

FAQs About the MCJ Internship (CJ 593)

Who is eligible for a CJ internship?

Any MCJ Graduate student with a 3.00 GPA or better.

How do I register for an internship?

Plan your internship experience well in advance of the beginning of the semester. Do not wait until the last minute to attempt to register for internship credit as there may not be enough time for you to complete the registration process.

Official course registration requires two forms that are signed by the student, Department Head, and MCJ Director, an ADD form and a SPECIAL STUDIES form. These are available to you only after you have secured the internship site and have completed the internship contract (the contract must be signed by you, your internship supervisor, and the MCJ Director – see below).

If you are a web-based student you will need to make arrangements with the MCJ Director to assist you in the completing the forms needed for course registration.

How do I find a place to do my internship?

The MCJ Director can provide you with information as to which agencies in the local Las Cruces area typically accept MCJ interns. You can also consult other students, other faculty, CJ career guides, the WWW, etc. for ideas about possible internship opportunities in your area of interest. It is also possible to organize an internship placement at your current place of employment providing that the internship experience is above and beyond your normal workplace activities and responsibilities. Once you have an idea of a place or places to contact, you are responsible for making the contact, securing the agreement, and getting the contract signed by your internship supervisor.

What does the internship involve?

To earn three credits of CJ 593 an intern must be on site and involved in your internship for 10 hours per week for 14 weeks of the 16 week semester, or for 20 hours per week during a summer session. Each intern must also create an internship log where you regularly record your hours, days, and activities. You are also required to write a reflective paper at the end of the semester describing your experiences, what you learned, and integrating your coursework with your “real world” experience in the internship. These materials must be submitted to the MCJ Director no later than the last day of class prior to the beginning of finals week.

How many hours per week do I have to be at the internship site?

During the regular semesters, you must be on site for 10 hours per week for 14 weeks of a sixteen week regular academic semester and 20 hours per week for each week of a six week summer session.

You may repeat the internship for additional credits at the same site or a different site.

Can I get paid for being an intern?

There are very few paid internships in the local area. Some students have sought internship opportunities through the coop office in Garcia Annex and have completed paid internships out of state. You may complete your internship anywhere, as long as it is a criminal justice or related agency approved by the MCJ Director.

Can I do an internship where I work?

Generally, no. But if the organization you work with is large enough that you can be assigned to another unit or program for internship purposes, you may discuss this possibility with the MCJ Director.

Does the internship count as an MCJ Criminal Justice elective?

Yes. Remember that there are three options for completing the MCJ program.

The *thesis option* requires you to complete 12 additional elective credits beyond the 15 credit core course requirement, of which 9 credits must be graduate Criminal Justice courses. Three of those credits may be selected from CJ 591* Directed Readings, CJ 592 Independent Research, or CJ 593 Internship. Remember that only one of these courses will count toward completion of our MCJ program curriculum and CJ 593 may be one of those courses.

The *research project option* requires you to complete 15 additional elective credits beyond the 15 credit core course requirement. Six of those credits must be graduate Criminal Justice courses and 9 credits may come from any academic department, including Criminal Justice. Up to 6 credits of CJ 591*, CJ 592, or CJ 593 may be used to satisfy the elective credit requirement. So, under this option a student may earn up to 6 credit hours of Internship credit.

The *focused coursework option* requires you to complete 21 additional elective credits beyond the 15 credit core course requirement. Twelve of those credits must be graduate Criminal Justice courses and 12 credits may come from any academic department, including Criminal Justice. Up to 6 credits of CJ 591*, CJ 592, or CJ 593

may be used to satisfy the elective credit requirement. So, under this option a student may earn up to 6 credit hours of Internship credit.

*Remember a student may enroll in a maximum of three credits of CJ 591. Additional credits of CJ 591 will not be counted toward your graduate curriculum.

Who should do an internship?

Any student who meets the requirements, would like to explore some aspect of the criminal justice system in more depth and receive on-the-job experience, and who can fit the internship into her/his schedule.

Steps to Seeking an Internship:

- 1. Determine whether the internship fits with your chosen degree plan option.**
- 2. Determine whether an internship fits in you schedule for a given semester.**
- 3. Determine what kind of work-related experience you'd like to have and the kind of agency in which you'd like to be placed.**
- 4. Locate an agency willing to work with you.**
- 5. Meet with the agency representative, discuss the parameters of the internship, go through their process for becoming an intern (some agencies may require a background check), and have them sign the contract.**
- 6. Bring the signed contract to the MCJ Director and register for the course.**