

## Graduate Internship Information

### Internship Coordinator

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### Course Description

- MRAT 6360 Graduate Internship: Three to six credits. Prerequisite: Permission of department. Practical experience for advanced students in a professional recording industry setting. Pass/Fail.

### Prerequisites

- Current enrollment with good standing in the Master of Fine Arts Candidate in Recording Arts and Technologies program
- Completion of first full year of MFA curriculum
- Approved Internship Application (Permission of Department)

NOTE: All prerequisite courses must be completed with a grade of “B” or better.

NOTE: Concurrent enrollment in an internship and prerequisite course is not allowed.

NOTE: Employers may elect to require additional courses in specific areas

### Credit Hours

- No more than a total of 6 credit hours from MRAT 6360 will be counted toward your MFA guided electives.
- You may register for 3 credit hours per semester during the fall and spring terms.
- You may register for 3 to 6 credit hours during the summer terms.
- Credit hours are awarded as follows:

Credit Hours of Enrollment	=	Minimum Number of Hours on the Job
3	=	225
4	=	300
5	=	375
6	=	450

- EXAMPLE: In order to earn 3 credits, 225 must be spent on the job. This is an average of approximately 16 hours per week during a 14-week semester. However, there is not a weekly minimum.
- 4, 5, and 6-hour internships are intended for students and internship providers who desire a full-time internship opportunity. 4, 5, and 6-hour internships will be approved only for students without full-time course & workloads and at the discretion of the Audio Production Internship Coordinator.

NOTE: Before you register, be sure your internship provider can offer enough work hours so you can complete the required hours for the number of credits you want to earn.

NOTE: You are fully expected to complete the total number of hours required by the number of credit hour for which you enroll. You may not change the number of credit hours for which you have enrolled after the last day to add a class.

*All internship hours must be completed on the job in a professional environment under the supervision of the internship provider. Internship hours worked independently without supervision may not be logged or counted toward the required number of hours (e.g. your provider cannot send you files to edit at home). The MFA Internship Coordinator and internship provider must approve any exception to this rule in advance.*

### **Post-Graduation Internships**

- Students who have graduated may enroll in an internship course within one year of their date of graduation. Students who have graduated will not be allowed to enroll in an internship course after one year.
- Students wishing to intern after graduation must re-enroll in the university and register for at least one hour of internship credit.

### **International Student Internships**

- International students are allowed to intern for credit, but must have the experience approved as "Curricular Practical Training" (CPT) or "Optional Practical Training" (OPT). CPT is used if the credits are to be counted towards graduation and OPT is for post-graduation internships. To qualify for these programs, contact the MTSU Office of International Affairs to complete the required U.S. Immigration and MTSU paperwork needed to gain approval. The procedure is outlined on the "International Student" page of the audio internship website. The needed forms and approvals are available in the MTSU Office of International Affairs.

### **Repeating Internships**

- MRAT 6360 may be repeated for additional credit. However, no more than a total of 6 hours of internship can be counted toward MFA guided electives.
- If you wish to re-enroll in MRAT 6360, you must complete the application process in full each time you register. This includes an interviewing with the MFA Internship Coordinator, filing all required paperwork, and submitting an updated resume that reflects the experience you've gained from previous internships.
- Students are encouraged to work with different providers when repeating internships. Students may repeat an internship with the same provider, but only if the internship provider is willing to involve the student in additional and/or substantially different activities or activities with significantly increased complexity and/or responsibilities. Internships with the same provider will be approved only if the above criteria have been met. If you plan on interning with an internship provider for which you've worked in the recent past (or at present), the interview is not necessary.
- Students who have an unresolved "Incomplete" in an internship course will not be allowed to re-enroll in the internship course until the Pass or Fail grade is entered.
- Students who have received the grade of an "F" in an internship course will not be allowed to re-enroll in the internship course.

## Internship Opportunities

- All internship providers/opportunities must be certified for credit by the MFA Internship Coordinator prior to the start of any internship.
- Students are encouraged to develop their own internship opportunities, but these must meet the approval of the MFA Internship Coordinator before the internship starts. Approval criteria include, but are not limited to:
  - ✓ Must be primarily an audio or music production internship
  - ✓ Must include meaningful training, instruction, exposure to professional operations, etc.
  - ✓ Must be supervised by a full-time audio professional
  - ✓ All work must take place in an appropriate professional environment
- All internships must be approved by the MFA Internship Coordinator prior to the start of any internship.
- All students must interview with both the MFA Internship Coordinator and the potential internship providers.
- The decision to accept a student for an internship is completely up to the internship provider. However, a student may be denied a specific internship opportunity at MFA Internship Coordinator's discretion.
- Students are not guaranteed an internship position with any particular internship provider; however, every effort will be made to match student interests with appropriate provider opportunities. As many students as possible will be accommodated, but there is no guarantee that all qualified students will find internship placement. You may be competing against other applicants for the same position. Internship providers are under no obligation to you or the university to make internship opportunities available.
- Internship providers are not guaranteed they will be provided with student interns at any given time. MTSU is under no obligation to make interns available to the industry.
- Internships with providers that are located in private residences will not be approved. Internship providers must be located or work in non-residential facilities and must operate as legitimate commercial businesses.
- Internships with independent engineers or producers may be approved, but all student work must take place with a commercial work place such as a studio, shop, or venue. Student interns are not permitted to work in private residences or in the homes of internship providers.

