Internship Handbook: Expansion of Classroom and Academic Preparation in the Real World
University College, Northern Arizona University

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Section 1: Introduction and Mission

This informational handbook is designed to provide students, supervisors, and interning companies or organizations with material focused on processes relating to for-credit internships and preparation for the real world in a career-oriented setting using experiential learning. The handbook also provides access to information relating to regulations and rules designated by the Arizona Board of Regents and the Department of Labor.

Internships

Characteristics of an internship include, but are not limited to:

- A typical for credit experience usually last 3 months or the duration of a semester.
- Internships may be part of an educational program, providing careful monitoring and evaluation for academic credit.
- An important element that distinguishes an internship from a short-term job or volunteer work is that an intentional “learning agenda” is structured into the experience.
- Learning activities common to most internships include learning objectives, observation, reflection, evaluation, and assessment.
- An effort is made to establish a reasonable balance between the interns learning goals and the specific work an organization needs done.
- Internships promote academic, career and/or personal development.

The goals of an internship include the following:

- To provide a suggested overview of work experience expectations and guidelines.
- To integrate classroom knowledge and theories with outside work experience.
- To aid students in clarifying their own career goals, needs, and desires under professional and academic supervision.
- To allow a location and supervision that assists students in developing practical work-related skills.
- To help students develop contacts and networks for future employment and references.
- To increase students marketability for post graduation job opportunities.

Reminders of what an internship is not:

- **Time-Out**: Internships are learning experiences and require active engagement to draw the most information from. It is not a “time-out” from school.
- **An Easy Grade**: Internships mirror work experiences and can be more rigorous than a regular class. Student should be prepared to manage their time effectively as to not get overwhelmed with other obligations and commitments.
- **Volunteer Experience**: Interns are different from volunteers regardless of any financial arrangements. Faculty members and site supervisors evaluate the quality of learning and the quality of work throughout the semester.
- **Resident Expert**: A professional staff member of the organization should supervise the intern. It is not appropriate for the organization to expect an intern to be the “resident expert”.
- **Go-Fer:** Interns should not be assigned to perform only routine and uninteresting work for the company or organization. While some routine work is expected, an internship is primarily an educational experience and is geared to benefit the intern.

- **Guarantee of a Job Offer:** An internship can be an excellent doorway to career options, however, there are no guaranteed job placements. The internship experience is beneficial for resume experience, for experiences hiring companies typically look for, as well as a networking opportunity.

Section 2: Definitions


Internship: An internship is a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in professional fields they are considering for career paths; and give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent. ("Position Statement: U.S. Internships, A Definition and Criteria to Assess Opportunities And Determine the Implications for Compensation—Definition of ‘Internship’ and Consistent Criteria.” National Association of Colleges and Employers, July 2011. Web. 21 July 2014. http://www.naceweb.org/advocacy/position-statements/united-states-internships.aspx)

Unpaid Internship: There are some circumstances under which individuals who participate in “for-profit” private sector internships or training programs may do so without compensation. The Supreme Court has held that the term “suffer or permit to work” cannot be interpreted so as to make a person whose work serves only his or her own interest an employee of another who provides aid or instruction. This may apply to interns who receive training for their own educational benefit if the training meets certain criteria. The determination of whether an internship or training program meets this exclusion depends upon all of the facts and circumstances of each such program.

The following six criteria must be applied when making this determination:

1. The internship, even though it includes actual operation of the facilities of the employer, is similar to training which would be given in an educational environment;
2. The internship experience is for the benefit of the intern;
3. The intern does not displace regular employees, but works under close supervision of existing staff;
4. The employer that provides the training derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the intern; and on occasion its operations may actually be impeded;
5. The intern is not necessarily entitled to a job at the conclusion of the internship; and
6. The employer and the intern understand that the intern is not entitled to wages for the time spent in the internship.

If all of the factors listed above are met, an employment relationship does not exist under the FLSA, and the Act’s minimum wage and overtime provisions do not apply to the intern. This exclusion from the definition of employment is necessarily quite narrow because the FLSA’s definition of “employ” is very broad.
Cooperative Education: Cooperative education, or “co-ops”, are experiential learning opportunities. Co-oping allows the student to integrate classroom theory with practical experience in industry and business by alternating semesters of paid employment in their major field with semesters of study. Co-op practice is a great way to get hands-on experience in the field, get paid, and earn credits toward the degree. Unlike an internship, where students are working but not necessarily getting paid or earning credits, a co-op is a structured program with specific requirements for the student and employer. Employers prefer candidates with an understanding of organizational contexts and constraints as well as strong communication and teamwork skills. These professional skills are often learned on the job while working in industry. With a co-op, students can gain industry experience and have a leg up on the competition when they graduate—greatly increasing their marketability.


