Guidelines for Graduate-Level Internship

Definition:
A graduate internship is an experiential learning opportunity where students apply theoretical knowledge gained from their coursework in Communication Studies. An internship is not focused on gathering data as one would for a graduate thesis.

An internship may be a new position or a current position with new responsibilities/duties/tasks. The new responsibilities/duties/tasks form the internship.

A student may have multiple internships, as long as each internship is linked to the student’s educational goals in communication studies.

Format:
1. In the first section:
   a. Identify the organization(s) where the internship will occur.
   b. Explain why the organization(s) interests you.
   c. Explain your (new) responsibilities in the internship.
   d. Explain what interests you regarding the responsibilities.
2. In the second section:
   a. Identify specific communication element(s) in the internship responsibilities which interest you.
   b. Explain how the internship will contribute new knowledge and advance your future career goals.
3. In the third section:
   a. List 3-4 goals (as related to communication studies) for undertaking the internship. Make the goals measurable, active, and specific (e.g., “At the end of the internship, I will know …”; “at the end of the internship, I will be able to …”)
   b. List the anticipated number of hours involved in the internship.

Process:
1. The student prepares a draft internship proposal for their graduate committee. The graduate committee for the MS consists of the student’s advisor and one additional graduate faculty member in Communication Studies. An outside-department reader is not required for the MS degree.
2. The committee reviews, make recommendations for rewrites on the internship proposal.
3. The committee approves the internship.
4. The student identifies, in consultation with their advisor, how many credits to take in a semester.
5. The advisor enters permission for the student to register.
6. The student registers for the credits and undertakes the internship.
7. The student makes a formal presentation to the department. On-campus students traditionally present during a Department Colloquium; online/distant students traditionally prepare a digital presentation using any one of a variety of recording options (e.g., Soundslides, iSpringFree, Jing, Camtasia, Slideshare).

A student will keep a journal while on the internship, noting communication issues and related theories for addressing the issues and student learning/educational goals. The student does not submit the journal to the committee, but the journal is invaluable when time comes to write the internship report.

The department follows up after the internship is completed with a survey to your employer/supervisor.

Internship Report:
The student writes the internship report using the internship proposal as the guiding organizational framework.