



# BYU IDAHO HEALTHCARE ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

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## Internship Guide

## Purpose

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The purpose of an internship is to provide you with opportunities to:

- 1) Gain work experience in the healthcare industry.
- 2) Apply classroom lessons to “real life” healthcare situations.
- 3) Explore various types of healthcare organizations as possible career options.
- 4) Establish networking relationships with working professionals.
- 5) Find full-time work after graduation.

The extent to which your internship(s) provides you with the above opportunities relies largely upon the effort you put in to finding an internship and then dedicating yourself to excel at your internship.

## Requirements

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### *Organizations*

Internships must be completed at organizations whose primary purpose is to provide healthcare services or assisted living, provide consulting or operational support services to healthcare provider organizations, or provide healthcare insurance.

### *Hour Requirements*

The internship must be a minimum of 7 continuous weeks and a minimum of 200 hours. The 200 hours can be worked over the course of more than 7 weeks. Most internships span the duration of a 14-week semester and exceed 200 hours. The individual work schedule for an internship varies and is set between the intern and their work supervisor.

The 7 weeks and 200 hours is a minimum. Most interns have a much better experience when they work more than 200 hours. For this reason, you are strongly encouraged not to register for a full load of classes, or any at all, during your internship semester.

### *Job Duties*

The job duties of a healthcare administration internship are flexible. The duties are to be associated with aspects of running the organization. Some examples include improving patient flow, improving quality, managing finances, managing employees, developing strategy or marketing plans, etc. There is not a requirement to work in a certain number of functional areas. Internship job duties can be broadly or narrowly focused but should include a defined work product(s) or goal(s) that you are accountable to produce. An internship should not be solely focused on “job shadowing” or clerical/secretarial work.

### *Past Experiences*

Internships need to be completed while registered for the internship course. Past experiences that would have counted as an internship will not count for graduation credit.

### *Timing and Pre-requisite Courses*

Students may apply for and begin an internship once they have completed the HCA 285 Introduction to Healthcare Administration and HCA 340 Managing Healthcare Provider Organizations courses. However, you are strongly encouraged to complete as many of the required business courses and all required 300 and 400-level healthcare administration courses before your internship. Completing these courses will better prepare you to maximize your contribution at your place of internship. You will also be in a position close to graduation and able to accept an employment offer should one be offered to you.

All internships must be started and completed within the semester or session for which you register for HCA 498R.

### **Process**

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Properly completing an internship and earning the associated 2 credits requires the following:

- 1) Obtain approval for your internship.
- 2) Register for the HCA 498R course.
- 3) Complete the required assignments for the HCA 498R course.

### *Obtain Approval for Internship*

Once you have an offer for an internship, you must apply with the university to receive approval of the internship. You apply by accessing the “Internship Approval” form via your I-Plan website. The application form will ask for several pieces of information. The following are some key pieces of information of which to take note:

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| Internship Type:         | If you are completing an internship at the Student Health Center, select “On-Campus”. For all other internships “Healthcare Facility” is appropriate.   |
| Number of Credits:       | The HCA 498R course is fixed as a 2-credit course.  |
| Job Description:         | Although you may not know the exact specifics of your internship, please be as specific and thorough as possible in describing what you will be doing for the internship. This is the primary piece of information that is used to approve or reject your internship. |
| Internship Start Date:   | The internship start date must be within the semester for which you are registering for HCA 498R.   |
| Internship End Date:     | The internship end date must be on or before the end date of the semester for which you are registering for HCA 498R.   |
| Total Anticipated Hours: | The total anticipated hours must meet or exceed 200 hours.  |

Every internship provider is required to have on file or sign an agreement with BYU Idaho that addresses various aspects of the internship relationship between the university and the internship provider. Once you submit your internship application for approval, the BYU Idaho Career and Internship Office will verify that an agreement is on file or will send an agreement to the internship provider for signature. This will be handled by the Career and Internship Office and does not require direct involvement from you as the student.

### *Register for HCA 498R*

After your internship application is approved, you will receive authorization to register for the HCA 498R course. Registration for the course follows the same process as registration for other BYU Idaho courses.

Internship credits are exempt from tuition charges. However, an administrative fee equal to one credit hour at the current rate of tuition will be charged for an internship course. The fee is in addition to any tuition charges for other classes. Fees are charged independently of tuition and are not subject to the 12-credit tuition cap.

### *Complete the HCA 498R Course*

The HCA 498R course is a graded course, it is not Pass/Fail. The course consists of written assignments and tracking and submitting the hours you work at your internship. Please be sure to monitor the HCA 498R Canvas course and submit all assignments on or before their due dates. Students who do not complete the minimum work requirements of 7 weeks and 200 hours will receive a failing grade for the course.

