

Graduate Internships and Co-ops Motion

What the motion does:

- Provides a framework for programs to offer internships/co-ops to their students
- Modifies Graduate Catalog to provide additional detail for students to understand the process
- Clarifies expectations for the experience (must align with plan of study, maximum number of credits)
- Clarifies requirements of student (12 credits of WPI graduate work complete, may not double-count towards degree requirements)

Flexibility for Programs and Departments

- “Opt in” course numbers allow tracking of the experience
- Flexibility for programs in terms of grading (pass/fail or letter grades) and credits (0-3 credit hours)
- Requires approval of “departmental designee” (e.g. grad coordinator, faculty advisor, or another individual) to ensure the internship meets requirements

Rules and Limits for Internships/Co-ops

- Maximum of 3 credit hours may count towards degree requirements (programs may impose stricter limits or not allow at all)
- Students must complete 12 credits of graduate coursework at WPI and be in good academic standing before registering
- Must align with the student's plan of study and be related to the specific graduate degree program
- In most cases, cannot be doubled up with TA support during the academic year unless permission is given from department

Rationale

- Current Graduate Catalog has Internships listed under “Financial Aid” section. New text will be its own section, to emphasize the learning value of the experience.
- Some programs wish to offer internships/co-ops at the graduate level
- Difficult to track students who do graduate internships/co-ops
- “PhD Plan” for some students might include this experience (current students funded on IGERT must complete such an experience)
- Currently, programs use ISP or other mechanisms to facilitate this process

Changes made from 2-week notice version

Specify number of credits instead of “one year”, and allow departments to designate who approves

- *Students enrolled in a Master’s program may participate in the graduate internship experience after successfully completing ~~their first year of~~ 12 credits of graduate coursework at WPI, provided they are in good academic standing. With approval of the departmental designee ~~faculty advisor of record~~, ...*

New Course Description (Master's shown)

XYZ 5900 "Master's Graduate Internship Experience"

(*** Credits)

A Master's graduate internship experience is designed to enhance the professional development of the graduate student. Master's graduate internships must align with the student's plan of study and may be pursued at either a company or an external organization. This course is subject to approval by the departmental designee (pending administrative checks by the Registrar and the Career Development Center) to ensure that student's program of study supports graduate internship experience and that the proposed internship aligns with student's graduate studies.

Amendment proposed by C. Shue

Allow for the possibility of a student doing an internship at their current place of employment, if they can document that it will provide a new learning/project experience

Add the following text to the top paragraph of the second page

Because the purpose of an internship is to provide a student with a new experience, graduate students already employed full-time or part-time may not participate as interns at the same place of employment without department approval.