



Journalism and Media Communication Internship Handbook

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Overview

This handbook is provided and available to students, faculty, and experience providers who are involved in qualified internships for the Department of Journalism and Media Communication at Colorado State University. This handbook contains information on how to create, register, and get credit for an internship. Questions and comments can be directed to the Internship Coordinator, Kimberly Spencer at kimberly.spencer@colostate.edu

What is a Qualified Internship?

CSU as an institution of higher education does on occasion provide for-credit, off-site internships for its students. Some departments also provide informal opportunities for practical learning experiences, which may include not-for-credit opportunities, and volunteer opportunities.

In Colorado, there are certain circumstances where a student engaged in an off-site, for-credit internship may be considered for Workers' Compensation insurance through CSU. These internships are known as Qualified Internships. This guide is intended to assist departments outline Qualified Internships that provide high-quality learning experiences, integrating academic knowledge and work experience in professional environments.

We recognize that other learning opportunities are equally valid and important, however, may not be eligible for Workers' Compensation coverage through CSU.

To establish uniformity in the use and application of the term "internship," CSU's Risk Management recommends the following definition as provided by the National Association of College and Employers (NACE):

An internship is a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in professional fields they are considering for career paths; and give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent.

Criteria for a Qualified Internship

To ensure that an experience is a qualified internship, and thus may be eligible for Workers' Compensation, all the following criteria must be met:

- The experience must be an extension of the classroom: a learning experience that provides for applying the knowledge gained in the classroom. It must not be simply to advance the operations of the employer or be the work that a regular employee would routinely perform.
- The skills or knowledge learned must be transferable to other employment settings.
- There must be a Learning Agreement between the student, experience provider, and university that clearly outlines and documents the roles and responsibilities of each party to ensure the integrity of the

internship experience for all parties.

- The experience has a defined beginning and end, and a job description with desired qualifications.
- There are clearly defined learning objectives related to the professional goals of the student's academic coursework.
- There is supervision by a professional with expertise, educational and/or professional background in the field of the experience.
- Internships include an academic component supervised by a CSU faculty member (the internship coordinator) who monitors and evaluates the academic learning and assigns a grade.
- There is routine feedback by the experience provider supervisor.
- There is an evaluation by the experience provider and student intern at the end of the internship.
- If these criteria are met, then the experience can be considered a qualified internship, and the student may be considered for Workers' Compensation. Other experiences/internships may not entitle the student for Workers' Compensation benefits.

Qualified Internship Parameters

- One-semester work experience that is either paid or unpaid.
- For academic credit in which the student enrolls, 45 hours of work is equal to 1 college credit. Journalism and Media Communication students can earn up to 4 credits for their internships.
- The company/organization must be a legitimate established business.
 - Home-based businesses are not applicable due to liability and risk issues.
 - Interns must be given an orientation to the organization, safety procedures, training, ongoing supervision, and evaluation.
 - Interns must be provided with information on any safety risks and potential exposures prior to the start of internship and allowed to make an informed choice regarding the acceptance of the internship.
 - Interns need to receive any required vaccinations prior to starting the internship.
 - Interns must be provided and instructed in the use of any needed Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- If a confidentiality agreement is required, it must be stated in the job description upon posting and be provided to the student before the start of an internship.
 - Students must submit the agreement with the Internship Coordinator.

Experiences that DO NOT Qualify as Qualified Internships:

- Commission-based positions.
- Internship located in home-based businesses.
- Positions in which an intern is unpaid and not registered for academic credit.
- Positions that require more than 20% clerical duties when this is not field of academic study.
- Volunteer opportunities.
- "Independent contractor" relationships that require the intern to set up his/her own business for the purpose of selling products, services and/or recruiting other individuals to set up their own businesses.
- Family-owned businesses or positions supervised by a family member.
- Telemarketing positions.
- Positions in which the employer requires the student to pay a fee or fees in order to work at the organization. Licensure fees should be covered by employer
- Internships that are approved retroactively i.e. the student must register for the internship during the semester the work is being performed.

Non-Qualified/Non-Academic Internships

The Internship Coordinator will review these guidelines with the student to ensure the internship meets the criteria outlined herein. Students can still engage in these opportunities, but not-for-credit learning experiences should be viewed as volunteer opportunities.

