Sustainability Internship Handbook

Guidelines for completing the requirements for

SUST404

Last Updated
May 2018
Introduction

The internship is a vital component of the BA in Sustainability degree program at the University of Louisville. This applied learning experience offers the intern an opportunity to integrate and employ the skills and knowledge accumulated during the academic program of study.

The internship is intended to offer a challenging work experience that will expose the student to the multiple demands that face private and public service administrators, managers, and planners. Above all, this exposure to a sustainability-focused organization offers the student significant opportunity to apply the knowledge obtained through course work.

This handbook is designed to answer many of the questions you have, and assist you in early preparation for the internship/practicum component of your coursework. Read the booklet thoroughly, and direct any questions you may have to the internship/practicum coordinator (the student advisor) or to the director of your degree program. A list of important phone numbers is included later in this booklet.

The Internship

The internship is a guided work experience designed to give students a realistic exposure to issues in the sustainability arena. The internship includes work in a sustainability-focused position in a government, non-profit, or appropriate private sponsoring organization. The internship is carried out under the direction of both an on-site organization mentor and a faculty supervisor assigned by the BA Program director. The internship must include a minimum of 150 hours over a period of not less than one full academic semester. The intern is required to keep a journal and submit a final research paper at the completion of the internship period, guidelines for which are detailed later in this handbook.

The Application Process

Successfully securing an internship or practicum requires that the student properly complete each step of the application procedure. Specifically:

1. **ONE FULL SEMESTER BEFORE** the anticipated start of the internship or practicum, the student should schedule a planning meeting with a BA degree faculty advisor.

2. The faculty advisor will assist the student in identifying appropriate internship opportunities. It is the responsibility of the student to forward a resume and a cover letter to the sponsoring organization for review.

3. Once the sponsoring organization and subsequent internship has been identified, it is necessary that the student notify the faculty advisor and request approval.

4. Once an internship opportunity has been approved, an internship agreement (Memo of Understanding) form is completed and signed by all parties. A copy of the form is included later in this handbook.
5. After the internship agreement has been completed, it will be necessary to fill out a registration form and obtain the appropriate in order to be officially registered for the internship credits. The form can be obtained from the UPA main office.

**Student Responsibilities**

The internship not only provides a valuable learning experience to complement the academic curriculum, but can also play a critical role in the development of career opportunities. Internships opportunities require both professional conduct and responsibility. The student’s performance will be evaluated and it is important to conform to standards of professional behavior including appropriate dress, attitude and punctuality. During the course of the internship period, the intern is responsible for following the policies and rules of the sponsoring organization. Questions about this should be directed to the sponsoring mentor.

Similarly, the sponsoring agency should meet the same professional standards. If the student should have any concerns, they should be brought to the attention of the faculty advisor.

**Checklist of Student Responsibilities**

1. Obtain and review the *Internship Handbook*.
2. Complete the internship application and update resume and cover letter (one full semester prior to beginning the internship).
3. Attend a planning meeting with a faculty advisor.
4. Confirm internship responsibilities and complete internship agreement form with appropriate signatures. Complete registration form with appropriate signatures.
5. Completion of 150 internship hours.
6. Satisfactory performance as evaluated on the final evaluation reports by the sponsoring agency.
7. Satisfactory completion of the responsibilities outlined in the internship agreement form.
8. Satisfactory completion of the final research paper and submission of the internship journal.

**Role of the Faculty Advisor**

The faculty advisor will seek to assist in obtaining internships. The faculty advisor will assist as possible the student in the placement process, taking into consideration the student’s career objectives. The faculty advisor will determine a faculty supervisor who will serve as the intern’s on-campus supervisor for the duration of the internship.
The faculty supervisor will further act as a resource for the intern during the internship, and if necessary will act as a liaison between the intern and the sponsoring organization. At the completion of the internship/practicum, the faculty supervisor will grade the paper/project and journal.

**Role of the Sponsoring Organization**

The sponsoring organization must be a legal entity. A representative of the sponsoring organization must sign the internship agreement and will assign a member of its staff as an internship mentor. The mentor should:

- Discuss the internship responsibilities and be available to answer questions and offer guidance to the intern.
- When necessary, hold conferences with the intern to discuss the intern’s progress in meeting the objectives of the internship.
- Provide the intern with a suitable work environment.
- Complete the final evaluation report and return it to the student advisor. The evaluation form will be provided by the student at the beginning of the assignment.

**Research Paper Guidelines**

The internship paper is designed to reflect a student’s ability to integrate essential 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 sustainability theories, concepts, methods, and issues by relating them to aspects of the working context in which the student participated. The purpose of the research 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; rather it is to demonstrate the student’s ability to synthesize and apply what is relevant in this broad interdisciplinary field so as to acquire a more complete comprehension of the tasks performed by the intern, his/her role in the agency/company, and the agency/company’s place in a larger organizational context.

**Format**

A conventional term paper format should be used. While no explicit length is required, approximately 15 to 20 typed, double-spaced pages will be sufficient. 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. 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, including information on agency function, staff, finances, and relationship with other agencies/companies and a brief description of the intern student’s duties and responsibilities.

