

## INTERNSHIP PROGRAM OVERVIEW 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.

The Internship Program at Lincoln Christian University has been developed to be an integral part of the student's training for ministry. It requires a strong partnership between the University and the Internship Sites/Field Mentors to provide meaningful internship experiences, which include an experienced Field Mentor who can help the student with his/her integration of theology and practice of ministry. Therefore, all four-year degree students at Lincoln are required to complete an internship (varies from 3 – 12 hrs, depending on the degree) usually during their senior year. Although the fall semester is the best scenario, some students go on their internship during the spring semester.

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/her total educational experience. Ideas learned in the classroom will be tried and evaluated in actual ministry settings.

At the heart of this Internship Program 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 skills, 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.

***The Internship Program is not just a requirement to get out of the way, but an integral part of the education process, directly related to the students' degree. See the illustration below.***

### LCC's model

Gen Ed Field Classes	Bible/Theology Field Classes	Christian Ministry Field Classes	
		Major-specific classes-18 hrs (on campus)	Internship-12 hrs (major specific "classes"-off campus)
<b>39 credits</b>	<b>41 credits</b>	<b>30 credits</b>	

The internship is not just a semester of ministry experience but integral part of each degree's requirements. Instead of taking 12-hours of instruction in on-campus classes, we require our students to learn in the "classroom of real ministry" by going on a 12 hour internship. Field Mentors act, in a way, as adjunct professors guiding the students to learn in practical ways that is often times impossible on campus. Therefore, the internship must be in direct relationship to the specified field of study. It is not possible to do an internship in some area that doesn't relate to the major.

### A traditional model

Gen Ed Field Classes	Bible/Theology Field Classes	Major-Specific Classes (on campus)
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## Internship Goals

The primary goal of the Internship Program is to help students to 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, to reflect theologically on his/her ministry, to grow in his/her self-understanding, and to grow in his/her relationship with God, mentor, church, and peers. (Some of our students serve on internships in a non-church setting. It is on those internships that students are encouraged to find a spiritual mentor to help them with these goals.)

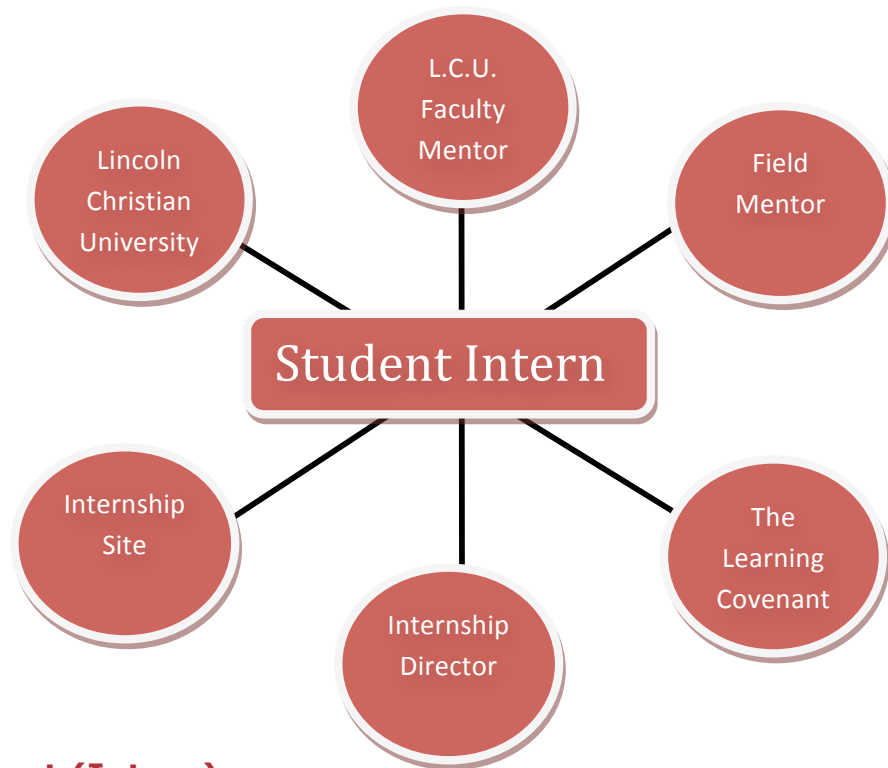
This primary goal will be accomplished in relationship with the Field Mentor, individuals at the Internship Site, the student's Faculty Mentor, and the Internship Director.

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/her relational skills with guidance from a mentor.
- **Reflecting Theologically:** The student will be assisted in theological reflection upon the ministry events which he/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.

## Internship Components

Since LCU's goal is to *prepare Christian leaders for the world*, we seek to use several components to make this goal a reality. Below is a diagram that illustrates how each internship component works with the others to help each student become the Christian leader that God desires.



