



Academic Internship Program Guide

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. This valuable form of professional training provides students with the opportunity to explore 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.

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ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS

In order to receive approval for the Academic Internship Program, your cumulative GPA must be at least 2.0.

For Students Who Do Not Meet GPA Requirements:

Students who do not meet these requirements may still apply. If your GPA does not meet the requirements, you must submit the [College Board Petition for Specific Action](#) to the Academic Advising Office. If the petition is not approved, you are still able to pursue a non-credit internship. Find the petition here:

<https://www.clarku.edu/offices/academic-advising-center/resources/>

You will need to 1) fill out the petition form above, 2) retrieve faculty advisor approval 3) send to advising@clarku.edu and receive a signed copy back, and 4) return the form to AIP@clarku.edu with all signatures.

APPLICATION DEADLINES

The application priority deadline is one week before the add/drop deadline for each semester. This allows Career Connections Center staff time to process your application, and gives you time to supply any information that may be missing or incomplete.

Find the add/drop deadline for each semester on the academic calendar page of Clark's website:

<https://www.clarku.edu/offices/registrar/academic-calendars/>

Special considerations:

- International students needing CPT should apply earlier when possible, to allow time for ISSO to process their CPT applications (more on CPT later in this guide).
- The Career Connections Center will accept late applications on a rolling basis. However, you may receive a late registration fee from the Registrar's Office.
- After the start of Module II for each semester, we will no longer accept applications for that semester.

FINDING AN INTERNSHIP

It is your responsibility to find an internship. A Career Connections Center staff member can guide you through your internship search and assist you with:

- Advice, research assistance, contacts, and internship leads.
- Résumé, cover letter, and interview preparation.

Internship Resources

Find job boards and search strategies on this page of the CCC website: <https://www.clarku.edu/offices/career-connections-center/get-ready/find-jobs-and-internships/>

Searching for an internship near Clark's campus?

- In Handshake, you can filter for local internships.
- Check with faculty and other students for referrals as well.

Does the Internship Have to Be Major Related?

While academic internships are usually done in an area related to your major, this is not required. Often, internship experiences may help you develop skills that bridge the gap between your major and a possible career choice. If you wish to do an academic internship that is not connected to your major, you will need to identify a Faculty Sponsor in the discipline most closely connected to the internship you wish to pursue.

Internship Organization Criteria

- The organization must be in a business-zoned area, which means the internship is in a public setting and not a private home.
- You must have a schedule that allows you to work a minimum of 140 hours on-site throughout the semester for each unit you wish to receive (one unit = one class worth of credit). This is equivalent to approximately 10 hours per week for a 14-week semester. Only the hours completed during the semester will count. You must record all hours on the timesheet, and the cumulative hours must be approved by your Site Supervisor at the end of the semester.
- No more than 25 percent of your internship duties may be clerical.

Can I Receive Credit for a Paid Internship?

As long as your internship meets the internship organization criteria (above), you may be paid and receive academic credit for your internship.

COMMUNICATION POLICY AGREEMENT

By applying to the Academic Internship Program, you agree to the following policies regarding communication over the course of your internship:

- Checking your Clark University email on a regular basis for emails and announcements from the AIP team; responding to messages from the AIP team in a timely manner.
- Reaching out to AIP@clarku.edu with any questions about your required AIP deliverables, such as your midsemester/final evaluations and timesheet.
- Contacting the AIP team with any questions or concerns about your internship.
- Proactively communicating to the AIP team any updates or changes to your internship, such as:
 - Significant change in job responsibilities
 - Considerable change in hours/schedule
 - Change of site supervisor overseeing your internship
- Following up with your faculty sponsor regarding any questions or to clarify expectations of your academic component.

SAFE INTERNSHIPS

On-site internships require workplace health and safety plans

Your sponsoring organization must have a workplace safety plan available to you. These types of plans may include workplace safety policies, infectious disease safety requirements, OSHA safety information, employee resources, etc. To have your on-site internship approved for academic credit, you will need to provide a written version of your organization's workplace health and safety plan (either a document or a link to the website). If an official health and safety plan is not available, students should email their site supervisor or the organization's Human Resources department. Students should upload the emailed response in substitution of a formal policy as part of their application.