## **Additional Information**

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Additional information regarding internships can be found at BYU Idaho's Internship and Career Services website at: [www.byui.edu/internships/](http://www.byui.edu/internships/).

## **Internship Advice from Previous Students**

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The following is advice from students who have completed healthcare administration internships. This is valuable advice to consider as you complete an internship.

“Some advice that I would give to another student that wants to do this same internship would be to make it your own. Come with a list of questions you are interested in knowing the answer to and make sure you get them answered. If there is a job you want or information you want to know, find that person and they will answer your questions. One of the best parts of this internship was sitting down with the CFO and we talked about the financial information. I went into the internship and specifically told them that I was hoping to come out of it with a job and I think it really pays to be straightforward. There was not a job available going in, but I have now been hired.”

“I would advise students to keep their minds open when they consider internships. Oftentimes, there are opportunities where you are currently working if you have proven yourself as a capable individual. I would also counsel them to take these internships seriously, as you will only get out what you put in.”

“Some advice I would give to someone desiring to complete this same internship would be to go into it with an open mind and give it your all. It sounds cliché, but it is so true! There will be times when you are bored or don’t necessarily want to be there, but if you give it your full attention you will learn so much. I feel like I was able to learn something from every person, and it was because I took the time to get to know each of them individually. The more effort you put into it, the more you will get out of the experience. If you run out of things to do, ask to help someone else.”

“If I had to give someone advice, I would tell them to take initiative; always ask for more opportunities to work with others and be a part of different projects. There are going to be times when you are not super busy, and it is important to always show you are eager to learn and participate more. There were times when I would have to ask everyone if there was something I can help them do, and that is how I was able to work with another boss for a day and learn more about the sociology side of healthcare and how it is different. Also, I would tell them to network where you can, don’t be shy to ask people questions and learn more about what they do, especially when it comes to the hospital and when you have the chance to get out of the organization setting. My last advice would be to have a good attitude during your internship, be willing to get to know others, work in a team, and create the dynamic that will bring the team closer.”

“The advice that I would give to another student who wanted this internship would be to make sure that you are ready to work. Being with a company that is brand new is stressful. There are going to be a lot of times when you don’t know what to do but you have to figure something out.”

“I would advise future interns to take control early in the semester to meet with their supervisor and set some parameters and goals. With a clear vision, you can then get plenty of time to experience and fulfill those goals. You should check in often with your supervisor to ensure you are accomplishing everything they have in mind for you. Speak up if you do not feel you are gaining experience in certain areas and be your own best advocate. Lastly, be willing to try something out of the ordinary, even if you do feel a bit out of your comfort zone.”

“Advice that I would give another intern that is wanting to complete the same internship would be to take the bull by the horns so to speak. The internship is what you make of it. It can either be a boring experience or very exciting, full of opportunity. I was given an

incredible opportunity to perform research for my director because I was proactive and getting things done that, he felt comfortable and confident in giving me the research opportunity. I would also say to not be afraid to express your opinion on a matter that grabs your attention. The hospital really values diverse opinions and solutions.”

“The advice I would give to another student desiring to complete this same internship is to stay focused on your task and ask a lot of questions. Anytime I did not fully understand something I would ask my supervisor questions and that would help better my understanding. I would also say to make as many connections as you can by talking to different people and putting your name out there so that in the future when there is a job opening, they will already know the type of person you are. My final piece of advice would be to have fun and get to know the people that you are working with. I really enjoyed my internship experience because I made strong connections with the other interns and employees I was working with.”

“The first piece of advice I would give is to work hard. If you are looking for an internship where you hang out and play games on your phone or do homework, this is NOT for you. Every day you will be hands on, grinding from clock in to clock out. You will be rewarded however for working diligently by gaining valuable insights and working with more than one department. Second, I would tell them to pay attention and try as hard as possible not to have to be told twice what to do or to ask dumb questions. Take the time to try and problem solve on your own. If you are working on a report or a spreadsheet with multiple errors/questions, package all your concerns together and give them to the person all at once or email it to them in a concise manner so they can get to it on their own time.”

“The advice that I would give to another student desiring to complete this same internship is to push forward on the difficult days. Like any job or internship, there are going to be hard days that make you question what you’re doing in the healthcare field. But you just have to keep going, it will make you a stronger person in the end. On both the good days and the hard days, remember to put Heavenly Father first, and He will carry you through each day.”

“Critical thinking, I cannot emphasize this enough. You absolutely will use critical thinking. You will have to make a lot of decisions on your own and the providers are giving care and are not always able to assist you.”

“The advice that I would give to others in this job would be to put effort into it. No one is sitting behind you pushing you to do a good job. If you sat back and didn’t do a whole lot, you could probably coast through the job easily. But don’t. Go the extra mile and you’ll feel so much more accomplished and satisfied at the end of the semester.”