

**Graduate Student Internship Packet**  
School of Communication and Journalism  
COMM 7980: Non-Thesis Project in Communication

**Graduate Faculty Internship Supervisor**  
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*Updated 8/2025*

**Application Procedure:**

- ✓ Obtain Packet
- Determine that you meet the internship prerequisites.
- Meet with the graduate faculty internship supervisor, with an unofficial transcript stipulating that you understand and have met the prerequisites.
- Locate an internship position based on the approved guidelines, include a job description and/or an outline detailing internship position objectives and responsibilities with an on-site supervisor.
- Submit the completed **Form A** of the internship agreement to the graduate faculty internship supervisor for approval.
- The graduate faculty internship supervisor will register you for COMM7980: Non-thesis Project in Communication

**PURPOSE:** Internships provide students with practical experiences in a career setting. These experiences often allow interns to apply their formal course work with the day-to-day operation of communication-related jobs. While some internship positions may offer the student a stipend, a stipend is not mandatory. The M.A. - nonthesis graduate degree program requires an internship from all students prior to taking their comprehensive exams.

Internships must be communication related. While the term "communication" is defined by the School of Communication and Journalism in a broad and reasonable way, all internships must employ some form of effective oral and/or written communication and help the student achieve career goals. An intern must not be merely running errands or performing clerical duties.

Internship credit cannot be granted for a job the student is already performing. In some cases, internship credit may be granted to a student already employed in a communication related job if the internship requires activities above and beyond those of the regular job.

Students planning an internship must remember that the "employer" invests time and effort supervising and training interns. Services of value are expected in return. The internship is a reciprocal arrangement: students exchange their work in return for on-the-job training, work experience, and an important resume item.

**PREREQUISITES:** Students should apply for an internship after passing qualifying exams and completed 27 graduate hours including COMM7000, 7010, and 7020. Students must be in good academic standing as specified by the Graduate School.

**ROLE OF YOUR GRADUATE PROGRAM COMMITTEE:** Your committee is responsible for guiding your graduate program. The student's graduate committee must first approve any internship. At the discretion of your committee chair, you may need to hold a committee meeting to discuss your internship plans and goals prior to registering for the course. You should keep in mind that a portion of your oral exam will focus on the application of your course work to your internship.

**OBTAINING THE INTERNSHIP:** The responsibility for arranging the internship rests with the student. The School continually works to enlarge the number of internship opportunities in Auburn and other locations in and out of the State of Alabama. Students may also obtain suggestions from School's faculty or the graduate faculty internship supervisor.

**INTERNSHIP SUPERVISORS:** In addition to having the approval of your committee, internships must have someone designated as the supervisor. An internship must have two supervisors, one on the job supervisor and the graduate faculty internship supervisor from the School of Communication and Journalism. The student is responsible for securing the permission and cooperation of both supervisors before registering for an internship.

**REGISTRATION FOR INTERNSHIP:** All School of Communication interns must be registered for COMM7980 during the semester when the work is performed. The internship course is for 3 (three) hours of credit. 3 hours of internship credit should equal 20 hours of work per week. The graduate faculty internship supervisor will register you for COMM7980: Non-thesis Project in Communication

**THE INTERNSHIP AGREEMENT:** The student must complete an internship agreement available from the School's main office or by contacting the graduate faculty internship supervisor. The student specifies the objectives of the internship and how these are to be realized in the agreement. This form should be completed in consultation with both the on-the-job supervisor and the graduate faculty internship supervisor. Both supervisors and the student sign the agreement indicating their collective approval of these objectives. The agreement is then submitted to the School prior to registration for that internship.

**PASSING THE INTERNSHIP:** Successful completion of your capstone project requires the unanimous support of all members of the Advisory Committee and submitting all required semester materials.

