

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
ARTICULATION OFFICE
ACADEMIC RECORDS AND REGISTRAR**

GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATING INTERNSHIPS FOR USC CREDIT

Students who plan to do an internship while on a study abroad program may be interested primarily in the experience and not care whether they earn units at USC for the internship. However, students who wish to earn USC credits should be aware of the following policies.

Only internships which receive credit on the official overseas program transcript are potentially available for credit. However, even internship courses which are granted credit on the study abroad transcript will not necessarily be granted units by USC. (This is true whether or not the institution is a college in the US, such as Syracuse University.) The USC curriculum committee has established guidelines for internship courses given by USC, which indicate what criteria they must meet in order to be approved as unit-bearing courses, and how many units should be given. These same guidelines are used by the Articulation Office in evaluating internships taken abroad, to determine if they will receive any elective units, and if so, how many. If you wish an internship which has been granted elective units to be used for major or minor credit, it must also be reviewed by the major or minor department to determine if it can be used to fulfill major/minor requirements.

In almost all cases, internships cannot be approved for credit in advance, because it is necessary to review the work produced by the student during the internship. Therefore, you should keep all materials produced during an internship for review upon your return (see “Summary” for details). One exception: at Australian National University, the Public Sector Internship A has been reviewed and will receive credit, but the internship B has not been pre-approved and would need to be reviewed upon return.

USC may grant the same number of units for an internship as the overseas institution, fewer units, or no units at all. If no units are granted, the internship will not be entered on the student’s USC record (though it will appear on the transcript from the overseas institution).

The following information is summarized from the **“Guidelines for Undergraduate and Graduate Internship Courses”** prepared by the University Curriculum Committees:

“An internship is intended to provide practical experience in applying knowledge to relevant work settings and to enable the student to acquire needed skills and knowledge that cannot be gained in the traditional classroom.

Generally, one unit of credit for an internship requires 4-5 hours per week of offsite work experience over a 15-week semester, or 60-75 hours of work at the internship site per unit of credit.

Before beginning an internship, the student is generally asked to complete in writing a pre-approval agreement which includes: number of internship units to be earned; specific work site and the nature of the work that will take place there; how the internship will further the student’s program of study (i.e., what academic value is expected to occur from the internship beyond what a mere job would offer); specific goals that should be achieved from the internship; and how the students will be evaluated. [If there is no such official requirement overseas, students should, on their own, determine all these matters.]

If a student is already employed at a workplace, credit is not generally given for performing work activities that the student would have to do anyway at their workplace.

A faculty member should be responsible for grading. If an on-site supervisor other than the faculty member has input into the grading, the interaction between the faculty member and supervisor in grading must be clear.

Typically after completing an internship, students are encouraged to reflect on their experience and summarize their learning. They may be asked to write an appropriately substantial paper reflecting on the nature and value of the internship, how it furthered their academic program, and how well the goals specified in the pre-approval agreement were met. [If no such paper- or any other tangible product- is required by the overseas site, it will probably be required by USC if credit is to be granted.]

The student should be supervised at the worksite, either by the faculty member (instructor of record) or by a specified on-site supervisor. If the faculty member is not the supervisor, generally a student has formal contact with the faculty member at least once during the semester to assess progress towards the goals identified in the pre-approval agreement.”

Summary

In general, course credit will not be given for office work such as xeroxing and answering phones, even if this is done in a foreign language. The student must do something of academic value and provide evidence of this activity.

Students (or their institutions) should provide as much as possible of the following information upon the student’s return, verified by the instructor or the overseas institution:

1. Course syllabus, goals, or pre-course agreement, and any related information which describes what is expected during the internship. The information in the pre-approval agreement described above should be covered (academic value of work to be done, nature of supervision and work site, contact with faculty member, method of evaluation, etc).
2. Log or other record of number of hours worked. Approximately 60-75 hours of work at the internship site are required per USC unit.
3. Final paper(s) or other products, including such items as a research report prepared for the supervisor, a reflective paper on what was gained from the experience, a report presented to other students in the class, etc.
4. Evaluation and any comments or reports by the instructor or supervisor.

Student Agreement

I, _____, have read the Guidelines for Evaluating Internships for USC Credit and agree to follow the Guidelines if I participate in an internship and request USC credit.

Signature

Date