



HONORS COLLEGE

Honors College Internship Guide

Why do an Internship?

Briefly stated, an internship is an [experiential learning](#) opportunity that—in the case of the **Honors Internship**—becomes a part of a student’s academic studies where the student receives credit for a supervised project or work experience related to their major program of study. Generally, internships have goals that include the following:

1. Performing duties in a position that is relevant to the student’s area of study.
2. Bringing learned knowledge, skills, and perspectives into ongoing academic studies that can then be reflected upon and shared with others.
3. Participating as a member of a community of practitioners in a given field.
4. Working in a position that allows better information and decisions regarding career options.
5. Learning about and developing skills useful in marketing to potential employers.

The Honors Internship

The Honors Internship allows students to complete some of their requirements in the Honors College through a rewarding co-curricular experience. Within the Honors College, internships may be contracted for 1-3 credits under the designation of HON 48X. The college also permits students to earn credit in the required honors curriculum for enrollment in a departmental-specific internship course. By either means, the student must submit an Honors Internship Contract with the same expectations for the experience in order to receive honors-designated academic credit.

Eligibility and Requirements to Conduct an Honors Internship

- Students must submit their complete contracts no later than the **first day** of the semester in which they intend to complete the internship and receive academic credit. Completed contracts include approvals from the On-Site Internship Supervisor and the Faculty Mentor at Marshall University.
- Students must have held membership in the Honors College for at least 1 year prior to the internship and be in current *good standing* with the college (including a minimum 3.3 GPA).
- Students may earn a total of 3 honors hours for a single internship in one semester during their time as a member of the Honors College. Credits may be earned at the following rate:
 - 3 credits: approximately 150 hours during the semester (equivalent to 10 hours per week)
 - 2 credits: approximately 100 hours during the semester (6-7 hours per week)
 - 1 credit: approximately 50 hours during the semester (3-4 hours per week)

- The internship may be a paid or unpaid position.
- The internship must be a productive educational experience for the particular student (based on a demonstrable alignment between their major program at Marshall and career goals). Internships must provide students the opportunity to apply what they are learning in their field of study to professional settings.
- Student-intern job duties and the learning objectives for the internship must be clearly connected to their field/s of study as well as to the college's mission and learning outcomes.
- The student must enroll in HON 48X to receive credit toward the required honors curriculum unless they are enrolled in a departmental internship course for academic credit.
- Each student-intern will have one person serving in a supervisory role as the **On-Site Internship Supervisor** during the internship who has approved the internship and will evaluate the student-intern and who will provide the **Honors Internship Evaluation** at the end of the contracted period and before the end of the semester in which academic credit may be granted.
- Each student-intern will also have a **Faculty Mentor** at Marshall designated who supports the student's experience so that it best aligns with their major program and who can speak to the value of the internship experience in this context.

General Expectations for an Honors Internship

An Honors Internship is a preview of a profession conducted by a student through substantive tasks within an experiential learning opportunity defined by clear learning outcomes that serve as goals. To reach these learning goals, an Honors Internship must encompass:

- Clearly defined learning goals and expectations that are discussed prior to the start of the internship and continuously reviewed through the experience. These are conveyed to the Honors College through the contract.
- Orientation and training upfront that covers mission, goals, organizational structure, and workplace procedures and policies.
- A dedicated supervisor who (together with others, potentially) mentors the student-intern throughout the experience, giving continuous feedback through regular meetings.
- Reflective evaluation of the experience by both the student-intern and their supervisor.
- Opportunities to network with senior staff members.
- Substantive, meaningful work that authentically represents that which the student could expect in a field that reflects their undergraduate major and is consistent with their overall career goals. In general, tasks should be varied, involve independent decision-making, and develop demonstrable and valued workplace skills.

Potential Substantive Tasks:

- Designing publications
- Developing procedures
- Performing lab tests
- Team projects among others in the organization
- Interviewing patients
- Conducting surveys
- Writing marketing plans
- Facilitating workshops

- Performing software or hardware revisions
- Community outreach
- Preparing legal briefs
- Creating financial forecasts and cost recovery reports
- Dedicated project(s) that students can work on during downtime
- Presentation to staff members
- Opportunities to view or participate in the work of other departments
- Attending staff meetings and/or workshops
- Copyediting and writing
- Creating a website

Responsibilities of all Parties to the Honors Internship Contract

The honors student as the Student-Intern, their On-Site Internship Supervisor, their Faculty Mentor, and the Honors College must each individually support the student's participation in the Honors Internship as described in the contract for a student to be eligible to be enrolled in HON 48X (if they are not already enrolled in a departmental internship course) and to receive honors academic credit toward the required honors curriculum. The Honors College is ultimately responsible (using the information provided by all other parties) for approving the proposed internship for honors-designated academic credit and accepting the completed internship as partial completion of the college's curricular requirements.

