8. INTERNSHIPS

Four reasons underlie the department's conviction that an internship is invaluable in preparing students for their career after leaving Whitworth.

- **Preparing for the job market:** Finding an internship and spending a concentrated time in a work environment is the best way to gain experience in the field you may enter after you graduate. This practical experience cannot be obtained in the classroom. An internship also helps you build professional contacts for a future job search. *It is extremely difficult if not impossible to get a full-time job in any communications field without having had internship experience in that specific area.*

- **Confirming career goals:** An internship provides a valuable check to determine if you really do want to pursue a particular career area, and gives a first-hand look at the working environment for the given profession.

- **Making connections from the classroom:** Internships help you apply what you have learned in classes to the job situation. If students have a semester or more left after completing the internship, they also may wish to select courses to address certain questions or concerns that arise during the internship.

- **Learning what it means to be on the job:** An internship helps students learn the norms and expectations of the professional workplace. Many students have never worked in an office or other formal work environment, an experience for which the classroom simply cannot prepare them.

**Finding the right internship for you**

The Communication Studies three-credit internship is designed to be a capstone experience. That means you already will have considered career options and that you anticipate pursuing a job after graduation with responsibilities very similar to those from your internship. You **strongly** are encouraged to do multiple internships during your college career, and most students do two or three. However, except in special cases, students complete only one internship **for credit** in our department.

Freshman and sophomores in particular should consider job shadowing professionals in several fields. Identify organizations that are doing the kind of work that you want to do. Contact someone within that organization and ask to follow him or her while he or she works. Once you have observed several professionals or more, you will have a better idea of what you do or do not want to pursue. You also may want to try an exploratory internship without credit to gain experience and widen your exposure to different fields. The department’s internship adviser Dr. Whitehouse is available to help you consider options.

After you have explored your opportunities and narrowed your options, then you are ready to seek an internship for credit. The Career Center can help you with researching what opportunities are available, preparing a résumé, and setting up interviews. Know that you are responsible for identifying and securing your internship, but do not commit yourself until you have cleared the site with Dr. Whitehouse.
Getting paid for doing your internship is a wonderful bonus. Unfortunately, paid internships aren't as plentiful as we'd like and in some highly competitive areas (like TV) many more students desire internships than there are opportunities available.

Internships can occur during the fall or spring semesters, as well as Jan Term or the summer. Students earn one academic credit for 40 hours of internship work. Most students complete the required three academic credits in a single term, meaning they work at least 120 hours over the course of a semester. However, students may spread work over several semesters, for instance taking two credits with 80 hours of work at one site in the fall and 40 hours at another site in Jan Term.

Communications internships must meet all the following criteria:

• The internship must be in a field you plan to pursue after graduation.
• The internship must be work that a college graduate would do, with less than 40 percent of the total work time being observation or clerical. (Note that time in training sessions cannot be included in the required 120 hours.)
• The internship must be either at a site you have not worked at previously or a significant change in job responsibilities.

Know that Whitworth requires you both to pay for your internship and earn academic credit during the term when the work occurs. That means if you complete an internship in the summer, then you must receive credit and pay for that internship in the summer. Retroactive credit is not granted.

If you are a Communication Studies major then you can register up for either JMC490 or SP490. As you would expect, the JMC internships are media related, while the SP internships relate to some aspect of speech communication.

Our students have completed numerous internships in news media, public relations, ministry, and government, just to name a few. Previous students have held positions such as:

**Advocacy**
Camp Fire USA
Children's Miracle Network
Crisis Pregnancy Center
Broadcasting
BBC Radio, London
CNN, Atlanta, Georgia
KAEP-FM
KHQ-TV
KING-TV Seattle, Washington
KPBX-FM
KRDO-TV Denver, Colorado
KXLY-TV Sports Broadcasting

Education
Martin Luther King Outreach Center
Spokane School District #81 and Mead School District #354

Organizational Communication
Alaska Airlines, Seattle, Washington
Microsoft, Redmond, Washington
Mukogawa - Fort Wright Institute Cultural Center, Spokane, Washington
Office of U.S. Senator Patty Murray, Washington, D.C.
Office of U.S. Congressman George Nethercutt, Spokane, Washington
Sheraton Hotels, Seattle, Washington
Spokane Mental Health
Washington State Legislature, Olympia, Washington
Wishing Star Foundation

Promotions
Gross Hatch Advertising
Holy Family Hospital - promoter for Women’s Health Conference in Spokane
Hoopfest 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament
Imagio - J. Walker Thompson Public Relations Firm, Seattle
Spokane Indians Baseball Club
Spokane Symphony

Reporting
Dow Jones, New York City, New York
Empire Health Services
Inlander newspaper
MacNeil/Lehrer News Hour, New York City, New York
Sports Illustrated, New York City, New York
Spokane County Air Pollution and Control Authority