

University of Arizona

INTERNSHIP POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

Updated with policies & guidelines approved by Faculty Senate, 5/5/08; with link to Honors Guidelines, 5/19/09

GENERAL INFORMATION

Purpose of an Internship:

The primary goal of an internship is to give students an opportunity to apply lessons learned in the classroom to a real-world experience set in a professional practice-oriented environment, with the intern's work preferably overseen by a professional. In addition to offering students the opportunity to demonstrate and develop their technical skills, it allows students to develop professional skills such as teamwork, effective communication, social interaction and professional networking, an understanding of business procedures, leadership, and critical thinking. Finally, it should provide students with work experience within a semi-formal academic framework that carries with it official course credit from The University of Arizona.

Definition:

An internship consists of specialized duties that provide training and practice in actual service in settings such as an industry, business, research laboratory, theatre, museum, community agency, or government office.

Policies for Internships:

1. **Determination of credit:** The University and Board of Regents require a minimum of 45 hours of course work for each unit of credit awarded.
2. **The number of credits of Internship** must lie within the approved credit range listed in the catalog course description. Note: The number of credits that will apply toward a student's academic program ranges from 3 to 12. Students should check with the college or department to verify the maximum internship units allowed. Exceptions to the college or department limit are granted through a college petition process.
3. **The grades available for Internship courses** are limited to **S** (superior), **P** (passing), **F** (failure), **I** (incomplete), **W** (withdraw). While it is possible for a student intern to receive a failing grade for the course, **S, P, F** grades do not calculate into a student's grade-point-average.
4. **The content of an Internship** must not significantly duplicate material offered in a regularly scheduled course in the department in the current semester; any exceptions must be approved by the college dean.
5. **Departments and programs must have Internship application forms** modeled on the approved University templates (see Curriculum forms, <http://www.registrar.arizona.edu/forms.htm>) that are to be completed when the student enrolls in the course or at the beginning of the term.
6. **The enrollment fee for Internship credit** is calculated at the same rate as for other credit courses.
7. **For undergraduate Internships**, the instructor or internship coordinator must provide either a course syllabus or a project plan detailing: (1) learning outcomes, (2) expected reading, or lab or field work, (3) expected meetings, (4) expected work products, and (5) criteria to be used for evaluation and grading.
 - a. All proposal forms and project plans must be signed by the instructor and the student and filed in the department or program office within a week after the term commences.
 - b. At the end of the term, or whenever the student completes the project, the instructor or internship coordinator must complete a record of the outcome that explains the grade submitted. The record of outcome form with the instructor's signature should be filed in the department or program office when the course grade is submitted.

8. **If students are paid in association with an Internship**, academic credit can be awarded only for faculty-approved academic work as defined by department policy. Students must check on the department policy before enrolling for internship or practicum credit related to their paid jobs.
9. **If registration for an Internship course occurs after the twenty-first day** of the regular semester, after the first two days of Winter Session or Pre-session, or after the first week of a Summer Session, the department head (or designee) must sign the Change of Schedule form, in addition to the instructor.
10. **If a grade of Incomplete is awarded for an Internship** at the end of the term, an internship coordinator must be identified who agrees to evaluate the student's work, should the instructor become unavailable.

Guidelines for Internships:

Use of these Guidelines: *The Guidelines for University of Arizona Internships constitute a compilation of best practices among a number of colleges and departments. The items stated below are not requirements but recommendations. Undergraduate Council and Graduate Council strongly encourage internship coordinators and faculty not only to use the guidelines and related documents with students interested in internships, but to customize the Application Form, Evaluation Form, etc. to fit the internships that are typical for your students and to meet the unique needs of your department.*

*Faculty who agree to supervise **Honors Internships** for University Honors students should consult the Guidelines for Honors Internships, <http://www.honors.arizona.edu/HonorsAcademics/Policies/IndvStudies.htm>, as endorsed by the Undergraduate Council, 4/7/2009.*

Application Process:

An Internship Application Form is available online (see the Registrar's Office Web site with University forms: <http://www.registrar.arizona.edu/forms.htm>), along with related documents: Internship Assumption of Risk Release, Student's Internship Evaluation Form, and Supervisor's Internship Final Evaluation Form. Many colleges and departments have specific application forms. Students with or without a declared major in the department offering the internship should contact the department office for further information regarding the internship requirements, faculty who sponsor department internships, and the department's application process.

Students should enroll within the first three weeks of the Fall and Spring Semesters or immediately after the beginning of Winter or Summer Sessions. Students must complete the required 45 hours of course work per credit unit before the last day of the term. The last day to register for Internship credit in Fall and Spring Semesters without incurring a late charge is the same as for all other courses; see <http://www.bursar.arizona.edu/students/fees/census> and http://www.bursar.arizona.edu/students/fees/late_charge.asp.

