

STUDENT INTERNSHIPS FOR CHURCH AND FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

The Internship Philosophy

Jesus had a strategy for developing His followers into individuals who would become leaders in fulfilling His mission. Jesus called them to Himself, taught them, modeled a lifestyle which He wanted them to follow, cared for them, and held them accountable. He also involved them in ministry which was used as a learning experience for them.

Lincoln Christian University's philosophy of internships follows this holistic model, established by Jesus and used by Paul for training Timothy and others for ministry. Disciples were mentored for more effective ministry while they were involved in ministry.

Service learning and internships at Lincoln Christian University are an integral part of the student's training for ministry. Internships specifically require a strong partnership between the University and the on-site internship supervisors to provide meaningful internship experiences for the student that will help the student with his or her integration of theology and practice of ministry. Most LCU undergraduate students are NOT required, but encouraged, to complete an internship (varies from 1 – 6 credit hours, depending on the degree), usually during their senior year.

LCU believes that students need an opportunity to experience ministry, to reflect upon that ministry experience with a mentor, to articulate insights which have been gained, and to plan for future ministry utilizing the newly learned insights. This learning context will help the student integrate previous learning, formal and informal, which will enhance his or her total educational experience. Ideas learned in the classroom will be tried and evaluated in actual ministry settings.

At the heart of the student's internship is the belief that the development of the student's interior life is foundational to effective ministry. Our desire is that each student will learn to be God's person as well as be able to do ministry. The development of the student's identity and integrity is a vital concern to each faculty member at Lincoln Christian University. Spiritual formation is essential to the learning experience at LCU. Scripture teaches that the most effective ministry results from a heart surrendered fully to Christ and with an awareness of dependence upon Him (John 15:5-8).

Lincoln Christian University's goal for the internship is to prepare Christian leaders for the world who are growing in their relationship with Jesus Christ, in their ministry skill, and in their vision for the Kingdom of God.

Local churches and other organizations will be encouraged and revitalized as they share in this partnership of training leaders for Kingdom ministry.

Internship Goals

The primary goal of an LCU internship is to help the student grow in the integration of the Christian faith, academics, and the practice of ministry. This goal can be met by helping the student to develop ministry skills, leadership skill, to reflect theologically on his or her ministry, to grow in his or her self-understanding, and to grow in his or her relationship with God, mentor, church, and peers. (Some of our students serve on internships in non-church settings. It is in those internships that students are encouraged to find a spiritual mentor to help them with these goals.)

This primary goal will be accomplished in relationship with the on-site internship supervisor, individuals at the internship site, and the student's faculty supervisor.

The following five strategies will be utilized in achieving the goal (these strategies are taken from *Experiencing Ministry Supervision*, William Pyle and Mary Alice Seals, editors):

- **Nurturing Personal Spirituality:** The inner life of the student must be developing during the internship experience. Spiritual formation is foundational for ministry.
- **Developing Relational Skills:** The experiential learning provided by the internship will enhance the opportunities for the student to develop his or her relational skills with guidance from a mentor.
- **Reflecting Theologically:** The student will be assisted in theological reflection upon the ministry events which he or she experiences in the ministry setting.
- **Learning Through Relationships:** Personal relationships will provide learning experiences as well as support for the intern.
- **Learning Through Ministry Events:** Participation in the planning, recruiting, implementation and reviewing phases of ministry events will provide opportunities for integration of classroom learning and ministry.

The Student Intern

Most LCU undergraduate degree-seeking students are NOT required to complete a supervised internship experience, but are encouraged to, in their areas of specialization. The internship requirements range from 1-6 credit hours, a minimum of 40-50 hours of experience and academic work required per credit hour earned. We encourage scheduling internships during the senior year

The Internship Site and Supervisor

The student, with appropriate assistance and approval, will select an internship site and supervisor for his or her internship. The on-site supervisor will enter into a Learning Covenant with the faculty supervisor and the student. This Learning Covenant will include clearly defined expectations.

The Faculty Supervisor

A faculty member from the student's area of specialization will serve as his or her faculty supervisor during the internship experience. The faculty supervisor will work with the student in preparing for the internship experience. This includes reviewing any student assignments, communication, and assigning the final grades. Faculty supervisors may contact the on-site supervisor and intern to arrange a visit to the internship site. Since an internship must be directly related to the intern's field of study, the faculty supervisor in that field will approve or not approve each potential on-site supervisor (based on-site supervisor's qualifications and, most importantly, the students' academic and practical ministry needs).

The On-Site Internship Supervisor

The person in the ministry setting to whom the student is most responsible will serve as the intern's on-site supervisor. He or she will be the primary model for the student and will assist him or her with the integration of theology and ministry in a church setting, or character and service in a non-church organization. The supervisor will also help the student to reflect upon his or her internship experiences through weekly scheduled meetings as well as monthly Reflection Reports and a Final Evaluation Report

to the faculty supervisor. The on-site supervisor will also grade the overall internship experience according to how the student met his or her individualized goals and school learning objectives as listed in the student's Learning Covenant.

The Learning Covenant

An explicit, written covenant will be developed as a guide for the internship and for subsequent evaluation. The Learning Covenant must be completed before a student can be registered for the internship. The complete Learning Covenant will be sent via email to the student, faculty supervisor, on-site supervisor and academic dean. It must be approved via email by all parties within two weeks of its receipt and prior to the start of the internship. The covenant may be refined during the first two weeks of the internship. All changes must be communicated to the Faculty Supervisor.

What an LCU Internship Is and Is Not

An LCU internship is a special relationship between an on-site supervisor, faculty supervisor, and the intern working together to shape the student to be a leader for the world. It is an opportunity to help a student learn new skills and apply the knowledge they have gained in the LCU classrooms. Although Lincoln Christian University students work hard on their internships, the purpose of an internship is not to provide inexpensive part-time help to fill gaps in the organization's staff. Internships require a qualified on-site supervisor who is currently in the field directly related to the student's major (or focus) and who will mentor and invest in the life of the student.

Areas of Specialization

All undergraduate students at LCU are required to complete core courses in Bible and Theology. Students also choose a particular "major" or "specialization" that they believe best suits their gifts, interests, and call. Listed below, are the focus areas from which one might choose.

- Biblical Studies
- Business Administration
- Children's ministry
- Christian Ministry
- Communication Studies
- Intercultural Studies (Missions)
- Psychology – Agency or Church-setting
- Philosophy
- Preaching
- Spiritual Formation and Ministry
- Youth and Family Ministry
- Worship Ministry