Service Learning: Service learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection in order to: enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. This method emphasizes critical thought and reflection as it stimulates community involvement and personal growth. Service learning is student-centered, hands-on and applies directly to the curriculum of study, thus the similarity between internships and cooperative education experiences.


Volunteering: Volunteers are recognized as individuals undertaking specific tasks, projects, or roles within a service/non-profit/fundraiser/events/etc. for multiple reasons that can include any of the following: self-fulfillment, improvement of social and community life, community connections, and giving back. As a learning experience, volunteering aids in skill development, socialization, and civic awareness. Volunteering is usually non-paid work and ineligible for academic credit, yet individuals who volunteer develop valuable skills and make important connections while building a strong and diverse resume.

Section 3: “How To” For the Internship Supervisor

If you are new to the university and a student approaches you for help with an internship/field work experience you can choose to be their Internship Supervisor. There is no set protocol for working with student interns other than determining and creating components of experiential learning that are related to the organization’s needs and directly influence the student’s career goals and marketability for post graduation opportunities. One requirement is that all safety and university policies must be upheld. Full policies and information are available within this sectioned handbook.

The University College internship webpage: http://www.nau.edu/University-College/Student-Resources/Internships/

- Your department should have a “Field Work Experience” course in the catalog. Internship and Field Work course numbers are 208 and 408, and carry a department prefix. For example: UC 408, HIS 408, etc.
  - 208 encompasses 1-6 units and carries this course description: “Supervised field experience in an appropriate organization for students who have a limited background in a discipline. Pass-Fail only. May be repeated for up to 12 units of credit. Prerequisite: Permission of the supervising department or college is required.”
  - 408 encompasses 1-12 units and carries this course description: “Individualized supervised field experience in an appropriate agency or organization. Pass-Fail only. May be repeated for up to 12 units of credit. Fee required.”

- If your department does not have a 208 or 408 course already in the catalogue, work with your chair and/or curriculum committee to have the course added.

Planning

- Have a conversation covering these topics with the student:
  - Ensure the student has a clear understanding of what it means to commit to an internship.
  - The student should be advised to research potential internships that will provide a distinct learning experience relating to their own program of study.

- Ensure that the correct forms are used and completed appropriately.
  - Create a document of expectations, a syllabus, or an outline that provides information and guidelines about:
    - Determine when students will be asked to check in with you as their Internship Supervisor:
      - Determine a regular weekly meeting schedule.
      - Create/set up a calendar for important dates, due dates, etc.
      - Create or define the goals of the proposed internship.
    - Develop any assignments that are to be completed by the student during the internship duration.
In most situations the site supervisor will be asked to do a mid-semester and final evaluation for the intern. It is the NAU Internship Supervisor’s responsibility to coordinate this.

- Document contact and emergency information.

- Complete all the necessary paperwork with the appropriate signatures. These documents evidence the nature of the course work and goals therein, serving as a record for the experiential learning commitment. These forms are available on the UC internship webpage link below.

1) “Affiliate Agreement” — Required unless currently on file. This agreement is mandatory if the unit does not currently have one on file for the facility hosting the intern.

2) “Undergraduate Request for Field Work Experience” — Required for the Scheduler of Classes (SOC) to create the course section in LOUIE.

3) “Internship Learning Agreement” — Optional to help in formulating goals, outcomes, and assignments.

- Coordinate the course and section of 208 or 408 with your department’s Scheduler of Classes (SOC). The Scheduler of Classes will need the completed “Undergraduate Request for Field Work Experience” form in order to create the course and section in LOUIE. This form also shows approval from the Internship Supervisor to create the course.

- Direct the student to contact the department’s SOC to obtain a permission number for enrolling in 208 or 408 for the semester of study. When enrolling, students will need to select the number of credits since both 208 and 408 have a variable of units available. If the student needs help with this, they can talk to the SOC or the Registrar’s Office.

The following link provides information regarding internships for credit at NAU, and links to main contact information to colleges and programs across campus.

http://nau.edu/University-College/University-Advising/Internship-Advisors/
Section 4: For Credit Opportunities Outside of the Classroom—ABOR and NAU Requirements

For Credit Opportunities Outside the Classroom

Goal: To provide information and guidelines to support successful learning experiences through internships and for credit opportunities outside the classroom.

