

Internship Guide: M.S. in Information Management Students

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An in to the Internship Process

The Purpose of an Internship Opportunity

In recognition that education extends beyond the formal classroom, the faculty of the School of Information Studies (iSchool) encourage students to participate in special learning situations outside existing courses. The internship program is designed to provide the student with the opportunity to work in a day-to-day professional environment under the supervision of an experienced professional and with the guidance of an iSchool faculty member. In addition, the programs are designed to promote positive interaction between the faculty and students of iSchool and experienced information management professionals in institutions, businesses, libraries, and other agencies.

The Difference between Co-ops and Internships

At the School of Information Studies, internships are work experiences offered by employers.

An internship is usually 10-15 weeks and can be paid or non-paid. Internship end dates can be extended but must be done so in accordance with a specific student's program of study and its requirements. This can vary from student to student (especially international students and visa regulations and policies), so be sure to meet with Kathy Benjamin if your employer is requesting an extension of your internship. There are some employers who seek co-ops, but these positions are offered less frequently. If you have an employer seeking a long duration internship or co-op (anything beyond a semester in length) please consult with Kathy Benjamin before accepting this offer. There are times when this arrangement will not be possible.

An internship can be applicable to all iSchool graduate programs. A maximum of six (6) credits may be earned through internships (or co-ops) by a graduate IM student. International students cannot work for an off campus employer unless the work is for academic credit, so be very careful in planning your internship. If you have any questions about internships for your program of study, please feel free to contact Kathy Benjamin. This includes positions that are listed as volunteer and/or non-paid opportunities.

Students are encouraged to seek meaningful, relevant internships in which they can apply the theories taught in the classroom to real world applications. While Site Supervisors do share their knowledge and expertise with interns, the students give a tremendous amount back to the organization in terms of projects completed, professional services rendered, enthusiasm, creativity, and new approaches to information problems.

Where the Internship fits into an Information Studies' Program

Students usually select and register for internship opportunities once they have completed approximately one-half of their academic program at the School of Information Studies. This is to ensure that they have the skills to be successful in the work experience they select. However, students are encouraged to plan early, so that their work experience will best parallel their professional goals. It is never too early to contact the Academic Advisor or Faculty Supervisor to develop a goal and discuss possibilities.

The School of Information Studies at Syracuse University does not discriminate against employers, students, or applicants on the basis of race, gender, handicap, age, veteran status, national origin, or political affiliation.

Benefits for Those Involved in the Internship Program

Clearly, an internship opportunity is a winning situation for everyone involved! While you, the student, gain real work experience, your employer gains the use of your skills for a designated period of time. Let's take a closer look at exactly what benefits will accrue for the various parties.

Benefits for the Student:

- practical experience using information skills and applying theoretical knowledge
- pursue a special interest in a subject specialty
- interact and communicate with professionals
- experience an information or library setting consistent with professional goals
- become aware of employment opportunities
- test theoretical concerns against reality
- understand the role of the sponsoring site within the community
- develop a professional self-awareness
- develop professional contacts for future advice and job seeking

Benefits for the Site:

- develop and implement special projects
- have additional professional-level assistance available
- gain fresh insights from students currently studying leading-edge approaches
- interact with students and programs at the School of Information Studies (iSchool)

Benefits for the iSchool:

- provide stimulating, practical learning environments for students
- meet the individual needs of students
- promote a good working relationship with public and private sector organizations

Frequently Asked Questions

Must I do an internship?

According to the Graduate Handbooks, IM students should earn 2-6 credits through internship as part of their exit requirement. For IM students with little, or no, appropriate experience as information professionals, students must register for at least 2 credits and no more than 6 credits of internship or cooperative education credits. No graduate student may earn more than 6 credits through internship opportunities.

Students with more than one year of full-time professional IT experience in the information technology field may waive the internship requirement (experience may be audited). This waiver will not reduce the total credits required for the IM degree but will allow the student to take other course electives to fulfill the credit requirements for the degree.