### **The Student (Intern)**

Each degree-seeking student is required to complete a supervised internship experience in his/her area of specialization. The 12-hour internship will preferably run from June to December, the fall semester of the student's senior year (August to December and January to May internships are optional). The student must complete a minimum of 4 months, including at least 600 hours of experience. The student will receive 12 hours of credit for the internship. The majors which require a 12-hour internship are: Preaching, Children and Family Ministry, Christian Spiritual Formation, Youth Ministry, Youth & Preaching, Intercultural Studies and General Ministry.

The 6-hour internship can be done during the summer or during a semester. The student must complete a minimum of 3 months, including at least 300 hours of experience. The majors that require a 6-hour internship are: Psychology, Biblical Exposition, and Worship Ministry.

Intercultural Studies students have the option to complete a four-hour internship experience during the summer usually, but sometimes during the semester. The student must complete a minimum of 2 months, including at least 175 hours of experience.

Business, Philosophy, and General Studies students are required to complete a 3-hour supervised internship experience. The student must complete a minimum of 2 months, including at least 150 hours of experience.

### **The Internship Site and Field Mentor**

The student, with appropriate assistance and approval, will select a Field Mentor/Internship Site for his/her internship. The Field Mentor and church, mission agency, para-church, or non-church organization will enter into a Learning Covenant with the Faculty Mentor, Internship Director, and the student. This Learning Covenant will include clearly defined expectations.

## **The Internship Director**

The Director of the Internship Program coordinates the Internship Program. The Director (along with Faculty Mentors) are responsible for supervising students during the entire experience, including a period of orientation and debriefing. The Internship Director and Faculty Mentors will approve the Field Mentors, review student reports, and assign the final grades.

## **The Faculty Mentor**

A faculty member from the student's area of specialization will serve as his/her Faculty Mentor during the internship experience. The Faculty Mentor will work with the student in preparing for the internship and will communicate with the student on a regular basis during the internship to advise and encourage him/her. The Faculty Mentor will also contact the Field Mentor and intern to arrange a visit to the internship site, unless extenuating circumstances prohibit it. The Faculty Mentor will evaluate and grade all Academic Integration Goals and assignments before grades are due to the Internship Office. Since an internship must be directly related to the intern's field of study, the Faculty Mentor in that field will approve or not approve, along with the Internship Director, each potential Field Mentor (based on Field Mentor Qualifications and, most importantly, the students' academic and practical ministry needs).

## **The Field Mentor**

The person in the ministry setting to whom the student is most responsible will serve as the intern's Field Mentor. He/She will be the primary model for the student and will assist him/her with the integration of theology and ministry in a church setting, or character and service in a non-church organization. The mentor will help the student to reflect upon his/her internship experiences through weekly scheduled meetings, Monthly Reflection Reports, and a Midway Progress Report. The Field Mentor will also grade the overall internship experience according to how the student met his/her individualized ministry 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 will be developed by the student, Faculty Mentor, and Field Mentor, with approval given by the Internship Director. This must be completed and approved by all parties prior to the start of the internship. The covenant may be refined during the first 2-3 weeks of the internship. All changes must be communicated to the Internship Office.

## **The University**

Lincoln Christian University will provide direction for the students and Field Mentors through the process of selection, involvement, and evaluation. Resources are available for training and support.

The Faculty Mentor (or The Internship Director or other LCU faculty member, if necessary and able) will conduct on-site visits to provide encouragement and direction for each intern and Field Mentor, unless extenuating circumstances prohibit it.

## What an LCU Internship Is and Is Not

An LCU internship is a special relationship between a Field Mentor, Faculty Mentor, and God working together to shape the student to be a Christian leader for the world. It is an opportunity to help a student become what God is calling him or her to be.

Although Lincoln Christian University students work hard on their internships, an internship is not about getting some cheap part-time help to fill a few gaps in the church or organization's staff. There must be a qualified mentor who is currently in the field directly related to the student's major (or focus) and who will invest in the life of the student. For a more complete explanation of "what an internship is *not*" contact the Lincoln Christian University Internship Office.

## Areas of Specialization

All students at LCU have a dual major -- Bible and Ministry. Students also choose a particular "major" or "specialization" that they believe best suits their gifts, interests, and call. Below are listed over a dozen such majors and/or focus areas from which one might choose.

- Children and Family Ministry
- Business Administration
- Christian Spiritual Formation
- Psychology – Agency or Church-setting
- Philosophy
- Intercultural Studies (Missions)
- Preaching
- Youth Ministry (focuses on Campus Ministry, Camping, and Inner City)
- Youth & Preaching
- Worship Ministry