Legal Requirements and Standards:
Department of Labor: http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.pdf

6 criteria test for unpaid interns:

1. The internship, even though it includes actual operation of the facilities of the employer, is similar to training that would be given in an educational environment.
2. The internship experience is for the benefit of the intern.
3. The intern does not displace regular employees but works under close supervision of existing staff.
4. The employer who provides the training derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the intern, and on occasion its operations may actually be impeded.
5. The intern is not necessarily entitled to a job at the conclusion of the internship.
6. The employer and the intern understand that the intern is not entitled to wages for the time spent in the internship.

Arizona Board of Regents: https://azregents.asu.edu/rrc/Policy%20Manual/2-224-Academic%20Credit.pdf

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<th>For Summer (based on 10 weeks onsite)</th>
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<td>2 units</td>
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**NAU Affiliate Agreement:**

Contact the NAU Legal Department if you are unaware of official processes. An affiliate agreement (standard form) is needed between the site and the university and should be signed by the college Dean. NAU Legal can develop a form for your department. If the site has its own form, it must be vetted by NAU Legal and signed by the Provost. The student and faculty may not sign any documents or agreements other than these with sites in order to commence an internship for credit.
Supervision is an integral part of an internship experience and not all interns will be coming into this program with the same set of expectations or experiences. In short, some will need more supervision than others. Below are some suggestions that might help you and the intern achieve a clear set of expectations:

- Be certain of what you want the intern to do and have the necessary tools available that they will require doing their job. Conducting a periodic review of the learning outcomes and expectations with the intern can help keep everyone on task. If the intern’s tasks change to reflect a changed environment or he or she has achieved the learning objectives, update the outcomes and expectations.
- Make sure the intern has a clear understanding of who he or she must report to and who will answer their questions, and ensure that the intern knows which person you have designated to supervise in your absence.
- Tasks and expected outcomes should be defined in person and summarized in writing in order to avoid confusion. Encourage the intern to take notes during meetings and be prepared to give a task completion report when pertinent. One option is to create an agreement with the student once the tasks and expected outcomes are decided. Another would be to create a task/project document with different columns for what needs to be done and for reporting what has been accomplished.
- Be certain that you are familiar with the intern’s learning objectives and that the tasks performed contribute toward those objectives.
- Spend some time orienting the intern to your site, the work schedule, and your own availability. The intern will need to know their way around the physical environment.
- Exchange contact numbers so that you can reach the intern in the event of an emergency or a change in schedule.
- Make sure the intern understands the site’s policies with which they must comply.

Communication is key component to effective supervision in any internship or work environment. The following suggestions can help to establish a good communication system during the internship experience.

- Schedule regular meetings with the intern to discuss new and past assignments, to answer any questions, and to discuss dynamics of the organization.
- Give the intern opportunities to attend meetings (staff, committee, or legislative) whenever possible.
- Discuss career opportunities in the field, and career paths of college graduates.
- Structure and supervise the internship more closely in the beginning, and ease off when the time seems appropriate.
- If problems occur, speak directly with the intern. If the supervisor is unsure how to deal with a particular situation, a phone call to the Internship Supervisor at NAU, who can offer support and advice, is recommended.
Rewarding an intern’s achievements or good works can be a valuable experience for both the company and the student. These are suggested ideas for such recognition.

- Note the intern’s name on any finished project to give them credit and recognition – perhaps as a footnote.
- Give the intern opportunities to attend professional seminars, workshops provided within or by the Organization.
- Give the intern the opportunity to interview or observe in other departments/areas of the organization.
- Give the intern the opportunity to meet the administration, or board members, VIP’s or director.
- Write about the intern in the company newsletter - or better yet, have them write about themselves.
- Add the intern’s name to the telephone directory sheet.
- Post the intern’s picture on the agency’s bulletin board, website, social media, or other publications in order to make them a visible member of the organization.
- Recognize the intern for positive or innovative performance.
- Provide the intern with contacts known to you for help in future job hunting.
- Act as a reference for the intern for his or her future career endeavors, scholarship recommendations, or other professional actions.

Motivating employees can be a difficult task, but there are a number of easy ways to meet those challenges, creating an environment that fosters growth and development.

