Internships are an excellent opportunity to see neuroscience/psychology in action in mental health, educational and research settings. Internships may be conducted during any semester. There is a separate fee for summer internships. The department recommends at least a junior standing at the time of registration. Participation in the internship program is required. All students must have 4 credits towards an internship, which is 160 hours at an internship site.

For the internship, we expect you to work in a neuroscience/psychology related field under the supervision of a person with at least a master’s degree in psychology or a related discipline. Regular contact with you Westminster College internship instructor is required. A reading list developed prior to actual internship activities, a journal and a paper integrating the readings, internship experience and other college course work are required. You must be a junior to participate.

Different types of internships lead to different types of outcomes. Our students may work in a research setting, where they utilize their research and quantitative skills, or in more applied internships, where they use the information they have learned in their classes to work in human or animal settings. Regardless, by the end of the internship students will be able:

1. To communicate effectively using appropriate psychological style in written reports of research and psychology applications. (PSY 5)
2. To link core scientific principles to areas of application. (PSY 6)
3. To use both convergent and divergent thinking in solving quantitative and applied problem solving tasks. (PSY 7)
4. To practice the ethics of neuroscience/psychology in professional and interpersonal settings. (PSY 8)
5. To establish creative linkages between psychology and other knowledge domains. (PSY 11)
6. To recognize competencies, seek opportunities for self-improvement, and actively engage in making strategic choices regarding academic and career goals. (PSY 12)

For a research internship, students will also be able:

1. To develop skills to find, evaluate and use neuroscience/psychological knowledge. (PSY 2)
2. To reason scientifically, applying appropriate research design and quantitative methods. (PSY 3)
3. To use technology appropriately and responsibly. (PSY 4)

These outcomes align with the psychology curricular outcomes, which can be found at [http://www.westminster.edu/acad/psych/psych_mission_outcomes.cfm](http://www.westminster.edu/acad/psych/psych_mission_outcomes.cfm).

Office hours: For internships taking place during the semester, please contact your instructor during their office hours, which can be found at
Steps to finding and registering for your internship

Planning

Students have the sole responsibility for the planning of their internships. The organization which sponsors you should be chosen after careful investigation. Internships should not be afterthoughts. Although the internship officially begins during the semester you have chosen, you should have a fairly good idea of what you would like to do at the beginning of the previous semester. Often the summer between your sophomore and junior year is a good time to track down possibilities, particularly if you would like to do an internship close to your hometown. If you need some inspiration to come up with possibilities, or the dates of internship day, Mrs. DeMedal in the Career Center (top floor of the McKelvey Campus Center) maintains a data base of all past internships. She is very eager to share this information with you. Also, in mid-February there is an 'internship day' where you can interview with potential agencies for internship positions. There is often someone there from a psychology-related organization. Be sure to choose a semester in which you have sufficient time to schedule a quality internship.

Internships are a way to learn from professionals and to "network." Students sometimes choose internships that put them in a setting similar to one they envision for their own careers. You may become enthused by your experiences, or you may decide that you do not enjoy a type of work as much as you thought. Both are valuable outcomes. Internships can also provide opportunities for research experiences. For example, work in a graduate lab may provide an inspiration for a senior thesis or provide an invaluable contact for admission into a graduate program.

One important criterion in the selection of a sponsoring agency is the availability of professional staff, preferably a psychologist, with at least a master’s degree. A sponsor should be someone willing to spend some time with you in explaining what his or her job entails, the pros and cons of the occupation, his or her career path and what you might need to know about graduate or professional training. Make sure this individual approves your internship and is willing to serve as a contact person with the Westminster psychology faculty.

Prior to the beginning of any registration paperwork, make an appointment with a member of the psychology faculty to discuss your general plans. At that point, a faculty member can tell you if your plans seem appropriate, can go over the grading options and will also suggest who the best faculty instructor for the field experience might be. One of the first things you should do after obtaining a faculty instructor is to develop a reading list. Material on this list should be part of what you pack for the internship. The list must be completed and have the approval of
your instructor by the end of the semester prior to your internship.

