

Sustainability Internship Guidelines

The internship is intended to expand the student's experience with sustainability beyond the classroom. The engagement with sustainability issues is a guided work experience designed to give students a realistic exposure to real-world work environments. The internship may include work in an applied, administrative, or analyst area of a government, non-profit, or appropriate private sponsoring organization. The internship is carried out under the direction of both an agency mentor and the faculty supervisor assigned by the Undergraduate Degree director. The intern is required to keep a journal and submit a final research paper at the completion of the Internship period. The guidelines for the paper are described below.

Sustainability Internship Program Requirements:

- Be a second-semester sophomore, junior, or senior enrolled at UofL
- Have Sustainability as a major
- Have a minimum of 45 credit hours
- Have a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 grade point average
- Have a current resume

Internship Position Requirements:

- Paid or unpaid experiences related to sustainability
- Majority higher level functionality beyond administrative
- Minimum 12 weeks in length - dates must coincide with the semester / academic calendar
- Minimum of 12 work hours per week and 150-hours total
- Approved by Undergraduate Degree program director

Internship Research Paper Guidelines

The internship paper is designed to reflect a student's ability to integrate theoretical classroom and research experiences with the body of applied skills attained during the internship experience. The paper should demonstrate the student's grasp of general sustainability principles, theories, concepts, methods, and issues by relating them to aspects of the administrative context in which the student participated. The purpose of the paper is not to provide a narrative review of the student's day-to-day job duties, nor a sequential course-by-course review of the significance of the student's classroom experience; but rather it is to discern the student's ability to synthesize and apply what is relevant in this broad interdisciplinary field to enable a more complete understanding of tasks performed by the intern student, his or her role in the agency/company, and the agency/company's place in the larger organizational context.

The student should demonstrate achievement of program core competencies by linking the internship/practicum experience to many or all of the following identified learning outcomes for the BA in Sustainability degree, in which students should be able to:

- Understand, conceptualize and analyze sustainability problems and issues in a holistic way;
- Develop a deeper understanding of the basic concepts in sustainability, and the disciplines that can assist with real-world problem solving;
- Evaluate the role of social institutions and the political, legal, and cultural frameworks for sustainability;
- Acquire methods and techniques to explore and analyze issues that cross disciplinary boundaries;
- Understand ethical perspectives for issues related to sustainability;
- Obtain practical experience through a required sustainability-related internship
- Develop skills that will facilitate creative, innovative, and workable solutions to sustainability problems

Internship Paper Format

A conventional research term paper format should be used. While no explicit length is required, approximately 12-15 typed, double-spaced pages should normally suffice. The specific objective and thesis of the paper should be clearly stated. A title page, table of contents, and a list of reference materials consulted should be included. The bibliography should demonstrate documentation of the material cited within the paper. One standard citation style should be used consistently within the paper, preferably with the author's name, date of publication, and page in parentheses directly after the material cited, and an alphabetical list of references at the conclusion of the paper. The organization of the paper should follow the general outline below:

A. Introduction.

Brief description of the agency/company, including information on function, staff, finances, and relationship with other agencies/market(s), and a brief description of the intern student's duties and responsibilities.

B. Sustainability issues to be examined.

A discussion of the issues, citing relevant sustainability literature with an explanation of its relevance to the internship.

C. Discussion and analysis

An examination of the activities and functions of the agency/company, with reference to relevant literature. Did the agency/company behave as the literature predicted it would? Why or why not?

D. Linkage of internship with stated learning outcomes.

A discussion of how the experience demonstrated the achievement of desired learning outcomes (stated above).

E. Conclusions

A discussion of insights gained with regard to the issues in Sustainability from this experience. What aspects of the literature were most/least useful in understanding the operation of the agency/company?

F. Due Date

The due date for the internship paper is the last day of class for the semester in which the student is enrolled in the internship. The paper will be graded with respect to the extent it follows the format described above, and demonstrates depth of analysis. A letter grade will be assigned to the paper.

Internship Journal

In addition to the paper, the student must provide a journal that indicates dates worked, hours, and primary tasks. Ideally this can also be a place to note reflections as the internship progresses.

Evaluation

The intern's on-site (or primary) supervisor must complete an evaluation of the intern. This can be completed on-line.

All questions regarding the internship should be directed to the Director of the BA in Sustainability program director, Dr. David Simpson (dave.simpson@louisville.edu).