

# *Department of Public Relations*

## **Internship Policies and Procedures**

(Available online at: <http://www.jou.ufl.edu/academics/bachelors/public-relations/public-relations-internships/>)

*Last Revised: MAY 2013*

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### General Information

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An internship is an important part of career preparation. According to curriculum studies, internship experience and writing skills are the two most important elements in finding your first job.

Academic credit for internships is available by enrolling in PUR 4940 – Public Relations Internship. The course is a Professional Elective that fulfills Block 2 requirements (Block 3 for students admitted prior to Summer B 2012). It can be taken for one to six credits. No more than six credits are allowed for the internship. Noncredit internships may be taken at any time and do not require department approval.

PUR 4940 is offered every fall and spring semester, as well as during summer C session. The course is graded S/U (satisfactory/unsatisfactory). The instructor is the interim department chair, Dr. Juan-Carlos Molleda.

To qualify for academic credit, an internship must be an on-the-job **learning experience in public relations**. The intern must be supervised by a full-time employee of the sponsoring organization who is knowledgeable about public relations. The intern must physically work at the organization's office, at the same location as the supervisor. Although we are not keen on the idea of telecommuting for internships, we will evaluate each situation individually and make considerations if a strong case is presented by the student and the supervisor.

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### Enrolling in PUR 4940

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#### **MEET PREREQUISITES**

**You must be classified as a junior (60 credits or more) or a senior in the Department of Public Relations. Have earned at least nine semester hours of credit in professional courses, including PUR 3000 and JOU 3101; and have a 2.5 or higher overall GPA and a 2.5 or higher professional GPA.**

#### **IDENTIFY INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES**

Search for two or three potential internships that would interest you and further your public relations education. Several sources of information on internships include the Weekly email announcements from the Department of Public Relations and My CJC, Public Relations Internship Binders in Weimer 2085, the Knight Division in Weimer 1080, and the Career Resource Center in the Reitz Union.

#### **DRAFT A WORK SCHEDULE**

Since you will be enrolled in an academic course, your internship must follow the academic calendar, meaning that you must start and finish your course requirements in the regular weeks of the semester.

Internships cannot overlap semesters, and you must register and pay tuition for PUR 4940 as you would for any other course.

Confirm with your potential internship employer the number of hours you will work, which affects the number of credits you can earn. The following guidelines apply:

<b>1 credit = 65 hours</b>	<b>4 credits = 260 hours</b>
<b>2 credits = 130 hours</b>	<b>5 credits = 325 hours</b>
<b>3 credits = 195 hours</b>	<b>6 credits = 390 hours</b>

Fall/Spring Semester 15 weeks of class	Summer C Semester Duration varies by start and end dates
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**All hours that need to be completed to satisfy your requirement must be done *before* the last day of class.**

This does not prohibit you from starting and ending your internship on dates agreed upon by you and your internship employer, as long as you are registered for the course before the beginning of the semester in which the internship will take place and you fulfill all requirements, including submitting all reports and completing necessary hours, by the set deadline.

For example, a student wishing to take PUR 4940 for one credit in Summer C might start their actual work hours in June, rather than in May when Summer C begins. Regardless, he or she must be registered for the internship at the beginning of Summer C and start submitting weekly reports in May even though they have not begun their hours. Likewise; a student might start a two-credit internship in May and end it in June, long before the end of Summer C in early August. He or she can submit all final reports early, but grades will not be finalized until the end of the semester.

**SUBMIT APPLICATION**

**The application packet needs to be completed in the correct format and must be received by the Department of Public Relations by 12pm EST on the deadline listed below. The packet must be submitted in person or by U.S. Mail, to the department.** Early submissions are encouraged. Allow time to modify the application in case the internship is denied.

<b>Summer 2013 Deadline – Wednesday, May 14, 2013</b> <b>Fall 2013 Deadline – Monday, August 19, 2013</b>	<b>Spring 2014 Deadline – Thursday, January 2, 2014</b> <b>Summer 2014 Deadline – Thursday, May 8, 2014</b>
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The application packet consists of two parts:

1. A completed and signed PUR 4940 Internship Application Form (available online at <http://www.jou.ufl.edu/academics/bachelors/public-relations/public-relations-internships/>)

The **APPLICATION MUST BE TYPED!** It is a PDF form and can be filled in electronically. After completing the application, you will need to print and sign it.