**FAILING THE INTERNSHIP:** If you fail any part of the project, a reexamination may be given on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee and approval by the Dean of the Graduate School. The re-examination will be scheduled for the next semester. Further reexaminations will only be granted under exceptional circumstances with unanimous approval of the student's Advisory Committee and approval of Auburn University's Graduate Council. Failure may result in additional graduate school fees and costs and may also delay graduation. The student is responsible for these costs. Students should consult with the graduate school.

**GRADUATE INTERNSHIP ASSESSMENT REPORT:** Graduate students are required to submit a final assessment report detailing the following:

- a. comments on the quality of course work preparatory for the internship
- b. a critical assessment of internship activities both positive and negative.
- c. a substantive analysis of the value of the internship in terms of the students personal and career objectives
- d. advice for students who might wish to intern or work at the same location
- e. summary comments regarding the internship or internship process.

**EVALUATION BY THE ON-THE-JOB SUPERVISOR:** The intern must arrange for an evaluation from the on-site supervisor. **Graduate Student Internship Evaluation** form is attached to this packet. This evaluation must be given to the graduate faculty internship supervisor no later than the last day of the participating semester. It is the intern's responsibility to coordinate this evaluation.

**INTERIM REPORTS:** Graduate students are expected to report to the graduate faculty internship supervisor through Canvas. The report should outline work performed during the month reporting.

**RESEARCH PAPER & ORAL DEFENSE:** The internship (non-thesis) option involves successful completion of the internship, along with (1) a written research-based internship paper proposal, (2) a written research-based internship paper, and (3) oral defense of the written internship paper.

1. **Internship Paper Proposal:** The internship paper proposal will be a 5–7-page paper (excluding title page and references) that outlines a plan for the final internship paper. The goals of the proposal are to (1) clearly articulate the field of interest and identify the industry where the student intends to pursue an internship or has pursued an internship, (2) integrate relevant communication theories to frame the research and practical application of these theories to the internship experience and (3) serve as a roadmap for the student’s internship planning, including research questions related to the organization(s) the student intends to or has already secured an internship for. Appendix F of the Graduate Student Manual includes more detailed expectations for the internship proposal paper.

The internship paper proposal should ideally be due by the end of the student’s third semester but no later than the end of the 3rd week of the student’s final semester. Unlike the thesis option, only the Advisory Chair of the internship committee will evaluate the internship paper proposal.

2. **Internship Paper:** Once the proposal is approved, students build on the proposal and work on the internship paper. The paper constitutes the written portion of the student’s capstone exam. It should be a 20-25-page paper (excluding title page and references) that identifies, explains, and evaluates communication practices in the internship. The paper will include a research question (written during the proposal stage) and should use relevant literature and communication theory to answer the research question regarding the student’s internship experience. Appendix G Graduate Student Manual includes more detailed expectations for the internship paper.
  - a. The Advisory Committee Chair will serve as the primary contact for working on the internship paper.
  - b. Once the written internship paper has been completed, all Advisory Committee members will review the written portion of the paper prior to the internship paper oral defense.
  - c. The student and the Advisory Committee Chair, in coordination with the Advisory Committee members, should plan the deadlines for the written internship paper at the beginning of the student’s final semester. These deadlines should take into consideration the Auburn University Graduate School deadlines to ensure timely completion of the paper prior to graduation as well as Advisory Committee Member schedules to ensure the committee has sufficient time to review the written paper prior to the oral defense. At least one week should be scheduled between the time written paper is completed and the oral defense occurs to allow for adequate time for evaluation. Exceptions to this policy can be made with unanimous approval of advisory committee members and the GPO.
3. **Internship Paper Oral Defense:** The internship paper oral defense will take place following the written portion of the project and will last two hours. The oral defense begins with a brief presentation of the written portion of the project. Following the presentation, students will respond to questions from their Advisory Committee. In instances where the Advisory Committee determines the final oral defense is not satisfactory, the Committee may also require a separate written examination.

