

# SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES AND CREDIT

**Individual Study Petitions** — Special petitions must be completed for Directed Study (DS), Independent Study (IS), and Courses by Special Arrangement (CBSA). These petitions must be completed with the instructor of record and approved by the Program Chair, Academic Dean, and Office of Academic Affairs prior to processing the registration for the individualized study course; standard registration deadlines apply. Regular tuition applies and in the case of courses by special arrangement, an additional fee may be assessed.

The purpose of an Independent Study is to allow the competent and prepared student to pursue study of a topic of special interest or need in depth and to develop the student's ability to work on their own by pursuing a reading/research project to successful completion. Prior to registration, students must file the Independent Study Petition. This petition requires the signature/approval of the Instructor, Program Chair, Academic Dean, and Office of Academic Affairs. Regular tuition is charged.

In most cases, Independent Study should be within the field of the student's major and should be something that cannot be pursued through established courses. These are pursued on campus under the direct supervision of an Aurora University faculty member.

While most Independent Studies last one full term, occasionally they will run over several terms or less than one term. Students should register for Independent Studies along with other classes. During the first week of classes, the University Registrar must approve registration for Independent Studies on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the Instructor, Academic Dean, and Office of Academic Affairs. No Independent Studies will be approved after the first week of the term.

**Course by Special Arrangement (CBSA)** — This is a course that is part of the approved curriculum program but is being offered to a student during a term when it is not scheduled. It should be employed only in cases of extreme scheduling conflict when no substitution is appropriate. Prior to registration, students must file the Course By Special Arrangement Petition. This petition requires the signature/approval of the Instructor, Program Chair, Academic Dean, and Office of Academic Affairs. An additional \$130 per semester hour fee is assessed in addition to regular tuition.

**Directed Study (DS)** — This is a course in which a student or students study on campus under the close supervision of an Aurora University faculty member. This is not "field experience," does not cover material in the regular curriculum, and is not as research and/or independently oriented in its instructional methodology as an Independent Study. Students should file the Directed Study Petition prior to registration. This petition must be signed/approved by the Instructor, Program Chair, Academic Dean, and Office of Academic Affairs. Regular tuition is charged.

**Internships and Practica** — All students are encouraged to explore and participate in an internship experience. Aurora University recognizes the validity of field experiences and experiential learning conducted under the direction of the faculty and encourages the integration of such learning into the university's academic programs where appropriate. Students pay normal tuition for internship and practica credit. Students are also responsible for other expenses associated with placements

(e.g., travel, texts or reference materials, special clothing, insurance required by the site, etc.).

In order for the student to receive credit for an academic internship/practica experience, the student must complete the minimum required number of clock hours per credit hours.

| Credit Hours Attempted | Minimum Required Clock Hours |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 semester hours       | 49 hours                     |
| 2 semester hours       | 97 hours                     |
| 3 semester hours       | 145 hours                    |
| 4 semester hours       | 193 hours                    |
| 5 semester hours       | 242 hours                    |
| 6 semester hours       | 290 hours                    |
| 7 semester hours       | 338 hours                    |
| 8 semester hours       | 387 hours                    |
| 9 semester hours       | 435 hours                    |
| 10 semester hours      | 483 hours                    |
| 11 semester hours      | 531 hours                    |
| 12 semester hours      | 579 hours                    |
| 13 semester hours      | 627 hours                    |
| 14 semester hours      | 676 hours                    |

## Internship Policies:

1. The Internship Information Packet is located online. Additional guidance can be sought from a student's academic department. Students must meet with their faculty sponsor and/or the internship advisor prior to starting an internship experience. Students can choose to participate in either an academic internship experience for credit or a non-credit volunteer internship experience. All internship experiences are beneficial.
2. Students participating in an academic internship experience for credit may arrange the internship experience in conjunction with any credit-bearing program of the university with the consent and sponsorship of the program faculty. Internships carry common course numbers throughout the university, together with the departmental prefix of the sponsoring program. Internship experiences may carry a departmental prefix reflecting the discipline of the faculty sponsor and the content of the learning experience, even though the credit may not be applicable to a specific major.
3. Aurora University offers two forms of internship experiences:
  - a. An academic internship experience for credit requires the student to be at least a sophomore in standing. The academic internship experience requires a faculty sponsor, educational criteria, and a current executed affiliation agreement and Schedule A on file. Internships can be designated as either credit/no credit or letter grade depending on the school or program. An academic internship experience will have the appropriate departmental prefix (i.e., CRJ, BUS, BIO, etc.) and 2940/3940/4940.
  - b. A non-credit volunteer internship experience enables a student to either explore a professional area of interest or perform a documented community service. The non-credit internship experience does not require a faculty sponsor and the student will not receive credit or a letter grade for the experience. Non-credit internships may never be converted for retroactive credit or recorded on the academic transcript.
4. All students participating in an internship experience must have a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0. This policy does not apply to students

who are majoring in social work, education, physical education, athletic training, and nursing. Schools and programs have the right to apply a higher GPA standard that may supersede this policy. Students must not have been on academic warning at the end of the preceding term when the internship experience is to begin. Students must also have completed at least 12 semester hours at AU by the time the internship experience begins. The program faculty of the approving/sponsoring unit may impose additional or more stringent requirements for eligibility.

