

Internships: earn credits and gain experience

By Sheryl A. Machita

Get experience and academic credit at the same time? No, it's not a dream; it's called an internship.

Internships at Capitol Campus vary from a twelve-credit, nonpaying multi-media internship at a local television station to a four-credit accounting internship at a large firm which pays \$200 to \$225 per week.

The television internship is a Friday through Monday, from 5:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. job for Suzanne Reichert (a twelfth term, multi-media major), who works at WHP, a Harrisburg television station. Although she doesn't get paid, she will earn twelve credits at Capitol Campus.

"The difference between doing work for the classroom and the workplace has to be experienced to be fully appreciated," says Reichert. "The experience allows you to discover your weak and strong points as well as the job's and the employer's. Types of work I sampled in the classroom and said I wouldn't want to do, I now feel I should re-examine."

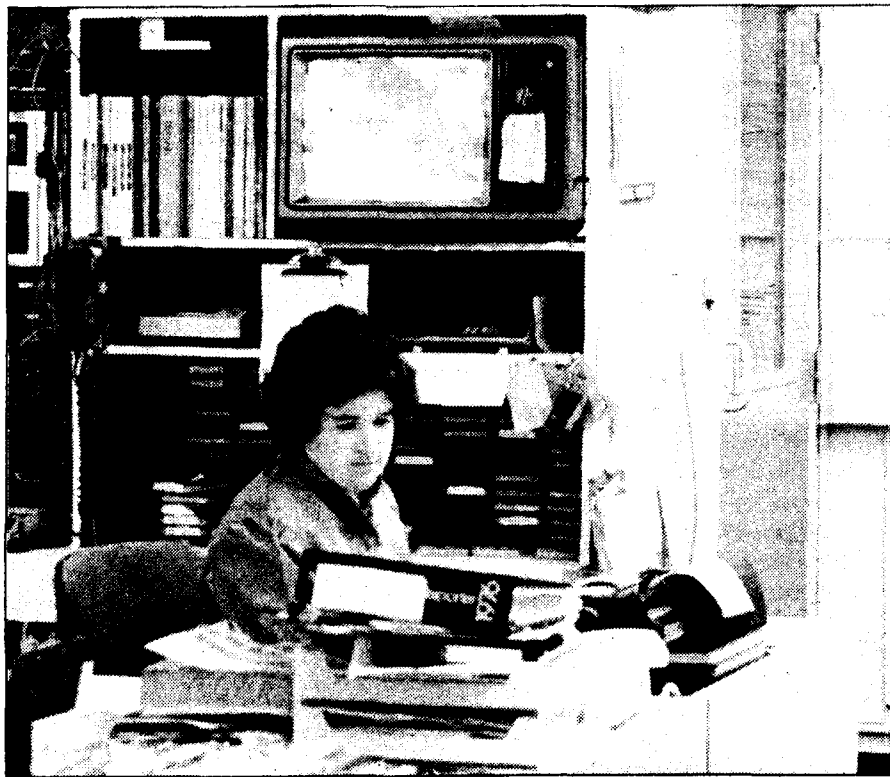
The Humanities Division offers multi-media internships in many fields including television, print, advertising, and public relations. Generally, the media internship is a twelve-credit program where the student works full-time, keeps a record of his or her experiences, and then writes a paper about them.

Head of the Humanities Division, Dr. John S. Patterson, says: "It has served people well in the past and given students good experiences. I'd like to see more interaction between the people who are actually on an internship, and the people who have had internships before, and the people who haven't had them yet, so that everyone has a good sense of what to expect."

Internships in the Public Affairs Division range from probation and parole offices, state offices, and the legislature to various human service agencies. The two requirements of the internship are to keep a daily journal about the experience and to write a report on it.

"Students come back from an internship," says Dr. Lloyd W. Woodruff, associate professor and coordinator of the undergraduate public affairs internships, "saying that it has given them insight into linking the campus with the outside world."

Dr. Christopher K. McKenna, head of the Public Affairs Divi-



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Suzanne Reichert
student intern

sion, says: "A side benefit of an internship is that it may often lead directly or indirectly to a permanent job."

In the Behavioral Science Division, internships of four, eight, or twelve credits can be earned, depending upon the number of hours spent at the organization. In addition to the work at the human service organization, a weekly seminar, a log, and a paper are required.

This term two students are involved in behavioral science internships. One is working at Philhaven, a private psychiatric hospital in Lebanon, and the other is at the Helen S. Chandler Community Mental Health Facility in Harrisburg.

Rie Gentzler, instructor in social science and coordinator of the undergraduate behavioral science internships, says that internships are a lot of work. But she went on to say, "Most students feel it was an invaluable part of their education."

Over in the Education Division, junior year students get seven weeks of class and three weeks of teaching in school. This goes on for three terms.

"They aren't internships in the regular sense of the word," says Donald K. Alexander, associate professor and coordinator of the undergraduate education program, but they are "an integral part of the courses."

He added: "These field experiences make students com-

fortable with the classroom by the time they student teach."

Although most internships aren't paid, the Business Administration Division offers the exception to the rule.

The accounting internship, which pays \$200 to \$225 per week and is four credits, involves working full-time for a firm and requires a paper about the experience.

Archie McGhee, instructor in accounting, says that participating in an internship is "a



big plus especially in today's market." He says that working for a firm like Cooper's and Lybrand, or Laventhal and Horwath looks good on a resume.

The accounting internship usually takes place in the winter term. McGhee advises students not to take any other classes as the work load at the firm is heavy.

Not all divisions have internships.

Dr. William A. Welsh, head of the Science, Engineering, and Technology Division, says:

"Engineering students are better served by having taken specific courses that employers can recognize than the varied experiences of an internship."

The division does have a Cooperative Education option in the Electrical Design Engineering Technology. A student works six months and gets paid and attends classes six months, but the student doesn't receive academic credit for the work part of the program.

"The big advantage of the option," says Wesley G. Houser, associate professor and chair of the electrical design engineering technology program, "is the experience of interspersing formal education with practical experience."

Almost every division at Capitol Campus has some kind of undergraduate or graduate, real work experience that is aimed at bridging the gap between the world of education and the world of work.

"Students have a real advantage," says Gentzler, "in that there are so many people who want interns that they can design an internship to meet their own needs."

Photography by Sheryl A. Machita