

PR INTERNSHIP POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

GENERAL INFORMATION

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 but not required. Noncredit internships may be taken at any time and do not require department approval.

To participate in an internship for credit, you will need to apply to the PR Department. If accepted, you will need to complete weekly submissions on Canvas for PUR4940 – Public Relations Internship. PUR4940 is offered every fall, spring and summer semesters. The course is graded S/U (satisfactory/unsatisfactory).

IMPORTANT DETAILS

- No internship credit will be granted unless the application is received and accepted by the end of the drop/ add period for the semester you are completing the internship.
- More than one internship may be completed for academic credit for a maximum of three credits total.
- 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. Students are not permitted to complete an internship supervised by a family member. The majority of the internship must include public relations related responsibilities.
- Submitting an internship application signifies that you will complete the internship with the organization specified. You may not change your organization without approval from Dr. Hutchens. If you wish to change your organization at any time, you must submit a new acceptance letter to the Department of Public Relations immediately.
- Credits are earned by working a set number of documented hours at your internship. Only internship hours completed during the semester you are receiving internship credit will count for your credits. You may start and/or end your internship on dates outside the semester as agreed upon by you and your internship employer but note that only the hours during the semester will count for the required hours. All hours must be completed *before* the last day of class.

0 Credits*

1 credit = 65 hours

2 credits = 130 hours

3 credits = 195 hours

* The 0-credit option is available if your employer requires you to be registered for internship credit, but you do not need PUR4940 course credit according to your degree audit. This will allow you to register for the course without having to pay for credits you do not need.

- Once you register for the internship course, your number of credits is set. This means

that you cannot change the number of credits or hours required once the semester starts.

- Neither the Department of Public Relations, nor the Department faculty/administration, 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.

EXPECTATIONS

Once the Department approves you for internship credit, you will be enrolled into an online course on Canvas. Each week you are required to submit a “quiz,” entering your total hours worked for that week along with a description of what you worked on that week. Because the internship credit requires a set number of hours, it is crucial that you properly track and submit your hours and summaries each week. All course details will be explained in greater depth on Canvas.

At the end of the semester, you are required to submit:

- A self-evaluation
- A supervisor evaluation form
- A supervisor evaluation letter

REQUIREMENTS

You must apply to the UF Public Relations Department and be accepted to participate in an internship for credit that will count toward your Public Relations Degree. The following outlines the requirements and steps.

1. You must have completed PUR 3000 (with a C or better), JOU 3101 (with a C or better) and PUR 3500 (with a C or better; only required for students who started at UF after Summer B 2020); have a 2.5 or higher overall GPA and department approval.
2. The internship must be an on-the-job learning experience in public relations. You must be supervised by a full-time employee of the sponsoring organization who is knowledgeable about public relations. Students are not permitted to complete an internship supervised by a family member.

HOW TO APPLY

If you meet the above requirements and want to complete an internship for credit, you must submit an internship application and acceptance letter to the Department by the deadline for consideration. If approved, we will add you to the course. You will receive an email either way.

Internship materials are due no later than noon on the last day of the drop/add period each semester, which corresponds with the following dates:

Fall 2023: August 29
Spring 2024: January 12
Summer A/C 2024: May 14
Summer B 2024: July 2
Fall 2024: August 28

Before turning in the materials, check One.UF (under academics – action items) to see if you have any holds. If you submit an application and have a hold, this will likely delay your being added to the course. All holds need to be lifted by noon on the dates above. We encourage students to submit applications early, which will allow for ample time to resubmit if any issue arises with the application.

The internship materials must include:

1. An **Internship Application** (available [here](#)). This University document requires honesty and accuracy – failure to do so will result in not receiving approval.
2. An **Acceptance Letter** from your supervisor. This letter must:
 - a. Be addressed to Dr. Hutchens
 - b. Be written on the organization's letterhead
 - c. State that you were hired as an intern
 - d. Outline your responsibilities/duties as an intern
 - e. Specify your start and end dates
 - f. Numbers of hours you will work per week
 - g. Identify where you will be working from
 - h. Include your direct supervisor's official title and be signed by him/her

The Internship Application and Acceptance Letter are to be submitted to the Department:
purintern@jou.ufl.edu

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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?

No. Credit is not granted retroactively. It must be earned – and tuition for enrollment in PUR4940 paid – the semester in which the internship is done.

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?

No. Credit hours cannot be changed. An internship-for-credit, is recognized as a course on your degree audit/transcript. As such, UF will not allow a student to change the number of credits for a class during the semester. Your only options are to drop the course or receive an incomplete. Be sure to reach out to Dr. Hutchens ASAP if you anticipate problems completing your hours, if your work responsibilities change and are no longer PR related or for any other unforeseen circumstances related to your internship.

Do I have to find my own internship?

Yes. The [Office of Careers and Corporate Partnerships](#) lists opportunities but note that they have not been reviewed or approved by the Department. This means that some may not be approved for internship credits. Specifically, to qualify for academic credit, an internship must:

- Be an on-the-job learning experience in public relations
- You must be supervised by a full-time employee who is knowledgeable about public relations
- The majority of the internship must include public relation related responsibilities

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

Yes, paid internships are strongly encouraged by the Department. In fact, most professional PR associations strongly encourage paid internships by their members. This includes: The PR Council, PRSA, and the Commission on Public Relations Education.

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

The rate of pay varies by organization and usually is influenced by what courses you have completed, what year you are in college, and what experience you have. Most paid internships for past semesters has ranged from \$10-\$20 per hour.

Should I take an unpaid internship?

The decision is entirely yours. Pay is not a factor in approving internships. At the same time, keep in mind that if you are enrolled for 1-3 credits you are paying tuition to do the internship and that completing a for-credit internship is not required.