Evaluating your organization's workplace health and safety plan

By accepting the internship, you are ultimately responsible for determining if the organization's workplace safety plan meets your own comfort level for in-person interaction.

Nature of internship responsibilities

Your safety is of utmost importance. As such, after reviewing an application, Clark University's Career Connections Center may not support an internship for academic credit. Instances where an internship is not supported include,

but are not limited to, the following: if the work or organization does not adhere to federal law; if it is deemed that, as an intern, your safety may be compromised, and/or the internship takes place in a private residence.

If your internship becomes unsafe

Notify your site supervisor and the Career Connections Center staff immediately if you believe the workplace is not following its workplace safety plan or has otherwise become unsafe.

HOW TO APPLY

Step 1: Secure an internship with a Site Supervisor

Your first step is to secure an internship offer with a designated Site Supervisor at the organization. The Site Supervisor should be well-versed in your area of concentration, have professional standing, and hold, minimally, a Bachelor's degree or equivalent skillset. It is usually in your best interest to have one Site Supervisor. If this is not possible, try to negotiate for one primary supervisor to coordinate your work.

Site Supervisor's Responsibilities:

- Develops a clear, written description of your assigned duties
- Assigns you challenging, progressively responsible tasks
- Provides mentoring: teaches you about the field; discusses avenues of preparation and career paths; assists you in building a professional network; answers your career questions
- Meets with you on a daily or, at a minimum, a weekly basis to provide constructive feedback on your work and help you prioritize tasks
- Completes a mid-semester and final evaluation distributed by the Career Connections Center, assessing your performance

Once you have found a Site Supervisor, you will be asked to provide all internship information on your online application; an email will then be sent to your Site Supervisor for verification.

NOTE: For on-campus internships overseen by a Clark professor, your site supervisor and faculty sponsor **must** be two different people; a graduate student cannot assume the role of site supervisor.

Step 2: Identify a Faculty Sponsor

A Faculty Sponsor must be a full-time Clark faculty member (or part-time with department chair approval) who works with you throughout the internship to ensure academic validity and to evaluate the success of the internship from an academic perspective. The faculty sponsor's academic specialty should be as close as possible to the area in which you are doing your internship. However, the faculty sponsor does not have to be your Faculty Advisor.

Please note: Faculty Sponsors may NOT be graduate teaching assistants.

Faculty Sponsor's Responsibilities:

- Helps structure your academic component to complement the internship (see below)
- Reviews your assigned tasks for the internship
- Meets with you regularly, at least once for every 20 hours worked, to discuss your progress
- Assigns and evaluates your academic work for the internship and submits a pass/fail grade

Step 3: Develop an academic component

Through a co-design process between you and your faculty sponsor, you will develop an academic final deliverable to submit at the end of the semester. The academic component is approved by your faculty sponsor.

Although it should complement your job duties, it must be separate from and in addition to your work responsibilities.

Once you and your Faculty Sponsor have agreed to the academic component of your internship, have them complete the Faculty Sponsor form, which you will need to upload as part of your application. The form is available on the AIP website [here](#).

Sample Academic Component for Academic Internships:

- Typically, a faculty sponsor will assign an **8- to 10-page final paper or project** for a 1.0-unit credit internship.
- However, the academic component of your internship can take several forms, ranging from several short papers to a major research report to an artistic portfolio or videotape.
- For example, advertising interns often conduct mock ad campaigns, human services interns can present case studies, and brokerage interns can put together several mock portfolios, researching and evaluating the stocks chosen.
- A **weekly journal or blog** should be part of the academic component. Although faculty typically assign a journal as one method of evaluation, a journal alone is not sufficient.
- The amount of academic work required will depend on the number of credits undertaken. For example, a two-unit internship will require a more rigorous academic component.

Step 4: Complete the online Academic Internship Program application

The Academic Internship Program application is a Qualtrics application that requires several uploads. You can find the application and application preview [here](#). Allow yourself a couple of hours to gather the necessary information and complete the open-answer portions of the application.

