

Economics Department Internship Program

FAQs

Below you'll find answers to frequently asked questions about the Economics Department Internship Program (EDIP).

What is an internship?

An internship is an activity that formally integrates academic study with practical experience in a cooperating organization. The internship may be paid or unpaid, on- or off-campus, part-time or full-time. Internships can be in business, non-profit, government, or other settings relevant to the student's academic pursuits. In any case, internships should involve closely monitored and structured work that complements the student's academic experience.

What are the benefits of doing an internship?

There are many benefits to doing an internship. Internships give students a chance to experience a real working environment, apply their economics knowledge, learn new skills, engage in professional networking, and test out a career path.

Can graduate students do Econ internships for academic credit?

Yes. The Econ Department offers Econ 285, a graduate-level internship course, for our graduate students.

What kinds of internships do Econ students do?

Econ students engage in a wide variety of paid and unpaid internships. They work with for-profits, non-profits, schools, universities, government organizations, and even other SJSU departments. Because economics involves decision-making, cost-benefit analysis and allocation of scarce resources such as time and money, nearly all human activity involves economic thinking. Regardless of your job description, economics likely plays a role.

I don't have an internship, but I want one. What should I do?

The process of getting an internship is very similar to searching for and securing a job. Most students begin by simply looking through internship openings. Occasionally students will begin by approaching particular organizations that they want to work for, and inquire about the possibility of designing an internship or project there. Regardless of the approach, the process of searching for internships, applying, interviewing, and getting an offer will likely take several weeks, if not months. We recommend that you browse the [SJSU Career Center webpages on how to prepare for an internship](http://www.sjsu.edu/careercenter/webpages/on-how-to-prepare-for-an-internship). <http://www.sjsu.edu/careercenter/students/find-a-job-internship/>

Where should I look for internship opportunities?

We recommend starting with these excellent sources: the SJSU SpartaJobs database, maintained by the [SJSU Career Center](http://www.sjsu.edu/careercenter/) <http://www.sjsu.edu/careercenter/>, and [Internbound.com](https://internbound.com/) <https://internbound.com/>, where you can find a variety of local internships, many of them paid. You should also chat with people within your network, including the Internship Director, and let them know what you are looking for, just in case they know of any opportunities in your chosen field.

How many units can I get for my internship?

One unit is equivalent to 50 hours of approved internship work. Undergraduate interns can enroll in 3 units of Econ 185. Graduate students can enroll in 3 units per semester of Econ 285, our graduate level internship course.

I've got an internship! Now can I get some units for it?

First you'll need to make sure that your internship qualifies. Contact the Economics Internship Director directly. Be prepared to describe what you'll be doing on the internship, and how it relates to (and builds on) what you are learning in your economics classes.

To ensure a smooth application process, it's a good idea to check in with the Internship Director before you initiate your search.

I've got an internship and the organization requires me to receive college credit for it. What should I do?

The decision of whether or not an internship merits academic rests solely with academic departments. Within the Econ Department, the Internship Director reviews students' applications and determines whether or not the internship can count for course credit.

To receive Econ credit for your internship, you'll need to submit the required paperwork to the internship director. Once you have the director's approval, you will be provided with an add code for the course.

Some organizations mistakenly believe that if a student is receiving academic credit for the internship then they don't need to be paid. This is not the case. Learn more about this important issue at the [SJSU Career Center Academic Credit and Compensation webpage](http://www.sjsu.edu/careercenter/employers/internship-recruitment/internship-academic-credit-compensation/), <http://www.sjsu.edu/careercenter/employers/internship-recruitment/internship-academic-credit-compensation/>.

I've got an internship and I've already worked ## hours. Can I count those?

No, unfortunately not. Students can only start counting internship hours for academic credit after they have successfully submitted their EDIP paperwork and have been accepted into the EDIP program. Hours cannot be counted retroactively.

I'd like to enroll. Can I have an add code?

You cannot have an add code until you have successfully completed the EDIP application. Add codes are issued only after applications have been formally approved.

To get your internship formally approved, contact the Internship Director. After successfully submitting the completed application, you'll receive instructions on getting an add code.

What is the required EDIP paperwork?

All students who want to participate in EDIP must complete the EDIP Learning Plan (LP) and Participation Guidelines (PG).

If the internship is with a non-SJSU organization, then that organization will need to sign a [New Partner Proposal](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/ugs/faculty/curriculum/guide/SJS4) <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/ugs/faculty/curriculum/guide/SJS4>.

The EDIP director can give you these forms and detailed instructions on how to complete them.

Can I enroll in the internship units for Summer/Winter?

No. The internship courses (Econ 185 and 285) are only offered during the Fall and Spring semesters. *However, you can still do an approved internship over the Summer or Winter semester.*

You'll follow the normal steps of getting your internship approved by the Internship Director. As you do the internship you'll regularly complete and submit all of the assignments. Then, in the very next Fall or Spring semester, you will be officially enrolled in the class for credit during that semester.

I already did an internship. Can I get credit for it even though it's over?

No. Unfortunately we cannot retroactively offer credit for past internships.

I currently have a job. Can I get some internship units?

Generally speaking students cannot use their jobs for EDIP units. Students may, however, propose a new project for completion at their current place of employment, as long as it goes beyond their ordinary work responsibilities and clearly involves utilization of your economic knowledge and/or skills.

Please contact the Internship Director to discuss your situation.

I've got my internship, and I'm enrolled in my Econ internship units. Now what?

As with any other class, you'll be doing assignments throughout the semester for your internship units. To receive academic credit for your internship you must satisfactorily complete these

assignments. Note that you'll do these assignments *in addition to* the work you do on your internship.

What are the EDIP assignments?

The internship assignments include a weekly logbook, a report, and other written work. Each of these assignments, all of which are designed to be very practical, will be graded credit/no credit.

The Internship Director will give you more information about assignments and deadlines once your internship begins.

What do I have to do to pass my internship units?

The most important step towards receiving a passing grade for your internship units is to complete the number of hours you've contracted for. If you signed up for 1 unit, you must complete 50 hours of approved internship work. If you signed up for 2 units, you must complete 100 hours of approved internship work, and so on.

If you do not complete your contracted number of hours, you will not pass the units and you won't receive academic credit for your internship.

In addition to completing your hours, you must also complete and submit the EDIP assignments in a timely manner, according to the stated deadlines.

I completed my internship. Is there anything else I need to do?

Congratulations!

Please help us spread the word about EDIP, and let us know if you'd like to recommend your organization to future internship students.