

# **CJ 490 & CJ 491: INTERNSHIP IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

## **(General Information)**

### **What is an Internship?**

The internship experience in the School of Criminology, Criminal Justice, and Legal Studies (SCCJLS) at Grand Valley State University is designed to provide students an opportunity to apply their academic experiences to a practical, professional setting in the field of criminal justice. This internship experience also provides students the opportunity to explore career opportunities in criminal justice.

According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE),

*An internship is a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in professional fields they are considering for career paths; and give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent.*

Some advantages to internships include:

- Gaining valuable career field experience
- Enhancing your resume
- Establishing professional references
- Networking and building professional relationships
- Demonstrating what you know and applying your course work.
- Exploring your compatibility with your chosen field
- Growing personally, professionally, and academically while working with professionals and community leaders.

Interns have the opportunity to get ahead of the competition by showcasing their abilities while still completing their degrees. Interns from the SCCJLS have received full time job offers at the completion of their internships on several occasions, or, have been referred to another organization by their internship site.

### **What are the Minimum GVSU Requirements for CJ 490 & CJ 491?**

- Declared Criminal Justice Major or Minor
- Minimum 60 Credit Hours - Junior Standing OR special permission granted to sophomore status.
- Minimum GPA: 2.5 Overall
- CJ 490 - Students will earn 1 credit hour for every 50 hours worked. Generally, students usually enroll for three credit hours (150 hours).
- CJ 491 is required as a co-occurring course (seminar – one credit).

Please Note: Internship sites may have other requirements that must be met by the student.

## **The Classroom Component of Internships: CJ 491**

In addition to the mandatory internship hours required for the credits in CJ 490, students are also required to complete all course requirements in CJ 491 (seminar – one credit). They include:

- Two mandatory class sessions: one at the beginning and at the end of semester. These class times and locations can be found in Banner.
- Complete all online course assignments, including, an internship learning agreement, weekly logs and reflection papers, weekly discussion boards, and a final reflection paper and presentation.
- Students will receive a grade of pass/fail for CJ 490 and CJ 491.

Please note: A Syllabus of Record can be obtained from the Internship Coordinator or the School of Criminal Justice.

## **The Internship Process – it is Quite Simple**

1. Meet all minimum requirements for CJ 490 and CJ 491.
2. Find an Internship Location.
  - The SCCJLS does not “place” interns. It is the responsibility of students to locate an internship site that meets their professional and personal needs. Students are encouraged to consider the internship process as a job search. The SCCJLS does maintain a list of some agencies that are interested in hosting student interns and the SCCJLS internship coordinator may be able to assist. Also, the Career Services Department located at 101B DeVos Center (<https://www.gvsu.edu/careers>) has a wealth of information regarding employment and possible internships and regularly updates various available opportunities in “Handshake”.
  - Once a location is found, the student is responsible for contacting the agency and scheduling an interview. The SCCJSL internship coordinator is available for assistance and information to the site as needed.
3. Once approved by the Internship Site, communicate with the SCCJLS internship coordinator and enroll in Banner for both CJ 490 and CJ 491.
  - These courses require a permit. Submit an override request on-line through Banner to enroll in the courses. Once the override form is approved, complete the Banner registration.
4. Complete the On-Line Career Center Internship Learning Management System form. Please Note: You will need your Internship Site Supervisor’s information to complete this form.
  - Go to: <https://www.gvsu.edu/careers/ims-login.htm>. This form can also be accessed through the SCCJLS Homepage by clicking on the Student Resources Tab (<http://www.gvsu.edu/cj/internships-48.htm>);
  - Then select/click: Instructions Online Internship Application.
  - Next, complete your part of this application and submit it.
  - The form will process electronically with the SCCJLS internship coordinator and your site supervisor for approval.

## **The Learning Agreement**

Students are also required to complete a learning agreement with their internship site supervisor. The purpose of this agreement is to establish mutually agreed upon goals and objectives for the internship agreement. This should be completed prior to the beginning of the internship hours. This is also one of the first assignments that you will be submitting on-line

## **Frequently Asked Questions (CJ 490 Internship and CJ 491 Seminar)**

### **Can I use my job as an internship?**

No. An internship is not an extension of your current job. The SCCJLS does not grant academic credit for life/employment experience. However, your current employer may have other job opportunities that could qualify for an internship outside your current work hours.

### **Can I enroll in CJ 490 and CJ 491 for credit in another semester besides the semester when I am actually interning?**

No. Many organizations require that you are enrolled in CJ 490 & CJ 491 for that specific semester you are interning with them. CJ 491 is the co-occurring class component that cannot be completed in another semester.

### **Do I have to intern in West Michigan?**

No. Many students intern at a location close to where they would like to live post-graduation. A student can basically intern at any CJ-related location – in or out of state.

### **Can I intern in the Spring/Summer semester?**

Yes. Many students seek internships during the summer when their schedules are more open and in a location that they plan to return to after graduation. Summer is a great opportunity to gain professional connections in the community you plan to live in! Students can intern during any semester.

### **Are internships paid?**

No. In most cases, criminal justice internships are not paid.

### **Does GVSU assist in scheduling my internship hours?**

No. Scheduling Internship hours is between you and the internship coordinator/site.

### **Am I guaranteed employment with my internship site after completion of CJ 490/491?**

No. In most cases, interns are not employees. The internship experience does not guarantee employment, but may lead to future opportunities and other employment connections.

### **Can my site supervisor terminate my internship at any point?**

Yes. Interns can be removed at any time. Generally, prior to that dismissal there will be specific conversation with both the student and the internship coordinator.

### **Can I have more than one internship?**

Yes. Students can enroll for CJ 490 for 1 to 9 elective credit hours. This number of credit hours will allow students to have multiple internships. Each internship also requires the cooccurring seminar (CJ 491).

**Will GVSU place me in an internship?**

No. Students must seek out internships on their own. While some information will be provided regarding sites, students must personally contact the organization and complete all necessary paperwork on their own. Treat it as if it were a “real” job search and application process. The internship coordinator may have helpful information for internship options to consider.

**Will my internship site accommodate my personal and work-related needs for time off?**

Students are encouraged to treat the internship seriously. It is recommended that once a schedule is made, the intern follows that schedule and does not ask for any changes or modifications.

**Is there a dress code required for interns?**

Yes. Students will be working (and networking) in a professional environment. As such, students will be required to dress and act professionally. It is very important that you ask your internship site supervisor about appropriate dress.

**Will the Academic Advising Center assist me in finding an internship?**

No. The role of the CECI Academic Advising Center and staff is to assist you in scheduling your courses to ensure that you graduate in a timely manner. See the SCJ Internship Coordinator and Career Services if you have specific questions about internships.

**If I have questions, who should I contact?**

All questions should be directed to the SCCJLS internship coordinator.