2. A business letter describing your proposed job responsibilities and tasks. The letter must be signed by the intended supervisor of your internship, printed on the organizational letterhead, and addressed to the department chair as follows:

Dr. Juan-Carlos Molleda  
Professor and Interim Chair  
Department of Public Relations  
College of Journalism and Communications  
PO Box 118400  
Gainesville, FL 32611-8400

Since both documents require signatures, **e-mail/faxed versions are not acceptable.** *Mailed* packets should be sent to Dr. Molleda at the above address. Hand-delivered documents should be brought to the Department of Public Relations in Weimer 2085. **Applications will not be accepted or reviewed until both documents have been received by the department and must be submitted by the deadline specified on page 2.**

### **PICKUP PROCESSED APPLICATIONS**

Students are responsible for picking up a copy of their signed application from the department after it has been processed for approval or denial. They are required to sign the processed application to acknowledge receipt and confirmation of the decision regarding their application. If your application is approved by Dr. Molleda you will be registered for your internship by the department.

Please keep in mind that once you have signed this form, you have established that you will complete the internship with the organization specified. You may not change your organization without approval from Dr. Molleda. If you wish to change your organization at any time, you must submit a new acceptance letter to the Department of Public Relations immediately.

It is important to keep in mind that credits cannot be increased or decreased after you are registered without dropping and adding the course with different credit hours and paying any late fees. Any changes made in the number of credits must be approved by Dr. Molleda.

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## Successfully Completing PUR4940

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### **WEEKLY REPORTS**

You must complete and submit a written report each week of your internship, starting with the first week. The report is due by 5 p.m. on the last day of each work week (dates can be found in the “due dates” document sent to you in the beginning of your internship). If you do not work a week during the course of your internship (ex. Spring Break), **you must still send in a report stating, “I did not work this week.”** This will ensure accurate tracking of your weeks and hours. Sending in multiple weekly reports at one time is prohibited and could result in a “U” grade for the course.

The weekly reports (**minimum** of 1 paragraph – 4 to 5 sentences) must describe your activities during the previous week. **Both style and tone should be business-like. Reports should be well written and free of grammatical and spelling errors. Sloppy reports will be returned for rewriting.** Submitting consistently sloppy or incomplete reports will result in a “U” grade for the course.

**Weekly reports must be submitted on the PUR 4940 Internship Weekly Report Form**, available online at <http://www.jou.ufl.edu/academics/bachelors/public-relations/public-relations-internships/>. Reports sent in on any other form will be returned for correction. Reports must be sent as email attachments to [purintern@jou.ufl.edu](mailto:purintern@jou.ufl.edu). Reports sent to any other address may be lost and could result in a “U” grade for the course. **Keep a copy of your reports in case you are asked to submit duplicates.**

Each report must be numbered (for example, Week 1) and include dates of the work week, the number of hours worked each day, and the total hours worked that week (see PUR 4940 Internship Weekly Report). The hours reported on weekly forms must total the number of hours required for the number of credits for which you are registered (each credit = 65 hours). **Students are responsible for tracking internship hours.** Reports submitted with incorrect calculations or missing information will be returned for correction.

### **SUBMIT INTERNSHIP EVALUATIONS**

The last week of the internship, you must write a two-page self-evaluation (double spaced, 12 pt. Times New Roman font) of the internship commenting on its value to you and its potential value to future interns. Submit the evaluation to [purintern@jou.ufl.edu](mailto:purintern@jou.ufl.edu) no later than the set deadline (**listed on the “due dates” document sent out in the beginning of the internship**).

At the end of your internship your supervisor must submit an evaluation of your performance. **This supervisor must be the same supervisor you listed on your application.** See that the supervisor’s evaluations are submitted **at least two weeks before the deadline**, remind your internship supervisor that he or she must write a letter of evaluation on your performance and work as well as Complete the Intern Evaluation Form, found online at <http://www.jou.ufl.edu/academics/bachelors/public-relations/public-relations-internships/>

The letter must be on the organization’s letterhead and signed by the supervisor. Because the letter requires a signature, it must be sent along with the evaluation form by the U.S. Postal Service, or may be delivered in person inside a sealed envelope. E-mailed/Faxed letters are not acceptable. **The supervisor’s evaluation letter should be addressed and sent to Dr. Mollada.**

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### Additional Information

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**No retroactive credit will be awarded for work you completed prior to the beginning of the semester in which you are registered for PUR 4940.**

- Hours worked at an internship site after the set deadline for completing PUR 4940 requirements will not be counted toward satisfactory completion of the course.

