Virtual Internship Policy

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DOCUMENT CONTENT

VIRTUAL INTERNSHIP POLICY

The internship program at Fredonia promotes students' intellectual, personal and professional growth in work settings related to their academic studies. Degree requirements which include internship and/or applied learning opportunities will increase the need for off-site or less time-restrictive internships, such as virtual opportunities. Students who are not able to complete on-site internships due to hectic schedules, travel limitations or work/personal commitments will benefit from the opportunity to interact with employers while still maintaining class schedules, leadership and community involvement on-campus.

Additionally, virtual internships allow students who cannot afford, or are not physically able, to participate in opportunities that may have not otherwise been an option. Virtual internships can be ideal approach for nontraditional students furthering their education while maintaining full-time work, or family /personal commitments.

If a virtual internship is proposed by a student, or offered by a prospective internship site supervisor, the following components should be considered prior to approval:

1. The organization must be an established, legitimate business or nonprofit, as evidenced by considerations such as a physical location, website, history of offering paid employment, listed telephone number, tax ID number, etc. The college may choose to authorize a virtual internship with an individual, but that individual needs to agree to a thorough background check.
2. Supervision of the intern is the joint responsibility of the Faculty Sponsor and the Site Supervisor. It is especially important that the Site Supervisor agree to supervise the student's work, and to assist in the evaluation of that work. However, it remains the primary responsibility of the Faculty Sponsor to evaluate the written work based on the Learning Contract criteria and to assign the grade. As such, it is recommended that the Site Supervisor host scheduled phone, skype or other virtual meetings on a consistent basis; at least weekly. When feasible, the site supervisor may also choose to meet with the student in a public place (e.g., coffee shop, restaurant). This facetoface meeting is a time for project planning, review of progress made, feedback, and mentoring.
3. The organization must agree to offer an internship that meets the criteria of a legitimate internship as outlined by NACE, the National Association of Colleges and Employers:

    a. The experience must be an extension of the classroom: a learning experience that provides for applying the knowledge gained in the classroom. It must not be simply to advance the operations of the employer or be the work that a regular employee would routinely perform.
    b. The skills or knowledge learned must be transferable to other employment settings.
    c. The experience has a defined beginning and end, and a job description with desired qualifications.
    d. There are clearly defined learning objectives related to the student's professional goals.
    e. There is supervision by a professional with expertise and educational and/or professional background in the field of the experience.
    f. There is routine feedback by the experienced supervisor.
    g. There are resources, equipment, and facilities provided by the host employer that support learning objectives/goals.

FAQ's	
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