- Help make interns feel like a member of the team.
- Challenge the intern and show respect for intern’s talents and abilities.
- Provide the intern with a designated work area.
- Provide interns with exposure to the process of planning and involvement by asking for and listening to their ideas.
- Provide constructive and specific criticism as well as feedback about strengths and successes.
- Help interns to understand their jobs in relation to other jobs.

Site Orientation
It is important for all employees to know the ins and outs of where they are working. Once the intern is on location at the facility, the Site Supervisor should cover the following with him or her in order that they better understand the company’s environment and context.

- Description and history of agency/site.
- Description of programs and clientele.
- Description of how the agency relates to the community and other organizations.
- Sketch of the organizational chart and introduction to key staff.
- Facilities orientation: office layout, phones, restrooms, parking, meals, coffee, etc.
- Coverage of record-keeping requirements.
- Discussion of specific role/responsibilities of the intern.
- The protocol for changing schedules or notifying of absences.
Suggestions for Training at the Site
Interns, like other employees, should not be expected to know what to do when they start a new position. Downtime is to be expected as interns are new to the organization and have a learning curve. Meet downtime with an understanding that there will be gaps, or an ebb and flow of active work, and interns should be made aware of what is appropriate during slower periods that aren’t necessarily tied to a project. These suggestions will help guide students with task information and instructions to help them meet the expected outcomes.

- Accompany the intern on specific tasks the first time or more if needed. Guidance is essential for success.
- Provide precise written directions or notes from meetings relating to specific tasks. Be sure to include the time frame and deadline.
- Provide basic training of any office machinery that the intern will be expected to operate.
- Be a point of reference, a role model, and a leader through your actions. Students will observe your behaviors and listen to your knowledge for their understanding of job expectations and performance.
- Provide any written materials, texts, reports, layouts, or templates that create a frame of reference for the intern to understand what the project should look like, or what the expectation is.
- Spend time with the intern, or assign someone to spend a significant amount of time with them during the first few days of work so that they acclimate to the environment successfully and again, have a frame of reference about outcome expectations.
- Be supportive and available.
- Provide constructive criticism and guide students through the appropriate method if their first attempt is not up to standard. Mistakes will be made, and it is important that students understand that it is part of the learning process when they make them. If a high priority/sensitive project is in production, do not rely on the intern to provide the optimal outcome. Offer guidance and assistance with high profile projects.
- Let interns know that it is okay to ask questions and that they will not be regarded as a burden when they ask for help or guidance. It is important that students understand this and that the work environment is open and growth oriented.

Completion of a Project or the Experiential Learning Period in General
Organizations and interns must plan for the ending date from the beginning. It is important to allow for realistic guidelines for completing projects and for transferring them to other personnel.

We encourage Site Supervisors to be cognizant of the expectations that are fundamental for professional growth. The university expects professionalism, and lawful behavior of all representatives, including students who are involved in experiential learning.

During the internship, students are expected to do the following:

- Continue performing all other coursework and to attend scheduled classes.
- Maintain confidentiality in all agency-related activities.
- Act professionally and appropriately in all agency-related activities.
- Abide by agency guidelines for appropriate employee behavior, including reporting to work on time, completing work assignment, avoiding absences, dressing appropriately, and maintaining appropriate agency records.
- Develop and expand professional work skills, as well as oral and written skills.
- Provide their own transportation to and from the agency.
- Report to the Internship Supervisor at the intervals determined at the internship’s commencement.
- Complete all assignments determined and agreed upon at the internship’s commencement.
Section 6: Evaluation Templates

Evaluation of interns or programs can be achieved in a number of ways and is not confined to the following suggestions. It is helpful to remember that evaluations should be structured as questions or prompts that allow for thoughtful and critical evaluation of the student’s perceptions and work, and in a way that provides information that can enhance the learning experience.

1. The “Student Intern Performance Evaluation” form is usually required and can be implemented periodically at midterm and/or at finals. It can be modified as necessary, but the completion of at least one evaluation per term is required.
2. Reflections, journals, and other documents as requested.
3. Upon completion of the internship; the “Student Intern Self Evaluation” form is usually required. Reflection is an important part of growth. Student interns must complete this evaluation for their own records and for supervisors to make any changes needed in order to create a stronger program. This evaluation is to be completed by the last week of the internship and returned to the Internship Supervisor.
4. Google document surveys can be useful because they collect information through a survey format that allows for comments as well. Follow this link to a sample:
   https://docs.google.com/a/nau.edu/forms/d/1DuAxTgs60TPbUOyz6EoRDsi9T1Acoqav59ssuQsPi-o/viewform