



## COMM399 STUDENT HANDBOOK

### INTRODUCTION

---

The Hope College Department of Communication seeks to honor its excellent majors with opportunities to gain valuable experience *and* earn academic credit in work situations. Recognizing that internships are extremely important for students pursuing careers in communication, the Department of Communication has developed a diverse internship program which allows students to gain practical experience in a wide range of communication-related fields. These internships are designed to enrich the curriculum and to assist students in exploring various career options. Internships for credit are subject to the policy guidelines set forth in this handbook. Students must first meet the eligibility requirements to qualify for admission to the program. The Department is able to maintain quality relationships with employers for future interns by pre-screening candidates. Careful internship selection and supervision is a critical component of the Hope College Department of Communication Internship Program. Students entering under the 2009-2010 or later College Catalog must complete an internship (COMM 399) or an approved 300-level study abroad course in order to fulfill requirements for a communication major.

*Please read this handbook carefully. As a student intern you are responsible for knowing the information contained herein*



## COMM399 STUDENT HANDBOOK

### CONTENTS

rationale and benefits .....	3
requirements & application procedures .....	4
eligibility requirements .....	4
application procedures – local internships .....	4
application procedures – summer event & conference coordinator internship .....	5
application procedures – off-campus internships & study abroad programs .....	6
domestic programs sponsored by hope college .....	6
international internships sponsored by hope college .....	6
international study abroad courses sponsored by hope college .....	7
Student-Arranged Internships .....	7
credit, placement, & compensation policies .....	8
obtaining internship credit .....	8
internships and current/previous employment .....	8
compensation policy .....	8
site visits .....	8
policy on incompletes .....	9
internship contingency plan .....	9
requirements .....	9
evaluation .....	10
ethical & professional conduct policy .....	11
learning experience expectations .....	11
professional demeanor expectations .....	11
commitment expectations .....	11
hope college policy statement on sexual harassment .....	11
hope college policy statement on discrimination .....	11
virtues of public discourse .....	12
supervisor/director/student communication expectations .....	12
internship termination .....	12



## COMM399 STUDENT HANDBOOK

### RATIONALE AND BENEFITS

---

There are many reasons to pursue an internship:

1. Provides a professional learning experience. Internships allow students opportunities to develop practical skills in realistic contexts where professional criticism is both immediate and constructive. Students also have opportunities to observe and understand connections between coursework and the world of work. Finally, internships aid in the identification of knowledge and skills essential to doing well in a particular profession.
2. Preparation for job searches. Students prepare resumes, write cover letters, and interview as if they were applying for a job. This gives students valuable experience in preparation for seeking employment.
3. Provides an incentive for academic achievement. Since only students with *strong academic records* are accepted into the program, the Department of Communication wants students to view the internship program as an incentive to perform well academically in all of their coursework.
4. Provides a confidence builder and enhances the maturation process. Successful completion of an internship often provides a student with the professional confidence necessary to begin the job search. Also, since internships require a great deal of personal responsibility, the experience provides an important step in an individual's personal and professional maturation process.
5. Visibility for Hope College Communication students. Students are given the opportunity to demonstrate their professionalism. This enhances the reputation of the Department and the College and increases the credibility of a student's degree.  
Opportunity to "sample" various career options in a relatively "low-risk" context. While only 4 COMM399 credits count toward the major, eligible students are encouraged to do multiple internships for the purpose of sampling different career areas. This enables students to determine their best fit in a professional environment.
6. Compilation of a portfolio. The purpose of a portfolio is to compile work samples in a professional manner to provide evidence of the quality and range of professional communication abilities for presentation to potential employers.
7. Provides potential employment opportunities and/or contacts. Occasionally internships lead directly into employment opportunities. Although this is more the exception than the rule, internships certainly do provide students entry into a professional network. Contacts made through internships are valuable sources of information for securing future employment.



## COMM399 STUDENT HANDBOOK

### REQUIREMENTS & APPLICATION PROCEDURES

#### ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The Department of Communication has established the following eligibility requirements. These requirements reflect departmental policy and are non-negotiable.

