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## I. INTRODUCTION

The College of New Jersey (“TCNJ” or the “College”) is committed to providing students with an educational experience that includes both classroom and non-classroom based experiences. A part of that experience is the ability to partake in academic internships which provides a form of experimental education that integrates knowledge and theory in the classroom with practical application and skill development in a professional setting.<sup>1</sup> This document outlines the undergraduate internship policy at the College.

## II. DEFINITIONS

N/A

## III. POLICY

### A. The Internship: Statement of Purpose

The primary purpose of the college-level internship is the development of occupational or professional competence in the actual occupational setting

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<sup>1</sup> Collaboration of Internship Listerv members (Pittsburgh Technology Council & Messiah College), NACE, NSEE.

after some theory education has been completed. Other purposes (income, career exploration, learning-by-doing, on-the-job training, etc.) cannot be the primary purpose, though they may occur as a second result of the internship experience.

## **B. Credits, GPA, and Requirements for the Internship**

1. Students who wish to participate in an internship program must have a minimum GPA of 2.0 and have completed a minimum of three course units at TCNJ. Departments may require a higher minimum GPA if it is deemed appropriate.
2. Appropriate prerequisite courses must be identified and be completed successfully prior to the internship experience. Additional requirements may be established by the department.
3. Actual professional situations where the student experiences the requirements of employment must be used.
4. The internship is an applied experience. In the internship, the student must apply what she/he has learned in the classroom. This academic foundation must be identified in a general way in the course offering proposal. Specific knowledge, methods, skills, activities, etc. must be listed for each intern in the proposal. (See Section C.)
5. A minimum of 45 on-the-job hours should be required per quarter course unit of credit. Individual departments have discretion as to whether to require additional on-the-job hours and whether academic tasks can count as part of this hours requirement. However, no more than 25% of internship hours can be spent completing academic tasks.
6. A substantial written assignment (or portfolio) deemed appropriate by the faculty supervisor should be required. The scope and content of the assignment/portfolio will vary depending on the course level, number of units, and nature of the internship experience. A simple log describing activities may be included but in and of itself is not sufficient to satisfy this requirement. Exceptions may be approved by the department chair in fields where there is an extensive professional component already

required (e.g., in the Journalism/Professional Writing major where the intern's duties may be public relations, researching, reporting that constitute a substantial writing, research, and creative experience).

7. The intern should be paid a salary whenever possible.
8. Internships may be offered on either a graded or pass-fail basis.
9. Second internships within the same program should be limited to those situations in which the student will be able to apply essentially different knowledge, methods, skills, etc. (still program related) than those applied in the prior internship. This limitation does not apply to a second internship in a different program (e.g., a second major, minor).
10. Maximum internship course units to be counted toward a degree by any one student are three. Maximum course units for a single internship are two.

### **C. The Internship Contract**

An internship contract consists of two parts: the proposal and the enrollment form to be developed by the Office of Records and Registration. The student will prepare a written proposal meeting the following requirements:

1. The proposal should state the number of credit hours from any previous internship, as well as the semester taken and the firm, institution, or agency where the internship was completed.
2. The proposal must explain exactly how credits are to be earned, what on-the-job activities will be required of the intern, and how these activities relate to program learning goals and objectives.
3. The proposal must describe the methods of evaluating the internship to be used by the faculty supervisor, which may include evaluation(s) by the on-site supervisor.

4. The proposal must specify learning goals and objectives. The learning goals may be general to all internships in a department (at a particular course level) and/or be specific to the particular internship experience.
5. The proposal must identify the firm, institution, or agency where the internship will be completed.
6. The proposal must identify a professional person at the firm, institution, or agency who will supervise and/or recruit the student during/for the internship.
7. Whenever feasible, the proposal should require on-site visits by a supervising faculty member.
8. The proposal must be approved by the department chair or his or her designee before a student may proceed with the internship.
9. The approved proposal must be delivered to the Office of Records and Registration by the end of the first week of the semester in which the internship is to be completed.
10. Copies of the approved proposal should be provided to the student, the faculty supervisor, the department, and the firm, institution, or agency supervisor.
11. If the circumstances of the internship change, it is the responsibility of the faculty supervisor to send an addendum to the proposal to the Office of Records and Registration.

#### **D. Faculty and Administration**

1. The supervising faculty member should be compensated at the independent study rate. Travel expenses for all on-site visits should be paid.
2. A periodic review of the quality of internships should be conducted under the direction of the dean of each school with departments offering internships.

3. At the beginning of the internship experience, a representative of the department offering the internship should establish contact with the on-site supervisor, to ensure that the goals/expectations of the internship site and TCNJ are aligned. This department representative should follow up with the on-site supervisor before the mid-point of the internship experience, to check on its progress.
4. At the end of each semester, the student and faculty sponsor should provide feedback on the quality of the internship experience. Departments should develop systematic procedures for gathering and reporting this feedback to the appropriate contact in the department (e.g., program coordinator, chair).