

FAQ

What is an internship?

An internship can be several different things depending on who you are talking to. In industry, an internship is often a job offered to interested college students. It may involve a series of one to two week rotations that give the student experience at a given business. Some industry internships are very structured and educational while others are simply summer jobs where students work along side permanent staff and pick up what they can. Industry internships may qualify for internship credits at OSU but they don't have to. You could accept an offer to do an internship at a large landscape company and choose to treat it just like any other summer job or submit an intent form with us to use that experience for your official departmental internship.

The internship program in the Horticulture Department started in the mid 1970's and was initially intended to make sure that students who got a degree in Horticulture had a functional level of practical experience. Over time, the internship has evolved so that it is now an important part of most students' education in the Horticulture department. The majority of our students carefully plan their work experiences and use the internship as a special way to finish school. In other words, they see it as more than just another summer job. In many cases it represents the culmination of several preparatory jobs. Often the internship becomes a stepping stone to a full-time position after graduation.

When am I eligible to do my internship?

You can conduct your internship any time after you complete your first year at OSU. In the best case scenario you would work at a different place each summer while you are going to school. After you finish courses for your area of interest, (ie. nursery production, turf maintenance & golf course maintenance, tissue culture, etc.), you would then make arrangements for your internship. In essence, the internship would be the capstone experience for you just prior to finishing school. Each year several students follow this approach and generally produce insightful reports.

Not everybody can follow the plan mentioned above, but it is important to remember that the internship should not be your first work experience in your field of interest. You need to plan as carefully as possible so you have some experience and insight in your field before you do the internship.

Remember, you can work for a company as an intern without registering for Hort 410. In other words, just because they call it an internship doesn't mean you have to register for an internship at OSU.

How can I make sure my internship is special?

In a word, you can't! However, you can do your research and find out as much as possible about your employer before you commit to a job. Do this by talking to other students who have worked there, or talk to faculty and the advisor to see what we know. Then decide just what it is you want to learn about at this job and talk to your employer to see whether they will give you the opportunity to be involved with the things you have

listed. Some people are flexible and will work with you on these goals, others don't want to be bothered. Once you know, you can make a positive decision.

Decide just what it is you want to accomplish with your internship. Once you have done that you can make better decisions about which job is best for you. Work with someone who will help you progress in your field.

How long does my paper have to be?

There is no magic length for an "A" paper. If you study the [report grading rubric](#) and include all of the information we ask for and demonstrate thoroughness and adequate analysis, your paper will probably be around 20 pages of text. Pictures and company documents can be added as appendices, but don't count as part of the text.

What makes an "A" paper?

An "A" paper is thorough and detailed. It contains adequate descriptive information but is not simply a travelogue of experiences. It shows a great deal of analysis on your part and demonstrates that you took a serious approach to understanding not only what was done but why and how well. It contains suggestions for making improvements or changes. It shows synthesis of what you learned in the classroom with what you learned through field experiences. It demonstrates that you have the knowledge base and experience necessary to analyze and dissect a business and interpret your experiences intelligently. For specifics, please refer to the [report grading rubric](#).

If I have several years of work experience before I come back to school, can I get internship credit for that experience?

In many cases the answer is yes. You are eligible for 6 credits of internship if your previous experience qualifies. See the Academic Advisor to find out if your work experience will qualify for internship credits. If your previous work experience qualifies, you have the option of writing a full report and registering for credit or writing a full report and satisfying the requirement without registering for credits. This last option is used occasionally by students who have lots of hours and don't want to pay for more.

What will happen to my financial aid while I'm doing my internship?

If you are doing a 6 month internship for 12 credits your financial aid may not be affected. If you register for 6 credits of internship and your total credits are below 12, you can anticipate problems. Discuss your plans with the financial aid office well in advance of the internship. In the past we have been able to compromise in most cases so that you aren't penalized unfairly. These cases can only be handled one by one. The important thing for you to do is consider potential problems before you leave for your internship, not after.

Can I work for professors in their research programs?

Yes, but **not for internship credit**. Students interested in becoming involved in research should pursue the Thesis option in lieu of doing an internship. Contact the Academic Advisor at 541-737-5448 for information on doing an undergraduate thesis.