B. **Sustainability issues to be examined**
   A discussion of the issues, citing sustainability literature and an explanation of its relevance to the internship.

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

D. **Linkage of internship/practicum with stated learning outcomes**
   A discussion of how the experience demonstrated the achievement of desired learning outcomes.

E. **Conclusions**
   A discussion of insights into the practice of urban planning gained from this experience. What aspects of the literature were most/least useful in understanding the operation of the agency?

***The due date for the research paper is the last day of class for the semester that the student is enrolled in the internship/practicum. The research paper will be graded on the extent to which it follows the format described above and shows depth of analysis. A letter grade will be assigned to the research paper.***

***All Materials must be submitted electronically to Dave Simpson dave.simpson@louisville.edu***

**Important Phone Numbers**

**BA Program Director:**
Dr. Dave Simpson  
Urban Studies Institute, Room 100  
Phone: 852-8019  
Fax: 852-4558  
Email: dave.simpson@louisville.edu

**UPA Program Administrator:**
Ms. Patricia Sarley  
Urban Studies Institute, Room 103  
Phone: 852-7914  
Fax: 852-4558  
Email: plclea01@louisville.edu
The Dept. of Urban and Public Affairs, University of Louisville, ________________, Student Intern and _______________________________ agree to the following:

Sponsoring Organization

1. The intern is a student in the Sustainability program at the University of Louisville.
2. The intern will perform the services requested in a fully professional manner.
3. Interns will have a mentor at the organization in which the student interns and a faculty supervisor from the Dept. of Urban and Public Affairs.
4. The internship mentor and the intern will mutually strive to develop an effective working relationship, with the mentor providing an appropriate level of support and encouragement to the intern.
5. The internship mentor will make every effort to insure that the student participates in as many facets as possible of the work within his or her area of responsibility.
6. While every position requires some clerical tasks, these tasks should be incidental to the main duties of the internship.
7. When feasible, every attempt will be made to permit the intern to observe or participate in various levels of decision-making in which the supervisor participates.
8. The internship mentor will complete a formal evaluation at the end of the internship and return it to the internship coordinator.
9. The internship will commence on __________ and end on__________, and it will require _____ hours of work per week. The intern’s mentor, department, and general responsibilities are as follows:

Mentor and Title ______________________________________________________________

Department __________________________________________________________________

Mentor and Title ______________________________________________________________

Department __________________________________________________________________
General Responsibilities

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

Stipend/Compensation (if provided by sponsor)

Faculty Supervisor

Additional Comments

Signed and dated

Intern

Internship Mentor

Faculty Supervisor

Internship Coordinator

Program Director

***For Student***

I understand that the internship deliverables (1) Paper; (2) Journal (internship only); (3) Evaluation must conform to the internship handbook guidelines and be turned in electronically by the last day of classes for the semester in which I am enrolled for the Internship credits. Initial________________
**Department of Urban and Public Affairs**  
**University of Louisville**  
**Sustainability Internship Evaluation**

Name of Intern__________________________________________________________

Rating scale:  
1: Poor  
2: Below Average  
3: Average  
4: Good  
5: Superior

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<th>Ability to Work with Agency/Community</th>
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<td>1. Understanding of agency purpose/function:</td>
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<td>2. Ability to understand and use agency policies and procedures:</td>
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<td>3. Ability to plan, organize and use time effectively:</td>
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<td>4. Knowledge and use of available resources:</td>
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<td>5. Ability to obtain pertinent information/facts when needed:</td>
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<td>6. Ability to distinguish relevant from irrelevant materials:</td>
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<td>7. Ability to plan a course of action:</td>
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<td>8. Written communication skills (memos, reports, briefs):</td>
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<td>9. Presentation skills (meetings, proposals):</td>
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<td>10. Ability to relate/apply theoretical knowledge to a given problem or agency function:</td>
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<td>11. Ability to communicate with staff/others:</td>
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12. Ability to obtain relevant facts from materials:  ___  ___  ___  ___  ___  ___  

Professional development  1  2  3  4  5  N/A

13. Integration of theory and practice:  ___  ___  ___  ___  ___  ___  

14. Shows pattern of continuous learning:  ___  ___  ___  ___  ___  ___  

15. Ability to focus on problems/needs of agency:  ___  ___  ___  ___  ___  ___  

16. Attitude towards authority:  ___  ___  ___  ___  ___  ___  

17. Attitude toward assuming leadership role/additional responsibilities:  ___  ___  ___  ___  ___  ___  

18. Promptness:  ___  ___  ___  ___  ___  ___  

19. Dependability:  ___  ___  ___  ___  ___  ___  

Additional comments:

Would you feel confident in hiring/recommending this intern for a job?
____________________________________________________________________________  
____________________________________________________________________________  
____________________________________________________________________________  

What suggestions, if any, do you have for the improvement of the Sustainability Program?
____________________________________________________________________________  
____________________________________________________________________________  
____________________________________________________________________________  

Additional comments:___________________________________________________________  
____________________________________________________________________________  
____________________________________________________________________________  

Signature of Agency Mentor  
Mentor’s Name (printed)  
Title  
Name of Agency  
Date