STUDENT INFORMATION

Most departments place the responsibility for lining up an appropriate internship with the student; internships are usually not assigned. However, some departments keep a file of internships in the community that are available to students with a major or minor in certain academic disciplines.

Minimum Eligibility Qualifications: Before applying for an internship, students should meet the following:

1. Be in **good academic standing** with the University of Arizona and have maintained at least a 2.00 grade point average (major and cumulative) at the University of Arizona prior to enrolling for an internship. Some departments/colleges require a higher GPA; consult with the internship coordinator.
2. Have _____ status with completion of the following required courses listed in the department curriculum for the _____ year: _____.

3. Continuing students should have completed at least two full-time semesters--a minimum of 24 University Credits. Transfer students should have completed at least one full-time semester--a minimum of 12 University Credits.
4. Be currently enrolled at The University of Arizona.
5. Be a declared major or minor in the department offering the internship.
 [Note: Students who do not have a major or minor in the department should contact the department head or internship coordinator to discuss their eligibility for an internship. **University Honors students** requesting an Honors Internship should consult the Guidelines for Honors Internships, <http://www.honors.arizona.edu/HonorsAcademics/Policies/IndvStudies.htm>, and contact an Honors College advisor.]

Student Interns Agree to:

1. Apply at least one week before the end of the semester prior to participation. Complete the Internship Application Form in its entirety and obtain all necessary signatures. Submit intern application to the department and/or college (if requested, provide sponsoring organization with final copy).
2. If the application is approved, submit a Change of Schedule Form signed by the supervising instructor to the department for the appropriate internship course (193/293/393/493/593/693/793) by the deadline specified for the semester in which the credit will be earned. Registration may be handled by the department or by the Registration and Transcripts Office (Administration 210). **Reminder: The last day to register for courses without a \$250 late charge in the Fall/Spring Semesters is the 21st day of the semester; for Winter/Summer Sessions (to avoid a \$50 late charge) register by the last day to drop with deletion from the record.**
3. Internship credits will not be awarded retroactively for internship duties performed at an earlier time.
4. Pay any registration fees associated with the credits to be earned, and if you receive financial aid, consult with the Financial Aid and/or Scholarship Office prior to registering.
5. Discuss with your prospective supervisor at the work site the possible risks and dangers associated with the planned internship. Then complete and sign the Internship Assumption of Risk Release Form and submit it to the department offering the internship course.
6. Recognize that you are representing The University of Arizona as an ambassador to the community and abide by the Student Code of Conduct and Code of Academic Integrity.
7. Understand and follow the policies, procedures, rules and regulations of the sponsoring organization.
8. Be prepared to perform your internship duties for the hours and duration specified. Completion of any non-academic requirements imposed by the sponsoring organization supervisor is by agreement between the student and the supervisor.
9. Talk to the supervisor regarding expected University holidays. Keep in mind many organizations do not follow the University calendar.
10. Fulfill all of the academic assignments and reporting requirements of the internship course as specified by the department in order for a grade to be assigned.
11. Students in paid internships need to indicate on their application form how their internship work hours and duties exceed the normal job requirements with the sponsoring organization.
12. Ensure that your direct supervisor is able and willing to submit an evaluation on your behalf. Some organizations have personnel policies prohibiting your supervisor from providing a written intern evaluation. If this is the case, special arrangements must be made for your supervisor to speak directly with the course instructor about your performance.
13. Before the end of the semester, complete the **Student's Internship Evaluation Form**, and give this to the course instructor.
14. Submit the final internship report or project to the course instructor by the date specified.

DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The internship reflects the essential partnership between faculty and those practicing the profession in the community. The department's role in the partnership is to send students who will be good UA ambassadors to the community and to ensure that students will have a quality "hands on" learning experience. An internship also enhances the lines of communication between faculty and professionals in business, industry and government. The internship is an excellent complement to the department's curriculum.

Department Internship Coordinators Agree to:

1. Select students who are in good academic standing.
2. Ensure that students are NOT awarded internship credit for their ongoing job. If an exception is made for a student who is a paid employee of the sponsoring organization, require the student AND the work supervisor to submit letters outlining the additional work to be performed above and beyond the student's regular work responsibilities (e.g., the internship component might be 10 hours/week spent completing a special project beyond the student's usual work hours).
3. Ensure that interns are NOT used as free labor in for-profit organizations/facilities that are owned or operated by the faculty member who will award the internship credit and grade. If internships are permitted in such a facility, the interns should be compensated as an employee of the organization.
4. Inform students of the necessity of complying with pertinent department and workplace policies and procedures.
5. If the student's internship involves doing research with human subjects (e.g., interviewing, collecting data), make sure that Human Subjects training is provided as appropriate to the student's assignment. [Check the Human Subjects Protection Program to determine if training is needed: <http://www.irb.arizona.edu/faqs.html>]
6. Require that instructors document communications with the student and work supervisor regarding internship activities.
7. Notify the student that, unless other agreements are made between the student and instructor, the instructor and department will not be responsible for any financial obligations incurred by the student for his/her participation; this includes, but is not limited to, travel and housing arrangements.
8. Notify the student that neither the instructor nor the University will be responsible for the payment of any medical care for injuries alleged to have resulted from the student's work experiences.
9. Address the kind and amount of compensation (if any) that the department permits for internship credit (e.g., volunteer work, paid employment, a scholarship, room and board).

