

earn **elective credit** for internships:

Not all majors require internships for graduation, but you may still have the option of receiving elective credit for an internship. Follow these steps to determine if your department offers this option:

- 1 Review this brochure and/or your major's course offerings:
 - Determine if you can earn elective credit within your major department for an internship.
 - In your department course offerings, look for courses that say, "Internship", "Practicum", "Field Study", "Independent or Special Study", or "Research."
- 2 Talk to your major advisor or departmental internship contact:
 - They can confirm the options available and help you decide what makes the most sense for you. They can also provide you with the necessary paperwork (like an internship agreement) that needs to be completed.

Meet **Ashley Gorham '13**

Lane County Sheriff's Department intern
Criminal justice major, social science minor

Ashley provided information to the community, contributed to the Sheriff's newsletter, attended community awareness meetings, worked with property and evidence, and became certified in two law enforcement-specific computer systems.

"[Interning] was an amazing experience. It allowed me to see all the different career options available, and to understand that I have lots of options. Go into your internship with an open mind. Put yourself out there and get exposed to as much as possible – that will help you decide what you want to do for the rest of your life."



Western Oregon University Internship Guide



Experience matters.

What are the benefits of doing an **internship for credit?**

- Formalizes experience - giving it rigor and structure
- Provides stronger connection to classroom learning
- Provides accountability for student and internship site
- It's noted on your transcript
- Some (internship sites) require it

the "side effects"

- Learn about yourself and world of work
- Develop skills, abilities, knowledge, and character qualities
- Put theory into practice
- Test different jobs/careers
- Make professional and community connections
- Gain real-world experience
- Stand out from others

Meet **Melanie Robertson '13**

Willamette Valley Hospice intern
Community health education major,
human biology minor

Melanie worked on several projects, wrote newsletter articles, assisted with donor relations, and helped with events.

"This internship was a valuable way to apply my class learning and get real world experience. It was very exciting to hear professionals use the same vocabulary we heard in class and be able to follow along with their conversations. An internship is a win-win for you and the organization."



Service Learning & Career Development
Western Oregon University
345 N. Monmouth Ave. • Monmouth, OR 97361 • 503-838-8432

wou.edu/slcd • slcd@wou.edu



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what is an **internship**?

an **internship** is...

- Also called **practicum, student teaching, field experience or research**
- An on-site work experience in a professional setting, directly related to career goals and/or fields of interest
- Supervised; emphasizing learning and professional development
- Evaluative; providing system for feedback and communication
- Paid or unpaid, for credit or not for credit
- Full-time or part-time
- Completed during a term, a summer, or over an entire year
- Completed locally, nationally, or internationally

"An internship is a carefully monitored work or volunteer experience in which an individual has intentional learning goals and reflects actively on what he or she is learning through the experience."

—The National Society for Experiential Education



Most departments **require or encourage internships** (Look for a 409 course in your major.)

Business and economics

- Offered all four terms, can earn up to 12 credits
- wou.edu/las/business/intern.php

Creative arts

- B.F.A. requires 3 credits of internship or international studio art

Computer science

- Information Systems (IS) degree requires an internship
- CS does not require, but practicum credits are available

Health and PE

- Community Health and Exercise Science degrees require an internship

Humanities

- Communication Studies and English majors strongly encouraged; talk to advisor for particular requirements

Natural science and mathematics

- Science majors offer credit for field study, research, practicum, and special individual study
- Mathematics major offers credit for research, independent study, practicum, and internship

Psychology

- Strongly encourage any type of applied experience
- Practicum offered most terms
- wou.edu/las/psychology/practicum.php

Social sciences

- Criminal justice requires practicum; offered only spring and summer terms; wou.edu/provost/extprogram/cj_online/forms_links.php
- International studies majors require internship or study abroad
- Anthropology and Sociology strongly encourage internships

Special education

- ASL Interpreting requires internship for graduation
- ASL Studies degree does not require, but internship credits are available

Teacher education

- Must complete 16 credits of student teaching

the numbers

- 9 out of 10 employers say they look for new grads with internship experience
- People with internship experience make 20% more right out of school
- 85% of interns get offers of full-time job after internship

why **intern**?



build your **résumé**

Internships provide professional work experience which will help your resume stand out from others. Employers look for internship experience on your résumé because they know internships are the best way to get ready for the professional world.

make **connections**

Interning is a great way to develop your network. The personal relationships you build during your internship can serve as references, help identify job openings, or even offer you a position.

identify a **career**

Discovering personal skills and career preferences can be challenging. Internships help students develop self-awareness about interests, strengths, and skills while trying out different career options. They provide opportunities to combine classroom learning with real life experiences from the work place.

Preparing for your **internship**

1 **know yourself**

- Identify personal strengths, skills, interests, and values
- Make a list of possible job titles/fields of interest
- Be able to name two or three careers/jobs you plan to pursue

2 **know where you want to work**

- Research organizations/companies who might hire someone with your skills, interests, and background
- Analyze desired qualifications in your field; know what employers want
- Research potential career fields: typical entry-level jobs, typical salaries, best geographic location for jobs, etc.
- Identify the geographic areas where you are willing to intern
- Identify ten potential employers for the type of work you are seeking

3 **get ready for the search**

- Have résumé and cover letter(s) reviewed
- Prepare a portfolio or work samples to highlight experience, skills, and talent (depending on your field)
- Develop a "30-second speech" for short encounters with employers
- Identify three or four individuals who will serve as references
- Practice interview skills; prepare responses to typical questions
- Purchase interview clothing appropriate for your field
- Confirm both email address and voicemail message are neutral and professional sounding

4 **start searching**

- Update profile and upload résumé on WolfLink; regularly check WolfLink for internship opportunities
- Develop system for tracking contacts, interviews, and other search activities
- Follow up on every interesting internship lead immediately
- Develop list of networking contacts and keep in touch
- Be able to discuss your résumé
- Follow-up each application with a phone call or e-mail to the employer requesting a job interview
- Send thank-you letters or emails in response to each interview