



Administration & Cultural Advocacy

Internship Guide

Internships take many forms. In Arts Administration and Cultural Advocacy, the goal is not to “check a box” on your resumé or degree. The goal is to combine coursework and experience that help you tell a meaningful story about your professional skills and creative interests after graduation.

Start planning for your internship as early as possible – usually, around a year in advance. Because the arts and culture sector is ever-moving, this takes research and decision-making on your part. Some internships may require prior coursework in a specific area. Some are introductory field experiences, where you shadow different offices in an organization. Some require an application, and some may be arranged via one-on-one discussions with the help of the AACA coordinator, your major advisor, or an email inquiry.

While most approved internships for AAC 497 are external – with an agency or organization outside of Southern – we also accept internal positions in places like Southern’s Buley Art Gallery, Lyman Center, Special Collections, and SPAR offices. Competitive local or national fellowships may also qualify for credit.

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Planning for AAC 497

4 credits of AAC 497 Internship in Arts Administration and Cultural Advocacy are the required capstone for the minor. The pre-requisite is AAC 200, though you should also have completed or be in the process of completing your 6-credit Area of Professional focus.

At the end of AAC 200, you’ll sit down with your instructor and the AACA coordinator to discuss your areas of interest. Continue planning for possible internships in the coming semesters. Aim to have a plan no later than the spring semester of your junior year.

The 4 credits of AAC 497 may be taken in a combination of single or successive internships: 4 credits, 1 + 3 credits, 3+1 credits, or 2 + 2 credits. Please note, however, that due to current federal Financial Aid restrictions, you may not register for AAC 497 more than twice (i.e., you may only do two semesters of internship credits).

For examples of how to plan for AAC 497, see the sample degree maps and timelines at <https://inside.southernct.edu/artsadministration>.

Finding an Internship

The [Arts Administration and Cultural Advocacy Internship List](#) is a good place to start your internship search. We aim to update it each spring for the coming year, though some listings are ongoing. It contains *some* of the New

Haven or Connecticut-based theatres, museums, libraries, festivals, and other non-profit organizations with which we already have standing partnerships and internship opportunities.

Approved internships, however, can also be found outside of this list, including *ad hoc* opportunities that may be announced throughout the year. To find an internship:

- a. Review the internship listing each academic year for organizations and positions that interest you.
- b. Speak with your AACA advisor about courses you need to take to prepare for these kinds of internships.
- c. When you see an internship that catches your eye, follow these steps:
 - If the organization has an official internship application process, let the AACA or internship coordinator know you hope to apply and **send us a draft of your application** first.
 - If the organization has a standing internship opportunity with Southern, check with the AACA or internship coordinator to **see if you qualify**.
 - If the organization does not list an application process or specific opportunities, use the contact information provided to **send an email inquiring about available or upcoming internships, copying your AACA advisor** or the internship coordinator. Ask us for help in crafting your email!
- d. If you find an internship at another arts, culture, or non-profit organization (e.g., in New York, a civic agency, etc) ask the AACA coordinator to make sure it will count for AAC 497.
- e. Most internships begin with a formal or informal meeting or interview. Please notify the AACA coordinator about any formal interview requests, and whether the organization would like us to join the meeting.

AAC 497 Approval and Registration

Once you've secured an internship opportunity from an organization, email the AACA program coordinator and intern coordinator. The coordinator(s) may wish to set up a separate Zoom, Teams, or phone meeting to discuss the terms of the internship with the organization.

You then need to [complete the AAC 497 application form](#). (You cannot sign up for AAC 497 in Banner.) You'll need the following information:

- a job title for the internship (e.g., Marketing Intern, Development Intern, Editorial Assistant, etc.)
 - the number of proposed credit hours (1 cr = 45 hours; 2 cr = 90 hours; 3 cr = 135 hrs; 4 cr = 180 hrs)
 - a list of the 4-5 key duties and responsibilities for the internship
- Note:* This may be an existing job description from the organization, or one specifically designed by the employer for your internship. If you are unsure, do not make it up yourself. Contact the organizational supervisor or the AACA coordinator(s) for help.
- contact information for yourself, the organization, and the faculty member who will be supervising your internship. Typically, the AACA coordinator or internship coordinator will supervise your work, though you are welcome to have another AACA faculty member or supervisor from your home department.

The AACA coordinator will look over your form and may request further information. Once it has been approved, the College of Arts & Sciences will contact you, the organization, and your faculty supervisor for an electronic signature.

Your signed AAC 497 registration should be completed no later than **2 weeks prior to the beginning of classes**. Upon receipt, the Registrar's office will register you for AAC 497 directly.

Stipend and Pay

It is an expectation of the College of Arts and Sciences that *all* internships completed for the required 4 credits of AAC 497 should be paid. The expected minimum rate is \$500 / credit.

Organizations: Prior to signing the SCSU internship form, external organizations with existing resources to support paid internships should contact the AAC program coordinator(s) with (1) the hourly or stipendary amount, and (2) the budget authority or HR representative who will oversee the intern's employment and payment. We will add this to the Description of Duties section of the signed paperwork.

External organizations *unable* to support paid internships - either partially or in full - should contact the program coordinator(s) about funding through our SCSU AAC Internship Fund.

Students: In order to receive payment for your internship, check your Southern email regularly for payment information requested from either your host organization or from SCSU's administrative offices.

If you are receiving an SCSU AAC Internship Fund stipend, make sure to:

- Complete and send a [W9 form](#) no later than the first day of classes to the AAC program coordinator (if you prefer to keep this information confidential, you may send your W9 directly to the SCSU Accounts Payable office).
- Monitor your email for instructions about your stipend. Your stipend will be processed after you complete the second check-in with your faculty supervisor (usually around Week 4). Our goal is for you to receive payment by midterm, though please bear in mind that administrative delays do happen at SCSU.

