

OSU AREc DEPARTMENT
INTERNSHIP POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Purpose

An internship is a supervised work experience with a private business, or a government agency or entity. A six credit hour internship is an important educational component of a Bachelor of Science Degree in Agricultural Business Management (ABM). An internship can also be a part of the degree in Agricultural and Resource Economics. An internship is important because it provides students with the opportunity to apply classroom learning and gain important entry level job experience. Ideally students will be able to identify problems or issues that can be solved or addressed using economics or business management techniques that they have learned in the course of their university studies.

Experience suggests the best time to do an internship is sometime during the final five quarters of coursework. Students tend to be well into their major coursework at this stage, but still have the flexibility to adjust coursework plans should the internship experience provide the incentive. Most students try to arrange internships for the summer because it tends to fit into coursework schedules easily. However, an internship can be set up during any quarter. Internships during the school year may require careful academic planning to insure that coursework is completed in a timely fashion.

Student Responsibilities:

1. **Arranging an Internship.** Responsibility for arranging an internship rests with the student. Students should keep in mind that the possible employer must be willing to enter in to a contractual agreement to provide a meaningful educational experience and to evaluate the student's performance. Students must be willing to undergo any application and interview process required by the employer and should commit to work a specific number of hours per week for a specified time period. As a general rule of thumb an internship involves 200 or more hours of experience and must be fundamentally related to business, management, economics, or policy. It is important to keep in mind that many internship opportunities may be more suited for other disciplines (i.e. crops or animal science). Any arrangements regarding funding/pay related to the internship are to be negotiated by the student and the business providing the internship opportunity. If you have an idea for an internship, you should discuss it with your faculty advisor before making a commitment. Faculty advisors are often able to provide assistance in identifying opportunities, making contacts and outlining internship opportunities.
2. **Agreement.** Once employment has been secured, the student will complete an "Internship Agreement" form. This form will outline the obligations of the student and the business offering the internship, as well as, the learning objectives for the student. Student should review this agreement with the business/agency and the faculty member supervising the internship. Either of these parties may suggest revisions and all three parties sign off on this agreement **prior** to the actual internship experience.

Student Learning Objectives. The student is responsible for developing the student learning goals. Your learning objectives will be reviewed and accepted by both the employer and internship advisor. Learning objectives are not the same things as your job duties/description (i.e. what you do in your day-to-day activities). Your learning objective must tie into the course work of your degree and be related to business, economics, management or policy principles. It is important to keep in mind that the internship educational process is not just job skills, but encompasses larger learning concepts and how they relate to your degree. Often time this requires additional research or project development beyond the scope of your day-to-day activities if they do not allow for acquiring new knowledge that relates to business, economics, management, and policy. Guidelines for your learning objectives are below.

- a. A draft of the learning goals should be the result of the student's conversation with the employer and faculty advisor in which responsibilities and opportunities for the student are discussed.
 - b. Learning objectives should be simple statements of both content and skills, which the student has no prior experience or knowledge of but will be obtained during the internship experience.
 - c. These objectives should tie the internship experience back to principles of agricultural/natural resource business, economics, and policy. The student is responsible for obtaining the information and materials needed to meet their learning objectives. Through their written report and oral presentation they must illustrate and document that these learning objectives were met.
 - d. The employer and faculty advisor will review the learning objectives with the student. Any revisions to the objectives must be entered on the internship contract before obtaining signatures.
3. **Credit.** To obtain the required internship credits for their internship experience, a student must complete 200 hours of "on-the-job" experience followed by preparation of a written report of the internship experience and a fifteen-minute oral presentation to faculty and fellow students. A student must register for 6-quarter credits of AREC 410 Internship either during the term(s) of the internship **or** after the 200 "on-the-job" hours are completed (but not before). Once a student is eligible to register for their internship credits, the credits may be split across multiple terms with no less than 2 credits in any single term. These course credits are graded Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory. A grade of X ("Work n Progress") will be posted for all internship credits until all aspects of the internship are completed. If all aspects of the internship are **not** completed within 3 terms following the completion

of the “on-the-job” portion of the internship then all X grades will revert to a U and a student may be required to complete another internship experience.

Summer Credits. If a student plans to complete their “on-the-job” internship hours and concurrently register for summer internship credits a grade will not be filed until all three requirements of the internship are complete. It is important to note that with summer internships students may be required to complete work on the internship report and make their presentation during the fall term following completion of their “on-the-job” hours. Summer internship grades are usually filed in September for Summer (September) and December for or Fall (December) term.

