

Accounting Internship Considerations for International Students Attending MU for Undergrad & Graduate Studies

Student Eligibility

As you consider the timing of your internship, it is important to remember that international students must be enrolled in a program for two full-time semesters before being eligible for Curricular Practical Training (CPT),

- ✓ Students who wish to earn undergraduate credit for an accounting internship must (1) return for continued undergraduate courses in the semester following the semester or summer internship OR (2) must need to earn the three credits earned through the internship as the final three credits needed for undergraduate graduation,
- ✓ To earn graduate credit for an accounting internship, international graduate students must (1) be registered as full-time MU MSA / MSAA students for two semesters prior to the internship AND (2) have completed at least 14 GSM credits prior to an off-campus internship start date,

Please also consider how the timing of an internship could impact your OPT eligibility (1) should you earn a full-time offer and (2) based on different firms' full-time start dates, While there is not a guarantee that an internship employer will offer a full-time position, students certainly want to be prepared and eligible to work if an offer is extended, Most firms offer full-time start dates in summer or early fall, Some firms offer start dates in January, A student who completes his/her accounting undergraduate degree at MU typically needs two full-time semesters to complete the MU MSA / MSAA program, If the student completes the fall + spring (or spring + fall) semesters required for CPT or OPT eligibility, followed by an internship, (1) the student may have fulfilled MSA / MSAA requirements well in advance of a full-time start date OR (2) there may be only one semester of coursework needed to complete the MSA / MSAA requirements following the internship (and the full-time offer may have a start date further into the future), Please consider how different program completion timing would align with different firms' full-time start dates and the OPT eligibility rule that students may not accrue more than 90 days of unemployment following the program completion date.

Position Eligibility

- ✓ Positions with work responsibilities equivalent to those of a first-year full-time employee will be considered for internship credit.
- ✓ Students who secure an internship outside of the Accounting Internship Early Recruitment (AIER) Program should submit the internship job description, proof of a competitive selection process and a statement from the company committing to provide a written intern evaluation. AIER students skip this step.
- ✓ Employment is full time, approximately 400 hours.

All internships must be approved and forms must be completed (including CPT or OPT forms for international students) with required signatures prior to the start date of the semester, no exceptions,

Off-Campus Work Authorization

Completion of CPT paperwork should accompany your ACCO internship course enrollment, This paperwork must be completed prior to your first day of work, For successful completion of the internship, you will be awarded 3 internship credits, Undergraduate students will earn three credits through enrolling in ACCO 4986 during the semester following your internship, ACCO 4986 will count toward your credit load, Permission numbers will be distributed prior to the ACCO 4986 semester, Graduate students will enroll in a 3-credit course during the semester of the internship, Course details are provided below.

Considerations for MSA / MSAA Students Who Completed an Undergraduate Accounting Degree at MU

Please remember that to be eligible for CPT or OPT, students must be enrolled full-time in the MU undergraduate **OR** graduate accounting program for two full-time semesters (fall + spring or spring + fall), ***If you entered the MU MSA / MSAA program one semester prior to your internship, you will not have been enrolled in the MSA / MSAA program for two semesters and will not be eligible for CPT or OPT***, As you are considering applying for semester vs. summer internships, please abide by this CPT/OPT eligibility guidelines.

UNDERGRADUATE Internship Requirements: Work Hours & Assignments

To Apply for Credit

- ✓ To obtain a permission number, complete the online internship reporting form: <https://tinyurl.com/y8eubyyq>, Students who secure internships through the AIER Program will receive an email reminder.

During and Following Completion of Field Work

- ✓ Training and work hours for spring semester internships often begin in early January, Summer internships often begin in June.
- ✓ Submit monthly timesheets of activity during field work.
- ✓ Register for ACCO 4986 in the fall semester.
- ✓ Complete a Reflection Paper answering specific internship questions.