Roles and responsibilities

Internship Coordinator

- Review the student's eligibility for participating in an academic internship (GPA, prerequisites, etc.)
- Maintain a copy of all agreements between the parties of this internship.
- Act as primary liaison between the student and the host organization
- Review the Learning Agreement for completeness and accuracy of information.
- Administer internship evaluation process for all parties.
- Ensure that all agreements and documents are in place prior to the start of the internship.
- Serve as liaison for any issues that arise during an internship – e.g. workplace conflicts or problems with supervisors or co-workers, injuries, not getting the agreed onsite hours, ensuring the opportunity to fulfill the requirements of the internship – number of work hours, learning goals, etc.
- Conduct site visits with Intern and Experience Provider/Direct Supervisor, as necessary.
- Collect employer's final evaluation and submit grade to university
- Assist the student in formulating concise and clear learning objectives for the internship.
- Review the position description and ensure that it meets learning objectives.
- Determine and discuss how the proposed internship is relevant to the student's educational objectives and merits academic credit.

- Determine academic assignments, monitor student progress, and provide final evaluation/grade.
- Provide students with appropriate academic assignments related to the internship placement.
- Upon request, meet with site supervisors to discuss internship placements.
- Review the site supervisor's evaluation and use as part of student's final grade.
- Award credit and a final grade based on interns' completion of assignment.
- Follow up on any safety or training issues prior to start date.
- Do not complete any agreements with host site other than the learning agreement without the review of CSU Office of General Counsel.
- Do not agree to any insurance requirements without approval from Office of Risk Management & Insurance.
- Ensure that there is a communication response plan, in the event of a student emergency. For example, communication tree where site supervisor notifies academic supervisor, who in turn notifies Department head/ Dean, and Office of Risk Management & Insurance.
- Submit an override in order for the student to officially enroll in a section of JTC 487.

Intern

- Review the internship position description to ensure that it meets the criteria for an internship with the internship coordinator
- Meet with the Internship Coordinator at least once a semester in order to establish internship guidelines, fill out appropriate paperwork, etc.
- Register for JTC 487: Internship and accept enrollment in Canvas course.
- Complete the required number of working hours for the credit hours outlined for the internship selected.
- Fulfill tasks as outlined in the job description and complete responsibilities assigned by the Experience Provider
- Approach the internship in a professional manner that is guided by courtesy, a desire to learn, and a willingness to receive feedback for improvement.
- Act in a responsible and appropriate manner in accordance with the rules and regulations of the organization.
- Complete all assignments outlined in the Internship Description
- Observe all safety rules and secure all vaccinations, insurances, training and equipment required and outlined in internship description.
- Notify the internship coordinator in a timely manner of any changes or if any problems develop during the internship.
- Complete the Final Report of the experience at the end of the internship/semester.

Experience Provider

- Verify the position and duties meet the University's Qualified Internship criteria.
- Complete a job description that includes learning objectives and goals; professional experience and skills the intern will gain exposure to and is expected to learn; Duties and responsibilities of intern; Resources, equipment, and facilities provided by the host employer that support the learning objectives/goals; Special qualifications required for the position; Special training or considerations

