FGCU’s MPA Internship is intended to provide MPA students with an opportunity to gain practical work experience in an administrative setting, as well as to provide an opportunity to reflect on this practical work experience in part by drawing upon relevant scholarly perspectives. Consequently, your final grade in the MPA internship is based on two components: 1) an evaluation of your internship work by a designated supervisor/mentor at the internship site; and 2) an assessment of an intermediate-length paper on your internship experience by the Internship’s instructor of record.

Registration Eligibility

- On occasion the MPA program may be contacted by outside organizations and/or political officials about potential internship opportunities. When this occurs, the program will provide information about these opportunities to MPA students. However, the program is not an internship clearinghouse or placement center, so in most cases a student will have to take the initiative to locate internship opportunities and to apply for these.
- In order to register for the MPA Internship, you must be an MPA student. In exceptional instances, this eligibility requirement may be waived at the discretion of the MPA Internship instructor of record, but a non-MPA student should understand that such a waiver will require a highly compelling rationale and supporting documentation.
- In order for an organization and the experiences it provides to qualify as a potential MPA internship placement, the organization in question must provide the student with meaningful administrative- and/or policy-related work experiences. Although an intern might reasonably expect to occasionally perform routine duties (e.g., make copies, answer phones, etc.), the major duties performed by the intern must be non-clerical in nature and provide substantive administrative- and/or policy-related work experiences. Determination of whether a potential internship site/experience meets this standard is made by the instructor of record in advance of an authorization to register.
- An MPA Internship requires 300 hours of work at the internship site (including work performed off-site if instructed to do so by the internship supervisor/mentor). Typically an MPA intern works 10 hours per week over the course of a 30-week period, or else 20 hours per week over the course of a 15-week period. Students who do an MPA Internship during FGCU’s Summer Session are expected to work 30 hours per week over a 10-week period. Specific hours are arranged between students and their employing agencies. It is expected that work hours will be planned so as not to conflict with course work.
- At the discretion of their internship agency, MPA interns may be paid on an hourly or stipend basis. It is equally at the discretion of an internship agency (and common) for internships to be unpaid. Details on whether an internship is paid or unpaid must be agreed to in writing prior to the start of the internship.
- Prior to being authorized to register for an internship, you must provide the instructor of record with information about your internship location, as well as the name and contact information of the individual who will serve as a supervisor/mentor at the internship site and evaluate your internship work at the end of the term. In addition, you must provide a brief list or narrative summary of the principal activities you will engage in during the internship. (As noted earlier, the major duties performed by the intern must be non-clerical in nature and provide meaningful administrative- and/or policy-related work experiences.) The student must provide all of the information requested on MPA Internship Application form and submit this form to the MPA Internship instructor of record before the student will be registered. The student, internship supervisor, and an MPA program representative must sign and date this form.
- Agencies oftentimes design their internships to begin based on their work and scheduling concerns, rather than on the basis of FGCU’s academic calendar. Consequently, an internship opportunity may
arise while an academic term is already in session. If this occurs, you should follow the application and department approval instructions provided in the bulleted points above prior to starting your internship work, register for the internship for the next term, but begin your internship work before the start of the next term as scheduled with the agency.

**Internship Completion Requirements**

- Completion of 300 hours of work at the internship site (including work performed off-site if instructed to do so by the internship supervisor/mentor).
- At the completion of the internship, and before finals week, you must arrange for your internship supervisor/mentor to send the instructor of record a brief letter or email summarizing the major activities you’ve engaged in during your internship, confirming that you completed 300 hours of work, and indicating if your internship performance was “excellent” (A-level), “above-average” (B-level), “Average” (C-level), “Below-Average” (D-level), or “Failing” (F-level). This evaluative summary must be received by the instructor of record by no later than the last day of classes in the term.
- You need to complete an intermediate-length paper (approximately 8 to 10 pages) that examines one or more aspects either of the work you did during the internship or some dimension of the administrative- or policy-related activities dealt with by the organization you worked within. Additional requirements for this paper are provided below.

**Internship Grade**

Final grades in the MPA Internship are administered on a regular grading basis (e.g., “A,” “A-,” “B+,” etc.). Your final grade for the MPA Internship will be calculated as follows:

- Evaluation of internship performance by the designated supervisor/mentor: 50% of final grade, with the additional stipulation that the student must receive at least an “Average” (C-level) evaluation by the designated supervisor/mentor in order to be credited with completion of the internship. The internship supervisor/mentor also must confirm that the student intern completed 300 hours of work at the internship site and/or in off-site work conducted as part of the internship.
- Assessment of internship paper by the instructor of record: 50% of final grade

