



Internship Guidelines for Students

Westcliff University requires all students enrolled in graduate degree programs to successfully complete an internship prior to graduation. Westcliff University degrees are designed to prepare students for the workforce, and the knowledge and skills learned throughout the curriculum are directly applicable in the industries to which they are associated. Internship experiences allow students to further refine these skills through practical use with guidance, oversight, and feedback while also building a network within the industry and references for future career needs.

Graduate students are encouraged to take full advantage of the opportunities afforded to them in their internship experiences and maximize their potential career placement or advancement upon graduation. Graduate internship courses are credit-bearing and are assessed on a Pass/Fail basis. During each internship course, students engage in direct experience in addition to participating in the assigned classroom activities. Students are encouraged to complete as many internship courses as possible in pursuit of their degree (with a maximum of one course per session).

Internship opportunities exist on- and off-campus. Off-campus internships require prior university approval, and F-1 students must have Curricular Practical Training (CPT) authorization to participate in off-campus internships. Students are responsible for developing and demonstrating the skills necessary to be successful in an internship.

In addition to industry knowledge, students should be prepared to demonstrate professionalism, effective communication (written, oral, and digital), and integrity while engaged in an internship. The faculty facilitating graduate internship courses assess these qualities and provide valuable feedback to students throughout the course.



Options on Fulfilling the Graduate Internship Requirement

The following are the 4 options to fulfill the graduate internship requirement:

- 1) Students must apply for an internship or position that is related to their program of study. *For currently enrolled USA locally based students, please note, if you have **passed** 1 session of your internship course for CPT, you have fulfilled this requirement and no further action is required.*
 - a) F-1 Students please reach your International Affairs Student Advisor for further information and internship course deadlines:
 - i) *Master's students can email cpt_masters@westcliff.edu*
 - ii) *Doctorate students can email cpt_doctorate@westcliff.edu*
- 2) For domestic students and students living abroad (*non F1 students*), the internship requirement can be fulfilled if the student had previous employment or internship related to their program now or in the past while in their program at Westcliff University. A **Verification of Employment** will need to be submitted by the employer. Contact internships@westcliff.edu to request this form.
- 3) Students with their own company can also fill out the Verification of Employment form and provide company evidence. **Evidence Documents listed in the Q/A Section.**
Note: *F1 Students cannot start a US based company under CPT*
- 4) For students enrolled in the MBA program, students have the option to fulfill their internship requirement by completing the SMART MBA Consulting Capstone program. Students may apply for it after 1 academic year. Students may inquire further with Student Services, Career Services, and/or review the website for information and application details: www.westcliff.edu/resources/mba-consulting/



Internship Course Details

The Internship course is a for-credit course taught by qualified faculty who will lead the course and facilitate discussion, with the objective of helping students improve their business acumen in ways specific to their professional goals. Students must receive a 70% or above to pass the class. Each student is ultimately responsible for researching, applying for, and obtaining the internship. Internships are encouraged because these provide valuable opportunities for students to gain real-world work experience. The degree program is rigorous and should be the student's primary focus while attending Westcliff University.

A completed packet should be submitted to the Career Services Center at internships@westcliff.edu before the deadline for processing. To finalize this registration, this form must be completed and submitted, prior to the start of the internship, to Career Services along with the Student Waiver of Liability and Assumption of Risk, an internship job description, and internship offer letter. **The internship should be no shorter than 8 weeks and no longer than 16 weeks.**

How to Apply for an Internship for Academic Credit (Domestic Students only - Non F1):

- Are you looking for an internship? Review "How to Find an Internship" Workshop. [Click Here](#) (Passcode: #meeting123)
- Complete "[Request to Add Internship Course](#)" form.
- Complete and submit the "Cooperative Education / Internship Agreement" (signed by both student and employer).
- Submit an offer letter on the company's official letterhead, signed by the employer. Offer letter should:
 - ✓ Follow Westcliff University's sample offer letter template.
 - ✓ Indicate your job title, start date, end date, number of hours you will work each week, salary, employer's address, name, contact information of supervisor, and a statement from the employer describing how the position is integral to your degree program.



Notice of Approval

The Internship Coordinator will review your application within 3-5 business days. You will be notified via your Westcliff email address as to approval, denial or the need for further documentation. Career Services will inform the Registrar's department of your approval to enroll in the internship course. For further questions please contact internships@westcliff.edu.

Internship Q&As

Q. I need help finding an internship/employment, who can support me with this?

A. Students receive ongoing bi-weekly emails from Career Services with internships or employment opportunities. Students are encouraged to reach the Career Services Department to receive career support and placement assistance.

Q. Does my internship have to be related to concentration?

A. Students do not have to choose an internship related to their program concentration, but it must be related to the program.

Q. My Internship is shorter than 8 weeks? Does this count?

A: Students must complete an internship of 8 weeks or more to fulfill the internship requirement.

Q. MBA STUDENTS ONLY - What happens if I am about to graduate and don't pass the SMART MBA Capstone?

A. Students need to take BUS 557 and fulfill the internship requirement by applying for an internship/employment in their last session.

Q. How long does it take to get approval for my Verification of Student Employment?

A. The turnaround time for approval is typically 3-5 business days. A formal email will be sent to your Westcliff email confirming approval or denial of the verification.



Q: F1 Students and Domestic Students ONLY- What happens if I fail my internship course?

A. International F1 students are not allowed to work on CPT without an academic class, and thus will be required to apply and enroll in the SMART MBA Capstone course.

Q. I am not in the Westcliff MBA program, can I still do the SMART MBA Consulting Capstone?

A: Students not enrolled in the MBA program may choose to apply for the SMART MBA Consulting Capstone program for their final capstone class and will be notified of approval 2-3 weeks prior to the start of session. Selection criteria is dependent on the company projects and scope of work given that students must apply their program knowledge to the capstone project.

Q.I am living outside of the United States. Do I still need to get an internship?

A. If living outside of the United States the requirement can be fulfilled by getting employment related to their degree or starting an internship that is related to their degree in their home country. An employment verification form can be submitted to your direct supervisor. Please contact internships@westcliff.edu to request this.

Q: I have my own business, can I waive the internship requirement?

A: Students must provide 2 pieces of evidence if owning a business when filling out the Verification of Student Employment form. **Typical accepted documents include:** *Business license or a state license (if required - therapist, barber, skin care, etc.), an active website, resale permit, business office lease (if working out of their home they would need a city business license), business receipts, or some evidence of income from the business.*

Q. How do I know my Internship Application will be approved?

A. Every Internship Cooperative Agreement has different Internship Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) depending on the program that are listed on page 4. At least 2 boxes checked off for the work to be approved.