April 29, 2020

Spring and Summer 2020 Internship Challenges

Dear Colleagues,

The pandemic has interrupted student internships this spring and summer. Some students have had their current and future internship experiences cancelled. This reality poses problems for credit bearing internships in general as well as for internships embedded in degree requirements. As with other academic expectations this semester, we encourage thoughtful accommodations to help students meet learning outcomes and complete their degree requirements. Students affected by a cancelled internship should not be penalized.

Ideas to consider:
- Allow course substitutions for Internship course
- Create an adjustment to the cancelled internship that meets the learning outcomes*
- Develop an Independent study for the student
- Waive the internship requirement

*For example, instead of reporting on the experiences and learning from the internship, students can report on a book that addresses such experiences; or introduce students to industry contacts, then have students conduct interviews and receive mentoring via Zoom, keeping a journal of observations. The Career Center is available to collaborate with any program on developing career readiness activities that might supplement internship alternatives.

Please note that if your program decides to waive a requirement or to accept fewer credit hours for an internship, students may fall short of the total hours needed to graduate. Consider adding an independent study option to replace the lost in progress credit hours. If you are concerned about expectations from accreditors, please consult with them for guidance during this unprecedented time. Requirements may be relaxed.

Thank you for your support of our students.

Jeannie Brown Leonard
Vice Provost for Student Success