Required uploads:

- Professional resume
- Copy of your most recent **unofficial transcript** with GPA
- [Faculty Sponsor Approval Form](#)
- Copy of your internship offer
- Employer's Health & Safety Policy

How long does approval take once I apply?

- Once your application is complete and has been submitted, please allow up to 5 business days for review and processing. Updates regarding your internship will be sent to your Clark email account.

What is the application deadline?

- The Academic Internship Program follows the academic calendar, including the add/drop deadline set by the Registrar's Office. Submit your Academic Internship Program application at least one week before the add/drop registration deadline to avoid a late registration fee of \$100.
- International students needing CPT: we recommend applying at least 10 days ahead of the start of your internship, to allow time for both the internship application approval and the [CPT application](#).

Step 5: Register for Credit

Once your application has been approved by the Career Connections Center, you will be sent an add/drop form to sign. **Send the signed form to the Registrar's Office** to complete the internship registration **before the add/drop deadline**. Internships typically carry a course number of 298 in the academic department of your Faculty Sponsor. As a reminder, it is your responsibility to enroll before the end of the add/drop period.

SUMMER ACADEMIC INTERNSHIPS

The application procedures for summer internships are generally the same as those for the academic year. However, there are a few important differences:

1. **Choose between three summer semesters.** You have the option of Full Summer, Module I, and Module II. All three require the same number of hours, but the Modules offer a compressed timeline, and Module II has a later registration deadline. Please see [Clark's Academic Calendar](#) for details.
2. **You may be required to pay tuition for summer courses.**
 - a. Typically, students' financial aid packages do not extend into summer.
 - b. Clark provides the first 0.25 units of credit for summer academic internship tuition-free for undergrads. In many cases, this is all the credit you need.
 - c. If you need more than 0.25 units you will likely pay tuition for the additional credit. Currently, summer tuition is \$2,185 per 1.00 unit. Thus:
 - 1 unit = \$2,185 – \$546.25 = \$1,638.75 net tuition
 - 0.5 units = \$1,092.50 – \$546.25 = \$546.25 net tuition

For support and advice regarding summer academic internships, please contact the Career Connections Center staff or make an appointment through [Handshake](#) for an academic internship advising appointment. For guidance on student financial matters, please contact the Office of Financial Assistance at finaid@clarku.edu.

CREDIT OPTIONS

Credit Limit

You may complete a maximum of 4.0 units of internship credit throughout your undergraduate studies. For each academic internship, you may choose to apply between 0.25 and 2.0 units of credit.

Partial Credit

It is possible to do an internship for less (or more) than 1.0 unit of credit. The number of internship hours and the academic component required are prorated accordingly. Below is a chart of how many internship hours are required per unit of academic credit:

Units and required hours:		
.25 units = 35+ hours	0.5 units = 70+ hours	0.75 units = 105+ hours
1.0 unit = 140+ hours	1.25 units = 175+ hours	1.5 units = 210+ hours
1.75 units = 245+ hours	2.0 units = 280+ hours	

Major Credit

The department chair has the option of allowing internships to fulfill elective and/or required credit toward your major. Consult with your department chair for specific information.

Your Obligations to Receive Internship Credit

- It is your responsibility to ensure that your internship application has been approved before beginning your internship.
- You must meet your internship time commitment (minimally 140 hours per 1.0 unit).

- You will need to submit the Academic Internship Time Sheet with your total hours approved by your Site Supervisor to the Career Connections Center at the end of the semester.
- You must complete your site responsibilities satisfactorily. Your site supervisor will formally evaluate you at the mid-point and end of the internship.
- While interning for an organization, you are expected to adhere to its personnel policies, such as dress code and work schedule.
- You must meet regularly with your faculty sponsor.
- You must fulfill the academic requirements set by your faculty sponsor.
- For on-site internships, you must adhere to the organization's workplace safety guidelines.
- **Inform the internship coordinator as soon as possible by email at AIP@clarku.edu if you are unable to meet any of the program's internship or academic requirements.**

Fifth Course

Sophomores, juniors, and seniors may, with the permission of the College Board, add a fifth course to their program at no additional cost. Eligibility criteria must be met before permission for a fifth course is given. Download and submit a [College Board Petition for Specific Action](#) to the Academic Advising Office.