- The student must attend an internship workshop prior to completing the application procedure and be present for the entire workshop.
- The student must be a *declared* communication major.
- The student must be a junior or senior.
- The student must have completed at least four of the required communication core courses **OR** the student must have completed three required communication core courses **AND** two elective communication courses.
- The student must have at least a 2.7 grade point average in the major. If a student's major GPA is not at or above 2.7 when reaching junior status, the student should meet with his or her academic advisor as soon as possible to determine a strategy for improving the major GPA.
- The student must receive a positive recommendation from a communication faculty or communication academic advisor. (The Internship Director cannot complete a recommendation form.)
- No student can enroll in COMM 399 on his/her own. Registration is authorized by the Internship Director and processed in the Communication Department only **after** an internship offer has been accepted by the student, the completed Internship Agreement has been received by the Internship Director, *and* approved by the Internship Director.

#### APPLICATION PROCEDURES – LOCAL INTERNSHIPS

1. Attend an **Internship Workshop** at least one semester prior to the time you wish to obtain your first internship.
2. After attending the workshop, complete the online **Application for Admission**. Students also must submit a complete grade history and documentation of major GPA (e.g., detailed degree evaluation).
3. Ask your advisor or other communication faculty to complete the electronic **Faculty Recommendation** form. See the department website for a link to the online form.
4. After completing the application and arranging for the faculty recommendation form, contact the Internship Director for a **meeting**.
  - It is extremely helpful if students become familiar with known internship opportunities **prior** to the first meeting with the Internship Director by:
    - Viewing previous students' reviews of internship experiences. (See department website.)
    - Exploring the Hope College Career Development Center Internship postings in the online job board, JobStop.



## COMM399 STUDENT HANDBOOK

- Visiting with a career counselor or the Career Development Center internship director to assist you in your internship search. Hope College Career Development Center is located in the Anderson-Werkman Financial Services Building, 100 East 8<sup>th</sup> Street.
  - Completing drafts of possible cover letters and an up-to-date resume. Career Development Center offers Optimal Resume, an online resource for drafting resumes.
  - Students should come to the meeting with cover letters and resume drafts completed. (Career Development Center is available to help you develop your resume and cover letters.) During the meeting, the Internship Director will advise students regarding the academic internship process and discuss approval for the academic internship program. *All application materials should be completed prior to this meeting.*
5. Following this meeting, **if approved for the program**, complete a Permission to Register for an Academic Internship form ([www.hope.edu/academic/intern/Contacts.htm](http://www.hope.edu/academic/intern/Contacts.htm)).
  6. Secure an internship. Either:
    - by applying for an internship posted with the Career Development Center ([jobstop.hope.edu](http://jobstop.hope.edu)), or
    - by submitting a secured internship to the Career Development Center for approval. For internship approval form, visit: [hope.edu/academic/intern/Info.htm](http://hope.edu/academic/intern/Info.htm).
  7. Once an internship is secured AND approved by Career Development Center, request an Internship Agreement form on the department website. (See Student Resources Links)
    - The Internship Director will email an electronic agreement for you and your site supervisor to complete. (12 hours per week = 4 credit hours. Summer internships need 168 hours total.)
  8. Complete the Academic Internship Registration form ([www.hope.edu/academic/intern/Contacts.htm](http://www.hope.edu/academic/intern/Contacts.htm)).
  9. Upon completion of the meeting with the Internship Director, students **must review and revise as necessary** their personal voicemail greetings and email addresses to ensure professionalism.
  10. It is recommended that students use the **Internship Search Process** form once a student begins the interview process for potential internships. **Formal thank you letters** must be sent following each interview.
  11. It is the student's responsibility to make internship contacts, schedule interviews, and secure his or her own internship.
  12. Once a student has accepted an internship invitation from a viable employer for an internship position sufficiently related to the field of communication, the student should request an **Internship Agreement** to be completed and returned to the Internship Director in order to be registered for COMM 399. The final approval of the internship will be made by the Internship Director. Students must be registered for COMM 399 prior to the start of the academic work for the semester in which they conduct their internship.

### APPLICATION PROCEDURES – SUMMER EVENT & CONFERENCE COORDINATOR INTERNSHIP

Hope College Events & Conferences Office (ECO) offers up to 4 student internships on campus each summer. The internship involves making arrangements for visitors involved in summer camps and conferences hosted by the College. This is a good introduction to the hospitality industry and the



## COMM399 STUDENT HANDBOOK

application of principles of organizational communication. Applications for the internship are due to Conference Services the end of January.

### APPLICATION PROCEDURES – OFF-CAMPUS INTERNSHIPS & STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS

#### domestic programs sponsored by hope college

Students enrolled in off-campus semester programs in Philadelphia, New York, Chicago, or Washington **do not need to complete the Internship Application form.**

To apply for **semester-long off-campus internship programs**, such as the Philadelphia Center, Chicago Semester, New York Arts Program or Washington, DC Honors Semester, review the following websites.