- required of the position; the start and end dates of the internship.
- Disclose all agreements a student will be asked to sign in the internship description.
 - Identify the risks of activities the intern maybe involved in and identify the required safety training for any tools, computers, specialized equipment, vehicles, physical activities, hazardous chemicals, biologicals or radioactive materials, etc. that are part of their activities.
 - Provide Intern and CSU staff with information regarding any Safety Considerations.
 - Provide adequate safety training and provide all Personal Protection Equipment to the student and have them properly fitted prior to the start of internship.
 - Provide an orientation, any precautionary safety instructions, training and ongoing supervision for assigned duties.
 - Document training and include a signature that the training was received and understood and provide CSU with copies of safety and training instructions.
 - Provide a safe work environment.
 - Encourage professionalism by assisting student in developing communication, interpersonal, decision-making, and other skills.
 - Provide opportunities for increasing responsibility and keep Intern directed toward accomplishing their learning objectives.
 - Maintain an open channel of communication with regular meetings
 - Keep internship duties within the scope outlined.
 - Complete all training documentations a final evaluation.
 - If the student is paid, understand the responsibility for:
 - Providing workers' compensation and liability insurance in accordance with State laws where the internship is conducted. Provide CSU a Certificate of Insurance.
 - Comply with federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, sexual orientation, national origin, sex, and/or disability.
 - Comply with Federal Labor Standards Act (FLSA)
 - Comply with Affordable Care Act and IRS reporting requirements.
 - Add intern under your business vehicle insurance if employee is expected to operate business vehicles.
 - Any insurance requirements of Colorado State University need to be approved and agreed to by the Office of Risk Management & Insurance prior to placements. CSU doesn't automatically provide professional liability insurance. A number of CSU academic programs, and organizations offer professional liability policies for a fee. The employment site and/or intern is responsible for outlining needs and obtaining this insurance if required.
 - Notify Internship Coordinator in a timely manner if any problems arise during the internship placement.
 - Complete a final written evaluation of the student's performance.
 - Stay within the hours outlined in the internship learning agreement.

Do I qualify to earn internship credit?

All journalism interns are strongly encouraged to have completed the following courses prior to earning credit for an internship in order that they have the necessary background, skills and theoretical groundwork to benefit from and contribute to an internship experience.

News-Editorial/writing/reporting: JTC100, JTC210, and JTC320

Public Relations: JTC100, JTC210, JTC350, and JTC351

TV/Video: JTC100, JTC210, and JTC340 **or** JTC341

Specialized/Tech: JTC100, JTC210, JTC310, JTC361, and JTC461 **or** JTC464

CMC: JTC100, JTC210, JTC365 and **one** of following (JTC326, JTC335, JTC372, JTC373 or JTC460)

How to find an internship

Review available internships by looking online at <https://career.colostate.edu/handshake/> **or find your own and contact the internship coordinator for approval**

If you need a letter confirming that you will receive academic credit, please contact Kim Spencer.

Once you have secured an approved internship, follow these steps:

Contact the internship coordinator to make sure the internship meets the requirements to earn credit. Complete the forms in the packet and send to the internship coordinator. The coordinator will contact you with instructions on how to register for the course.

Students must register for an internship at least 10 weeks prior to the end of the semester in which they are doing the internship. Forms are available in this packet at the journalism department [website](#).

How many credits will I earn?

Total hours needed for internship is dependent upon the number of credits receiving. For one credit-minimum of 45 hours; two credits-minimum of 90 hours; three credits-minimum of 135 hours

Students may earn only four total internship credits. Only seven credits combined of JTC484, JTC487, JTC495 and JTC496 will be allowed in degree fulfillment with no more than three credits applied toward fulfillment of JTC elective credit.

JTC487 AND JTC687 INTERNSHIP ASSIGNMENTS

ASSIGNMENT NO. 1: BACKGROUND REPORT

A brief, typed report that includes: (Be sure to answer all five points; please write one to three pages)

1. A brief history, explaining ownership, funding, and the impact of this organization on the community.
2. A description of the staff, departments and your supervisor's responsibilities.
3. A description of your responsibilities. Tell me when you began and what hours you are working.
4. Describe the audience your organization addresses.
5. Describe the management style of your organization.

Purpose: to help you understand the organization and to see how your work is a part of the communication process in the community.

ASSIGNMENT NO. 2: JOURNAL REPORT

You must turn in a journal report. Your supervisor must sign the report. Journal includes hours worked and specific work you have been assigned to do.

Purpose: This is to help you see how your internship is progressing and to help keep track of your hours and your specific responsibilities at your internship.

ASSIGNMENT NO. 3: FINAL REPORT

Along with your journal, write an assessment of your internship, and include samples of your best work. Include good points as well as areas where you think improvements can be made for future internships. Limit your final report to one to three pages. Submit a sample of your best work completed during this internship. Depending upon your internship work, this might be a brochure, business plan, Web page, clips, TV script, tape or any other completed work.

Purpose: Your own assessment of your work is valuable to you. Your assessment of the internship helps us evaluate this internship opportunity for other students. Work samples will be useful for your portfolio when you begin job hunting.

