



SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION

Illinois State University

Office of Field Experiences

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Dear Prospective Intern:

I look forward to working with you and appreciate your interest in finding an internship now. While I would like to meet with you face-to-face, it is important that we get you started on your own journey to find an opportunity you might love.

My office hours are 2-4 p.m. Mondays & Wednesdays ... 9-10:30 a.m. Tuesdays ... and by appointment other times.

You also should have received our internship log (a separate attachment), where you can browse to see the kind of internship opportunities where other School of Communication students have succeeded in the past.

Please review this—and look at your own networking and connections—and find some places where you might like to do an internship. That will get you started.

(NOTE: Your internship should be “new to you,” so you cannot select a position you have held previously—unless the duties and responsibilities at that location are new to you. Also, your supervisor cannot be a relative, someone you live with, or another undergraduate student. You CAN intern where relatives work, but you cannot report to the relation or roommate.)

If you are reading this, you are READY for an internship (commitment is a big factor)

So, let's get started ...

1. Choose 5-10 places you might enjoy, learn from, and contribute to professionally.
2. Write the name, location, contact person and phone number (NOT email, phone) on its own index card.
3. Then, go on-line and research each organization to find:
 - a. The organization's mission (what it does, why it exists)
 - b. Its current goals (an organization USUALLY promotes its interests on its site)
4. Review the information on each card, then put the cards in order from “most-desirable” to “less desirable.”

Now you are ready to start your calls (remember, don't bother to email these contacts until, or unless, they ask you to ... use the phone).

1. Call the number, ask to speak to the contact (if the contact is not available or no longer with the organization, ask to speak to the internship coordinator).
2. If you end up on voice mail, leave a message, but then make a note to call back the next day—be persistent.
3. If you reach the contact, start out by saying (in your strongest, most confident voice): “Hello, my name is _____ and I am a student in the School of Communication at Illinois State University and I want to be your intern.”
4. Frequently, the response from the contact is “Why?” Here is where your preparation comes in on those little note cards.
 - a. Talk about what the organization does.
 - b. Talk about its current goals, plans and programs.
 - c. Talk about how YOU would like the opportunity to come in, work hard and learn by contributing to the success of what that organization is doing.
 - d. The continuing conversation is less predictable ... remember to listen before you respond, and think before you ask.

- e. If you are still highly interested, it is good protocol to say “I would love to meet with you in person. When would be a convenient time to get together?”
5. Be prepared, though ... some of these conversations COULD lead up to an offer RIGHT OVER THE PHONE. So, have a response ready.
 - a. If YOU KNOW this is what you want, then say “wow, I didn’t expect an offer over the phone, but I would love to be your intern and can commit right now if we can work out the dates.
 - b. If you ARE NOT 100 percent sure, then say “I am flattered ... I did not expect an offer over the phone. However, I am talking with other organizations and can’t make my decision this minute ... can I call you back in a week with a firm answer?”
 - i. If this happens, you can still work with other possibilities (for a week—or whatever time you negotiate), but MAKE SURE you make EVERY promised phone call BACK –and we’re NOT talking voice mail or text messages.
 - ii. If this happens, give EVERY similar organization the same consideration ... and stick to your schedule.
 - iii. If the organization wants a firm answer then ... well, you have to decide. It’s okay to ask for an hour or two ... but STICK TO THE TIME SCHEDULE
6. Also, you should prepare 20-30 seconds of a message should you get sent to voicemail ... “Hello, this is _____, a student in the School of Communication at Illinois State University, and I am leaving you this message because I want to be your intern. Please call me back at _____. Again, I am _____ and you can reach me at _____ to talk about internships. Thank you!”

Once you find something ...

1. Confirm the starting time and regular responsibilities for your internship.
2. Get a copy of the Internship Form (available on the counter in the SoC Advisement Center, or from the Field Experiences office, Fell 456 ... or from the Internship Program Director (Tom Lamonica ... talamon@ilstu.edu).
3. Complete the form, sign both sides, and return it to the Field Experiences office.
4. Look at your academic plan and consult **Addendum A** (below) to see how internships can help you graduate.
5. Obtain/await your Permit to Enroll from the Field Experiences director.
6. Register for your internship section (NOTE: An internship for credit is a class without a classroom ... you do some assignments, get evaluated, get a grade and academic credits, and get a bill for tuition and fees.)
7. Receive your syllabus of learning experiences (when the semester begins) and enjoy your internship experience.

Get back in touch with me if you have questions or concerns. Enjoy the experience of searching for your next professional opportunity. Please read the addendum below for important information on how internships can assist your path to a degree.

Best wishes,

--Tom

PS: Please note: Unlike many on-line and proprietary institutions, Illinois State University does not give “retroactive” credit for past professional practice experiences. YOU MUST **SIGN UP** FOR CREDIT DURING THE TERM YOU ARE DOING YOUR INTERNSHIP.

ADDENDUM A: How Internships Fulfill Graduation Requirements

While strongly recommended, internships are NOT required by any of the four primary major programs in the SoC—Communication Studies, Journalism, Mass Media, Public Relations. However, your internship efforts can be used to SUBSTITUTE for electives in your major—in addition to being difference-makers in launching your career, by building your professional experience, networking and

*portfolio. Check out your major below to see how your internship can bring you closer to graduation. In ALL CASES, if you have questions or concerns about how internships can fulfill graduation requirements **see your academic advisor.***

All SoC Majors

Six hours of internship credit can count toward any major (except Journalism students following the 2014-16 catalog). However, the university allows students to complete 16 total credit hours of internship/teaching assistantship/independent studies/directed projects to meet their minimum 120 hours to graduate.

- 1st internship for 3.0 credit hours counts as a 200 level elective
- 2nd internship for 3.0 credit hours counts as a 300 level elective
- Subsequent internships, minimum 1.0 credit hours, to meet student needs.