

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA ASHEVILLE  
FACULTY SENATE

Senate Document Number SD4822S  
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Statement of Faculty Senate Action:

**APC Document 43 (ESI): Add new course, ESI 491, Senior Research Internship**

**Effective Date: Fall 2022**

1. **Add:** On page 188, after the entry for 490, new course **ESI 491, Senior Research Internship:**

**491 Senior Research Internship (4)**

Students are placed in an organization and provided with professional supervision for a minimum of 105 hours in order to develop a stronger link between academic learning and real-life application. As a capstone experience, the course requires a written project that includes research connecting the internship work with the content of the student's major program, and an oral presentation of the results of that project, along with weekly assigned work such as reports and/or reflections on the internship experience. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor. See program director.

**Impact Statement:** The impact of this addition is expected to be beneficial for students, as it allows them an option to pursue a more hands-on and experiential senior capstone experience without sacrificing any expectations of rigor. This kind of engagement is widely recognized as a way of enhancing student learning in many fields. It will be an alternative to the more traditional, strictly research-based capstone option that will remain in place. Given the current small size of this concentration, it is anticipated that the class would generally function as an independent study (as the traditional option generally does). Class meeting time would generally be an hour per week; the rest of the expected meeting time will be taken up in the internship's 105 hours. Faculty teaching this course would presumably be doing it as an overload in the same manner as independent study courses and undergraduate research courses. At least 2 members of the Philosophy Department are currently able to teach this course, but it is expected that the Director of ESI (currently Melissa Burchard) would most frequently be the one to teach it. It would be available in any semester with advanced planning and permission of the instructor. Given the small size of the concentration, at this time it is not expected that the course will be in great demand.

Student Learning Objectives will include the following:

- Connect and apply academic learning completed in courses for the major to experiences gained through work in a local organization
- Critically examine your internship placement and experience through written assignments such as reflection papers and through verbal reports in class
- Demonstrate self-reflection regarding the relationship between your internship and the content of this course and the other courses in your major through the final written project and oral presentation
- Synthesize and apply course learning, expressing your knowledge in verbal, visual, and/or creative forms

**Rationale:** Ethics and Social Institutions is a major concentration that emphasizes the important roles of institutions in our society, as well as the importance of those institutions being grounded in ethics and having a membership that understands ethics. Our institutions are not just theoretical entities; they are concrete and living organizations that deeply affect the communities they work in. Further, many students learn more, and more deeply, through hands-on, experiential opportunities than through traditional research and paper writing. Consequently, it seems a significant oversight in the ESI curriculum that it has not as yet included the option of allowing students to learn through an internship experience. As internships are not allowed at UNCA in the form of independent study, there has to be an internship course in the catalog in order to provide this important learning opportunity to ESI students.

Many ESI students come to the major concentration because they are deeply interested in issues of social justice, and want to do work in non-profit agencies after they graduate. Thus an internship opportunity is even more appropriate for them as a capstone experience, as it provides them the opportunity to learn what it would be like to do that kind of work as a career, and to learn some of the skills that will help them find such careers upon leaving school. Having an internship option could conceivably also encourage some students to declare the major concentration who might otherwise not have done so.