**Additional Instructions for the MPA Internship Paper**

- As indicated above, you must complete an intermediate-length paper that examines one or more aspects either of the work you did during the internship or some dimension of the administration- or policy-related activities dealt with by the organization you worked within. Much of this paper can focus on the details of the organizational activities you’ve chosen to focus on, but in addition your paper must draw upon a minimum of 4 pieces of scholarly and/or professional literature (articles, books, and/or policy reports issued by government agencies or non-profit research organizations) to ensure that your paper has an academic and professional dimension to it.
- Your paper should be approximately 8 to 10 pages in length (including the references section), typed and double-spaced, using 1-inch margins on all sides and 11-point “Times New Roman” font (or an alternate font of equivalent size).
- The instructor of record must receive your paper by the first day of finals for the term. The paper must be submitted in electronic format (in other words, as an email attachment).
- Your paper must draw upon a minimum of four sources from the following categories. At least two of your sources must be from categories 1 and 2.

1. Scholarly books or chapters from scholarly books. By “scholarly,” I mean books published by university presses (e.g., Johns Hopkins University Press, the University of Chicago Press, the University of California Press, etc.) or by non-university scholarly presses such as Sage, Routledge,
Praeger, Wiley, Blackwell, Marcel Dekker, Allyn & Bacon, Island, Brookings, Rand, and CQ (Congressional Quarterly) Press. If you are considering a book that isn’t published either by a recognizable university press or by one of the non-university scholarly presses specifically listed here, email me the author, book title, and publisher and I’ll tell you whether it meets the standard. The category of “scholarly books” as designated here does not include “textbooks” that merely process and package bits and pieces of information in easily digestible form for students in college classes. College textbooks serve a number of legitimate purposes in higher education—most notably that of quickly facilitating students’ thinking and learning in the classroom. However, textbooks are not suitable for use as scholarly sources in an upper-division undergraduate research paper. (Examples of college textbook publishers are Houghton Mifflin, Pearson, Thomson, McGraw-Hill, Prentice Hall, Harcourt, and Norton.) Some high-quality non-university presses such as Sage, CQ Press, Allyn & Bacon, etc., publish both bona fide research-based works of original peer-reviewed scholarship and “textbooks,” so don’t assume that any and all books published by such presses meet are “scholarly research.” In addition, this category of “scholarly books” does not include popular mass-market books.

2. Articles from peer-reviewed scholarly journals in Public Administration or in closely-related fields such as Law, Public Policy, Political Science, International Studies, Sociology, History, or Economics. (Some of the FGCU Library’s electronic journal collections, such as ProQuest, allow you to limit your search to peer-reviewed journals. Some do not, however, in which case you will have to examine the journal’s information page or self-description in order to confirm that its articles undergo scholarly peer-review. This requirement of “peer-reviewed” and “scholarly” excludes popular mass distribution journals such as Time, Newsweek, etc.)

3. Reports, “White Papers,” databases, etc., offered by government agencies and task forces. This means the original research reports, etc. (the reports themselves, not executive summaries of, or press releases about them) from respected non-partisan government research bodies such as the Congressional Research Service, Congressional Budget Office, and Government Accountability Office.

4. Reports, “White Papers,” databases, etc., offered by respected and relatively non-partisan “research institutes” or “think tanks” (e.g, the Rand Corporation, the Brookings Institute, etc.). If you use any materials by these types of organization, your research paper must be very clear and forthright in identifying the type of organization and, if applicable, its partisan and/or ideological orientation. If you are uncertain about the status of a research institute or think tank whose work you might be interested in using, email the instructor of record the necessary information and he or she will advise you accordingly.

- Citations, sources listed in your references/bibliography section, and overall layout of your paper must be formatted in accordance with Chicago style “author-date” requirements. Guides to Chicago “author-date” style are available at http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html and http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/1/. (Important note: do not assume that you can use Chicago formatting in your paper merely by designating “Chicago Style” in the references menu of your word-processing program. This style formatting feature in word-processing programs only carries out a small portion of the necessary formatting. If you rely on this exclusively and fail to use an actual style guide, you may end up with some formatting errors.)

- Assessment of your paper will be carried out according to the following criteria:

  1. The quality and completeness of your descriptive discussion of your internship experience (whichever relevant facets of it that you have chosen to focus on in the paper).
  2. The quality and relevance of the scholarly and/or professional literature you have applied when discussing your internship experience.
  3. The clarity, incisiveness, and logical consistency of your application of the scholarly and/or professional literature.
4. The technical quality of your writing. This includes the presentation of ideas and information in an orderly, coherent structure and with smooth, apt writing transitions, as well as the accuracy and consistency of your grammar, punctuation, spelling, and word usage.

5. The accuracy and consistency of your case study’s formatting and citations (in accordance with Chicago style and formatting requirements).

