

CRIMINAL JUSTICE INTERNSHIP INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES

Eligibility Criteria:

To be eligible for an internship in criminal justice, students must meet the following criteria:

UNT DALLAS REQUIREMENTS:

- At least 2.7 UNT Dallas GPA
- At least 12 hours of 3000- or 4000 level courses
- Position must be related to major
- Not seeking credit for past work, or for any position you have held for more than 6 months
- Working in a new position or a position in which you have taken on significantly new responsibilities
- Can be paid or unpaid
- Cannot work directly for a family member

DEPARTMENTAL REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the UNT Dallas requirements:

- Satisfactory (C or better) grade in CJUS 2100
- At least 12 hours of 3000- or 4000 level CJUS courses
- Personal meeting with the internship coordinator (Gretchen Hackard, J.D.)
- Secure an internship placement no later than 1 week before the semester in which the student is to receive credit
- Completed “up front” paperwork

Securing an Internship Placement

Students must meet with Dr. Hackard as early as possible (preferably no later than the week before finals in the semester before the intended internship) in order to participate during the following semester. Internship placements must be secured at least one week prior to the beginning of the semester in which the student intends to intern. When students meet with Dr. Hackard to be cleared to participate in the internship program, they can discuss internship placement contacts with which the UNT Department of Criminal Justice or UNT Dallas has worked with in the past. Students are not limited to this list. However, if a placement is found off the list, the contact will need to be willing to work with UNT Dallas and the internship program requirements (i.e. be willing to guarantee students 120 or 240 contact hours, be willing to provide a supervisor/mentor that will sign time sheets and fill out the end of the semester evaluation, etc.).

Finding an internship placement is quite similar to finding employment. You will attempt to reach the contact person by phone or e-mail to inquire whether they have an internship position available and, if so, how to go about applying for the position. To begin, only initiate applications with 2-3 placements and it is always best to stay in contact with anyone you begin the application process with, even if just to say, “thanks for considering me but I have accepted an internship placement elsewhere.” It is important not to “burn bridges” with individuals in the field as oftentimes these are the same individuals you will contact when looking for employment.

Although perhaps similar, each placement will vary as to how their application process will proceed and as to the types of opportunities interns will have while interning with them. Placements will make the final decision as to who will be chosen for the internship. Some placements have more established programs than others. It is okay to ask the contact up front what their internship placement is like (i.e. what will you get to observe, take part in, etc. while interning there) before officially applying. The answers provided may help you decide whether a placement is a good fit for you. Please contact Dr. Hackard with any questions or concerns you may have about applying for and securing an internship placement.

Submitting “Up Front” Paperwork

Prior to beginning your internship and no later than the first class day of the semester, students must complete and submit the enrollment form and the liability release form. These forms can be downloaded from Dr. Hackard’s webpage on the UNT Dallas website under the link “Other Documents.” Students will also submit the following:

- A personal resume describing your academic and work experience and relevant skills;
- A personal statement describing your career goals and how the internship experience serves these goals (1/2-1 page, typed, double-spaced); and
- A plan for completing your internship reflecting the number of internship contact hours you plan to complete each week (describe in detail your internship schedule).

These documents can be submitted via e-mail attachment to Dr. Hackard at Gretchen.hackard@untdallas.edu. **All “up front” paperwork (resume, personal statement, completion plan, enrollment form, and liability release form) is due before you will be given a code to register for the internship.**

Weekly Journals

Students should keep notes of their activities each day of their internship. Every week, students will then compile their notes into a journal summary of their week’s activities. The journal entry should include a description of the duties, activities, and events of the week, as well as a summary of what you have learned over the course of the week. The journal entries should be completed within Blackboard **no later than 11:59 p.m. every Monday** during the internship. The weekly journal should describe the student’s internship experience during the previous week (based on a Sunday through Monday calendar). **If you did not have any internship hours the previous week, you should still provide a journal entry the following Monday stating that no internship hours were performed the previous week. Late journals will be penalized (see below).**

Time Sheets

A 3-credit hour internship requires 120 contact hours at student’s internship placement and a 6-credit hour internship requires 240 contact hours at student’s internship placement. **All internship contact hours must be completed no later than the Friday before finals, with final time sheets and journals due by 11:59 p.m. on Monday during finals week.** Time sheets reflecting student’s contact hours at their internship should be completed daily, logging the number of hours worked, and submitted weekly. Each time sheet needs to be signed by student’s immediate supervisor or the internship coordinator at your agency. Once students begin their

internship contact hours, weekly time sheets must be submitted via scanned Blackboard message attachment **no later than 11:59 p.m. every Monday** and should reflect the hours worked the previous week. **If you did not complete any internship hours the previous week, you still need to submit a time sheet the following Monday reflecting zero hours (no supervisor signature required for this). Late time sheets will be penalized (see below).**