ASSIGNMENT NO. 4: EVALUATION

Toward the end of your internship, your supervisor will be e-mailed a final evaluation form that is to be returned to Kim Spencer before you can be given a grade. It is **your responsibility** to see that he/she returns the completed evaluation on time to CSU. Even if you work beyond the end of the term, the final evaluation is still due on the date specified on Canvas. **Missing the evaluation results in an "Incomplete" for the course.**

YOUR GRADE:

- You will receive a pass/fail grade for this course. Your grade will be determined by your supervisor evaluation, which will be converted to a letter grade, coupled with the penalties outlined for missing, late or poorly completed assignments.
- Journal must be signed by your supervisor. Handwritten journals are acceptable if readable. The Background and Final Reports should be typed.
- Your internship supervisor will be required to complete an evaluation.
 - Kim Spencer will email the evaluation to your supervisor; evaluations will be accepted via email, fax or mail directly from your supervisor, not from you.
 - You are not responsible for your supervisor receiving the evaluation, but you are responsible for making sure that he/she returns the evaluation to Kim. **You will get an "Incomplete" in this course if your supervisor neglects to turn in an evaluation.**

SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS:

You have several options for submitting your assignments on time:

- (1) Assignments may be submitted through Canvas. (recommended)
- (2) You may also drop them off at Kim Spencer's office, C226 Clark, or leave in Spencer's mailbox.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

If you have questions, call or email the internship coordinator:

970-491-0612 or e-mail at Kimberly.spencer@colostate.edu

Student/Supervisor Agreement for CSU Interns

Date _____

I understand that _____ will be
(student's name)

working for _____
(organization)

During the (circle one) Spring, Fall, Summer Semester, 20_____, to earn internship credit through the Colorado State University Department of Journalism and Technical Communication.

This student has agreed to work _____ hours to earn _____ credits.
(1 credit=45 hours, 2 credits=90 hours, 3 credits = 135 hours)

I agree to supervise this student's work and to provide a written evaluation to CSU Internship Coordinator Kim Spencer.

Supervisor (Print Name) _____

Supervisor's Phone Number _____

Supervisor's E-mail (required) _____

Mail Address (Street/P.O.) _____

City/State/ZIP _____

Signed _____
(supervisor)

Please return to:

Kim Spencer, Internship Coordinator, Department of Journalism
and Media Communication
Campus Box 1785
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, CO 80523-
1785
Ph. 970-491-0612; kimberly.spencer@Colostate.edu

Student JTC487/JTC687 Internship Form

Internship Policy Statement: The Colorado State University Department of Journalism and Media Communication encourages all students to take advantage of internship opportunities. Internships benefit both the students and the internship sponsors. Students benefit from the opportunity to apply what they have learned in college courses to a work situation, under a trained supervisor in a professional setting. The internship sponsors benefit by establishing a relationship with the school and faculty, by being introduced to potential employees and by the actual work the interns accomplish. Internships are required for graduation, and they provide the final preparation for entering the profession. Interns can expect to receive help from the internship coordinator in locating internships that match their career goals and provide meaningful, responsible work experiences; be supervised, given feedback and suggestions for improvement; be supported by the internship coordinator in dealing with work related issues; receive a letter grade that reflects their work. Grades are the combination of the supervisor's evaluation; an evaluation of the student's work samples; the interns' journals; required reports, and the department's assessment of the rigor of the particular internship. Interns are expected to treat the internship as a professional job and to act accordingly. Students will be placed only in offices where their work will be supervised by a professional in their particular area of communication. National accreditation requirements do not allow academic credit for work on student media such as the Collegian, CTV or KCSU. Supervisors can expect to receive support from the department in pre-screening applicants so that only qualified students apply, and through phone contacts and visits during the internship. Supervisors are expected to provide the department with a written job description and conditions of the internship; sign a contract indicating willingness to supervise and evaluate the intern; provide supervision, feedback and a written evaluation. (Supervisors may be requested to provide a resume of their professional work.) We encourage pay for interns to help defray their education costs.

Anticipated time of internship: Year _____

Summer _____ Fall _____ Spring _____

Name: _____ CSU ID _____

CSU Address: _____
Street, apartment number, etc.

