

The Christian Ministries Internship Program
Grove City College

Christian Ministries is the branch of the Christian Thought Department that oversees internships for Christian Thought majors, double majors, religion minors, Christian Ministry auxiliary participants, and other students who desire to acquire practical experience and college credit for their participation in internships during the summer or regular semester.

Each internship requires approval from the director of the program before it is undertaken. Academic credit is not transferable from another college or university. Also, academic credit is not granted retroactively due to the nature of the academic and department requirements.

Students are encouraged to seek opportunities for internships in their local church, though the director often receives inquiries from outside ministries to enlist GCC students for their respective organizations. Normally, a local church or parachurch are considered eligible entities for the internship, with subsequent credit being offered.

The director will work with the student to evaluate the written job description offered by the ministry to see if the position is worthy of internship credit. Not all opportunities are worthy of academic credit. It will be established by the department director if the position has the potential for valuable ministry service, so that the student will gain hands on experience in Christian Service.

Once the job description has been evaluated and approved, the student will complete the internship application form found on the GCC internship website. A copy of the completed form will be given to the director for his files, and the original form will be turned into the college internship director as soon as possible. Summer internships need to be fully approved and applied for by Study Day of the Spring semester. Late submissions will be accepted with the written permission of the program director of the college.

The director will review the academic requirements of the internship with the intern using the Christian Ministries Internship Manual. The manual will serve as the standard by which the internship will be evaluated, in terms of meeting the requirements so that the student will receive credit. Please see the internship manual for a full discussion of the academic expectations.

Typically, the intern will choose a member of the Christian Thought department to serve as the student's academic sponsor for the internship. Each faculty member who accepts the role of advisor is expected to work closely with the intern before, during, and after the internship experience. The sponsor will be the major link between the sponsoring agency and the college. The sponsor will use the internship manual as a guide in assisting the student in the entire internship process.

Academic sponsors are expected to work closely with the Christian Ministries program director to ensure the successful completion of the internship on behalf of the student. The student will channel all academic work through the faculty sponsor in accordance with the dates of completion set by each individual sponsor. The sponsor is expected to make the dates of completion clear to each student before the actual initiation of the internship.

All questions regarding the internship by the student are to be directed to the student's individual sponsor. The program director will be available for consultation in the event that the student and sponsor cannot work out any difficulties that may arise between them or the sponsoring organization. The program director and the school internship director may work together in the event of a breakdown in the aforementioned process.

Communication between the intern and the sponsor should be an ongoing process during the internship. Letters and e-mails are acceptable forms of communication, as well as phone calls. All agreements that affect the internship and the grading process need to be in writing to ensure understanding by all parties. The intern is expected to comply with all of the requirements of the internship unless the sponsor and intern agree on other terms. All work is to be submitted before a grade is assigned by the sponsor. Work not submitted in a timely manner may result in a less than desirable grade or an incomplete grade until the work is finished.

The internship has the potential to be a powerful opportunity for the intern to learn from those on the front lines of ministry. Each intern is expected to represent the college and the Lord with the highest levels of Christian character and integrity. The grade assigned by the sponsor will be the result of a full evaluation of the academic work, the internship experience, and the evaluation of the intern's supervisor.

Many students who work in a local church participate in some form of youth work, but often these roles are expanded into small group ministry, discipleship, and worship leading. The job description usually sets the parameters of the internship. Those who choose to work with parachurch groups often work at a summer camp, retreat center, or wilderness ministry. Other ministries will be evaluated for their effectiveness and application for ministry.

All internships in Christian Ministries need to have a practical aspect to the opportunity so that students can receive a full-orbed experience. Some organizations end up hiring some of the interns they employ on a full-time basis. This is the ideal situation for each intern. Other ministries are simply the training ground for the intern.