Polk State Internship Program
Overview: International Internships

Background: Polk State offers Study Abroad opportunities, Global Studies Certificate, and other Global Initiatives in alignment with and support of the college’s Strategic Initiatives for Global Education. International Internships are a component of the college’s Institute for Global Initiatives and are managed through the Polk State Internship Program (under the District Dean of Academic and Student Services) by the internship coordinator.

Certificate/course credit: Students interested in a global internship experience may earn two of the five requirements toward completion of the Global Studies Certificate.

- Students may earn course credit through either an AS, BAS, or AA elective credit, as applicable for their program of study. The AS practicum courses for internship credit are detailed in Section I of the Internship Program Handbook (www.polk.edu/intern).
- Course credit for AA students may be earned through SLS 2941 Internship: Organizational Culture (online).
- BAS students may speak to their program director for details regarding course credit eligibility.

Financial Aid: It is preferable that students earn course credit and maintain their full course load during the term in which they pursue an international internship in order to secure any applicable financial aid; however, students may want to plan accordingly since the internship trip will be 2 ½ weeks in duration just prior to the Thanksgiving Break when many classes may have exams and/or assignments due.

There may be additional financial support available. Students may wish to consult with the Study Abroad Coordinator, Kim Simpson, for more information. ksimpson@polk.edu

Eligibility: This opportunity is open to any Polk State who:
1. Is currently enrolled and in good academic and financial standing with the college.
2. Maintains a current GPA of 2.5 and has completed a minimum of 30 course hours within the AS/AA program.
3. Meets the Institute for Global Initiatives criteria for international travel.
4. Meets any criteria specific to the internship location (e.g., foreign language skills, health, etc.)
5. Completes all requirements prior to trip departure (e.g., valid passport, medical/vaccination requirements, medical and travel insurance, final payment for trip, required documentation, attending all pre-trip meetings/orientation, etc.)
6. Is a minimum of 18 years of age.
7. Ideal students are also capable of functioning independently, curious regarding the host country’s culture, responsible for adhering to any/all trip guidelines, and flexible regarding site experiences.
8. This trip involves considerable walking throughout the trip as well as responsibility for one’s own luggage and belongings. Polk State cannot confirm a foreign country’s ability to provide for ADA needs
or accommodations in public spaces, work sites, and/or in homestay environments. Students participating in this trip must be able to adapt to a wide range of environmental conditions.

**NOTE:** See the Institute for Global Initiatives and/or International Internship site on polk.edu for additional details regarding travel abroad requirements. Any appeals to these criteria must be submitted through the Global Initiatives – Education Sub-Committee for review and final decision. Polk State College maintains the right to cancel any travel abroad trip based on the Department of State Travel Advisory Warnings and/or as a result of lack of student participation or individual student cooperation.

**International Internship trip location: Mérida, Mexico**

The Polk State, faculty-led, international internship site for fall of 2014 is in Mérida, Mexico. Polk State also provides for a resident coordinator in Mérida, who assists with all internship placements and student home-stay arrangements. Both the trip leader and the resident coordinator are bilingual and are very familiar with Mérida and the surrounding area.

Internships are available for students seeking experience in the international/global arena in order to further their global competence, Spanish language skills, and/or global workforce experience. While there are opportunities for a broad range of career interests, some of the likely areas of interest include: international business administration/operations, supply chain management, education, the hospitality industry, and global health.

**Home-stays:** Students are placed in family home stays upon completion of the on-site orientation. Home-stay sites are vetted by the resident coordinator and provide students with an upper-middle class home environment in which to reside and take meals while working locally. It is likely that other students (including those from Polk State) will also be staying at the same home-stay location. These expenses are part of the cost of the internship trip.

**Internship placement sites:** Students are placed by the resident coordinator based on several criteria:
1. Language skills in Spanish
2. Program of study/area of interest
3. Specific job/internship requirements

Students will walk or take local transportation to and from their internship site. Students will be expected to meet any specific site requirements for their work experience. Students will complete an average of 30 work hours. If the student’s AS practicum course requires more work hours than the student can earn in his/her international internship site, a companion internship placement will be secured either prior to or following the international internship trip as requested/required. Students are not paid during their international internship experience.

**Excursions/entertainment:** Several excursions to enjoy the area’s history, natural beauty, and culture will be arranged as part of the on-site orientation upon arriving in Mérida and on weekends. Students are also encouraged to attend free local evening festivals and entertainment (with a Polk State travel
buddy). For more information regarding the orientation and/or excursions, please contact Professor Julie James at: jkjames@polk.edu for details.

**Cost:** The cost for the international internship trip to Mérida, Mexico including the student’s airfare, home-stay, meals, orientation and scheduled excursions is approximately $1800. Expenses will not be more than this amount, although based on the number of students participating it could be somewhat less, therefore if students budget for the trip at $1800 expenses will be covered.

Expenses are approximately as follows:
- Airfare and bus: $475
- Hotel/Homestay arrangements: $700
- Orientation/Excursions/Insurance: $440
- Faculty/Resident Coordinator expenses: $200

The student’s personal spending money should not be more than $100-200.
For more information, please see [http://www.polk.edu/institute-for-global-initiatives/international-internships/](http://www.polk.edu/institute-for-global-initiatives/international-internships/) or contact Lynn Chisholm at lchisholm@polk.edu.

**To register:** [https://higherreach.polk.edu/modules/](https://higherreach.polk.edu/modules/) or contact Kim Simpson, Study Abroad Coordinator at ksimpson@polk.edu for more information.
Polk State College is committed to and encourages equal opportunity/equity/access for its programs, services and activities.