- [www.philactr.edu](http://www.philactr.edu)
- <http://www.chicagosemester.org/>
- <http://www.newyorkartsprogram.org>
- <http://www.hope.edu/academic/polisci/offcampus/washdc.html>

Up to 4 hours of internship credit may be applied to fulfill the communication major 300-level requirements only if the internship constitutes a “field placement” through one of the established semester-long programs listed above. Students may use the remainder of the credits gained through the semester program as general education or general elective credits. Internships must be related to the field of communication to receive COMM 399 credit. Check with the Internship Director when you receive your placement to verify that your internship is eligible for communication credit.

An **Internship Referral Essay** must be submitted to the Internship Director upon completion of an off-campus program in order to receive COMM 399 credit. Students are encouraged to produce electronic portfolios, following the Communication Department guidelines, to document their internship experience.

#### international internships sponsored by hope college

Visit the International Education Department website for more information on **international internship programs** (e.g., London, Australia, New Zealand):

<http://www.hope.edu/academic/international/offcamp/intprograms.htm>. (In addition to meeting the department required documentation, students must complete all of the college’s required forms for international programs.) Students may earn 4 credits for Communication 399 for an approved international off-campus program. Your internship must be related to the field of communication to receive COMM 399 credit. International internship programs must be approved by the Internship Director prior to study abroad. It is also necessary to seek approval from the Internship Director when you receive your placement to verify that your internship is eligible for communication credit.



## COMM399 STUDENT HANDBOOK

An **Internship Referral Essay** must be submitted to the Internship Director upon completion of an international internship in order to receive COMM 399 credit. Students are encouraged to produce electronic portfolios, following the Communication Department guidelines, to document their internship experience.

### international study abroad courses sponsored by hope college

Courses in International Study Abroad Programs may be substituted for COMM 399 credit. (In addition to meeting the department required documentation, students must complete all of the college's required forms for international study.) The student must take a communication-related class while abroad. Prior to enrolling, the student is encouraged to get the class pre-approved by the Internship Director to ensure the course can be substituted for the full required four credits of COMM 399. After the study abroad program is completed, the student needs to formally substitute the study abroad for COMM 399 by submission of an "Application for Major/Minor Waiver/Substitution" form to the registrar's office. This form can be found in the registrar's office and must be signed by the student's advisor and the department chairperson. Students will not get credit for COMM 399 until this form is completed.

### Student-Arranged Internships

Students may become aware of an internship opportunity that is not part of the Internship Program or Career Development Center's current list. If a student is interested in arranging his/her own internship, this must be done well in advance of the proposed start of the internship to give the Internship Director AND Career Development Center sufficient time to assess the quality of the internship. Students may only arrange internships with agencies willing to take other Hope College interns at a future time. Students may *not* arrange internships at family-owned agencies and/or have family members serve as site supervisors. (In addition to meeting the department required documentation, students must complete all of the college's required forms if the internship is international.)

If the internship placement is outside the West Michigan area, students must provide the Internship Director sufficient material on the placement's established internship program well in advance of the proposed start of the internship. The approval of long-distance internships is at the discretion of the Internship Director as special arrangements must be made to compensate for the inability to conduct on-site visits.

All requirements and deadlines listed for local internships must be followed for student-arranged internships. All requirements listed in the COMM 399 syllabus must also be fulfilled.





## COMM399 STUDENT HANDBOOK

### CREDIT, PLACEMENT, & COMPENSATION POLICIES

#### OBTAINING INTERNSHIP CREDIT

Internships will be 1-4 credit hours. For each credit hour earned, students must spend 3 hours/week working in the internship during the academic year (12 hours = 4 credit hours), and a minimum of 168 total hours for summer internships. Certain internships may require a greater amount of time commitment. Students are encouraged to spend as much time at their internships as possible in order to maximize their learning experiences, but internship demands must be balanced with demonstrated commitment and excellence in their other coursework. All students must meet the *minimum* college time requirements in order to receive credit for their internship *in addition to* satisfying the time requirements established by their internship site supervisor.

Furthermore, the Department of Communication considers a total of 16 credit hours of academic coursework, internship credit and/or independent study credit to represent a substantial semester load. Therefore, students who are registered for 3-4 hours of internship credit will enroll in no more than 12-13 additional hours (normally three courses). Requests from students taking internship credit to exceed this 16 credit hour limit must be approved by the Internship Director.