5. Students must meet all eligibility requirements imposed by the internship site, including but not limited to, GPA requirements, or prior completion of specific coursework, background/security checks, citizenship/residency requirements, health and fitness, insurance coverage, prior work experience, and demonstrated competence in specific skills.
6. Other completion requirements (including, but not limited to, outside reading, journals and logs, written assignments, progress, and exit interviews) may be imposed at the discretion of the faculty sponsor or the program faculty. In all cases, the completion requirements of the learning experience shall include documentation, readings, or other assignments adequate to support evaluation for credit by the faculty.
7. A maximum of 14 semester hours of academic internship experience credit may be presented for graduation as part of general degree requirements.
8. Contracts for an academic internship experience for inclusion in a major must bear the signatures of the student, the site supervisor, the faculty sponsor, Dean or designate and the internship advisor. The deadline for submitting completed contracts for an internship experience are as follows (academic departments may require earlier deadlines which supersede those listed below):
  - a. Fall semester – August 1
  - b. Spring semester – December 15
  - c. Summer semester – May 1
9. No approvals required in this section may be granted retroactively. Students may not begin their internship experience prior to official registration for the course.
10. Faculty sponsors must secure the prior approval of the Academic Dean unless sponsorship duties have been arranged in the faculty member's contractual load or otherwise delegated by the Academic Dean. The internship advisor or faculty sponsor will determine the appropriateness of a particular site or placement and then either arrange the initial contact between the student and the site or provide contact information for the student to arrange an interview. Students who have learned of potential sites through other channels must review the site with the internship coordinator or Program Chair before initiating contact with the site.
11. All internship sites must have a current executed affiliation agreement and Schedule A on file before a student can register for their internship at the site.
12. An internship application must be completed and approved as an authorization to register for an internship experience.
13. Students should consult and secure a faculty sponsor during the first five weeks of the term preceding the term in which an internship experience is to begin.
14. Final evaluation for the issuance of credit/no-credit or letter grade is the sole responsibility of the faculty sponsor as the faculty member

of record for the learning experience, who will consult with and consider the evaluations of the student and the site supervisor.

#### **Practica Policies:**

1. Practica courses may be developed and offered by any credit-bearing program of the university as a required or selected course offering included in a major, certificate, or credential program.
2. Practica bear the departmental prefix of the program and are assigned course numbers in accordance with the numbering scheme employed by the program. Titles and catalog descriptions of these courses shall include terms such as "practicum," or "field" to indicate clearly that the course is conducted through this type of experiential instructional model.
3. Practicum credit is included in maximums established under the general academic regulations for total credit from given departments or divisions that may be presented for graduation. Within such limits, all requirements, minimums and maximums for practicum credit within a program are established by the program faculty.
4. Prerequisites for enrollment in practica including but not limited to GPA, prior coursework, declaration of major, and special skills or fitness are determined by the controlling program and summarized in the catalog description, which shall also reference the source of the full program regulations pertaining to the practicum offering.
5. All practica are under the academic supervision of program faculty assigned by the Program Chair and approved through the normal mechanism for approval of faculty teaching assignments in the academic unit. The supervising faculty determines completion requirements and instructional design, monitor student progress, serve as the liaison between the university and the site, and are responsible for summary evaluation and grading of students enrolled in practica.
6. Contact hours and duration shall be determined by the program faculty but shall adhere to the minimum clock hour conversions above (p. 1).
7. Grading systems for practica are determined by the program faculty. Completion requirements and evaluation methods must support the grading system chosen for a practicum.
8. Students register for practica as part of the normal registration process for other coursework. Controlling programs are responsible for handling pre-practicum application procedures, if any. The signature of a program advisor or designee on the student's registration form or change of course petition is required for registration. Programs incorporating practica in their offerings are responsible for establishing faculty committees or other mechanisms that may be required to meet internal or external monitoring, screening, certification, or reporting requirements.

## **Course Descriptions**

Catalog course descriptions are included in published catalogs. Descriptions of independent studies, directed studies, and internships are contained in the petition by which the learning experience was approved. Course descriptions and outlines of selected topics courses are provided by the sponsoring department at the time the course is submitted for the course schedule and are permanently available in Colleague, the student information system (SIS). Descriptions of courses by special arrangement do not differ from published catalog descriptions.