**Registration**

Initiate the paperwork for registration no later than two weeks before the registration time. You need to obtain the "Westminster College Application for Internship" form and an "Approval for Field Experience" card both of which will be included in a packet of materials you obtain from Mrs. DeMedal in the Career Center.

The following information must be provided on the application form:

- **Description of work assignment**: After contacting your sponsoring agency, compose a brief description of your planned activities. "I will be assisting a school psychologist in evaluating learning disabled children", "I will be gathering data on children participating in an experiment on attentional deficits, etc."

- **Anticipated work schedule**: Of primary importance here is working an appropriate number of hours. Generally, students work 10 hours a week for a total of 160 hours/semester.

- **Goals**: The academic and personal benefits and the professional opportunities provided should be described.

- **The basis of the instructor’s final evaluation**: These criteria must be discussed when you find a Westminster faculty instructor.

The application form requires the signatures of your faculty instructor, your on-the-job supervisor and the department chair. Therefore, the form should be obtained and completed in ample time so that it may be sent to your sponsoring agency and returned to you in time for registration. When the form is completed, take it to Mrs. DeMedal's office. Occasionally, although you sent the form off in time to your supervisor, it may not get signed and returned promptly. If this occurs, the career center will fax the form to the supervisor for his or her signature.

Prior to registration have your faculty instructor and the department chair sign the "Approval for Field Experience" card which must be presented at the time of registration.

**The Internship Experience**

If appropriately planned, your internship experience should be both educational and worthy of college credit. Regard your internship as an apprenticeship. You should not be doing work which is primarily clerical. To guarantee things are going as they should, it is **required** that you contact by phone (or e-mail) your faculty instructor after the first week of your internship. Through your discussion, it can be determined if your activities are appropriate or some changes need to be made. If the internship appears unsatisfactory in any way let your
Westminster instructor know. It may be more appropriate for us to attempt to rectify things for you.

On-site supervisors will vary quite a bit in how much time they are willing or able to spend with you directly. Sometimes they are concerned that they need to prepare special activities for you. You can assure them that they need not, although, many will voluntarily take special interest in you. However, it is your responsibility to arrange at least a small amount of time with the supervisor to ask questions relevant to his/her professional training and responsibilities.

Since the experience is an apprenticeship, it is essential that you understand "the psychology" of what you are doing. For example, in some cases you will be working on a day-in day-out basis with teaching staff or perhaps a lab technician. This is O.K., but such people may not be knowledgeable enough to teach you why they do what they do. It is your responsibility to seek out professional staff who can explain this to you. Such an understanding is an essential component of your internship.

As a way to help you understand what you are doing:

- You should be consulting material on your reading list. Attempting to integrate academic material with the practical experiences of the job can be a source of questions which you can bring to your on-site supervisor and other staff.
- In addition, you should request suggestions as to what else you might read.
- Many sites may have libraries which would permit access to materials that would otherwise be difficult to obtain.

Grading

Regular or S/U grading is available for internships. Regardless of grading type, the same course requirements apply. They are:

- **Journal**: A daily record should be kept of your on-site activities. It should include a description of how information from your college courses relates to your internship activities.
- **On-Site Evaluation**: Your on-site supervisor is responsible for writing a brief evaluation of your performance. The evaluations are sent to Mrs. DeMedal who will send a copy to the faculty advisor and the student.
- **Paper**: A paper which integrates your practical experiences with academic psychology is required. It most likely requires relating your activities to materials on your reading list (as amended during the semester). Its exact content, length, date due etc., will be assigned by the faculty instructor. Generally, it is completed after you return to campus at the beginning of the following semester.

**Internship Survey**
The Psychology Department monitors the quality of student internships. At the end of your internship experience, we will ask you to fill out a survey, which can be found at http://www.psych.westminster.edu/phpESP/public/survey.php?name=Internship_Survey_Final