Any subsequent internship credits (after the first four hours of credit) are taken on a pass/fail basis, and those credits will be applied as general elective credit toward graduation. Communication internships may not be used to complete an allied field.

#### INTERNSHIPS AND CURRENT/PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT

Internships are intended to represent *new* learning experiences. They are also designed to involve the student in the complete job search process. Therefore, internship credit is not given for current or past employment activities. Furthermore, internship credit is not granted retroactively for previous internships that the student may have completed. There may be situations, however, where a student may wish to intern at an agency where s/he is employed. This *may* be approved provided the focus of the student's responsibilities is on communication-related tasks.

#### COMPENSATION POLICY

Although most internships are not paid, students may occasionally be offered a stipend or financial compensation for their work. Students are strongly encouraged to choose their internships based on the perceived value of the learning experiences rather than on the amount of money they might receive. Both paid and unpaid internships are eligible placements for COMM 399.

#### SITE VISITS

The Internship Director may schedule a site visit at an internship placement. This visit involves a tour of the work environment and a meeting with the intern and site supervisor. This meeting provides an opportunity for the intern to demonstrate his or her professional role and duties for the Internship Director.





## COMM399 STUDENT HANDBOOK

### POLICY ON INCOMPLETES

Because internships do not always coincide exactly with the academic semester, filing a grade of incomplete is sometimes necessary. For the students whose internship has not ended by the time grades are due, a request for an incomplete must be made to the Internship Director. If an incomplete is granted, students must submit all paperwork (evaluations and writing assignments) and schedule the final conference with the Internship Director within two weeks of the last day at the internship site. Failure to do so without seeking an extension will result in a grade of 'F.' College policy stipulates that the incomplete grade will automatically convert to an 'F' during the semester following the semester in which the incomplete was assigned.

### INTERNSHIP CONTINGENCY PLAN

Students are strongly encouraged to have a back-up plan in the event an organization cancels an expected internship or the internship placement is not approved by the Internship Director. This back-up plan may include other internship contacts, and it may also be advisable to register for four classes with the expectation of dropping one once your internship is approved.

### REQUIREMENTS

---

Because students do receive academic credit for internships, there are assignments to be completed and timelines to be observed. Assignments and due dates are clearly articulated in the course syllabus for COMM 399. The timetable of an internship generally corresponds with the semester timetable for the College. This may vary in the case of summer internships or in situations where site supervisors require a longer time commitment.

Once a student has accepted an internship, s/he should request from the Internship Director an Internship Agreement to complete with the site supervisor. This form *must* be returned to the Internship Director to be enrolled in the course. The Internship Agreement is designed to provide a structure for the internship. It represents a contract between the student and his/her site supervisor. The student and site supervisor must establish specific objectives to be accomplished during the internship and adhere to them as closely as possible. The Internship Agreement must also provide a timetable of the days per week and hours per day the student will spend working as an intern. Criteria for evaluating the intern's performance are also specified in the Internship Agreement. **The Internship Agreement must be received by the Internship Director before the Director will register you for COMM 399. Registration should be completed no later than the end of the first week of a semester.**



## COMM399 STUDENT HANDBOOK

### EVALUATION

Sixty percent of the final evaluation in COMM 399 is determined by the Internship Director and **forty percent** is determined by the student's internship site supervisor who will assign a grade on the final evaluation at the completion of the internship. The Internship Director uses the following point system:

Student Midterm Evaluation	5 Points
Site Supervisor Midterm Evaluation	5 Points
Site Visit Interview (at discretion of internship director)	10 Points
Anonymous Internship Referral	5 Points
Discussions	20 Points
Writing Assignments	10 Points
Electronic Portfolio	30 points
Updated Resume	10 points
Student Final Evaluation	5 Points

All supervisors are asked to articulate their criteria for evaluating student internship performance on the **Internship Agreement**. These criteria *may* be based on, but are not limited to the following:

- Regular, prompt attendance at the workplace as scheduled.
- Positive attitude toward associates, supervisors, and work as manifested by factors such as:
  - willingness to learn new skills/information
  - willingness to respond flexibly to emergent employer needs
  - willingness to take direction
  - willingness to assume responsibility
  - willingness to take criticism constructively
  - willingness to work cooperatively with others
- Timely, accurate completion of all work assigned, reflecting thoughtful and careful effort and demonstrating concern for content quality.
- A professional appearance, as well as other verbal or nonverbal behaviors in the workplace.

