INTERNSHIPS in CRIMINAL JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE ADMINISTRATION
MANSFIELD UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

The Importance of Internships

They’re fun!

Meet potential mentors

They can lead to full-time employment

Network for future jobs after graduation

Acquire college credits in a professional setting

Determine if you are meant for a particular field

Acquire valuable professional references for your resume

Gain valuable experience in your chosen criminal justice field

Experts agree that diving into the internship fray is almost a requirement for landing a job today. A study from water-cooler site vault.com notes that 86% of college students have completed at least one internship, 69% more than one. According to Job Outlook 2003, a survey by the National Association of Colleges and Employers, human resource managers agree that their own internship programs are the best sources of full-time employees among recent grads.

Savvy students think long term. Career experts concur: the time to start looking for that internship is now. Not only are there fewer internships than during the boom years of the 1990s but also the tough job market of the past several years has more qualified and experienced candidates competing.

According to a 2006 Experimental Education survey conducted by the National Association of Colleges and Employers, 76 percent of employers say the primary purpose of sponsoring internships is to recruit entry-level talent. On average, 53 percent of interns were converted to full-time hires. In addition, 83 percent of employers reported higher retention rates for those with internship experience, compared to those with no such experience. (This paragraph taken from Ohio Northern University.)
Use the Internet to Refine Your Search

Of the many websites out there that list internships programs, a few stand out like internshipprograms.com, internships.com and monstertrak.com. If you’re interested in a specific city, try Googling your location and the word internship to see what’s around. Then, suggests Peter Vogt, career coach at monstertrak.com, use the Web to find each company’s annual report, and read up on it. It’s also smart to find articles about the companies you’re applying to. (Time Magazine, October 27, 2003, page 81.)

If you are interested in seeing if a particular state correctional institution within the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections offers internships, click on the following link and follow the directions.

http://www.cor.state.pa.us/humanresources/cwp/view.asp?a=457&q=132541&humanresourcesNav=|

Criminal Justice Internships at Mansfield University

Criminal justice majors are strongly encouraged to take an internship during their university career. Students may take an internship in any federal, state or local criminal justice agency. Students may take an internship anywhere, though most seem to acquire an internship close to their home in order to eliminate housing expenses during this time. Seniors who do not take an internship generally regret doing so, according to their essays entitled “Regrets,” in the class CJA 4490: Senior Seminar.

Students are allowed to take internships during the Fall, Spring or Summer semesters, though it is generally recommended that they be taken during the summer. Students may sign up for two separate and distinct internships. For example, students may elect to take a 6 credit internship with the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections one summer session, and then take another 6 credit internship with the Federal Bureau of Prisons during another summer session. Students should only split their 12 credit internship into two 6 credit internships if they are taking two internship experiences at two different agencies.

(Note: It is Dr. Thornsley’s personal opinion that internship experiences less than 12 weeks are generally not desirable since it takes that long for an agency supervisor to become familiar with a student, and for the student to acquire a worthwhile experience.)

At Mansfield, students receive either a “SATISFACTORY” or “UNSATISFACTORY” as a grade. Quality points are not assigned. Internships are taken under the course “CJA 4450: Internship in Criminal Justice Administration”, and can be taken up to a maximum of 12 credits, but no less than 6 credits (6, 9, or 12 credits). Students are expected to work 40 hours per week to receive 1 credit hour. Internships are given a designation of “W” for an upper division “Writing” credit. If students sign up for 9 or 12 credits in CJA 4450,
they only receive 3 credits towards their “W” requirements. However, if they sign up for two sessions of internships, for 6 weeks each, then they receive 6 credits towards their “W” requirement. Credits earned in CJA 4450 count as CJ electives and upper-division courses. Students may receive a salary for work performed.

Students may contact either Dr. Thornsley or Dr. Ryan about internships.

**Required Grade Point Average**

While the Department of Criminal Justice Administration only requires a 2.00 GPA and a 2.00 in the major to take an internship, the Provost’s Office will be looking at cumulative GPA’s more closely in the future, and may refuse internships if it is felt that the student is not adequately academically prepared.

**Selecting an Agency for Your Internship**

Generally students know what agency they want to do their internship at. This decision is usually made based on the following: (1) the agency’s geographic proximity to the student’s home, (2) a prior personal or professional relationship with the selected agency, (3) a student’s interest in a particular agency, and so on. Students should, on their own, contact the agency they are interested in, and inquire if they accept internships. (See the Sample Letter of Introduction and Important Information for Criminal Justice Internship Supervisors.) If the agency is interested in accepting interns, the student should then request to schedule a meeting with the agency to inquire what will be expected of them. After this meeting, if both parties are in agreement in continuing with the internship, the student should acquire the following information from the agency: (1) agency name and address, (2) name of the on-site supervisor, and (3) telephone number, FAX number and e-mail address of the on-site supervisor. The student should request two business cards from the anticipated on-site supervisor, one of which will be provided to the faculty supervisor.

At that time, the student must provide the agency supervisor with the following forms: (1) Student Performance Evaluation and (2) IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE INTERNSHIPS SUPERVISORS. All of these forms are available on-line under the Department’s web page, under “Internships.”

**Student Performance Evaluation**

Students must be evaluated by their agency supervisor at the end of their internship experience with the form Student Performance Evaluation. Students must print off this form and provide it to their supervisor with a self-stamped, self-addressed business envelope. After they review it with their agency supervisor they must submit it to their Mansfield University faculty supervisor.
Recent Changes in the Department of Criminal Justice Internship Procedures

Changes to forms, procedures, revisions to both the course syllabus and Student Performance Evaluation, and requirements for students taking an internship will be effective September 2009. For the most part, these changes are due to requirements made by the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE). The Provost’s Office is also now reviewing learning outcomes and assessments requested in their INTERNSHIP FORM more closely.