Student-Intern

The honors student must complete the [Honors Internship Contract](#) prior to beginning work in the internship and no later than the stated deadline for the academic semester in which honors credit is sought. At the completion of the internship project, the student will complete an **Honors Internship Report**, which is described below, no later than 1 week before the end of exam week in the semester in which credit is sought.

Honors Internship Report

Before the end of the semester in which the academic credit will be given, the student must provide a reflection on the qualities of their experiential learning in the context of the internship.

The report will consist of the following two parts:

1. A **presentation** consisting of one of the following two options:
 - A 10-15 minute presentation of what has been learned in the internship given in person to an audience of students and faculty in the Honors College.
 - A 10-15 minute video presentation of what has been learned in the internship.
2. A 500-word **essay** on the particulars of the internship and the student-intern's experience.

The Honors Internship Report is an important opportunity for personal reflection as well as for a well-thought articulation of significant aspects of the experience that further the student's

academic and career goals. This should be based largely on the student-intern's consideration of actual outcomes of the internship experience when compared with expectations stated in the Honors Internship Contract. The following questions should be addressed in both the presentation and the essay.

1. *Personally*, what have you learned about yourself?
2. *Intellectually*, what specific things have you learned about this kind of work and its relevance to your interests and career goals?
3. *Practically*, what hands-on skills do you gain?
4. What unforeseen challenges did you face and what did you learn from managing them?
5. How has this experience advanced your academic and career interests overall?
6. How do you see the work that you completed as an intern supporting the missions of the sponsoring organization and the Honors College?
7. What do you feel you still need to accomplish to prepare yourself for whatever is next in your life?

On-Site Internship Supervisor

The organization, agency, or business for which the honors student-intern will be working agrees to provide them with opportunities to learn through experience. It is the responsibility of the on-site supervisor to oversee the quality of the student-intern's experience and to regularly meet with them. The organization agrees to employ the student to perform only reasonable and legal work and that the aim of the internship is to provide the student with a learning experience appropriate to their major program and career aspirations. In general, the student-intern, as opposed to the sponsor, should be the primary beneficiary of the internship experience. Additionally, it is our expectation that the student-intern's work should not displace that of paid employees who are not interns. Once the internship begins, the supervisor is expected to provide the student-intern with training and orientation. Throughout the internship experience, the supervisor should provide the student-intern with ongoing feedback so as to help develop their knowledge and skills. At the end of this guide, we provide some best practices that align with our expectations for the quality of experience that our students deserve.

The supervisor must provide a **Letter of Commitment** to the Honors College that clearly states their approval of the contracted Honors Internship and include a job description, a plan for ongoing supervision and mentorship, means of access to necessary materials or resources, and a list of job tasks. Ideally, this is submitted at the same time as the Honors Internship Contract. It must be submitted before the end of the first week of the semester in which academic credit is sought.

Each credit hour earned is normally expected to correspond with 50 hours of work performed in the internship. The student must keep a **Log of Internship Hours**. This log must be submitted to the Honors College by the supervisor at the end of the internship. At this time, and no later than one week before the end of the semester in which academic credit is to be earned, the supervisor must also submit the **Honors Internship Evaluation** form to the Honors College. Note that unless the supervisor specifically permits the college to share the form, students will not have access to it.

We have prepared a list of best practices for an internship experience located at the end of this document.

Faculty Mentor

The Faculty Mentor will typically be a faculty member of the student's major program. They are expected to serve as an academic advisor who is capable of helping the student-intern achieve the most rewarding outcomes from this experiential learning opportunity. The mentor must provide a **Letter of Support** to the Honors College that clearly states the expected benefits of the internship for the student within the context of their major program of study and its suitability for honors academic credit.

The Honors College

Provided that all required materials are submitted in a timely manner and that the final evaluation submitted by the supervisor and the report by the student-intern support granting academic credit that contributes to the required honors curriculum, the Honors College will complete all necessary updates to a student's record for them to earn the honors academic credits. All parties to the Honors Internship Contract will be kept informed by the college.

