PSYC489: Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

Who can help me with my internship search?

The internship is a job search process, and is highly dependent on your specific career interests within the psychology major. Career Services can help you get the basic tools and information you need to start your search. They provide resume assistance, tips for using online listings (e.g., Huskies Get Hired!), and other useful information (e.g., having a phone/email "script" for professionally approaching organizations). Call 815.753.1641 to schedule an appointment, or visit Room 220 of the Campus Life Building. The psychology major specialist is Dr. Pillsbury.

You can also check out the “Locating Internships” section on the Psychology Department’s website for more information about where our interns have worked in the past and other potential sites in the DeKalb/Sycamore area:
http://www.niu.edu/psyc/undergrad/internships.shtml

Am I eligible to take the class?

In addition to having secured an internship experience related to the psychology field, you must have the following qualifications to enroll in PSYC489:

- Junior or senior standing
- Declared major in Psychology (BA or BS)
- Psychology major GPA of 2.5 or higher
- Overall GPA of 2.5 or higher

If you do not meet any of these qualifications but have secured an internship, you can still do the internship. However, it will not be for course credit. Please contact Career Services if you’d like to register your internship to receive a note on your transcript.

Can I do the internship first and get PSYC 489 credit later (or take the class afterwards)?

PSYC489 has to be taken at the same time as the internship. There are multiple reasons for this. First, we have to make sure the internship is formally registered through Career Services and that you’ve received a satisfactory evaluation from your supervisor. Second, the course is designed around experiential learning principles. This means that you need to reflect on your current internship experiences in order to make adjustments based on what you’ve learned from the course sessions and activities.

Do my internship start/end dates have to exactly coincide with the semester?

Not necessarily. There are a few weeks of “wiggle room” around this. The biggest constraints are that (a) you need to complete all of your hours (120) by the end of the semester and (b) you need to enroll in the course before the semester deadline (usually within two weeks of the start of the semester). After that, specific start/stop dates are flexible. Some interns start within 2-3 weeks before the first week of the semester, and some 1-2 weeks after. You just need to complete the majority of your hours during the semester that you are enrolled.

If you do start early, you will need to meet with the Internship Director ahead of time to make sure you get orientation materials for the course. If you start a bit later, you still need to attend the class orientation session to make sure you are on track for completing the course requirements.

Can I take PSYC 489 multiple times?

PSYC489 can be taken up to two times (6hrs) for credit. However, only the first time (3hrs) counts toward the psychology major. The following 3hrs counts as a general elective toward graduation. Also, the second PSYC 489 course must be taken with a different internship than the first one.

Do I have to work exactly 10hrs a week at my internship to fulfill the hour requirements?

Ten hours is only the recommended average per week to fulfill the 120hr requirement (over 12 weeks). As long as you complete 120hrs by the end of the semester, you can certainly work less hours in more weeks (e.g., 8hrs over 15 weeks). You can also do more hours in fewer weeks (e.g., 15 hrs over 8 weeks). Some interns find their hours fluctuate a lot based on organization’s needs or workload for a particular week, so that is expected.

Are there regular lectures I must attend for PSYC 489?

We usually meet as a class only four times a semester (once a month) for a three hour session. These sessions are usually Friday afternoons and are required for course completion. Everything else for the course is done online through Blackboard (portfolio completion) or by one-on-one appointments with the Internship Director.

Are there letter grades for PSYC489?

Grading for this course is on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis rather than letter grades. This means that, although the credits count toward degree completion (i.e., major requirements and/or general electives), the course is not included in your GPA calculations.

Can I take PSYC 489 in the summer?

PSYC489 will be offered in the summer starting in 2015. For the summer session, presentations and group discussions are conducted online to accommodate internships outside of the greater Chicago area. The Internship Director will also be available for in-person meetings at specific times during the summer for local interns.

Who should I contact regarding more information about the PSYC 489 course?

If you have more questions about the PSYC 489 course requirements or enrollment procedures, please contact Dr. Barber via email [lbarber@niu.edu](mailto:lbarber@niu.edu) or sign up for advising hours on the clipboard next to the main psychology office (PM 400).