Students with a minimum of three years of full-time work experience in the IT field, may petition to reduce the credit requirement of the program by three credits, substituted by work experience, which will be audited. Students should consult Advising in Student Services regarding the procedures for this petition.

What will an internship opportunity cost?

You must pay regular Syracuse University credit hour costs for your internship opportunity. If you are earning 6 credit hours, you must pay the bursar's office for 6 credits.

How and where do I register for an internship opportunity?

You may register through the University MySlice system for your internship opportunity, just as you would for any other class. Register for IST 971 according to your work experience:

IST 971 M800 is for new work experiences.

IST 971 M801 is for students extending or continuing their internship into a new semester

IST 971 M802 is for students registering for credit hours for iConsult (permission from iConsult director is required).

If you have questions about registration, contact Kathy Benjamin (kabenjam@syr.edu).

Once I am registered for the internship credit, then what?

All internship courses require academic assignments as well as working for the employer. These academic assignments are found in the Bb for the IST 971 course. Some of the assignments in the Bb course for IST 971 are mandatory forms to fill out during the internship. The Proposal Form (see example on page 19) should be uploaded to the IST 971 Bb course at least one week before you begin working, so that the faculty supervisor is aware of your intended participation of the course. **You will not get credit for the internship work experience if you do not turn in this paperwork!** No student is allowed to seek permission for a work experience that happened in the past. There are other mandatory forms to fill out at various points of your internship timeline. See page 11 of this guidebook for more details on the forms and assignments. All interns are expected to complete all assignments given in the course syllabus.

What if my work assignment won't end before the end of the semester?

You will have a missing grade on your next grade report. Once the work assignment is completed and all academic assignments have been turned in, a grade will be submitted for you. Make arrangements ahead of time with your Faculty Supervisor.

When you are searching for a site, consider these organizations that have hosted interns in past semesters:

Bank of America	Curriculum Associates
Deloitte Consulting	KPMG, LLP
AXA Equitable	Microsoft Corporation
Ernst & Young (EY)	Quicken Loans
Aruba Networks	Kodak Alaris
Johnson & Johnson	Southwest Airlines
Sprint (T-Mobile)	Wayfair, LLC
Boehringer & Ingelheim	Franklin Templeton Investments

Just the Facts: Finding an Internship

In selecting a site, use the following resources:

Academic Advisor

Your advisor has probably worked with other students in similar situations, and may have suggestions for where you can pursue an internship. He or she may also help you define your skills to include on your resume.

Your program listserv

This listserv is utilized by the Career Services and Experiential Learning team to post some currently available jobs, internships and co-ops, including local to international positions. The main system in which students should search for jobs, internships, and co-ops is **Handshake** (www.syr.joinhandshake.com)

Special Needs

International Students must consult the Center for International Services (CIS) for information regarding internships and employment. The iSchool's Career Services & Experiential Learning team works closely with this office to process CPT (curricular practical training) for all international students choosing to work for an off-campus employer. The iSchool provides the CPT recommendation letter for the work experience, but it is up to the student to complete the CPT application process before starting work for an off-campus employer.

Career Counselors

For assistance with resume preparation, interviewing, and utilization of Handshake, the online recruiting tool, you may consult with the iSchool's Director of Career Services, Christopher Perrello (csperrrel@syr.edu) or the Assistant Director of Career Services, Jeffrey Fouts (jlfouts@syr.edu). You must set up an appointment through Handshake to meet with either Christopher or Jeff.