_____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Have you earned any JT487, JT484, JT495, or JT496 credits? If so, how many and what were you doing?

List any previous internships (for credit or not for credit) _____

Please note that the Journalism and Media Communication Department allows a maximum of four internship credits during your college career, and you may earn only a total of seven credits in any kind of independent study such as the courses listed above.

My JT area of focus is _____ Cumulative CSU GPA: _____

Expected date of graduation: _____ Current Status. Jr. Sr. Grad.

If your summer address is different from the one above, please provide that address below:
Street, apartment number, etc.

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

THIS SECTION ONLY FOR STUDENTS WHO HAVE REQUESTED AN APPEAL:

For students: If you do not have all of the prerequisites for the internship, you can appeal to register for it. The appeals process requires you to obtain a signed verification that your supervisor is willing to work with you as an intern even though you do not have all of the prerequisites, and that the skills you will use for the internship will not be taught in the prerequisite that you don't have. You will need your advisor's signature below to make an appeal. The appeals process takes about one week to complete, so please plan accordingly.

For adviser: Please review this form and indicate below if you know this student's work and believe he/she is prepared for an internship. If you cannot judge the student's preparedness, please advise the student to seek a signature from an instructor of his/her latest writing, public relations or broadcast classtaken.

I know this student's work and believe he/she is prepared for an internship

Signature of adviser or appropriate instructor

**Submit this form to Journalism Department Internship Coordinator, Kim Spencer,
Clark C226,
or by email: Kimberly.spencer@colostate.edu**

Frequently Asked Questions

How do international internships work?

An international internship needs to meet the same criteria in order to be a qualified internship, and for that student to be covered under CSU's Workers' Compensation coverage. In addition, there may be other international host country requirements that would have to be met.

Students in international placements need to work with the Office of Education Abroad.

Each internship agreement or relationship with the experience provider may be different and may require review. CSU's International Travel Risk Manager and CSU's Workers' Compensation Manager can assist to determine whether the internship is a Qualified Internship and whether the student may be considered for Workers' Compensation coverage. Please contact Derek

Smallwood, Derek.Smallwood@colostate.edu, and

Kenda Weigang, Kenda.Weigang@colostate.edu for assistance. To file a workers' compensation claim, see the [CSU Risk Management and Insurance File an Incident form \(Links to an external site.\)](#).

Are there special considerations for out of state internships?

In order for an out of state internship to be a qualified internship, the same criteria will apply. Students injured while completing the duties of an unpaid/non-remuneration qualified internship out of state should file a Workers' Compensation claim at

[CSU Risk Management and Insurance File an Incident form: https://rmi.colostate.edu/workers-compensation/](https://rmi.colostate.edu/workers-compensation/)

Note: room and board is considered remuneration.

Workers' Compensation coverage for paid, out of state, Qualified Internships varies from state to state as to what qualifies a person as an employee and when student interns are covered. Students injured in the course and scope of their internship functions should consider filing a claim in both states, one against the employer or host site in the state of internship and one against CSU in Colorado.

CSU Workers' Compensation Program Manager, Kenda Weigang kweigang@colostate.edu, Tel. # (970) 491-4832 should be contacted immediately so that there is coordination of communication with multiple states' adjusters and responsibilities for injury benefits can be assessed and assigned.

Are students participating in an internship covered by Workers' Compensation insurance?

A student participating in a Qualified Internship may be considered for Workers' Compensation coverage if injured while performing the duties of the internship.

Individuals involved in a learning experience, on-the job training or volunteer experience that does not meet the qualified internship criteria are unlikely to be eligible for workers' compensation coverage.

Who is responsible for providing the coverage?

Experience Provider.

Any business that enters into a bona fide cooperative education or student internship program sponsored by CSU for the purpose of providing on-the-job training for students, for pay, is considered an employer and potentially responsible for workers' compensation coverage. The employer can be any business, agency, organization or governmental agency.

International experience providers are required to follow the laws of the host country. There may be situations where there is a conflict of laws. Please contact the Office of Risk Management and Insurance for advice on international insurance.

What can be considered as pay for an internship?

