

FAQ of Intern/Mentor and Independent Research Students

How did you determine your area of interest?

- Previous personal experience in the field...Favorite school subject....
- By analyzing my academic pursuits and out-of-school hobbies and attempting to bridge those into one field....
- Something that I liked and was good at...
- My dad and I were looking through the most recent fiscal quarter ITL papers report by NIST and determined the areas I was interested in...
- I kept reading and reading until I found an interest....
- My area of interest was born out of a fascination with what used to be a feeling nostalgia for things I was born too late to experience.
- I researched and researched until I came into a field that I had no clue about but really wanted to become an expert in.

How do you manage your academic and extracurricular schedules?

- Plan ahead. My agenda book is my best friend. I know everything that I am doing for the week, when I'm doing it, and the amount of time it will take....
- I choose my priorities and do the highest priorities first..
- Utilized my time in class. Can talk to your friends but know when it is time to get things done. Motivation to have a fantastic project pushes you to finish most of your work in class.
- It's very difficult. I'm not going to lie. It's a matter of sacrificing things you used to do before to make time. So for me, I can't watch as much TV if I want to maintain my grades.
- Last year I found myself procrastinating a lot. Since my workload is bigger this year I've worked on making sure I don't procrastinate. We get all of our due dates ahead of time, so if I plan my IM/IR work around my extra curriculars it gets done on time.
- I put all the dates in a calendar. I remind myself of really important things by sticky noting them on my computer.

How much time do you spend working and researching?

- Sasser: In IM students are expected to spend 5 hours a week on site, typically two days a week and about 2 hours of research across the week. In IR students have the majority of class time to complete their work.
- In the beginning, it was maybe an average of 30-45 minutes a night. Since then, my topic has been narrowed down so I can do things much more efficiently...
- I do a lot of research for class along with my internship. It's a great skill to have because now I can research scholarly articles with my eyes closed

Stop by room 141 and we can address your specific questions.

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- In class, I try to spend most of my time researching. At home, it fluctuates. Some days, a lot, if I get hooked on a specific part of the research and want to learn everything about it. Other days none because I did all of it in class.
- I spend about 5-8 hours on-site weekly. At home, separate research usually takes up 2 hours a week of time.
- Not that much, surprisingly. Once I get to working, it's easy to get the work done.

What do you like most about IM or IR?

- I like the independence you don't have a teacher babying you. You can go at a pace that works best for you and research what interests you.
- I like the idea of working on site and getting real-world work experience.
- I like being able to have an internship. With this internship it will help in the future or for college. I like having more knowledge in a field other than just what I learn in school. I think it gives me a head start and I learn so much about myself and the "real-life" work field.
- I like the flexibility of the class. I can do what I want, when I want.
- The community aspect and being able to network with a variety of people. I also really enjoy how the class forced me to get out of my comfort zone. Public speaking, researching, and annotating papers were all foreign concepts to me until I stepped into this class.

What do you like least about IM or IR?

- Can be overwhelming at times. Once you improve your time management skills it gets significantly easier.
- IM can be very tiring since there's so much work, but I think it's worth it when I'm doing something that I like.
- There is nothing that I don't really like. For example, the only thing that is difficult, is balancing all of my extracurriculars without going insane. I knew how to manage my time before, but with my internship, I just added another "big rock" and didn't really take any "big rocks" out in place of it.
- Sometimes we have a few assignments that are pointless or really don't advance your research since it doesn't fit your topic. However, this can't really be changed because there has to be some sort of a standard to be graded on, even if that standard doesn't necessarily fit your topic.
- Sometimes the assignments do not make sense to me at first glance which can be frustrating. Usually, I find that I enjoy the assignments by the time that I am done though because I really like my topic.

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