Independently Finding Your Own Internship

Not all internship opportunities are secured through leads provided by your advisors or iSchool Career Services. You can also develop an opportunity on your own. Target a particular institution and contact the director for an initial meeting and/or conversation about a potential internship. Keep in mind the criteria that a site must meet:

- There must be a Site Supervisor who is more knowledgeable about the work than the student and have professional work experience.
- The Site Supervisor must be willing to guide, supervise, and evaluate the student
- There must be specific, finite tasks for the student to complete
- These tasks must be considered educationally useful by the Faculty Supervisor

Tips for finding an internship or co-op site

Use all of your connections

The internship opportunity does not have to come from the School of Information Studies. Feel free to enlist the help of family, friends, professors, administrators, or anyone else you may know who is in a position to help you. Be creative in the utilization of resources from the library such as national guides for internships to reach outside of the Syracuse community. There is a vast assortment of online resources available that provide lists of internships worldwide, as well as individual company websites listing internship opportunities. Just keep in mind that the site and your role there must meet the criteria specified by the School of Information Studies in order for you to earn credit.

Have an effective resume

Remember, this may be your initial contact with an employer. Make sure it reflects exactly what you want conveyed to an employer. There are a variety of resume workshops scheduled during the academic semesters, usually before career fair time. These workshops could be one-on-one resume review sessions with employers that come to the iSchool or could be in a group setting hosted by the iSchool career counselors (Christopher Perrello and Jeffrey Fouts).

Be Persistent

Create a cover letter, attach your resume and follow up with a phone call.

Who's Who in the Internship Process

Here are the important players in your internship search and successful experience.

Internship Student

This is you. The weight of this experience is on you, but the benefits are yours to reap. Here are some things you **MUST** do:

- be proactive in your search for an internship opportunity
- ask questions and be persistent in securing an internship
- turn in the necessary paperwork to the Bb course at the appropriate times during your internship
- keep in touch with your Faculty Supervisor
- international students must secure CPT approval through the International Services Office for off-campus employment. This includes volunteer and/or non-paid positions.

Your Academic Advisor

This faculty or staff member is assigned to you when you begin taking classes at the iSchool. This person is available for advising you throughout your program at the iSchool and can assist with the internship process. As your advisor, this person may be familiar with your future plans and with the classes you have taken, and may be able to offer these services to you:

- identifying skills to put on your resume
- suggesting potential sites for internships and/or employment

Your Faculty Supervisor

This faculty member will act as the professor for the course, assisting you throughout the internship opportunity, contacting your Site Supervisor to track your performance, and assigning your grade. **The faculty supervisor cannot give you credit for a work experience you completed in the past.** He or she cannot guarantee you a position. Your own initiative is essential for finding and completing a successful internship opportunity.

Site Supervisor

This is the person with whom you will work at the site. He or she is not determined until you have selected a site and been offered a position; this might not be the same person who initially accepted you. In order to qualify for this position, this person must have skills superior to yours, and must be willing to guide you and evaluate your work.

The site supervisor's main responsibilities are to:

- Advise you in your work
- Orient you to the site
- Provide you with the necessary space and supplies to work
- **Assist** with completion of the Learning Agreement, if necessary
- Participate in a midpoint evaluation with the faculty supervisor
- Evaluate your performance at the completion of your internship work
- Communicate with the faculty supervisor in reference to your work

Career Counselors

Christopher Perrello (casperrel@syr.edu) and Jeffrey Fouts (jlfouts@syr.edu) can help with preparing students for the career search by working with you on resumes, cover letters, mock interviews or career advice. Both counselors see students by appointment only. You can sign up for an appointment in Handshake. Appointments can be made by going into Handshake and clicking on the **REQUEST AN APPOINTMENT** link on your homepage.

Career Services Program Manager

Kathy Benjamin (kabenjam@syr.edu) can help you with the internship process. She can also assist with internship registration issues and general help for internship searches. Kathy is the go-to person for CPT and OPT letters for international students.

Center for International Services (CIS)

International students must see an advisor in this office to ensure that they can work in the United States. There is additional mandatory paperwork required by the CIS that you must complete before starting an internship. The Center is located on Walnut Place (across Waverly Ave. from Bird Library) and the telephone number is 315-443-2457.

