As a journalism major, am I required to do an internship?

Yes, an internship is a requirement of graduation. The purpose of the internship is to give you the opportunity to practice your profession in a “real-time” working environment as well as receive additional training and networking that will help you compete in the marketplace.

How do I find an internship?

There are many places to start. The key is to start early. Don’t wait until your senior year to start planning for this experience. Schedule an appointment with the department’s Internship Coordinator. Talk with your professors and other students in journalism. Look into the various media organizations here in San Luis Obispo and in your hometown. Check your email; the journalism department frequently lets students know of internship openings. There are also internship postings online. The Communication and Media section of Cal Poly’s Career Services site is a good place to start. If you’re interested in an internship in Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York or Washington, D.C., a good place to look is mediabistro.com. The journalism department will soon post a list of approved internship sites. You may also arrange your own internship. Just be sure it’s approved by the journalism department.

How do I receive credit for my internship?

Before you accept an internship position, you must IN ADVANCE submit an Internship Proposal Form to the Internship Coordinator in the journalism department. Once your internship is approved, you’ll receive a permission number so that you can register for JOUR 444, Media Internship, for 3 units of course credit.

When should I do my internship?

JOUR 444 is a 3-unit class designed to be taken in your senior year after you’ve completed the majority of your core courses and requirements. Many students line up their internships for the summer between their junior and senior years.
Are there any pre-requisites?

You must have your internship approved by the department and have completed at least one quarter in the capstone course in your specific area or track. Capstone courses are JOUR 352, JOUR 353 or JOUR 413.

Can the pre-requisites be waived?

All internships must be approved by the department. There are no waivers of this requirement. Completion of the capstone courses will be addressed on a case-by-case basis and only if you have equivalent work experience – through volunteer work, student media, etc. – in your chosen field of journalism or public relations.

May I take the pre-requisite course simultaneously with JOUR 444?

This is not recommended as it could produce serious conflicts of interest.

May I do my internship after I graduate?

You may “walk” in the June graduation ceremony and do your internship that summer, but you will not receive your degree until you’ve completed JOUR 444.

How do I submit a proposal?

You’ll find an electronic Internship Proposal Form online at http://form.jotform.us/form/22187904953158

Who should complete the Internship Proposal Form?

Your on-site supervisor, with your assistance, should complete and sign the electronic Internship Proposal Form. Once it’s submitted, you should contact the department’s Internship Coordinator.

When is the Internship Proposal Form due?

The Proposal Form is due well before the beginning of the quarter in which you will be enrolled in JOUR 444. The internship is designed as a 10-week assignment, and you must be ready to hit the ground
running from Day One of the quarter. Your on-site supervisor may turn in the Proposal From early, but if it is turned in late, you run the risk of not having your internship approved in time for it to qualify for course credit.

**May I start my internship before the quarter begins – or after it starts?**

To receive credit for JOUR 444, you must be enrolled in the course and you must complete 100 hours of internship work during the quarter you’re enrolled.

**May I do my internship in the summer and then enroll in JOUR 444 the following fall?**

No. You must be engaged in your internship the same quarter that you’re enrolled in the course.

**Isn’t it more expensive to enroll in JOUR 444 in the summer?**

The cost for a summer course is roughly equivalent to the cost of taking a course during the academic year. For example, a student taking JOUR 444 in the summer of 2013 would pay $1,017 for the 3-unit internship course (@ $339/unit). Students enrolling in 6 units or less of journalism courses during the 2013-14 academic year would pay $1,940.50 per quarter. For more information, see [http://afd.calpoly.edu/fees/fall2013u.asp](http://afd.calpoly.edu/fees/fall2013u.asp).

**What about financial aid for a summer internship?**

If you have financial aid, please consult with the Financial Aid Office before you line up a summer internship. For more information, see [http://financialaid.calpoly.edu/_finaid/summer.htm](http://financialaid.calpoly.edu/_finaid/summer.htm).

**May I get internship credit for the job I had last year?**

No. The University does not provide internship credit for past work experience.

**May I repeat JOUR 444 for credit?**

No. You may take JOUR 444 only once. There may be a way to receive credit for on-the-job experience through JOUR 400, Special Problems for Advanced Undergraduates. See the department’s Internship Coordinator for more information on this course.
May I do an internship remotely?

Yes, this is possible, and, in some cases, you can have a truly rewarding experience in an online internship. However, it’s important that you receive adequate professional supervision. That’s one reason you need to have your remote internship approved by the department.

May I be paid as an intern?

Absolutely. In fact, we would like for all journalism internships to be paid positions. Many are not paid.

How relevant does the internship have to be to my major?

To qualify for credit in JOUR 444, you should be engaged in a work experience that requires you to apply your skills in journalism, public relations, media or communications. Internships frequently provide stepping stones to your first career job, so it’s important to choose wisely.

What are the course requirements for JOUR 444?

Once you’re enrolled in the course, you’ll need to complete at least 100 hours of work on the job. The course is designed as a 10-week experience, with the expectation that you’ll work about 10 hours a week. This can vary, depending on the kind of work you’ll be doing. Some weeks you may work more, some less. What’s important is that you complete at least 100 hours by the end of the 10-week course. In addition to the work, you’ll submit the following to your Internship Coordinator at the appropriate times during the course:

- **Progress Report.** After you’ve completed 50 hours of work, or mid-way through the course, your on-site supervisor should submit a [Midterm Progress Report](#) online.
- **Provider Final Report.** During Week 10 of your internship, your on-site supervisor should submit an [Internship Provider Final Report](#).
- **Intern Final Report.** Also during Week 10, you must submit a [Student Intern Final Report](#). This report includes a **portfolio** of your work as an intern. In the portfolio, you should include substantial work samples accompanied by an explanation of the nature of the work and your role in it. You may need permission to post or duplicate any work produced under your employer’s copyright. Your portfolio may be submitted in a number of ways:
  - as an actual folder with hardcopy work samples
  - as a document with links to any websites, blogs, social media, video, audio, etc. that you produced
○ using a blog platform such as Wordpress. There are many sites online that will help you create an online portfolio.

• **Interview.** Once you’ve submitted all of the course reports, schedule an interview with your Internship Coordinator to discuss the internship and review your work.