

Internship Procedures

DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY &
ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

This document was approved
by G&ES faculty 10/28/08

A 3 credit hour internship course in the Department is required of Environmental Studies students, who are (160 work hours). This is done near the end of the student's program. Geography majors studying GIS may choose to take a 3 credit hour Internship with GIS (G&ES 395; 160 work hours). When possible, work should be completed in large blocks of time to best simulate an actual work environment. The internship experience gives the student practical experience in their field and often begins an environmental career and/or one using geospatial technologies.

For many, the experience is their first job in a new field. Internships are often used by employers to train and evaluate potential full time employees. Strong letters of recommendation from a previous employer are very valuable.

PLANNING THE INTERNSHIP

It is the student's responsibility to locate an internship, although there are resources within the department which may be useful. The department's email list is often used to announce internship opportunities. The department chairperson maintains a collection of all recent internship reports which students may look through. Advisors are also able to help in the selection process. Most employers have been very pleased and will gladly take on another intern from the department. We also have several prearranged internship

Faculty advisor, employer-supervisor, and student sign the form when the agreement indicates work to be performed, appropriate supervision, and considerable educational gain for the student. The form may be referred to by either party during the experience. Following is a portion of a hypothetical agreement.

Student will do

Employer will provide

Create maps and graphics for newsletter

Access and training for Microsoft Publisher
Access to interview staff members

Lead school groups through the park

Training and supervision

Contribute to <specify project>

Assignments relating to <specify project>

Complete reports for EPA

Training on State and Federal regulations

Regular supervision and feedback with midway
and final evaluation

In addition to the internship agreement (above), students must also complete the Internship Contact Form and write a one-page summary of the plan, which reflects the same things which are in the agreement, but in narrative form.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students undertaking an internship are not excused from any responsibility of their other classes; this includes attendance. When in the field, students represent not only

Content of the subjective report will depend on the experience. It may include details on how the internship helped prepare the student for employment, what it meant for their personal and professional development, and what tasks, assignments or supervision was particularly valuable. It may also comment on the workplace environment. The reflective report will give other students who might be considering the internship more insight into the opportunity.

Occasionally the student will be critical of aspects of the experience, yet not want this to become public record. In such cases they may write a separate narrative marked "confidential." This will be made available only to faculty advisors.

- A. Reliable, responsible, excellent skills, performed better than expected – the type of person they would hire if they could
- B. Good worker, performed assigned tasks. Met but did not exceed expectations
- C. Useful intern but with some unexpected problems. Not a failure but clearly could/should have been better.
- D. Some serious issues with reliability, maturity, responsibility, attendance, attitude or dependability. Not successful
- F. Total failure to perform. Mostly absent. Complete loss.

The faculty member must receive the packet from the student, and communicate with the employer, before assigning a grade. A written assessment shall be provided to the student, along with the letter grade.

The completed packet must be given to the Department Chair for filing in the Internship records, which are available to other students. Subsequent internships may not be initiated until these reports are received.

EMPLOYER-SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The employer-supervisor takes an equal part drawing up the Internship Agreement, and signs when it accurately reflects their expectations and commitments. This is done in advance of the internship. During the internship, the employer-supervisor is responsible for assigning and supervising work and maintaining a record of number of hours worked. Employer-supervisors should provide their intern with regular feedback on their performance, and may contact the faculty supervisor at any time.

There are no "midterm grades" in an internship, but if the performance is not at the A-level (described above), the supervisor should attempt to encourage the student to improve their performance.

If something goes wrong with the internship along the way the employer must address the issue with the student immediately. If a serious problem remains, the employer shall contact the faculty advisor immediately to discuss how best to resolve the problem.

At the completion of the internship the employer-supervisor can expect a call from the faculty-supervisor in which they will discuss the experience. At this time the employer-supervisor may suggest a grade using a rubric like the one above.

The employer supervisor provides a written assessment for the student and sends a copy to the faculty-advisor. This statement will not go in the public folder.