Just the Facts: Once You've Accepted an Internship Position

Step 1: Register for the class through the University's MySlice system. Students should register for internship experiences during the regular registration period for a semester. The correct class number for IM students is IST 971. Please also note that the IST 971 course sections have a variable amount of credit hours for the registration. You must enter an amount of credit hours (choice of 1-6 credits) you want to earn for the semester for the work experience. If no amount is entered, the Myslice system will default to one credit hour, so be sure to input the correct number of credit hours you are seeking for the internship. If you have any problems, contact Kathy Benjamin (kabenjam@syr.edu), Career Services Program Manager. You may register before you have found a site if you anticipate that you will find one during a particular semester.

Step 2: Complete and upload the Proposal Form to the Blackboard course for IST 971

[Download the Graduate Proposal Form](#) (PDF)

This form must be turned in at least one week before you begin work. This form is to be uploaded to the IST 971 Blackboard course and provides the Internship Faculty Supervisor with a brief, overall outline of what you think you will be doing at the site. While it must have some detail, you do not need to know every aspect of your internship at this point. If you need assistance, discuss the form with your Site or Faculty Supervisor.

Once you've started working...

Step 3: **Check the *Bb for the IST 971 course*** for additional assignments (initial reflection paper, class video calls, etc.) during the internship period.

Step 4: Complete the Learning Agreement

[Download the Graduate Learning Agreement](#) (PDF)

This form must be completed and uploaded to the Blackboard course for IST 971 once you have worked 30 hours at the site. By this point, you will have a much better idea of exactly what you are doing on the job, and can detail your assignment more accurately. If there are changes between what you are expected to do and what you find you are actually doing, report them here. You may limit your response to the form, or attach additional pages if necessary. This form is an important part of your grade, so it should be taken seriously and filled out with care.

Step 5: Midway Point. Expect your Faculty Supervisor to arrange contact with your Site Supervisor for a discussion of your performance.

Step 6: Finish the work assignment. At this point, you must complete the Student Evaluation Form.

[Download the Graduate Student Evaluation](#) (PDF)

The content of this form will not affect your grade, but will give you the opportunity to rate the value of the experience in relation to your overall program at the iSchool and to your career goals. This form must be uploaded to the IST 971 Bb course. At this point, you will also need to complete the Final Reflection Paper as outlined in the course syllabus.

Step 7: Ensure that your Site Supervisor has completed the Site Supervisor Evaluation form. Your supervisor will receive a copy of this form early in your work experience, but it is a good idea for you to make sure that he or she is in possession of the correct form, and that it is returned in a timely manner. The Site Supervisor should complete the form prior to your last day of internship, in order that the evaluation be shared with you. This evaluation is designed to provide you valuable feedback on your performance. In addition to the form provided by the School of Information Studies, the Site Supervisor may choose to evaluate your performance using an in-house evaluation form. This is also an excellent time to request that your Site Supervisor provide you with a reference letter for your future use. The site supervisor should submit the completed evaluation form to Kathy Benjamin (kabenjam@syr.edu).

[Download the Information Management Site Supervisor Evaluation](#) (PDF)

Step 8: Complete any additional assignments for the Faculty Supervisor. Check the Bb for the IST 971 course to be sure all of your assignments have been completed and uploaded.

What's What: Forms and Their Destinations

The underlined forms and assignments are required to earn credit. All forms and assignments must be uploaded to the Bb course for IST 971, with the exception of the Site Supervisor Evaluation form. This form should be emailed to Kathy Benjamin (kabenjam@syrr.edu) by the site supervisor.