Under Colorado statute, if a student receives any kind of remuneration (including room and/or board, salary) from the Experience Provider then the intern may be entitled to workers' compensation benefits from that service provider.

- Companies are able to pay their interns a small stipend and still meet the legal requirements for unpaid internships. Money used solely to offset expenses incurred while performing activities can be considered reimbursement and not considered remuneration for employment but needs to be appropriately documented as such. i.e. mileage, reimbursement for vaccinations.
- If a stipend payment is associated with work performance or is of more than a nominal amount, it may be considered a wage

When is CSU responsible for providing Workers' Compensation Coverage?

CSU provides Workers' Compensation coverage for students receiving academic credit for a qualified internship provided:

1. The internship is unpaid and with a non-CSU entity.
2. That the injury or illness is work-related and deemed in the course and scope of the internship.
3. The internship must be sponsored by CSU and CSU must have placed the student with the employer for purposes of training. Approval by CSU must be in advance of commencement of qualified internships. CSU needs to have oversight of the internship through academic assignment deliverables through which a grade can be awarded, an advising/supervising role in the program and it needs to be for academic credit.
4. Retroactive approvals will not make an experience/volunteer opportunity or non-qualified internship, a qualified internship.
5. Students serving in unremunerated internships at Colorado State University or one of its entities are not covered by Workers' Compensation Insurance per the Workers' Compensation Act.

Colorado Workers' Compensation Act provides specific guidance pertaining to liability for student internships.

For complete description of Colorado statutes C.R.S. §§8-40-302(7) (a) and 8-40-202 (1)(a), please go to <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdle/dwc>

What if I am injured?

Anyone can file a claim for workers' compensation, but nothing is guaranteed. An investigation of

the injury, activities involved at the time of injury and internship requirements will be reviewed. workers' compensation.

Can the Experience Provider be held responsible for injuries incurred during a qualified internship?

Yes, if the Experience Provider provided an unsafe environment or the actions of an employee of the Experience Provider caused the event that resulted in the injury, subrogation may be taken against them by CSU or CSU's insurance carrier, if CSU covers the injury.

Can Qualified Internships be approved retroactively?

No. Risk management will not provide workers' compensation coverage for any injuries or internships that are set up/approved by the department retroactively. Please ensure that all placements and approvals occur PRIOR to the commencement of the qualified internship.

Does credit for the internship have to occur to be considered for Workers' Compensation coverage?

As long as the internship is set up, all forms completed, and approved for academic credit and the student has enrolled in the proper course credit for payment. **Prior** to commencement of the internship, the student can participate in internship activities during school breaks or over the summer and still be considered for coverage. *Signing up for an internship retroactivity will not be accepted.* Injuries must be reported immediately when they occur to the Internship Coordinator and an injury reported completed at <https://rmi.colostate.edu/workers-compensation/>

Are field trips and other learning experiences that are for credit covered by Workers' Compensation?

Field trips, practicums and other learning experiences which do not meet the criteria of a qualified internship are considered academic in nature and are not covered under Workers' Compensation.

Are internships coordinated by CSU covered by CSU's Workers' Compensation?

Only internships that meet the criteria of a Qualified Internship are covered by CSU's Workers' Compensation. Departments often serve as a resource to the students and outside agencies regarding learning opportunities. This doesn't constitute a sponsored and/or CSU internship.

What safety issues should be considered?

Experience Providers are expected to identify the risks of activities and provide for any required safety training for any tools, computers, specialized equipment, vehicles, physical activities, hazardous chemicals, biologicals or radioactive materials, etc. that are part of the student's activities.

Experience Providers who do not provide a safe environment for students to work in may be subject to subrogation for injuries sustained by CSU interns and/or CSU employees.

Who should I address insurance questions to?

Any other insurance requirements that the Experience Provider requires from CSU needs to be requested in advance. There may be some insurance that CSU will not provide, that is the responsibility of the internship site provider and/or the individual. For example, CSU does not provide auto liability insurance for personal vehicles. If professional liability insurance is required there are a

number of associates/groups that provide this and the student will need to investigate this with their academic advisor. Please contact Office of Risk Management & Insurance (970) 491-6745 for further assistance.