

Communication Studies 492a and 492b Internship Guidelines

The purpose of the Department of Communication Studies internship courses is to encourage students to pursue professional experiences directly related to their communication coursework. These opportunities allow students to develop their professional identities, identify their strengths and weaknesses, explore various career options, and strengthen their resumes. However, internships also allow students to synthesize the concepts and skills they have learned in their coursework and enhance their learning through hands-on applications. In order to earn academic credit for an internship, it must provide a unique and meaningful learning experience. Therefore, the following guidelines apply:

1. **Internship Placement:** The Department of Communication Studies does not place students into paid or unpaid internship positions, so students must find their own internships at a business or non-profit organization. Regardless of internship type, students' learning goals—along with their supervisor's acceptance of those goals—must be grounded in the adoption, analysis, adjustment, or improvement of communication practices and skills in the workplace.
2. Among other course requirements, students must submit a **Student Learning Contract and Job Description**, including intern and supervisor contact information, company information, job description, goals to be accomplished during internship, and how goals will be measured. Students' goals must be approved by their immediate supervisor and COMM 492a/b instructor. A **Time Card**, to document work hours, must be verified by supervisor.
3. **Internship Start and End:** A student's internship must begin **OR** end during the semester in which COMM 492a or COMM 492b is taken in order to complete the academic portion of COMM 492a/b. Note that 492 courses are not typically offered in the summer. It may be possible, at the discretion of the instructors of the fall semester 492 courses, to complete the internship course in the fall semester following the internship. It is up to the student to make these arrangements with the appropriate instructor **BEFORE** the end of the spring semester.
4. **Senior and Major Status:** Student interns must be senior Communication Studies majors (defined as having accumulated at least 90 units toward graduation). Exceptions may be granted only at the discretion of the course instructor.
5. **Work Hours:** Student interns must complete a minimum of 120 hours of work, preferably over at least 10 successive weeks during the semester in which the class is taken (or, again, according to the stipulations described in #3 for summer internships).
6. **Class Meetings:** Students must be available to meet during the 2-5 class periods determined in advance by the instructor (prior to registering for COMM 492a/b, students should contact the instructor to find out when class meetings will be scheduled). Most sections of 492a/b, however, are fully online and never meet in-person or synchronously.
7. **3 Unit Maximum in the Major:** Only 3 units of internship credit (492a or 492b) can count toward requirements for the major. Additional units count toward graduation, but not toward major requirements.

8. **Enrollment Limitations:** Students cannot enroll more than once in each 492 course. However, they may enroll in 492a for an unpaid internship and 492b for a paid internship. Note that credit for 492a and 492b cannot be earned for the same internship (a change from unpaid to paid does not constitute a different internship). Internship credit cannot be earned for a job at which the student is already working as a regular paid employee.

Students should be aware that they also can earn internship credits that count toward their graduation requirements through the College of Liberal Arts at CSULB:

<https://cla.csulb.edu/clainternships/>

Students also should be aware of federal guidelines regarding unpaid internships:

<http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.pdf>