NOTE: Use of MTSU facilities or equipment is not allowed as part of an internship.

- You can intern with only one internship provider during a single semester or summer.

NOTE: You are expected to fulfill the internship commitment you agree to at the beginning of the semester.

- The internship provider and/or coordinator can terminate an internship at any time.
- Under extreme circumstances a student may terminate their internship before the end of the semester. This can only be done in consultation with MFA Internship Coordinator and internship provider. If after the coordinator contacts the internship provider and feels it is appropriate to terminate the internship, the student must submit a written release from their internship provider. The student must also drop or withdraw from the class.
- Requirements for internship opportunities may be further defined by the MFA Internship Coordinator based on the needs of individual providers and workplace environment. For example, completion of advanced courses might be required for some internship opportunities.

- The MFA Internship Coordinator may suggest an internship that is appropriate to your current abilities. While this guidance may be offered, students are under no obligation to intern with suggested internship providers.

## Housing

- Housing is the responsibility of the student. However, students might contact local colleges and universities in the area in which they will intern to determine if dorm rooms might be available.

## Compensation

- Interns are generally not paid but receive compensation in the form of university credit. Please review the following quotation from the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act:

Please review the following excerpt from Fact Sheet #71 from the Wage & Hour Division of the U.S. Department of Labor regarding interns and the federal Fair Labor Standards Act:

**The Test for Unpaid Interns and Students:** Courts have used the “primary beneficiary test” to determine whether an intern or student is, in fact, an employee under the FLSA.<sup>2</sup> In short, this test allows courts to examine the “economic reality” of the intern-employer relationship to determine which party is the “primary beneficiary” of the relationship. Courts have identified the following seven factors as part of the test:

1. The extent to which the intern and the employer clearly understand that there is no expectation of compensation. Any promise of compensation, express or implied, suggests that the intern is an employee—and vice versa.
2. The extent to which the internship provides training that would be similar to that which would be given in an educational environment, including the clinical and other hands-on training provided by educational institutions.
3. The extent to which the internship is tied to the intern’s formal education program by integrated coursework or the receipt of academic credit.
4. The extent to which the internship accommodates the intern’s academic commitments by corresponding to the academic calendar.
5. The extent to which the internship’s duration is limited to the period in which the internship provides the intern with beneficial learning.
6. The extent to which the intern’s work complements, rather than displaces, the work of paid employees while providing significant educational benefits to the intern.
7. The extent to which the intern and the employer understand that the internship is conducted without entitlement to a paid job at the conclusion of the internship.

Courts have described the “primary beneficiary test” as a flexible test, and no single factor is determinative. Accordingly, whether an intern or student is an employee under the FLSA necessarily depends on the unique circumstances of each case. If analysis of these circumstances reveals that an intern or student is actually an employee, then he or she is entitled to both minimum wage and overtime pay under the FLSA. On the other hand, if the analysis confirms that the intern or student is not an employee, then he or she is not entitled to either minimum wage or overtime pay under the FLSA.

- Your internship provider may elect to pay you or make contributions to help offset the expenses of tuition and commuting. These arrangements are strictly between the student and internship provider.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Under the law above, as a "trainee" (intern) you are ***not*** afforded of the rights of a regular employee. Please refer to the following links for further information:

<http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.htm>

<http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.pdf>

### Additional Advice

- As an intern, you are an unofficial representative of the Department of Recording Industry, College of Media and Entertainment, and Middle Tennessee State University. More importantly, you represent yourself. Like it or not, your actions & words will reflect upon us all.
  - \* Be professional at all times, starting with the interview (have a clean copy of your resume and references)!
  - \* Professional attire suggested for the interview.
  - \* Be aware that you are in another person's business environment and your actions reflect upon that business and could affect their livelihood.
  - \* Be prompt and reliable. Late interns are usually known as "ex-interns."
  - \* Be sure to communicate appropriately with the internship provider and coordinator.
  - \* Dress and groom appropriately for your environment.
  - \* Politeness, respect, and appropriateness are expected of all interns at all times.
  - \* A good attitude and vibe are vital.
  - \* Be self-reliant and a self-starter, but don't overstep your bounds.
  - \* Interns who show flexibility and a willingness to learn tend to find more success.
  - \* What happens in the work place is considered confidential.
  - \* Find ways to make yourself useful...and don't be afraid to pay a few dues.
  - \* Be a good listener and learn to ask good questions at the appropriate times.
  - \* When given a task, learn to ask for the necessary information to complete the task.
  - \* Be quiet, especially in a session environment.
  - \* Use good communication skills at all times (including your personal websites)
  - \* Also, know your place in the "food chain." Intern opinions should only be offered when asked for, especially in the studio setting. Don't take sides in an argument. If you feel compelled to make a statement, be sure you are addressing the right person, at the appropriate time. Chain of command is important. No one likes a "know-it-all" intern.
  
- As an intern, your professional abilities and attitudes will be analyzed by your workplace supervisor(s), coworkers, and possibly their clientele. This is a "closely-knit" industry and people will talk about you. Even though your immediate internship provider might not be in a position to hire you, you and they might be in contact with someone who will. If you get a bad reputation as an intern, you might consider an alternate career, or at least relocating to another geographic location. Likewise, a good reputation can open a lot of doors. So, look at everything you do from now on as an audition for your next gig... it very well may be.
  
- Good Luck!