**Interested in an Internship?**

**By Rosmery Mendoza**

Internship coordinator ([Karen Mark](mailto:kimark@ilstu.edu?subject=))

Internship options

Clinical-counseling/helping profession

●       PATH

●       Collaborative Solutions Institute

●       Mental Health Unit of Advocate BroMenn Regional Medical Center

Homeless/chronic mental illness populations

●       Safe Harbor

●       Home Sweet Home Ministries

●       Psychosocial Rehabilitation Center (Mclean County Center for Human Services)

●       Peoria Housing Authority

Child/clinical

●       The Baby Fold

●       Children’s Home + Aid

●       The Center for Youth and Family Solutions

●       Children’s Advocacy Center

Adolescent/clinical

●       The Center for Youth and Family Solutions (advocacy program)

●       Project Oz

●       Mclean County Juvenile Detention Center

●       Chestnut Health Systems (chemical dependence/substance abuse)

●       Western Avenue Community Center

Substance abuse/chemical dependence

●       Chestnut Health Systems/Lighthouse (adolescent and adult units)

●       Illinois Institute for Addiction Recovery (at Advocate BroMenn Hospital)

Clinical/forensic

●       Mclean County Juvenile Detention Center

●       Mclean County Adult Court Services

●       Local law enforcement agencies (Mclean county sheriff’s office; Normal Police Dept; Bloomington Police Dept.)

Domestic violence/women’s issues

●       Neville House (through Mid Central Community Action)

●       Stepping Stones (through YWCA; supervision would need to be arranged)

●       Labyrinth Outreach Services to Women

Developmental disabilities and delays

●       Marcfirst

●       SPICE

●       Circles Behavior Consultation Services

Psychology/health

●       Planned Parenthood

●       ISU Health Promotion and Wellness

●       ISU Student Counseling Services

Child developmental (non-clinical)

●       Children’s Discovery Museum

●       Reading programs through Normal and Bloomington public libraries

●       Bloomington Parks and Recreation after-school programs

●       Heartland Head Start

●       Unit 5 schools

Geriatric populations

●       PATH Senior Services Program

●       YWCA Senior Services Program

●       Sugar Creek Alzheimer’s Special Care Center

●       Area nursing homes

Step-by-Step Guide: How to Get Started

A simple checklist or timeline outlining:

1. Search internship listings
2. Reach out to site supervisors
3. Get internship approved (contract process)
4. Register for credit (PSY 395/398)
5. Track and submit hours/reflections

Tips for a Successful Psychology Internship

1. Be Professional from Day One   
●       Show up on time, dress appropriately, and be respectful to everyone you work with.

●       Treat the internship like a job—you’re building your reputation and future references!

2. Practice Strong Communication   
●       Ask questions when you're unsure, supervisors expect that you're there to learn.

●       Keep open communication about your schedule, expectations, and responsibilities.

3. Be Open to Learning   
●       You won’t know everything, and that’s okay! Be open-minded and curious.

●       Every task, big or small, contributes to your understanding of the field.

4. Take Initiative   
●       Don’t be afraid to ask for more responsibilities if things are slow.

●       Show interest in learning about how the agency works and the people it serves.

5. Reflect on Your Experience   
●       Keep a journal or notes of what you're learning, challenges you face, and personal growth.

●       These reflections can help with end-of-semester evaluations and future job interviews.

6. Respect Confidentiality   
●       You may be exposed to sensitive information—follow all confidentiality guidelines and ethical standards at your site.

7. Seek Feedback Regularly   
●       Ask your supervisor how you’re doing and what you can improve on.

●       Use constructive feedback to grow your skills and confidence.

8. Network and Build Relationships   
●       Get to know staff, volunteers, and other interns.

●       These connections can lead to letters of recommendation, job leads, or future mentoring.

9. Manage Your Time Wisely   
●       Balance your internship hours with classes, work, and self-care.

●       Stick to a schedule and don’t wait until the last minute to complete your required hours.

10. Stay Positive and Flexible   
●       Some days might be slower or more challenging than others. Stay adaptable and focus on the bigger picture of gaining experience and making a difference.

Rosmery’s experience with PATH 211:

My internship experience at PATH 211 has been fundamental to my personal and professional growth. Through this opportunity, I significantly strengthened my communication and active listening skills, and I gained valuable insight into how to effectively support individuals in need. PATH 211 offers a meaningful and educational environment, and I highly recommend it to students seeking hands-on experience in a helping profession.

Questions and Answers

1. Why should I do an internship as a psychology major?   
Internships provide hands-on experience, help you apply classroom knowledge in real-world settings, build your resume, and clarify your career interests. They’re also a great way to network with professionals in the field.

2. When is the best time to apply for an internship?   
Most students start internships in their junior or senior year, but it's never too early to explore opportunities. Be mindful of application deadlines, which can be one semester or more in advance.

3. Are internships required for psychology majors?   
No,while internships may not be a graduation requirement for all students, they are highly recommended—especially for those planning to enter graduate programs or helping professions.

4. Can I earn academic credit for my internship?

Yes! You can earn credit by enrolling in the appropriate internship course (e.g., PSY 395/398). Be sure to coordinate with your academic advisor and the internship coordinator before beginning.

5. What is the process for getting an internship approved for credit?

You’ll typically need to secure the internship, then complete a contract with your supervisor, the internship coordinator, and yourself. Once submitted, the department will process an override to allow you to register for credit.

6. What if I want to do an internship without earning academic credit?

Some internship sites require students to be enrolled for academic credit in order to participate. However, others may allow you to intern without receiving credit. If you're interested in a non-credit internship, be sure to ask the site directly about their requirements and policies.