Frequently Asked Questions for Internship and Portfolio Courses

Q – Am I ready to take internship and portfolio courses?

A – You are ready to take internship and portfolio courses when you have completed all of your coursework for your CDA coursework, certificate or degree. Internship and portfolio courses are the **last courses** to take in order to complete your CDA coursework, certificate or degree.

Q - Can I take two internships in the same semester?

A - Yes. You can take two internships in a semester but you cannot take them at the same time. This means that you can take them back to back. For example, you can complete one internship during the first 4 week period of a semester and then complete the second internship during the second 4 week period of the same semester. This allows you to complete 80 contact hours in two separate four week periods.

Q – Do I need permission to take internship and portfolio courses?

A – Yes. All students must request permission to take internship and portfolio courses by sending their requests to early.childhood@riosalado.edu. The e-mail needs to contain the following information:

1. student name
2. student ID number
3. contact phone number
4. requested course prefix/number
5. preferred start dates for the requested courses.

Students must take the portfolio courses (EED255 or FCS250) with at least one internship course. If pursuing a degree with multiple internship courses, the portfolio course MUST be taken with the last internship course.

Q- Are there steps to take before requesting permission?

A – Yes. Before students request permission, they must secure the location for the internship and confirm the internship with the program director. Locations must be appropriate for the student's course of study (specialty area) and be a foundation for what the student plans to accomplish with his/her degree. The program director must also agree to have the College Supervisor on site to conduct a formal observation. Students who are out of state or out of the country are also responsible for obtaining their own supervisor. In addition, students are responsible for adhering to all policies and procedures that are required by the site. Any training, documentation and or clearances such as fingerprinting must be completed before starting an internship.
Q - Does Rio Salado provide me with a College Supervisor?

A - Rio Salado provides College Supervisors for students who are in Maricopa County. If students are in Arizona but not in Maricopa, it is up to the student to find their own supervisor. Students who are out of state or out of the country are also responsible for obtaining their own supervisor.

Q: If I live outside of Maricopa County, and it is my responsibility to find a supervisor/course observer, are there specific requirements that the supervisor/observer needs to meet?

A - A supervisor/observer must have the following credentials;

Minimum Requirements for Academic Areas (EED255, EED260, EED261)

The Academic Teaching Fields require the following from an accredited college or university:

- a master’s degree in the teaching field, or
- a master's in any teaching field with 24 upper division and/or graduate semester hours in the teaching field, or
- Master’s in any teaching field with 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching field.

Minimum Requirements for Occupational Areas (FCS250, FCS260, ECH253)

The Occupational Teaching Fields require the following from an accredited college or university:

- the same qualifications as those listed for Academic Teaching Fields, or
- a bachelor's degree plus 3 years work experience in field to be taught, or
- an associate's degree or 64 semester hours and 5 years work experience in the field to be taught, or 5 years work experience in the field to be taught.

In addition, this person must send their resume and letter of agreement to be a college supervisor to early.childhood@riosalado.edu.

The application for the Internship and Portfolio course will not be processed until the department is in receipt of the supervisor/observer’s resume and cover letter.

Q – Who is the College Supervisor and what does he/she do?

A – The college supervisor will provide the student with the syllabus for the internship course. The supervisor provides guidance and support to the student while they complete the course requirements. The supervisor sets up an appointment with the student for an onsite observation. The supervisor will be observing the student in a lead role capacity and will provide feedback to the student once the observation is completed. A copy of the observation tool is attached to the student syllabus for prior review.
Q – What happens after the request to take courses is made?
A - Students will receive an internship and portfolio interest form to complete. This form must be completed and returned to early.childhood@riosalado.edu. If the form is incomplete, it will be returned to the student with information to complete the form correctly. Students will also receive a copy of the Internship FAQ’s and a student acknowledgement form to initial and sign. Both forms must be completed and returned to the early.childhood@riosalado.edu.

Q – How long does it take to process the request to take courses?
A - Once the form is complete and received by early.childhood@riosalado.edu, it can take up to 30 days from the date it is received to process. Once it is processed, students will receive written permission to take the courses they have requested. When students are in receipt of the permission, they will be ready to enroll. Instructions regarding enrollment will be included in the permission letter. The permission will also name the instructor who will also be the College Supervisor for the internship.

Q – In addition to the onsite observation, what other requirements are there for the internship course?
A – Students are required to complete 80 contact hours for each one credit course, for a total of four weeks. These hours are hands on, in which the student is expected to take a lead role in the classroom. Students keep weekly logs of their hours and submit them weekly to their college supervisor for review. In addition, students create an action plan at the beginning of the internship. This plan must include specific goals and objectives in relation to the student's work experience and to best practices in the field. Students are responsible for aligning their internship experiences with their certificate or degree competencies. On the third week of the Internship, a college Supervisor will visit the site to complete an on-site observation with the student. The College Supervisor will be in contact with the student prior to the course, and the student will receive the course syllabus and due dates for the action plan, assignments and observation.

Q-Where do I complete my Internship hours?
A- Placement depends on the certificate and/or degree to which you are working towards. For example, if are working towards the AAS in Early Learning and Development you would complete your internship in a licensed child care facility (either in a preschool or infant toddler classroom depending on your area of specialty). If you are working towards an AAS degree in Family Life you would complete your internship in your block area or specialty area (refer to your specific block specialty on your student check sheet). If you are already employed in a child care setting or a human service setting (depending on degree pathway), you can complete the internship hours at your place of employment. If you are a family child care provider working on your AAS in Early Learning and Development, you CAN do your internship at your in home child care center.

Q: Can I use past experience in the field towards my contact hours needed for the Internship?
A: Past experience will not count towards contact hours needed for the Internship. The four week internship period should be completed with the eight week Portfolio course. These courses are designed to be taken together.
Q - Do any of the internship courses have course fees?

A - Yes, there are course fees for the following internships:

- EED260- $100.00
- EED261- $100.00
- EED262- $250.00
- EED263- $250.00
- EED265- $250.00
- FCS260- $100.00

Fees are subject to change. Students are responsible for paying these fees at the time of enrollment.