

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: INTERNSHIPS

1. Why should I do an internship?

An internship is an invaluable experience for a student artist. It allows you to explore different work settings to discover what your values and basic needs are within a job setting. Internships allow you to compare your interests and talents across disciplines, and possibly add or deduce a career path as you continue in your education. It is also a great place to begin your networking as an artist. Many students have been hired from their place of internship and gained valuable networks of people that led to other job opportunities. An internship is a great way to gain professional experience while in school, making you more desirable to potential employers.

2. If I do an internship over the summer, can I put the credits on the fall semester?

If you have specific questions regarding your internship credits, you should make an appointment with the Internship Coordinator. Internships for credit fall under the same academic policies as scheduling any other class. Extenuating circumstances are handled on a case by case basis. Make sure that you speak with the Internship Coordinator during the planning and organization of your internship to ensure that you are following the proper procedures. You will also need to fill out and submit an Add/Drop form to register for the internship.

3. Is it alright to send a cover letter over email to a potential internship/job?

With the advent of email employers/internship providers generally accept electronic versions of resumes, cover letters, and letters of inquiry. The main thing to keep in mind and plan for is how you send such documents. Make sure to consider formatting and size. Every computer has different capabilities, speeds, fonts, programs, etc. Make sure to send all materials in PDF format to avoid compatibility issues. Also remember to treat such communication as formally as you would a paper copy. Your cover letter should be a formal business letter, and should go through several edits. You may bring in a copy to the Career Development Office for help with this. Most people choose to follow up with a paper copy as a safeguard and courtesy when appropriate.

4. How many internships may a student do for credit while at MICA?

A student may complete 6 credits through internship experiences for credit. These 6 credits must be broken down into two distinct and separate internship experiences for 3 credits each. Many students go on to complete more than 2 internships in order to gain additional experience. If you pursue an internship without seeking credits you may utilize the Career Development Office in the same way as if you were doing it for credit.

5. Are there more paid or unpaid internships for artists currently?

There are limitless possibilities when it comes to internships and the market is constantly changing. There are an abundance of both paid and unpaid internships, and it is more a matter of deciding what you need, giving yourself enough time to search and plan, and being as competitive as you can be when applying.

6. Where can I research Internship Opportunities?

There are several places to search for internships. The best place to start is on www.MICAnetwork.com. This website lists many internships in various disciplines and was created based on standing relationships with companies and sites, as well as organizations looking specifically for MICA students. You should then check Peterson's Guide for Internships in the Arts (located in our office), conduct a web search by typing in keywords, and use our helpful links to look at specific websites sorted by concentration. You may also utilize the resources on campus by talking to your department faculty and the Internship Coordinator.

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7. When should I do an internship?

You may complete an internship for credit between your sophomore and senior years. Freshman may not do an internship for credit during their first year. In terms of seasons, students complete internships during the semesters as well as over the summer. You should look at your schedule and work with your advisor to determine where you can find time to engage in this experience with a commitment to quality.

8. Can I continue the same internship for multiple semesters for credit?

No. Each internship for credit must be separate and distinct. If you have questions about this please speak with the Internship Coordinator in conjunction with your Department Chair.

9. Can I do an internship outside of my major?

Yes. An internship outside of your major is an excellent way to explore a different discipline/major/industry. If you are doing this for credit, make sure you have a one-on-one conversation with your department chair to gain his or her approval first. You will be responsible for getting their approval using *The Learning Contract*, a document that you may obtain from the Career Development Office. It outlines goals and objectives for your internship and will require signatures from the Student, the Internship Supervisor, the Department Chair and the Internship Coordinator.

10. Can I begin an internship in the middle of the semester?

You can begin an internship at any time! However, if you are doing an internship for credit, and start in the middle of the semester, make sure to speak with the Internship Coordinator to get your Learning Contract in and all of your credit information organized. An internship cannot be put on your transcript after the Add/Drop period of the semester or be added retroactively. Each student's situation will be handled on a case by case basis in conjunction with the pertinent department chair.

11. What should I prepare to apply for an internship?

If you have identified an internship that you are interested in applying for, the first step is to determine what the particular site needs from you. Usually, the organization will have a website with all of the information delineating their application requirements. If you have researched their website and have not found this information, write down your questions and call the company/artist to inquire. If the application process is more informal, you may just ask the individual in charge. You will most likely need to prepare the following: a professional resume or an artist resume, a cover letter or letter of inquiry, a portfolio, and an application. You may also be asked to participate in an interview. You may seek help for all of these elements by visiting the Career Development Office.

12. Can I do an internship after I graduate?

Internships are largely done while the individual is a student. People in the workforce are more likely to help a matriculating student. However, every place is different and the word "internship" sometimes denotes "entry level, with on the job training." Make sure to do your research and understand the operational definitions of all the positions before applying.

13. Do internships lead to jobs?

Internships are an excellent way to gain professional experience as well as introduce you to professionals in your field, discipline and industry. Through networking, experience, dedication and hard work, you will be able to apply your knowledge towards a career path upon graduation. Internships prepare you for the transition out of MICA and often lead to jobs.