- An “I” (incomplete) grade will be given only in circumstances deemed exceptional by Dr. Molleda and after a written agreement to complete the course requirements has been signed by the student and Dr. Molleda. Ignorance of rules or inability to complete an overly ambitious work schedule set by the student will not be deemed exceptional. All incompletes must be rectified during the next semester or session. An “I” grade will not be changed to an S/U grade until the end of the next semester or session.
- More than one internship may be completed if each internship is with a different employer. You may also do more than one internship in the same semester as long as it is with different employers and does not exceed six total credits combined. No more than a total of six hours of internship credit may be earned for the Bachelor’s of Science Degree in Public Relations, either from the Department of Public Relations or any other department.
- If you experience any situations during your internship that you perceive as uncomfortable or of potential harm, please contact the Department of Public Relations. Students will not be penalized for refusing to carry out inappropriate duties assigned by their supervisor or another employee of the sponsoring organization.
- If your supervisor changes during the course of your internship, please contact the Department of Public Relations at [purintern@jou.ufl.edu](mailto:purintern@jou.ufl.edu). In addition, your new supervisor will need to contact the department to confirm that he/she is now acting as your direct supervisor.
- If you are having issues with your organization that hinder you from completing your requirements, please contact the Department of Public Relations immediately. Dr. Molleda handles each situation on a case-by-case basis. If a situation arises that you need to stop working with your organization, please contact the department to make arrangements. If you wish to change your organization due to circumstances out of your control, you must contact the Department of Public Relations. Each organization must be approved by Dr. Molleda.

**Neither the Department of Public Relations, nor the department faculty, nor the University of Florida is responsible for any personal injury, loss, or death while you are engaged in the internship or while traveling to or from it.**

## **Frequently Asked Questions about Public Relations Internships**

**Q:** Can I do an internship in the summer, but get credit for it in the fall, when my Bright Futures scholarship will pay for the tuition?

**A:** No. Credit is not granted retroactively. It must be earned – and tuition for enrollment in PUR 4940 paid – the semester in which the internship is done.

**Q:** I live in Miami. Can I wait until I get home after spring semester to find an internship and then submit the paperwork for earning credit?

**A:** No. All summer internships must be approved before the beginning of Summer C. Use spring break and other visits home to identify internships early.

**Q:** If I have a problem completing enough work hours to fulfill the number of credits for which I am registered can I request that my credit hours be reduced?

**A:** No. Credit hours cannot be changed. You must drop the course with the original credits and add the course with different credits. Doing so requires the department chair's approval and your on-campus presence to process the necessary paperwork. Late fees may be associated with this change.

**Q:** Do I have to find my own internship?

**A:** Yes. The department announces internship opportunities to students via weekly announcement emails and maintains binders of internship opportunities. For more information visit the office (Weimer 2085) to review the binders. Also, Knight Division for Scholarships, Career Services and Multicultural Affairs (Weimer 1080), MyCJC, and the Career Resource Center in the Reitz Union also provide help with finding internships.

**Q:** Can I get credit for an internship that pays me a salary?

**A:** Yes. In fact, paid internships are strongly endorsed by the department, as well as the National Commission on Public Relations Education. Because you have some training in public relations, your internship work will add value to the sponsoring organization.

**Q:** How much should I expect to be paid for an internship?

**A:** The rate of pay varies by organization and usually the student's class status; seniors command higher salaries than juniors do. Pay for recent internships have ranged from minimum wage up to \$16 per hour. Most paid internships fell in the \$10-\$12 per hour range.

**Q:** Should I take an unpaid internship?

**A:** The decision is entirely yours. Pay is not a factor in approving internships. At the same time, keep in mind that you are paying tuition to do the internship.

**Q:** Are there any advantages to doing unpaid internships?

**A:** Yes. Some students report that sponsors of unpaid internships are more flexible about work schedules. In contrast, sponsors of paid internships are more likely to treat their interns as regular members of their staff.