

Internships and Prior Learning Program

Contact Information

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Location: BRK 482

The Internships and Prior Learning Program (IPL) stresses practical experience, professional development, and the value of self-directed learning. IPL encompasses four academic areas of study related to engaged learning which include: Internships (national and international), Projects (professional and research), Service-Learning, and Prior Learning Assessment. All IPL courses with the exception of Service-Learning courses require application submission and approval prior to registration.

Internships incorporate engaged learning experiences by enabling students to apply theory, expand knowledge, determine additional learning needs, explore careers, gain real-world experience, and develop insight relative to public, social, and cultural issues. Internships emphasize self-directed learning in an academically sponsored experience and facilitates extremely useful opportunities for students to explore, identify and develop:

- Career interest areas.
- Learning needs. (i.e. Do I want to go to grad school?)
- Employability skills and experience that can be added to a resume.
- Networking opportunities with professionals in the field.
- Increased awareness of community, diversity, and public affairs.

Internships can be developed throughout the U.S. and internationally and can be affiliated with a number of career areas such as business, management, and administration; government and public administration; education and training; health science; human services; and information technology, to name a few.

The IPL internships fulfill portions of the Engaged Citizenship Common Experience (ECCE) requirement. To earn credit, students must be a degree-seeking undergraduate student enrolled IPL 300 while completing the internship.

Projects

Projects are a form of engaged learning experience and provide similar objectives and benefits as internships. Projects incorporate developing an end product that demonstrates work and reflection of learnings obtained throughout the semester. Project work requires independent motivation, excellent organizational skills and attention to self-imposed deadlines. The Project should relate to one's academic major and requires approval by both the student's department and an IPL Coordinator. Examples of a Project include:

- Research project with a faculty member at UIS or another institution

- Writing project (fiction or nonfiction)
- Entrepreneurial endeavor such as starting a business
- Audit of a nonprofit organization's computer system
- Creation of new software or a new app
- Study Away experience (in accordance with guidelines)

To earn credit, students must be a degree-seeking undergraduate student enrolled in IPL 301. The IPL Project fulfills portions of the Engaged Citizenship Common Experience (ECCE).

Prior Learning Assessment

Prior Learning Assessment allows qualified students to earn academic credit for college-level experiential and lifelong learning activities acquired outside of the traditional classroom. This is particularly valuable to those with an extensive background affiliated with a profession, military experience, community service and volunteer work, relevant travel or hobbies, or independent research. Students are required to develop a portfolio(s) to demonstrate and describe concrete learning experiences that can be transferable and applied to situations outside of the setting in which it was learned. The portfolio allows students to:

- Reflect on relevant experiences
- Articulate how experiences were learned
- Discuss the meaning of the experiences on both personal and global levels
- Describe ways in which you have, or will, apply and/or use those learnings in the future.

Students eligible to enroll in IPL 305/501 must be admitted to UIS, chosen a major, completed 48 semester hours of credit, and met with an advisor to determine if prior learning credit is an option and aligns with degree requirements. Portfolios are the only prior learning assessment method eligible for the Engaged Citizenship Common Experience (ECCE) credit. Credit hours earned will be posted at the end of the applicable semester to official UIS academic transcripts with the designation of CPL (Credit for Prior Learning).

Contact Admissions for detailed information about the additional options listed below for assessing experiential learning:

- College Level Examination Program (CLEP); standardized general and subject matter exams
- Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES); series of exams used by military personnel
- American Council on Education (ACE); evaluates courses offered by large corporations, government agencies, and the military

Service-Learning

Service-Learning courses explore the connections of academic theory and the practical needs of the community while expanding overall knowledge of community-based problems. Students are required to perform volunteer service hours to further enhance the process of self-reflection, self-discovery, and learning new skills and knowledge.

Not only do service-learning courses enrich a student's learning experience, but the course fulfills portions of the Engaged Citizenship Common Experience (ECCE).

Requirements

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IPL 300	ECCE: Internship Applied Learning	2-12
IPL 301	ECCE: Project Applied Learning	2-12
IPL 305	ECCE: Undergraduate Prior Learning Portfolio Development	3-6
or IPL 501	Graduate Prior Learning Portfolio Development	
IPL 499	Tutorial	1-12

Service Learning

IPL 202	ECCE: Service-Learning Immersion	3
IPL 362	ECCE: Social Change and Leadership	3