When assessing your paper, the principal concern will be with the knowledge and analytical skills you display. However, the technical quality of your writing is extremely important as well. If the technical quality of your writing in terms of basic grammar, punctuation, sentence and paragraph construction, transitions, layout, etc., is substantially below the level reasonably expected of an upper-division student, the highest grade you should expect to receive for the paper is a “B” (and “highest” would be in an essay whose knowledge-based and analytical dimensions are excellent.) If you’re concerned about writing “mechanics”—e.g., punctuation, grammar, paragraph construction, transitions, etc.—the brief online writing guides at Purdue University’s “OWL” site is helpful. Go online to http://owlenglish.purdue.edu/owl/section/1/ and use the “General Academic Writing,” “Mechanics,” “Grammar,” and “Punctuation” guide links listed in the menu on the left side of the webpage.

Some students have trouble with the “scholarly” aspects of their internship paper—i.e., with the fact that their paper cannot simply describe their practical internship experiences, but must also apply some scholarly and/or professional literature to better illuminate important dimensions of their practical internship experiences. Based on my experience, students who have trouble with this typically do so because they suffer from one or both of the following misunderstandings:

1. **Potential misunderstanding one**: in some cases, students’ problems with the “scholarly” aspects of an internship paper may be based in part on a misperception that “scholarly reflection” and “practical discussion” represent mutually incompatible, either-or choices in writing. In other words, that one is faced with a choice between writing either a highly abstract intellectual treatise that never extends itself beyond books and into the world of practical politics, or else a practical, ground-level discussion that doesn’t get bogged down in any of that pointy-headed intellectual stuff. But that’s a misperceived choice in so far as it thoroughly contradicts what we want to see in an internship paper, which is both of these in an effective combination with one another. An internship paper has to address both of these dimensions (the “scholarly dimension” and the “practical dimension”) in an integrated way.

2. **Potential misunderstanding two**: in some cases, students have problems with the “scholarly” portion of their internship paper because when they hear me asking them to draw upon and apply relevant scholarly literature to a discussion of their internship experiences, they misunderstand me to mean that they’re supposed to talk about how what they’ve encountered “on the ground” simply and clearly confirms what the scholarly literature says. But that’s not the point of addressing both the scholarly and practical dimensions in an integrated way. In weighing existing scholarly literature against practical internship experiences, the paper is by no means required to identify the points of confirmation or convergence between the two. It can just as reasonably identify and discuss evidence that calls the scholarly literature into question (i.e., events or data that seem to point toward an outright mistake or misunderstanding in the existing literature), as well as identify and discuss evidence that points toward potential gaps or “blind spots” in the existing literature. That’s the real essence and point of this type of applied paper: it ties “theory” and “practice” to one another in a way that ideally improves both.

**Finding Sources for Your Paper**
You can find scholarly peer-reviewed journal articles online through the FGCU Library’s search engines. Promising options are “ProQuest Research Library,” “EbscoHost Academic Search Complete,” “JSTOR,” “Oxford Journals Online,” and “Berkeley Electronic Press.” If your internship work involves considerations of public law, you’ll probably find the “LexisNexis Academic—Law Reviews” online database quite useful. To access these online journal databases and their search engines, go online to the FGCU Library Website at http://library.fgcu.edu/, and then click the “Articles and Databases” link under the “Find Books and Articles” section of the webpage. If you’re using a computer located inside the university’s network, this will take you
directly to the next webpage. However, if you’re off-campus, you’ll be asked at this point to provide the 14-digit student number that starts with “210” from the front of your Student ID card. Once you have provided your student number and progressed to the next webpage, you will be taken to a page where you can search for the databases I’ve listed immediately above. To search for books at the FGCU Library, simply click the “Library Catalog” link under the “Find Books and Articles” section of the webpage. In some cases you may find that a scholarly book is not available at the FGCU Library, but must instead be obtained through the Library’s interlibrary loan service. You can search for non-FGCU book holdings at other Florida university libraries by clicking the “Regional and State Catalogs” link under the “Find Books and Articles” section of the webpage. General information on the interlibrary loan service can be accessed online at http://library.fgcu.edu/CSD/Policies/interlib.htm, and the portal to the interlibrary loan submission page can be accessed at http://library.fgcu.edu/ILLiad/Logon.html.

**Academic Integrity Policy—Plagiarism or Other Forms of Cheating**

Good academic work must be based on honesty. The FGCU faculty and administration regard any attempt by a student to present work produced by someone else as his or her own as a serious offense. Students are considered to have cheated if they copy the work of another during an examination or turn in a paper or an assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else. Students are guilty of plagiarism, intentional or not, if they copy material from books, magazines, online sources, or other sources without identifying and acknowledging those sources or if they closely paraphrase ideas from such sources without acknowledging them. FGCU policy stipulates that students guilty of either cheating or plagiarism on an assignment (or of assisting another student in doing so) may receive a grade of F for the course involved and may be suspended or dismissed from the university.