Please note: You do NOT need to submit a petition if your total credits are 4.5 units or less for a given Fall or Spring semester. This means you can add .25 units or .5 units of academic internship credit to a normal, 4-unit course load without this petition.

TUITION

Academic internships are credit-bearing courses; therefore, your tuition is assessed at regular academic year or summer rates.

- **Fall and Spring Semester:** Your academic internship will be included in your tuition up to 5.5 units. If your academic internship brings your total to above 5.5 units, you may be charged tuition for the additional unit unless you submit a [College Board Petition for Specific Action](#) to the Academic Advising Office.
- **Summer Semester:** Please see the section on the previous page for information on summer tuition.

GRADING

Academic internships are graded on a **pass/fail** basis. Your faculty sponsor will review your site supervisor's evaluation and your academic component and submit a **pass/fail** grade.

Letter grades are occasionally approved for internships that are highly academic in nature. If you wish to receive a letter grade, you must first obtain support from your faculty sponsor. You then petition the Associate Dean of the College, Jen Plante (JPlante@clarku.edu), for approval. You must do so **no later than two weeks** following the beginning date of your internship.

Your petition letter must include:

- A discussion of what is exceptionally academic about your internship
- A copy of your internship application and proposal
- A letter of support from your faculty sponsor indicating why they support your request as well as information on how your internship comprises an exceptional academic experience
- A copy of your bibliography showing required reading for the internship

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

For Students Who Do Not Meet GPA Requirements

Students who do not meet these requirements may still apply. If your GPA does not meet the requirements, you must submit the [College Board Petition for Specific Action](#) to the Academic Advising Office. If the petition is not approved, you are still able to pursue a non-credit internship. Find the petition here:

<https://www.clarku.edu/offices/academic-advising-center/resources/>

International Students

The Academic Internship Program is available to undergraduate Clark students in good academic standing regardless of citizenship or immigration status. If you need CPT, please see the instructions below.

Curricular Practical Training (CPT): International students who are at Clark on a visa must ensure that the necessary immigration paperwork is completed before beginning an internship. Follow these steps:

- After completing the online Academic Internship Program application, wait for your acceptance email from the Career Connections Center. We will also email the ISSO office.
- Once you are accepted, complete the CPT application on the ISSO portal. Enter the AIP program lead as the approver. Email AIP@clarku.edu for the correct contact.
- More about the ISSO process can be found here: <https://www.clarku.edu/international-students-scholars/immigration/student-employment/>

Transfer Students

Applications from transfer students will be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis. A transcript from the student's previous college/university must be provided to show courses taken and the total credit amount. As the typical rule of being enrolled at Clark for two full semesters may not apply, internship applications will be accepted based on the number of credits awarded before transferring to Clark.

Continuation of Internship

You must apply separately for each semester of academic internship you wish to complete.

If you wish to continue the same internship for an additional semester, you may do so on the condition that the first semester's requirements have been completed and will not be duplicated. Grades of "I" or "NC" are not acceptable criteria for extending an internship for a second semester. You must demonstrate, in a second application, that continuation will benefit your academic program and that the work to be undertaken represents new or progressively more responsible duties.

Concerns

As a participant in the Academic Internship Program, you will be supported through multiple channels, including the mid-semester and final evaluations. At these times, we will check in and address any problems or concerns.

If you have a concern with an internship at any time, you should inform the AIP Program Lead immediately. We will not take direct action without your permission, and anything you tell us will be held in strict confidence. We will, however, work with you to explore possible courses of action and, if you wish, approach the supervisor or faculty sponsor to negotiate a solution. If the sponsoring organization finds your performance severely inadequate or charges you with misconduct, we will review both sides of the situation and attempt to arrive at a mutually acceptable solution. If the organization dismisses you with cause, a grade of NC will be entered on your transcript.

Questions? For further assistance, please contact the Career Connections Center staff supporting the Academic Internship Program at AIP@clarku.edu.