

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM GOALS

An internship experience affords students the opportunity to apply theories in a field of setting and develop “self-directed learning skills.” Specifically, the internship experience offers students the following opportunities:

- To provide students with a rich context for interpreting the theories and tools presented in their public administration courses, and to provide them with an opportunity to apply those theories and tools in a practical setting.
- To better understand the mission, organizational structure and culture, chain of command, management styles, communication strategies, and problem-solving techniques of public agencies in general.
- To enhance each intern’s skill set, including writing, oral, technical, personnel, and other resume-building skills.
- To provide students with public sector experience in order to better prepare them for future employment.
- To contribute to the community by serving public agencies.

INTERNSHIP AND THE CURRICULUM

An internship is required of all pre-service students. The internship requires a completion of (300 hours). The purpose of the internship is to provide students with practical and professional experience in a specific career area. Students are exposed to the dynamics of organizations and provided the opportunity to apply skills and knowledge acquired in their academic program. During the internship experience, students may develop professional networks, which can aid them in their pursuit of employment and in their careers.

While serving in the internship students should identify appropriate materials to include in the Internship electronic portfolio to be submitted during the Internship course. Each student intern will be evaluated and assigned a grade by the responsible agency supervisor.

Internship placements are generally developed in collaboration with the Internship Director/Academic Advisor. Finally, the Internship Director/Academic Advisor prior to beginning the internship must approve placement opportunities developed by individual students.

ACADEMIC CREDIT

Students who successfully complete the Internship course earn three (3) semester hours. Students are expected to complete 300 hours of internship, however, the internship experience may extend beyond these requirements.

The students who participated in the internship experience enjoy wide latitude in selecting the agency most suitable with their career goals and in conjunction with their chosen concentration, assisted by the Academic Advisor. The program maintains an MOU, Memorandum of Understanding agreement that provides that the agency detail specific intern responsibilities or special projects and work hours. The agreement is intended to ensure that interns engage in more than superficial functions during the intern experience.

STEPS TO SECURING AN INTERNSHIP

- Upon enrollment in the First Academic Terms, students should initiate communication with the Academic Advisor to express interest in securing an internship.
- In collaboration with the Academic Advisor the student should begin identifying potential internship sites based on career and professional interest.
- The internship should have no more than 5% of the job duties and responsibilities focused on clerical/administrative responsibilities in order for the internship to be approved.
- Once the potential internship site has been identified, the student should schedule a meeting with the Agency Supervisor to discuss prospective job duties, responsibilities and interests.
- Next, once the job duties/responsibilities have been negotiated and confirmed, the student should submit the MOU to the Academic Advisor for review and approval.
- The student will then develop a work schedule with the respective internship site and is eligible to enroll in the Internship course either in the term the 300 hours will be completed or in the next term at the conclusion of the internship.