Course options:

- ✓ Register for a 0-credit ACCO 3986 or 3987 course during the semester when you are interning and complete an internship survey, A survey link will be shared with the permission number e-mail.
 - **Spring Interns:** The ACCO 3987 course will label a student as “enrolled full time” within University records, During the semester in which you are enrolled in ACCO 3987, you will not be charged tuition and will not pay student services fees, As a result, you will not have access to the Student Medical Clinic, gym or the UPASS program.
 - **Summer Interns:** The 3986 course is a 0-credit course, so you will not be charged tuition.
 - **International Students:** Completion of CPT paperwork should accompany your ACCO 3986 or 3987 enrollment, This paperwork must be completed prior to your first day of work.
 - For successful completion of the internship, you will be awarded 3 internship credits through enrolling in ACCO 4986 during the fall semester, ACCO 4986 will count toward your credit load, Permission numbers will be distributed prior to the fall semester,
- ✓ **Final Semester Interns:** If you are completing the AIER Program internship as your last undergraduate course at MU, you will need to co-enroll in ACCO 3986 and 4986,

Steps & Deadlines

- ✓ **Signatures:** After completing the ACCO [internship reporting form](#), students should complete the “Request for Curricular Practical Training” form (including the employer signature) to Cindy Melis for her signature, (If you are not able to visit your employer, a scanned or faxed copy of their signature on your CPT form will be acceptable.)
- ✓ **Visit OIE:** OIE recommends completing the CPT form at least 1-2 weeks in advance of your internship start date, Completing the process even earlier is preferred, **OPT:** If you plan to use Optional Practical Training work hours for your internship, please contact OIE at least 60-90 days prior to the start of your internship.
- ✓ **Important: Complete OIE forms in advance.** *Students may NEVER start employment of any sort (OPT/CPT) before receiving official CPT authorization from OIE or a valid Employment Authorization Document from the US immigration service for OPT.

GRADUATE Internship Requirements: Work Hours & Assignments

Apply for Credit

- ✓ Complete the "[Accounting Internship Approval Form](#)" (available on the GSM forms website) for the appropriate course for the semester when you are interning, Students should complete all sections of the approval form except "for GSM Use."
- ✓ Complete online internship reporting form: <http://www.mu.edu/formassembly/816>

During and Following Completion of Field Work

- ✓ Training and work hours for spring semester internships often begin in early January, Summer internships often begin in June.
- ✓ Submit monthly timesheets of activity during field work.
- ✓ Register in the appropriate ACCO course(s) to earn internship credit (courses described below).
- ✓ Complete a Reflection Paper answering specific internship questions.
- ✓ Write an additional 5-page paper on an issue encountered during internship fieldwork.

Course options:

- ✓ **ACCO 6986:** 3-credit internship with a 3-credit tuition charge, May be taken in summer, fall or spring, Registration in this course will result in part-time registration status,
 - Section 101: Course is designed to continue past the end of the term, Student will initially receive an IC grade and have until a designated date to complete paper requirements, at which time the IC grade will be changed to a letter grade,
 - Section 102: Course is designed to be completed and graded (including papers) by the end of the semester.
- ✓ **ACCO 6987 (fall/spring only):** 0-credit course (with no tuition charge), followed by a 6988 a 3-credit course (with a 3-credit tuition charge), During the semester of 6987 enrollment, the student is labeled as a full-time MU student and is eligible for financial aid, Students may not register for additional courses during the semester of 6987 enrollment, ACCO 6987 is graded as satisfactory/unsatisfactory, **ACCO 6988:** 3-credit course required in the semester immediately following completion of 6987, Students receive a letter grade in 6988 based on completing the 10-page Reflection Paper and 5-page issue paper, To comply with CPT requirements, international students must enroll in ACCO 6988 in the semester following enrollment in ACCO 6987.

Steps & Deadlines

- ✓ **Signatures:** Students should complete the "Request for Curricular Practical Training" form (including the employer signature) and bring this form with the "Accounting Internship Approval Form" and job description to Professors Melis (instructor and internship director) and Ling (advisor) for their signatures. (If you are not able to visit your employer, a scanned or faxed copy of their signature on your CPT form will be acceptable.)
- ✓ **Visit OIE:** OIE recommends completing the CPT form at least 1-2 weeks in advance of your internship start date. Completing the process even earlier is preferred. **OPT:** If you plan to use Optional Practical Training work hours for your internship, please contact OIE at least 60-90 days prior to the start of your internship.
- ✓ **Important: Complete OIE forms in advance.** *Students may NEVER start employment of any sort (OPT/CPT) before receiving official CPT authorization from OIE or a valid Employment Authorization Document from the US immigration service for OPT.
- ✓ **Enrollment:** Professor Q Ling will share a permission number for the appropriate accounting internship course. Students must register for the internship course by the registration deadline. Failure to register will cause the student to forfeit the internship opportunity, academic credit and will result in being out of visa compliance.