Supervisors will be asked to assign the student a final point total at the completion of the internship based on the following scale: A (94-100); A- (90-93); B+ (87-89); B (84-86); B- (80-83); C+ (77-79); C (74-76); C- (70-73); D+ (67-69); D (64-66); D- (60-63); F (59 and below).

*Students enrolled in the Pass/Fail section of COMM 399 are required to complete ALL assignments.*





## COMM399 STUDENT HANDBOOK

### ETHICAL & PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT POLICY

While internships are tremendously beneficial for students, awareness of potential risks is prudent. The site supervisor and intern share responsibility for maintaining standards of ethical conduct for the internship experience.

### LEARNING EXPERIENCE EXPECTATIONS

The intern is not expected to be perceived as a “go-fer,” a “volunteer,” or an “expert.” The Department of Communication is concerned that all interns are treated with respect and that their educational experiences receive the highest priority. It is important to understand that certain professions require a reasonable amount of clerical work (i.e., photocopying, faxing, stuffing envelopes). However, these tasks should not represent the bulk of the student’s internship experience.

### PROFESSIONAL DEMEANOR EXPECTATIONS

Students should realize that while they are participating in the internship program, they represent themselves as well as Hope College and the Department of Communication. The opportunities available to succeeding students depend on the record of diligence, achievement, and goodwill achieved by current interns. Students should conduct themselves with integrity and professionalism. Appropriate dress, non-offensive language, respectful behavior and communication, punctuality, and responsibility in completing tasks are expected of interns.

### COMMITMENT EXPECTATIONS

Students are encouraged to be particularly selective when choosing an internship placement. However, once a student accepts an internship, he/she should view the internship as a priority commitment. Many times students drop classes when their schedules get too busy. However, dropping an internship can have severe consequences for the Department and the College and subsequent students interested in a particular placement. Students behaving irresponsibly at internships will forfeit their privilege to obtain future internships through the Department of Communication.

### HOPE COLLEGE POLICY STATEMENT ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination. It includes any inappropriate or unwanted conduct of a sexual nature which has a negative effect on the educational process, employment benefits, campus climate, or opportunities of any student or employee. As such, it violates *Title VII of the Civil Rights Act* and the *Michigan Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act*. The College condemns covert and overt acts which interfere with creating a positive learning environment for all persons. See <http://www.hope.edu/admin/documents/sexualh.html> for the entire policy and grievance procedures.

### HOPE COLLEGE POLICY STATEMENT ON DISCRIMINATION

Hope College is committed to the concept of equal rights, equal opportunities, and equal protection under the law. Hope College admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin, sex, creed, or handicap to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at Hope College. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic



## COMM399 STUDENT HANDBOOK

origin, sex, creed or handicap in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, and athletic and other school-administered programs. With regard to employment, the college complies with all legal requirements prohibiting discrimination in employment.

### VIRTUES OF PUBLIC DISCOURSE

Hope College and the Department of Communication endorse the virtues of public discourse for ethical and professional communication. Communication should respect the dignity of all persons and no persons should be subjected to emotional or verbal abuse. The virtues of public discourse include humility, hospitality, patience, courage and honesty. See website for a full description of these expectations: <http://www.hope.edu/academic/communication/virtuesbrochurenew.pdf>

### SUPERVISOR/DIRECTOR/STUDENT COMMUNICATION EXPECTATIONS

Students are encouraged and expected to maintain regular contact with their internship site supervisor and with the Internship Director. The Director is available to discuss concerns related to the internship. If suspected harassment, discrimination, unethical communication, or any other problems arise, students should report to the Director of Internships immediately.

### INTERNSHIP TERMINATION

The Internship Director reserves the right to terminate the internship of any student where suspected exploitation and/or harassment is taking place. Students must report any type of exploitative or harassing behavior to the Internship Director immediately. If an internship is terminated by the Internship Director due to exploitation or harassment, the Internship Director will work with the student to secure another internship to complete the requirements for completion of COMM 399.

In the event an intern is not performing satisfactorily or an internship must be terminated for any reason (e.g. transfer of the intern's supervisor), the Site Supervisor must notify the Internship Director immediately and provide a letter of explanation for the Communication Department. All terminations by supervisors require written explanations for educational purposes and fairness.

If the Site Supervisor fires an intern, the student is responsible for meeting with the Internship Director to negotiate how and if it is possible to complete the requirements for COMM 399. If the Internship Director permits, the student is responsible for securing another internship to complete the course.