Students must first complete the form entitled “INTENT TO APPLY FOR INTERNSHIP.” This form is to be submitted to the CJA faculty member who you wish to supervise you during your internship. This form is simply an internal departmental form that lets the faculty member know that you are considering enrolling in an internship. It gives the faculty member an opportunity to assist you in your search for an acceptable agency early on in the semester before.

Tuition Fees Now Required Beforehand

The Registrar’s Office is now requiring that at least half of the tuition payment be made before the course can be added to schedules for the Summer Session only.

Suggested Deadlines Imposed by the Department & Mansfield University’s Registrar’s Office

March 15th - For the summer and fall semester
November 1st - For the spring semester

Financial Aid Considerations

If a student signs up for 6 credits of CJA 4450 over the summer and receives financial aid, that counts as one semester of full time financial aid. Therefore, students should plan their financial aid needs accordingly for that academic year.

Dismissal from an Agency Internship

Students who are dismissed from their internship agency for reasons such as inappropriate behavior, unacceptable work, tardiness, and so on, will automatically receive an UNSATISFACTORY for their credits taken.

MANSFIELD UNIVERSITY INTERNSHIP REQUIREMENTS

1. **NEW: The PA System of Higher Education’s 2002 “Internship Agreement”**

Effective immediately (November 6, 2009), Mansfield University and the 13 other PASSHE universities will begin to enforce their September 7, 2002 requirement for legal contracts between student interns and the co-operating organization in a legal document
entitled Internship Agreement. This three page legal document is not complicated, but it may cause local agencies to question whether or not they want to have a binding contract with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, despite the fact that the Commonwealth is not asking for much documentation. A copy of this legal document can also be found on this web site. This is what you do. While you are being interviewed by your criminal justice agency, inform them that they will have to sign a formal Internship Agreement. You should bring a copy of this Internship Agreement with you to the interview as a courtesy, or you provide the link to the Internship Agreement in your follow-up “thank you” letter to them. The link will be next to the phrase “PASSHE Internship Agreement.” The Internship Agreement will be referenced in the three page document entitled “Information for Agency Supervisors” which you must also provide to the agency supervising your internship.

The Internship Agreement will have to be completed by the agency and they have to mail two signed copies of it to Mansfield’s Provost’s Office before you can be approved.

2. The Mansfield University INTERNSHIP FORM

Students who wish to sign up for an internship must also complete and print out the MU form entitled “INTERNSHIP FORM”. To obtain this form, go to Mansfield University’s Home site, then go to the A-Z Index, then to “A”, then to Academic Records, then go to Registrar/Forms, then to scroll down on the left hand side of the page to Internships. Students must fill out this form in its entirety. To print out the first page of this form, go to the top of the form and locate a Highlight fields box. If you click this box on, it turns most of the fields blue and you can type in the information yourself. Do not worry about the fields you cannot type in – they are for the faculty advisor to insert. You also have to fill out the top of the second page.

On page #1 of the MU INTERNSHIP FORM, the student is asked to insert the “PREFIX”, “COURSE #”, and “CREDIT HOURS.” The PREFIX is CJA; the COURSE # is 4450; and the CREDIT HOURS is how many hours you are asking to take.

On page #2 of the INTERNSHIP FORM, under the line Total internship hours, the student should simply multiply the number of credits he is enrolling in by 40 hours per week. For example, if a student is enrolling for 12 credits, they should insert “480” (12 x 40 = 480).

On page #2 of the INTERNSHIP FORM the following questions are found: (1) Specify the learning objectives for this internship, (2) Specify the functions the student will complete during the internship, (3) Specify the academic tasks the student will complete related to this internship: and (4) Specify the criteria used to evaluate the student’s internship performance. Responses to these questions will largely determine whether the Petition Review Committee will approve your internship. Responses to these questions may not be handwritten. You may use the typewriter found in the Criminal Justice Seminar Room (Pinecrest #210). Applications with handwritten answers will NOT be approved by the chair of the Department of Criminal Justice, simply because these forms
will ultimately have to be reviewed and approved by the Petition Review Committee. Drs. Ryan and Thornsley will have a copy of page two of the MU INTERNSHIP FORM so they may e-mail it to you and you may type the information in using a computer.

Students desiring to sign up for an internship should contact either Dr. Ted Ryan or Dr. Scott Thornsley to ask them to become their faculty supervisor. After the student completes the INTERNSHIP FORM and acquires the signature of their selected faculty supervisor and the approval of the department chair, the supervising faculty member will then submit the Mansfield University’s INTERNSHIP FORM and the general course syllabus (CJA 4450 (W): Internship in Criminal Justice) to the Registrar’s Office in South Hall.

**Review of Internship Applications**

Internship applications and other university requests (such as petitions) are reviewed on Wednesdays, at 1:00 p.m., by the Petition Review Committee (a four person review committee composed of the Registrar, the Executive Director of Enrollment Services, and the two Mansfield University deans). The Petition Review Committee has the ability to refuse an internship application.

**CONCLUSION**

Because of the above new requirements and the fact that the university is now reviewing internship applications more carefully, it is extremely important that you begin your search for an internship agency well in advance of when you want to take it. The “good old days” of simply going to any faculty member and them filling out your Internship Form for you in a few minutes and you not having to worry about anything are now over. These changes were not caused by the change in department chairs in June 2009.

*Department of Criminal Justice Administration; November 6, 2009*