Required Components and Timeline of the Honors Internship

An Honors Internship, eligible for academic credit applied toward the required honors curriculum consists of the following items.

- *Due no later (and preferably at least one month before) the **first day** of the academic semester in which academic credit may be earned.*

- 1. An [Honors Internship Contract](#) – Normally due prior to the start of the internship position and no later than the *first day of the semester* in which academic credit is to be earned. In addition to the form completed by the honors student-intern, a completed contract includes the following two items. ***An email request from the Honors College for these letters will be automatically generated when the student-intern submits their application using the email contact information provided. It will include a link to complete the On-Site Supervisor or Faculty Mentor portion of the application, including an upload of the letter***
 - From the On-Site Supervisor:
 - **Letter of Commitment.** This should clearly state approval of the contracted Honors Internship and include a job description, a plan for ongoing supervision and mentorship, means of access to necessary materials or resources, and a list of job tasks.

- From the Faculty Mentor at Marshall University:
 - **Letter of Support.** This should clearly state the expected benefits of the internship for the student within the context of their major program of study.
- *Due not less than **one week before the end** of the academic semester in which credit may be earned.*
1. From the On-Site Supervisor:
 - An **Honors Internship Evaluation** completed and submitted by the On-Site Internship Supervisor who must evaluate work completed by the student-intern during the internship experience.
 - An **Internship Log of Hours** completed by the student-intern then approved by and submitted by the On-Site Supervisor along with the evaluation.
 2. From the Student-Intern:
 - An **Honors Internship Report** completed by the student consisting of a 15-20 minute presentation of significant aspects of the internship experience and a 500-word summary statement.

The Honors College's Mission and Learning Outcomes

Our mission in the Honors College at Marshall University is to provide an environment for innovative teaching and learning within an interdisciplinary curriculum motivated by creative, critical inquiry and respect for a multiplicity of thoughts, experiences, and identities. The Honors College collaborates with university and public partners to foster inclusive academic excellence in a diverse and supportive community of scholars dedicated to becoming socially conscious, responsible leaders and lifelong learners engaged in the acquisition and application of knowledge for the greater good.

The college's learning outcomes require that students pursuing completion of the Honors Curriculum have a variety of opportunities in their honors-designated coursework as a whole to:

- make connections while adapting and applying skills and learning among varied disciplines, domains of thinking, experiences, and situations.
- outline divergent solutions to a problem, develop and explore potentially controversial proposals, and synthesize ideas or expertise to generate original plans and approaches.
- evaluate the effectiveness of their own work, reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of their knowledge and skills in defined areas, and devise ways to make improvements.
- produce cohesive oral, written, and visual communications capable of connecting effectively with specific audiences.
- appraise how cultural beliefs and practices affect inter-group communication, how specific approaches to global issues may affect communities differently, and how varying economic, religious, social, or geographical interests can result in conflict.
- demonstrate principles of ethical citizenship and socially responsible leadership through collaborative partnerships.

- evaluate how academic theories and public policy inform one another to support civic well-being.

Best Practices for Internship Supervisors

Although each internship mentorship situation is distinct, we offer best practices that align with our expectations for the quality of experience our students deserve and that is worthy of honors credits in our required curriculum in the Honors College at Marshall University.

- Expect to dedicate more time to training and supervising the student-intern early on. Many students may not have prior work experience; as such, they will need more guidance at the start of the internship. As a student gains experience and confidence, they should be able to work more autonomously.
- Try to make the student-intern's experience purposeful. Students do internships for professional development. Their job duties should help build their knowledge of the profession and increase relevant skills. Students' job duties should align with the learning objectives listed in the Honors Internship Application.
- Ensure the student-intern's time is structured, especially early on. The most successful internships allow students to be productive and valued participants in the organization. Give interns tasks to complete and be clear about what is expected. Ideally, responsibilities *increase* as the internship continues.
- Provide regular feedback. Meet with the student-intern regularly to discuss his or her strengths and explain areas that need improvement. Praise when appropriate. If the student-intern makes mistakes, offer constructive criticism and clear guidelines for how to improve.
- Help the student-intern network. Introducing students to others who work in the field can help them build professional relationships and learn about careers in the field from varying perspectives.
- Explain to the student-intern the organization's mission, norms, policies, and relevant procedures early on. Orienting students to the organization can help them understand the value of their work assignments. It can also help clarify expectations. Handbooks and/or websites that address workplace policies, rules, and regulations can provide students with valuable information about how the organization operates.