Course Instructors' Supervisory Responsibilities:

1. The instructor and sponsoring organization supervisor should maintain regular communication about the student's work activities during the internship. Any conflicts should be quickly resolved by communication among the student, instructor and sponsoring organization supervisor.
2. The instructor should ensure that the internship experience is related to the curriculum by building into the schedule regular interaction with the student. Communication with the student is an important component that elevates the work to a meaningful learning experience.
3. The instructor should maintain vigilance in overseeing the student's internship experience, regardless of the work location. Periodic on-site visits are preferable, but if personal visits are not feasible, the instructor should regularly converse with the intern via phone or e-mail.
4. The instructor should require the intern to report on a regular basis throughout the internship. These reports should include:
 - o a brief comment on allocation of the intern's time during the period,
 - o progress toward objectives, and
 - o discussion of any significant difficulties with the internship.
5. Send to the supervisor of the sponsoring organization the **Supervisor's Internship Evaluation** for completion, along with an envelope addressed to the course instructor; specify the deadline for this form to be returned to the department.

Course Work Related to the Internship:

For University Credit, instructors should include an academic component along with the work experience. Students should check with the department regarding the academic requirements of an internship, such as a written report, oral presentation, portfolio, research project, documentation of laboratory experiments, etc. Academic assignments are determined on a case-by-case basis, dependent on the number of credits to be earned. Course work associated with the internship is intended to give students an opportunity to reflect on their internship experience and how it applies to their academic program.

SPONSORING ORGANIZATION RESPONSIBILITIES

An internship provides organizations with an effective outreach to qualified and motivated students. The primary goal of the internship, as stated above, has educational and mentoring components that can be satisfied only through a formal partnership between the organization and University of Arizona college or department. It is the intent of the program that this partnership provides a meaningful learning experience to students as prospective professionals. In this manner, the organization becomes an important asset in the development of interns. As a secondary benefit, the organization has access to well-qualified students as potential candidates for full-time employment after graduation. As a tertiary benefit, the program allows supervisors to evaluate prospective long-term employees under actual work conditions at minimal cost. Initial contacts through the internship may lead to recruitment and eventual hiring, upon graduation, of an employee who has experience with the employer's operating procedures. In addition, multiple internships with the same student over his/her academic career may enable the intern to function at a higher level that will free full-time professional staff for more complex work.

Sponsoring Organization's Responsibilities:

1. Assign a full-time professional as the Internship Supervisor.
2. Prepare a Letter of Agreement outlining the organization's understanding of the internship it intends to offer, typically under the following headings:
 - a. **Purpose of the Internship** - A brief statement that describes the purpose of the internship and includes a statement on how the program philosophy will be maintained.
 - b. **Status of the Intern** - A brief description of the intern's status within the agency: expected number of hours per week, hourly wage or salary (if any), eligibility for benefits or not, eligibility for promotion or not, etc.
 - c. **Minimum Qualifications** - A statement that describes the minimum qualifications required of applicants for the internship. Minimum qualifications should include education, work experience, personal qualities, and special skills and knowledge.
 - d. **Job Description** - A broad statement of the job function that describes the intern's duties and responsibilities, including the identification of a "chain of command" for reporting purposes. Also include the name and position title of the expected supervisor.
 - e. **Organization-Specific Guidelines and Requirements for Interns** - A detailed list of what the organization expects from the intern and a definition of the organization's obligations to the intern. The former may include items such as the intern's specific job functions and/or the intern's professional responsibilities with regard to the organization's policies for office conduct, etc. The later may include items such as conditions of continued employment, potential for full-time employment after graduation, mentoring by full-time professionals in the organization, formal communication lines between the supervisor and intern, etc.
3. Prior to advertising the internship position, submit the Letter of Agreement for approval to the department head. This is an agreement between the student, the organization, and the department.
4. Provide pertinent policies and procedures to the prospective intern before she/he begins working.
5. Provide relevant education/training to the intern.
6. Maintain the intern status of the student, to be distinguished from employment status.

7. Make individual arrangements, if agreed upon between the student and organization for any stipend or other benefit of service deemed appropriate.
8. Notify the department of any decision to remove the student from the internship prior to the agreed upon time, due to the student's failure to comply with rules or regulations, and provide a written report to the department regarding the reasons for terminating the intern.
9. Complete and submit to the course instructor the Internship Final Evaluation by the deadline specified by department, and return this to the course instructor in the envelope provided.