Internship Expectations

Student Responsibilities

Students are responsible for completing **all required duties and hours** for the internship, in the modality – on-site or a combination of on-site and remote – arranged with the partner organization. This includes the general duties listed in the internship form as well as any amendments or additions made in consultation with the organizational supervisor and your AAC 497 faculty supervisor.

You are also expected to:

- a. Report and reflect regularly on your work for the internship on a weekly or bi-weekly basis, in a format arranged with the faculty supervisor
- b. Be on time for all on-site hours and remote or in-person meetings, and communicate ahead of time with your supervisor about any academic, health-related, or other conflicts that may arise
- c. Attend regular check-in meetings and Midterm Progress Review with your supervisor and advisor
- d. Check your Southern email on a daily basis and respond promptly to work-related messages
- e. Complete the AAC 497 final project and portfolio by the due date agreed with your faculty supervisor

Failure to fulfill the required duties or hours may require either withdrawal (W) or a failing grade (F) in AAC 497. If a chronic illness or emergency impacts your ability to continue the internship, please reach out to your organizational supervisor and AAC 497 faculty supervisor to discuss your options.

Organization and Faculty Responsibilities

In Arts Administration and Cultural Advocacy, we see the field experience capstone as a type of apprenticeship or educational collaboration between SCSU and the partner organization, with *shared* responsibilities between the organizational supervisor(s) and faculty supervisor.

Partner Organization: The agency or partner organization oversees the student's duties, performance, and any job-specific training. Specifically, we request that host organizations:

- a. Assign a primary supervisor or mentor to guide the student's internship experience (especially for internships that may involve shadowing or working across multiple offices).
- b. Clearly lay out the on-site, remote, or hybrid responsibilities of the student's work, including expectations regarding communication (email, phone, etc) and workplace etiquette.
- c. Meet with the student and faculty supervisor at scheduled times during the semester to review work goals and performance, and complete the Midterm Progress Review (see Appendix A) by Week 6 of the semester.
- d. Provide guidance and feedback on the student's final portfolio, resume, and choice of final project.

Faculty supervisor: The faculty supervisor collaborates with the partner organization to provide additional education and mentorship necessary for the student to succeed in the tasks assigned by the organization, and ensures that the student has fulfilled their responsibilities for AAC 497. Specifically, the faculty supervisor is expected to:

- a. Develop a mechanism for the student report to their hours on a weekly or bi-weekly basis and to reflect on their work completed, in a platform determined by the advisor (e.g., Blackboard, Google Docs, blog / journal)
- b. Hold regular check-in meetings with the student and, on a periodic basis, the organizational supervisor to review work goals and performance.
- c. Collect the Midterm Progress Review form (see Appendix A) and organize a midterm review with the student and supervisor no later than Week 7 of the semester. This review meeting may take the form of a site visit, SCSU in-person meeting, or video conference. Upon completion, the faculty supervisor emails the Midterm Progress Review form to the program coordinator(s).
- d. Advise the student on the format and content of the final portfolio, and attend and assist with any on-site components of the student's final project.
- e. Submit a midterm and final grade for AAC 497.

Final Portfolio and Project

In order to receive a grade for AAC 497, students submit a final portfolio at the end of the semester (by or before the end of finals week) to both their organizational supervisor and faculty supervisor. Upon completion, the faculty supervisor will forward a copy to the AAC 497 program coordinator. The portfolio consists of:

- **Revised Résumé / CV** listing the student's internship, in a language and format that has been reviewed and edited by their organizational mentor or supervisor
- **Professional Narrative (1-page, single-spaced)** that tells the written *story* of the work you did for the internship, in *two* different ways:
 - i. A 3-4 sentence professional "elevator pitch," or mini-description of the internship. You've met a potential employer on an elevator and have only 10-15 seconds to tell them about this internship and the work you did. What would you say?
 - ii. A second, longer narrative (200-300 words) for use in future interviews and applications. How would you turn your "elevator pitch" into a *full* explanation – with examples – of the internship, why you pursued it, your primary duties, your successes, and the skills and interests you gained from it? How would you make this longer story *engaging*?

• **Final Project**, in a format to be chosen by the student in consultation with both the organizational supervisor and faculty supervisor. The final project might consist of:

- a collection of sample work (grants, social media, correspondence, etc.)
- a presentation to the partner organization or to SCSU faculty
- a reflective essay (4-5 pp.)
- a special work-product requested by the organization
- another culminating project, selected by the organizational and faculty supervisor

Appendix A - Midterm Progress Review

The purpose of the Midterm Progress Review is to ensure that the student intern is making satisfactory progress and to provide educational feedback. It is the faculty supervisor's duty to organize the Midterm Progress Review, which should be completed no later than **Week 8** of the fall or spring semester (or a reasonable date before midterm grades are due in the winter or summer terms).

The Midterm Progress Review consists of:

- A **written progress report**, to be completed by the organizational supervisor. It is the faculty supervisor's responsibility to contact the supervisor to request completion of the report by or before the scheduled review meeting.

AAC 497 Midterm Progress Review – Agency Report

- A **live meeting** - on-site or online (Zoom, Teams, etc) - with the student, the employer or organizational supervisor(s), and the faculty supervisor. The review meeting is an opportunity for a candid but supportive discussion of the student's work completed to date, strengths, areas for improvement, and the remaining duties of the internship, including any potential options for the final project / portfolio.

Upon completion, the faculty supervisor emails a copy of the Midterm Progress report to the AAC 497 program coordinator(s) and enters a midterm grade for the student's section of AAC 497.