Internships and Research: Academic Credit & Independent Study

INTERNSHIP/RESEARCH FOR ACADEMIC CREDIT

Although the educational policies of Mount Holyoke and its peer institutions cannot award credit for internships/research in and of themselves, the experience gained by student internships/research can relate to credit bearing work through the following ways:

- The **Nexus: Curriculum to Career Program**
- The spring 2 credit course COLL 210 “Ready for the World: Preparing your Internship and Research Project”. This course is part of the Nexus Program, but is open to any student pursuing an internship or research project. COLL 210 will not satisfy the CPT (Curricular Practical Training) credit requirement.
- The fall 2 credit course COLL 211 “Tying it all Together: Curriculum to Career”. This course is part of the Nexus Program, but is open to any student returning from an internship or research project. COLL 211 will satisfy the CPT (Curricular Practical Training) credit requirement.
- Pursuit of a 2 credit independent study project (295P or 395P), inspired by and relating to the internship or research project. This is an option only when there is a substantial academic component supervised by a Mount Holyoke faculty member. The bulk of the credit-bearing work will normally take place during the semester following the internship/research experience. This independent study project will satisfy the CPT (Curricular Practical Training) credit requirement.

Some employers require internship applicants to submit a letter verifying that Mount Holyoke College will award you credit for your internship experience. There are two options for submitting such a letter:

- If you are planning on participating in Nexus, taking COLL210, COLL 211 or doing an independent study based on your internship experience, email Jenny Watermill, Program Manager of Experiential Learning, at jwatermi@mtholyoke.edu and request that a letter be sent to the employer explaining the policy and credit options as described above. Include the following information:
  - your full name
  - the organization name, address and contact name
  - which credit bearing option, related to your internship, you are planning on completing or have completed
- If you have already obtained a faculty advisor for an independent study project, your advisor can complete the Verification of Academic Credit for Internship, found at [www.mtholyoke.edu/cdc/guides_forms_and_how_tos](http://www.mtholyoke.edu/cdc/guides_forms_and_how_tos), and send it directly to your internship organization. Please also send a copy of the completed letter to Jenny Watermill at the Career Development Center.
NEXUS: CURRICULUM TO CAREER

Mount Holyoke’s Nexus: Curriculum to Career program enables students to meaningfully link their liberal arts education with their career goals. Nexus gives students a focused, intentional way to connect their academic work with valuable professional experience beyond the gates, through internships, research projects, and summer employment.

A Nexus minor consists of 16 academic credits. Requirements include:

- three academic courses, chosen from a faculty-approved list
- an internship, research project, or summer job
- one 2 credit pre-experience course (COLL 210) (or a suitable social science methods course) and one 2 credit post-experience course (COLL211), which includes a public presentation at the annual LEAP (Learning from Application) Symposium

Go to www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/nexus for more details on the Nexus Program, including program requirements and a list of approved Nexus tracks.

COLL 210: READY FOR THE WORLD

The 2 credit Nexus course, COLL 210 “Ready for the World: Preparing your Internship and Research Project”, is designed for students embarking on summer internships and research projects. This two credit course focuses on the connections students will make in the world beyond Mount Holyoke, looking at the workings of organizations, understanding social dynamics in interpersonal and professional interactions, exploring interviewing techniques for research and other purposes, learning about organizational priorities, objectives, and ethical guidelines. Registration for this course takes place in November and the class is held the following March and April. COLL 210 is required for the Nexus minor but open to all students.

COLL 211: TYING IT ALL TOGETHER

The two credit Nexus course, COLL 211 “Tying it all Together: Curriculum to Career”, is for students returning from summer internships and research projects. Using their academic studies, students will develop a critical analysis of their summer experience and its larger organizational setting, identify and discuss transferable skills, develop networks for future opportunities, and reflect on long-term career goals. Each student will present at the fall LEAP Symposium in October. Registration for this course takes place in April and the class is held the following September and October. COLL 211 is required for the Nexus minor but open to all students.
295P OR 395P: INDEPENDENT STUDY

An independent study allows a student to pursue independent and original work on a special project with the assistance of a faculty sponsor. In most departments, this may be undertaken as course number 295 or 395, depending on the level of work undertaken and the previous preparation of the student. Undertaking an independent study project involves making plans with an instructor and obtaining her or his signature on the course registration card, as well as the signature of the department chair and the academic adviser. Sophomores, juniors, and seniors are eligible for independent study. A maximum of 8 credits of independent study may be taken in the sophomore and junior years. Seniors meeting certain standards may submit their projects for consideration for a degree with honors. A maximum of 16 credits of independent study or honors work may be counted toward the 128 credits required for graduation.

*Independent work with a practicum component in a professional or volunteer setting, and a substantive academic component supervised by a Mount Holyoke faculty sponsor, may be designated 295 Practicum or 395 Practicum. When the practicum takes place during a summer or January, the bulk of the credit-bearing work will normally take place during the following semester. Practicum designation ordinarily requires consultation with a faculty sponsor prior to commencement of the practicum. Independent work with a practicum component is governed by the same policies as all other independent work.*

Courses with practicum components bearing the word Practicum in their title may qualify international students with an F-1 visa for Curricular Practical Training (CPT). Students seeking CPT should contact the McCulloch Center for Global Initiatives. *You will also find this information in the Mount Holyoke College Bulletin & Course catalogue.*
INDEPENDENT STUDY: THINGS TO CONSIDER

Here are some things to consider when thinking about developing your internship experience into an independent study. Feel free to write down ideas that come to mind from thinking this through with a Career Counselor, Peer Career Advisor, or Faculty Sponsor. **Good Luck!**

(1) Why are you pursuing this internship experience? (e.g. what do you hope to learn about yourself, choosing a major, possible career field, etc?)

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(2) What kind of independent study do you want to develop: one that is research based, project based, or both. Write an independent study proposal. Your proposal should include requirements for written work (e.g. How many papers you will write, what type of papers you will write, etc.), when meetings will take place with your faculty sponsor(s), seminars you may attend, or other requirements. Be ready to discuss the components with your faculty sponsor. You can also develop your proposal with your faculty sponsor(s).

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(3) Research the internship/research field of your choice to learn what kind of academic or professional endeavor you may be able to pursue after your internship is complete.

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CAMPUS RESOURCES

Career Development Center - located next to the Health Center and Torrey Hall.

Advisors:
Multiple CDC advisors are available. All advisors offer internship and career support.

Jenny Watermill, Program Manager, Experiential Learning

Hours
Academic Year: Monday - Friday 8:30 am - 5:00 pm
Summer: Monday - Friday 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Contact us:
Email: cdc@mtholyoke.edu
Phone: (413) 538-2080, on campus ext. 2080
Fax: (413) 538-2081
Website: www.mtholyoke.edu/cdc

McCulloch Center for Global Initiatives - located in Porter Hall on the first floor. Take a left when you enter the building.

Advisors:
Kirk Lange, Director of International Experiential Learning
Jenny Medina, Immigration Specialist

Hours:
Academic Year: Monday - Friday, 8:30 am - 5:00 pm
Summer: Monday - Friday, 8:30 am - 4:00 pm

Contact us:
E-mail: global@mtholyoke.edu
Phone: (413) 538-2070, on-campus ext. 2072
Fax: (413) 538-3385
Website: www.mtholyoke.edu/global

Your Faculty Advisor