

# CM 400 (Writing) Internship in Communication Arts

## Sample Syllabus

### Course Description

This course is intended to provide hands-on experience in a communication-intensive field for students majoring in Writing. (Note: CM Arts majors will take the internship in CM 431). Most internships take place in a real-world setting—a corporation, nonprofit organization, or business, though some internships involve university-based work (in a center, a department, or a research project setting). Some internships are paid and some are unpaid. The value of the internship comes from (1) learning from professionals with experience, (2) doing work in specific areas of communication, (3) reflecting on that work (critically evaluating that work to better understand it), and (4) developing a portfolio and relationships that may help land a job in the future.

CM 400 is a variable credit course, though most internships are for 3 semester hours. Forty-five hours of work is required for each credit hour awarded, so that the 3-semester hour internship requires 135 hours of on-the-job work. The Department Chair must approve all internships.

Internships are individualized to the student and dependent upon the availability of willing organizations to sponsor the internship. Students are encouraged to seek internships in an area in which they would like to pursue a career. Because this internship is for our Writing majors, the chosen internship must have an intensive writing component. In the past, we have supported internships in journalism, public relations, web design, technical writing, advertising, social media, research, among others.

### Course Requirements

1. A completed and approved Internship Contract form, which details who will supervise the internship, when it will begin, and what objectives are to be accomplished. This must be signed by the student, the Department Chair of Communication Arts, and the on-the-job supervisor.
2. Forty-five hours of on-the-job work for each hour of credit. For the standard 3-hour course, you will need to complete 135 hours of discipline-related work.

3. A daily journal that includes the following:
  - a. A list of each day worked and the hours worked.
  - b. A description of the work done on each work day.
  - c. A reflection on the day's work, including things such as what was learned, how the student's understanding of communication concepts and processes informs (or fails to inform) his or her understanding of the work, and/or new ideas about communication the student has reached by virtue of the work.
4. A portfolio of samples of work (retained in paper or electronic form) that also includes a final summary page about the internship.
5. A final evaluation by the on-the-job supervisor, using the evaluation form provided by the course instructor, and delivered by the supervisor to the course instructor (through either email or postal mail).
6. You are expected to be proactive with both your work and notifying the chair of any problems in advance.

### Outcomes

The course seeks to introduce students to a particular field of communication practice, giving them hands-on experience, an opportunity to interact with people in the real world working in a communication area, and an opportunity to build a portfolio.

### Grading

The final course grade is based upon: (1) the student's performance on the job; (2) the supervisor's evaluation; and (3) the student's effective completion of the course requirements, including the daily journal and the portfolio. Note: Standard grades, including the plus and minus grade options, are awarded for the internship.

### Addressing a Problematic Internship

Because this course is reliant upon the cooperation of an outside organization to ensure a productive educational experience for the student, the faculty in the CM Arts Department maintains some flexibility with regard to ending or reassigning students in internships. Although it is rare, the faculty have ended an internship when problems arose and reassigned a student to another organization, or used an incomplete to give a student more time to work through an internship. Our main objective is to ensure our students receive a quality internship experience.