Summary Term Paper

Students will complete a term paper **due by 11:59 pm on Monday of finals week** about their experiences in the internship program. The text of the term paper (excluding title page or references) should be **7 – 10 typed, double-spaced pages, in a 10 or 12 pt. font.**

In the first section of the paper, students should summarize the activities and major events that they experienced while performing their internship. The second section should be a critique of the internship itself. Was it a good, marginal, or poor experience? How well did the agency where you interned meet your expectations? In this section, students should assess both their internship experience and the agency where they interned. In the final section, students should compare/contrast their educational knowledge with their field experience. How did the internship match what you learned in school and how did it vary from your academic understanding of the work and field? How well did your educational experience prepare you for field work? What was the most surprising about your field work experience? Did the internship experience confirm your career plans or change them and why? Summary term papers should include a cover/title page. References are not necessary unless you use specific sources for the third section (the first two sections are purely reflective and evaluative of your personal experiences).

Formal Evaluation

Field supervisors or the agency's internship coordinator will be asked to evaluate the intern's performance near the end of the semester. We will provide a link to an formal online evaluation form to each student's supervisor for this purpose and will encourage each supervisor to meet with the students regarding your performance during your internship. **Students must provide an email address for the internship supervisor at their placement for purposes of this evaluation.**

Internship Meetings

We will have 3 group meetings over the course of the semester for students enrolled in the internship program. At each meeting, internship-related issues will be addressed and there will be a chance for students to share their experiences with one another. Meetings are usually scheduled near the beginning, middle, and end of the semester. **Attendance is required at these meetings.** If you receive an excused absence from Dr. Hackard to miss any of these meetings, you must schedule a make-up appointment with her **within a week of** the scheduled meeting.

Important Considerations Regarding the Internship Program

- While you are enrolled in the Criminal Justice internship and working at your agency or organization, you are a representative of the University of North Texas at Dallas and the Department of Criminal Justice. You should remember this at all times and act accordingly. Agencies have provided the opportunity for you and other students to have

an internship experience. Tardiness, poor performance, and the like that may be displayed during your internship not only reflects poorly on you, our department, and UNT Dallas, but could also jeopardize our ability to place future interns at your agency. **Violations of expected behavior will be handled on a case-by-case basis; sanctions could include termination from the internship program and a failing grade in the course.**

- The vast majority of internship placements will conduct a criminal background investigation/security clearance check prior to accepting you as an intern. It is always best to be forthcoming when asked about previous indiscretions (both arrests and convictions). If you are not forthcoming and these issues are found out later (after the agency has put the time, effort, and funds into conducting the background check), they will not be happy and the dishonesty not only reflects poorly on you but also on the Department of Criminal Justice and UNT Dallas.
- It is important to stay in contact with your internship placement. If you are sick or for some other reason will not be able to attend your scheduled internship hours, contact your field supervisor immediately to make them aware.
- It is important for students to keep track of their own progress during the semester so that they know how many hours remain to be completed. Students will be updated by Dr. Hackard at least once during the semester but will not be updated weekly as Dr. Hackard expects that students are keeping track of their own hours. If you would like to confirm your hour count at any time during the semester, contact Dr. Hackard by Blackboard messaging.
- If you complete your minimum contact hour requirement early (i.e., more than a couple of weeks before finals) you will need to meet with your field supervisor to determine whether you will continue coming in or whether you will have completed your internship at that point. Once you complete your minimum contact hour requirement, assuming you finish early, you are no longer required to submit weekly time sheets and journals to Dr. Hackard. At that time you can focus on your summary term paper.
- We are here to support you and advocate for you during your internship. If you feel that your agency or supervisor is placing you in a dangerous situation or a situation that makes you feel uncomfortable, notify Dr. Hackard immediately.
- All of your written work is expected to be professional, typed, and turned in on time. **Late work will be assessed a penalty of 5% per day.** Repeated late work will result in termination from the internship program and a failing grade in the course.
- It is always best to maintain a record of all of your submitted materials including weekly time sheets and journals.
- Course announcements and other important information will be distributed via Blackboard announcements and/or Blackboard messaging over the course of your internship. You are expected to check Blackboard at least three to four times a week.

We wish you a wonderful internship experience!