

Tips for Academic Internships

Developing Community Partnership Agreements:

- **Community Partnership Agreements (CPAs)**, while initiated by one faculty, **are with the UNIVERSITY**, not with an individual course or program or department. For example, the community partner may need someone in Design one semester and someone in Communications another semester. These are not monogamous marriages between a community partner and a department or faculty.
- It is most efficient to develop internship agreements with agencies/organizations/corporations that **commit to hosting interns and working with the University over time**.
- It is inefficient (and unacceptable to Procurement and Contract Services) to develop CPAs with organizations if there is not an identified faculty interest in placing students with the org.
- ONLY when a student participates in a paid internship as **an employee of that organization is a CPA not required** (because the student benefits from employee protections). Even in this case, the faculty must determine that the place of employment offers an *appropriate learning experience* for the student to warrant university credit. Note: Some departments do not allow this, and others encourage it.
- There is no work-around based on the students' internship being remote/virtual. Even **remote/virtual internships need to go through the same process of getting a CP Agreement with the organization**.

Role of the Supervising Faculty Member

- While this varies widely from department to department, ideally faculty are meeting with the student throughout the internship and the faculty member is there to support, troubleshoot, advise, and guide the student's reflections of their experience.
- Experiential learning has all the dynamics of both a work environment and a learning environment. The arrangement can be challenging in terms of expectations on all sides (faculty, student, organization), and logistical, practical, and ethical issues can arise, which assigned faculty should address.
- We expect faculty to view the CP site supervisor as a co-educator and therefore be responsible for initiating and responding to communication with the site supervisor.

Departmental Supports

In departments where an internship is required for a major, one helpful approach is to **create a block schedule** so that students have certain days of the week they know they will complete their internships.

Internship Equity

The Community Engagement Center, Career Center, and others are committed to finding/securing funding (as stipends and employment) for internships. This is an equity issue that has been identified, and must be recognized, and addressed at all levels.