- “ **The Resume:** (page 16) This is your primary method of introducing yourself to potential employers. It is usually one page in length, highlighting education, skills, and work experience. Resources: <https://ischool.syr.edu/careers/career-resources/resume-cover-letter-interview-preparation/>
- “ **Preliminary Assignment:** Student will review the Course Overview Document and the Preliminary Assignments readings. These readings cover guidelines for a successful internship, leadership, ethics, and professional communication. To earn the full amount of points for this assignment, the student will submit a two paragraph summary of your reaction to (a) starting the course and (b) the preliminary reading document.
- “ **Proposal Form:** (example on page 19) This form must be filled out by you, the student, and uploaded to the Bb for the IST 971 course. It is due at least one week before beginning a work assignment. This form provides information about the assignment such as where and with whom you will be working, and gives a brief outline of the tasks that have been discussed with the Site Supervisor.
- “ **Learning Agreement:** (example on page 21) This form is to be filled out by you and uploaded to the Bb for IST 971 by you, in cooperation with your Site Supervisor. **It is due after completion of 30 hours of work on the site.** This form will establish precise learning objectives which will be met throughout the assignment, details the tasks to be completed, and finalizes your responsibility to the employer.
- “ **Initial Reflections:** This is your reflection on what you have seen and learned so far. It should be submitted after you have completed two weeks of work with the employer. A list of items to address in this two or three page reflection can be found in the Course ASSIGNMENT section in the Bb for IST 971.
- “ **Student Evaluation:** (evaluation example on page 23) This evaluation is due upon completion of the work assignment and provides you with an opportunity to rate the work experience and the internship process. Your comments on this form will not affect your grade, but it must be uploaded to the Bb for IST 971 before the grade is assigned.
- “ **Site Supervisor Evaluation:** (example on page 25) The Site Supervisor Evaluation is due upon completion of the work assignment. Your site supervisor should have received a copy of the evaluation early in your internship. The evaluation form provides the Site Supervisor with the opportunity to express satisfaction or dissatisfaction with your performance, and helps in determination of a grade. The site supervisor must send the completed evaluation to Kathy Benjamin (kabenjam@syrr.edu).
- “ **Final Reflection:** Each student will complete and submit the Final Reflection form. This is your final reflection on what you learned during the internship. It should be completed and submitted in the assignments area within a week of completing the internship and no later than May 15th. A list of items to address in this two or three page reflection can be found in the Course ASSIGNMENT section in the Bb for IST 971.

Making the Grade

The person responsible for assigning your grade is your Faculty Supervisor. He or she has listed all assignments in the Bb for IST 971. All assignments must be completed before a grade will be assigned. If you have a problem that may prevent you from turning the appropriate assignments in on time, contact your faculty supervisor before the end of your work assignment.

Getting Credit

Basically, the hours spent at the work site are those included toward your earning credit.

This does not include hours spent traveling to and from the internship site. However, in some cases, the employer may allow you to work remotely for a portion or all of the internship hours. A rule of thumb:

1 Credit = 50 work hours.

For three (3) credits, you must work 150 hours.

For six (6) credits, you must work 300 hours.

Be sure to register for the correct *number of credits*. If you need to change your registration, please talk to Kathy Benjamin (kabenjam@syrr.edu or 315-443-4496).

Tuition for Internship Credit Hours

Credits earned through internship work experiences are just like those earned in class. You will need to pay the regular University credit hour charge for each credit. Financial aid (if applicable) will apply to these credits as to any others.

A Checklist for You to Use

1. Finding an internship
 - Meet with your Academic Advisor
 - Check Handshake and program listserv for internship opportunities
 - Familiarize yourself with the internship process outlined in this guide
2. After you have accepted an offer
 - Contact your Faculty Supervisor
 - Register for IST 971
 - Meet with your Site Supervisor
 - Fill out the Proposal form and upload it to the Bb for IST 971
3. During the internship
 - Fill out the Learning Agreement, upload it to the Bb for IST 971
 - Complete other assignments due during the early part of your internship for your Faculty Supervisor
 - Work the necessary number of hours
 - Complete any remaining assignment(s) for your Faculty Supervisor
4. Upon completion of the assignment
 - Fill out the Student Evaluation Form (upload it to the Bb for IST 971)
 - Submit the Final Reflection paper to the Bb course for IST 971
 - Remind your Site Supervisor to complete an evaluation form
 - Complete all remaining assignments (if not already done) for your Faculty Supervisor