



COMM 489 Internship in Communication

Completing an internship in Communication provides hands-on experience, strengthens professional skills, and builds valuable industry connections, giving you a competitive edge in your career. The Communication program offers students the opportunity to complete an internship (COMM 489) for 3 credit hours, which counts as an upper-level elective in the major. The following sections outline the process:

Step 1: Secure an Internship. Search [Handshake](#) WKU's online job and internship management system, talk with professors, watch the internship bulletin board in the main COMM hallway, work your network, search LinkedIn or other online sources to secure an internship. Choose opportunities that meet the criteria listed below.

Step 2: Select a Faculty Supervisor. Ask a Communication professor (Dr. Daugherty, Dr. Ishii, Dr. Jerome, Dr. Kong, Dr. Mize Smith, or Dr. Payne) to supervise your work in the course.

Step 3: Complete the Internship Application. Complete the application form and attach a copy of your unofficial transcript. Email both to your faculty supervisor.

Step 4: Ask Your Employer to Complete a Learning Contract. Your employer will complete a learning contract making sure to outline major duties in line with the criteria listed below. They will complete the form and email it to your faculty supervisor.

Step 5: Register for COMM 489. Once the Internship Application, Unofficial Transcript, and Learning Contract are received and approved by your faculty supervisor, an override will be provided in TopNet lifting the registration restriction. Select the CRN that lists your faculty supervisor as the Instructor.

Step 6: Review the Syllabus and Course Assignment Descriptions. Follow along with the appropriate course schedule and due dates for papers, work hour logs, and supervisor evaluations.

Required Internship Standards

- Work a minimum of 200 hours (100 hours must be in person).
- Assist with and/or perform most tasks in a professional setting, preferably not remotely or in a home office; virtual positions will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
- Engage in work that is both educational and contributes to organizational goals, benefiting both you and your employer.
- Participate in meaningful communication-related activities that support organizational processes and outcomes.
- Hold a temporary position or take on new responsibilities (i.e., this should not be your regular job).
- Report to a site supervisor who is not a close relative (e.g., parent, sibling, aunt/uncle, or grandparent).
- Receive compensation at the employer's discretion (payment is not required).
- Complete all COMM 489 course requirements on time, including submitting periodic reports that analyze, reflect on, and make sense of your work experiences.

Required Employer Commitment

- Provide a professional work environment where the intern can interact with organizational members; for virtual internships, ensure the intern is integrated into working teams, actively involved, and properly supervised.
- Offer meaningful work that contributes to organizational goals, beyond just clerical tasks.
- Supply the necessary workspace, tools, and resources for the intern to complete assigned tasks.
- Provide direct supervision and regular feedback to clarify expectations and support improvement.
- Complete formal evaluations of the intern's performance at both midterm and final stages.
- Maintain business and liability insurance that covers student interns on-site and off-site when working on behalf of the organization.