*** Graduating Seniors:** If a student has completed all other degree requirements and is completing a summer internship, their graduation date will be delayed until the completion of all internship requirements are completed and a grade is filed. This means that a student may qualify to “walk” in the June graduation ceremonies but their official graduation date will NOT be June. A student’s official graduation date and receipt of their diploma will not be until after all grades are filed, including those for an internship completed after all courses are completed (usually September or December).

4. Conduct. While on the job, interns will conduct themselves according to the Student Conduct Code and in a manner that upholds the standards expected of the student, Oregon State University and Eastern Oregon University. Any breach of the Student Conduct Code or termination for cause may be reported to the Dean of Student Affairs and academic discipline actions may be taken.

5. Report. Following completion of the internship, the student must complete a well-written report that discusses and develops each of your learning objectives, as well as summarizing the general internship experience. This may require the student to complete additional research after the completion of the on-the-job portion of the internship.

An excellent report ranges from 10-15 double-spaced pages, with 1” margins and 12-point font. It is expected the report will be typed, well organized, and free of grammatical errors. Students should consider submitting a draft well before the final deadline, as deficient papers will be returned for corrections. In addition, the faculty advisor may suggest revisions to be made before or after the internship presentation. Final internship papers should be submitted no later than halfway through the second term following completion of the internship experience, or by the date on the contract.

The general organizational structure of the report is:

- a. General Description of Internship and Work Performed (with whom, when done, hours/week, individuals involved, description of responsibilities, etc.)
- b. Description of Problems Addressed and Process Followed (Were you given major assignments to complete or problems to solve or analyze? Describe assignments/problems, how they were addressed, any obstacles encountered, etc.)
- c. Learning Objectives (taken from agreement) and Development/Discussion of Objectives (How did you obtain the information and knowledge to meet these learning objectives?)
- d. Summary and Conclusions (How did you and your employer benefit from your internship? What educational areas do you need to strengthen to be better prepared for career employment? What skills and knowledge helped you the most in your internship?)
- d. Reference, Appendices (supporting material)

The student and faculty supervisor may choose to alter this outline if the internship merits a different reporting structure.

6. Oral Presentation. The oral presentation will be scheduled no later than one term following the final internship paper submission. The presentation will be approximately 15 minutes in length with additional time allowed for questions and will follow the basic guidelines for the paper. The student should consider this a professional presentation and it should be accompanied by the appropriate dress and use of visual aids. Further guidelines may be received from the internship advisor based on the audience expected for the presentation.

Faculty Advisor Responsibilities:

1. A faculty advisor(s) oversees the internship program. A faculty advisor will meet with the student prior to beginning the internship to discuss the internship/work experience, student learning objectives, the paper, and the oral presentation. In conjunction with this process, the advisor may contact the business or agency employing the intern to ensure that the internship can be done and to clarify educational goals. After the agreement form has been reviewed and signed by the individual supervising the internship and by the student, the faculty advisor signs the agreement on behalf of the department.
2. After the internship is completed, the advisor will meet with the student to review the internship experience and discuss the focus and organization of the final report. Once the written report is completed, the faculty supervisor will review the report and approve the scheduling of an oral presentation.

3. The faculty advisor(s) will determine whether additional work is needed on the written report and whether a Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory grade is warranted for the internship.

Employer Responsibilities:

1. The primary responsibility of the business/agency is to ensure that the intern has a worthwhile educational experience. This responsibility represents an additional time and effort commitment that may not be present in a normal employment situation. The student is joining the business/agency for learning purposes that may or may not exceed the normal training activities of the firm. If the business/agency and the student's immediate supervisor are willing to make this commitment, the internship has an excellent chance for success.
2. The employer will provide the information necessary to complete the internship contract, including discussing and reviewing the student learning objectives. By signing the contract the employer agrees to give the student opportunities to collect the necessary information, experience and materials to exemplify the completion of these objectives.

The employer has the right to accept or reject an intern based upon the application and interview. Further, if during the period of the internship there is cause, the employer has the right to terminate the employment. If this occurs before the end of the agreed upon internship period, the employer is asked to submit a memo to the faculty advisor stating the reason for the termination.

In the event of early termination the following policies will prevail:

1. If at least 75% of the internship is completed, at the discretion of the internship coordinator, the student may be allowed to submit the written report and be graded thereon.
2. If the termination is for cause, (i.e. illegal act, unbecoming conduct, drugs, alcohol, etc.) the student will be required to find and complete another internship without faculty assistance or recommendation before a degree can be awarded. In addition, the student will be held to any implications of this termination as indicated above in **Student Responsibilities #3. Conduct.**

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