The conditions of an internship should be established between the employer and student before the student enrolls in COMM 368. These include the nature of the internship, supervisory arrangements, specific responsibilities of the intern, compensation (if any), and work schedules.

Employers must provide a safe environment in which students can work and the materials that students need to complete their assignments (a desk, computer, etc.). Once the internship begins, employers should review the students’ work with them regularly and treat them as professionals.