*NOTE: It is important that you and your internship supervisors are aware of and willing to schedule your work schedule around the assigned your oral defense schedule. The oral defense may be in person or via Zoom. The student will work to schedule a mutually agreeable time with Committee members.*

**SECTION I: - STUDENT INFORMATION**

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Classification: \_\_\_\_\_ Semester of Internship: \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION II: - INTERSHIP AGENCY/ORGANIZATION INFORMATION**

Agency/Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

On-site Supervisor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

On-site Supervisor's Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate the Internship Structure:              On-site Internship              Remote Internship

**SECTION III: - INTERSHIP OBJECTIVES & EXPERIENCES**

The internship is designed to provide the intern professional and practical experience in the furtherance of his/her college education. The objectives and experience during the internship period should be listed.  
*(please list as a separate sheet attached to this document)*

**SECTION IV: - SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION INFORMATION**

Committee Major Professor: \_\_\_\_\_

Committee Members: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## SECTION V: INTERNSHIP AGREEMENT

The INTERN agrees to submit to his/her graduate faculty supervisor all papers, reports and evaluations outlined within this document on or before the dates requested. The student is also responsible for any other report content deemed necessary by the faculty advisor. The INTERN also agrees to follow the Student Academic Honesty Code as published by Auburn University.

The Agency/Organization (employer) must be in full compliance with federal laws requiring nondiscrimination in respect to employment and personnel policies in hiring and treatment of females and members of minority groups.

The on-site supervisor named on page one of this form will be assigned responsibility for the INTERN. The Agency will provide a safe working environment for the INTERN.

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of COMM7980: Non-thesis Project in Communication hours the INTERN will register for the term of the internship.

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of hours per week at the AGENCY the INTERN will work. (20 hours minimum and 40 hours maximum)

\_\_\_\_\_ Date the INTERN shall report.

\_\_\_\_\_ Final date the INTERN shall report.

The INTERN will provide the on-the-job supervisor with an evaluation form (Form B) approximately one week before it must be submitted to the School.

The on-site supervisor's evaluation shall be forwarded to the graduate faculty internship supervisor no later than the last day of the same semester as the completed internship. *It is the INTERN's responsibility to coordinate this evaluation.* Reports turned in later may result in an incomplete grade. *It is the INTERN's responsibility to follow up on the reports and evaluations.*

This Internship Agreement, signed by the student, the on-the-job supervisor, committee members, and lastly the graduate faculty internship supervisor prior to registration.

Intern's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

On-the-job Supervisor's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Major Professor's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Committee Member's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Committee Member's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Supervisor's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

You need to make 3 copies of this agreement. Give the original to your graduate faculty internship supervisor, give one copy to your major professor, give one copy to your on-site internship supervisor, and keep one copy.

**Graduate Student Internship Evaluation**

**Please mail or email this form to:**

Graduate Faculty Internship Supervisor  
Associate Professor Kevin Smith  
[kevins@auburn.edu](mailto:kevins@auburn.edu), Tichenor Hall 120

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Intern Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Term of Internship: ( ) Spring ( ) Fall ( ) Summer

Agency/Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Intern Supervisor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Intern Supervisor's Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary of Intern's responsibilities:

Summary of the Intern's strengths:

Areas the Intern needs to work on:

Additional comments for the graduate faculty internship supervisor:

### Evaluation Form

Please circle the number which best describes the intern's performance:  
5 = Excellent, 4 = Above Average, 3 = Average, 2 = Below Average, 1 = Poor.  
If the item does not apply to the internship, please circle N/A.

Motivation	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Determination	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Dependability	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Competence	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Attitude	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Punctuality	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Quality of work effort	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Writing Skills	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Oral Communication Skills	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Electronic Production Skills	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Multimedia Skills	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Strategic Thinking Skills	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Maturity of Independent Thinking	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Adaptability to the Organization	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Adaptability to Team	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

What grade do you think the intern has earned during this internship?

Satisfactory

Unsatisfactory

Intern's Supervisor's Signature\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_