



CAREER CONNECTIONS CENTER

Academic Internship Program - Faculty Sponsor Guide

Thank you for agreeing to sponsor a student's academic internship! Please see the information we've compiled below that we hope can guide you this semester as your student gains hands-on experience in a professional work setting as they are exploring their career discernment.

What is an Academic Internship at Clark?

An academic internship is a credit-bearing, career-related work experience of limited duration in which an individual takes on responsible roles outside of the traditional university environment. Internships may take place in settings such as a nonprofit organization, a government office, or a for-profit business and must include training and supervision. Depending on the employer, some internship positions are paid; students can both receive academic credit and be paid for an internship. This valuable form of professional training provides students with the opportunity to test their career interests in an off-campus setting. Rising sophomores, juniors, or seniors may earn academic credit for internships during the fall, spring, or summer semesters; AIP-affiliated courses are graded on a Pass/Fail basis.

Process for a student to be approved for AIP credit

1. Secure an internship.
2. Find a full-time faculty member to act as faculty sponsor for the internship.
3. With faculty sponsor, plan the academic portion of the academic internship. Have Faculty Sponsor sign the Faculty Sponsor Approval Form.
4. Apply to the Academic Internship Program through the CCC website.
5. Once approved, follow instructions to register internship course with the the Registrar's Office.

Role of a Faculty Sponsor

- Co-develop an academic project for the internship with the student (see below). Determine what academic prefix this credit will carry (AIP courses carry a course number of 298; some course code examples include BIOL 298, MGMT 298, PSCI 298, etc.).
- If the internship will count as a 5th course, or they would like to petition for a letter grade, ensure student submits a 5th course request to Academic Advising.
- If the student's CGPA is below 2.0, ensure the student submits a College Board petition to Academic Advising.
- Ensure the internship is taking place in the same semester for which the student is seeking credit.

- Meet with student regularly (at minimum every two weeks) during the applicable semester, to discuss internship and academic component progress.
- Communicate any concerns regarding student's progress on academic component to Academic Internship Program staff at AIP@clarku.edu.
- Evaluate and approve student's final submission for academic component; submit a course grade at the end of the semester (the AIP team will provide you both the student and site supervisor's final internship evaluations for your consideration as you are finalizing the student's grade).

Academic Component Examples

- A Political Science student interning on a local campaign for public office: a research essay discussing topics such as polarization in local politics, elaborating on their canvassing experience in a nonpartisan election, using data to examine whether voters' alignment with national party ideologies affects their choices in local races, and discussing the challenges and benefits of addressing nonpartisan issues while maintaining the local nature of the election.
- An Economics student interning with an academic research institution: journal and coding sample of their research projects, applying the econometric skills they learned in the classroom to real life policy work and research.
- An International Development & Social Change student interning with a refugee and immigration services nonprofit: a presentation with a focus on refugees and the immigrant experience.
- A Marketing student interning with an audio technology manufacturer: a presentation showing the 'before and after' of the major projects that they were involved in, speaking about the process in each project, in addition to a paper describing their experience in the internship – what they learned from it and what they could have improved upon.
- A Screen Studies student interning within a university academic department: a final portfolio of their organizational and hands-on work, including pictures, documents, and templates; the focus of the internship was on film production, specifically the management of people and spaces.

How You Can Support Your Student During Their Internship

- Ask student what types of projects they've been working on, what the company/office/team is like to work in/with. Ask about their favorite parts of internship/what parts of it they've found more challenging.
- Encourage them to ask supervisor clarifying questions about tasks/projects
- Ask about what knowledge from courses they've taken at Clark has helped them at this internship. Ask about any topics or courses they haven't yet taken that could have been helpful to learn prior to beginning their internship.
- Encourage student to set deadlines for themselves to help with building progression/time management skills.
- If student shares any problems/concerns about internship, offer professional advice/guidance on how to navigate situations and ideas on how to resolve conflicts/issues.
- Proactively communicate with AIP staff regarding any concerns you have about student's internship experience or progress on their academic component.