



Internship Program Guidelines

Course Description and Purpose

Agricultural Economics 2940 (Sophomore) or 4940 (Junior/Senior), *Practicum in Agricultural Economics*.

This course is not offered in the traditional *classroom type* format, but rather provides MU credit hours to students who have already taken an internship position with a company, a government agency, or other institutions.

It is important to note that students need to have been hired and have accepted an internship offer first before they can apply for the 2940 or 4940 credit hours with the department. A student can enroll in a maximum of 3 credit hours per semester for each, 2940 and 4940. A total (and limit) of 12 credit hours in internships can be earned per undergraduate student upon graduation in the department (i.e. a student can take 2940 twice and 4940 twice maximum).

The credit hours provided are based on the notion that an internship enhances the student's educational growth process by providing training, learning and professional opportunities that:

- develop and improve undergraduate experience outside the classroom;
- strengthen the student's resume before graduation;
- allow the student a means to develop a professional network;
- provide a complementary resource to *on campus* education that help define future career goals;
- serve as a screening device for future job placement after graduation for both the student and employer.

Prerequisites

1. GPA of 2.5 or higher.
2. Major or Minor in Ag Econ, Agribusiness Management, or General Agriculture (with AgEcon emphasis).
3. Full-time student at MU.

Objectives

The objective of obtaining credit hours for an internship is to provide one more incentive for students to seek professional experience that faculty believe are necessary in today's competitive job market. Furthermore, the internship should provide experiences that enhance the classroom education.

The objectives of the internship *position* taken - with a company, a government entity, or others that apply - are various and depend highly on the type of position, the type of institution, and the student's personal goals. In very broad terms, the objectives of the internship position can be generalized, but not limited, to the following:

1. Provide an opportunity for the student to apply principles and techniques learned on campus to real life problem-solving situations.
2. Provide learning and work experiences, which are directly or indirectly related to curricula and student's career goals.
3. Develop student understanding of employment demands, responsibilities and opportunities.
4. Gain a better understanding of the decision-making and implementation process involved in a *real-world* situation.
5. Provide a means to evaluate the types of jobs and types of institutions a student may seek upon graduation, hence helping to define a future career for the student.
6. Strengthen student's resume.
7. Provide students the opportunity to meet industry leaders and gain technical training, which may not be available on campus.



Credit and Grading

A maximum of 3 credit hours may be earned by completing an internship course. The length of an internship is generally a time period equivalent to no more than one semester (16 weeks). Other arrangements may be approved by the internship coordinator if special circumstances develop.

Students on internships will be evaluated by the cooperator (employer) and the internship program coordinator. Grading is primarily the responsibility of the internship coordinator. Grading will be on a S/U (Pass/Fail) basis. Proper site selection and mentoring is key to ensuring an exceptional learning experience by the intern.

Procedure

1. Before applying for the credit hours with the internship coordinator the student must have either:
(Preferred)
 - a. Received an internship position offer and accepted such offer. At this point the student needs to decide if s/he will get credit hours while simultaneously on the job, or get credit hours during the semester immediately after completing the job s/he has been hired for.
OR
 - b. Completed an internship position. In this case the student needs to apply as soon as s/he returns to enroll in the semester following the internship contract period. At the most, the department will allow one semester between the completion of an internship and the application for credit hours. After two semesters following the completion of an internship, no application will be accepted.
2. Eligible students will file an application with the internship coordinator.
3. The internship coordinator reviews the applications and approves or disapproves. **EACH INTERNSHIP HAS TO BE PRE-APPROVED BY THE INTERNSHIP COORDINATOR BEFORE A STUDENT CAN ENROLL IN THE COURSE.**
4. A student whose application has been approved contacts a prospective employer and works out the internship proposal including a plan of action, timetable and financial arrangements. Hence for students seeking to obtain credit after completing the internship, it is still recommended the student discuss this with his/her employer coordinator during the internship, not after completion.
5. The student, internship coordinator, advisor and employer will concur on the final agreement.
6. Students will complete two main tasks throughout the semester of the internship:
 - a. Participate in a weekly discussion board on Blackboard after approval by the internship coordinator to enroll in the class.
 - b. Define a specific mechanism through which s/he can use such experience to pass on recommendations as "lessons learned" to other MU students, preferably in the AgEcon department. In order to define this task, the student will first meet with the internship coordinator to discuss possible alternatives that best apply to the individual experience. Examples of expected tasks include (but are not limited to):
 - i. Offering formal presentations in one or more student organizations on campus, such as the AgEcon club. In this case, the student needs to coordinate appropriately when and where these presentations will take place and present an agenda to the internship coordinator. Details need to be defined with the internship coordinator.



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- ii. Preparing a professional portfolio package that identifies specific “value added” from the internship experience. Such portfolio shall have the main purpose of being used in future job searches, interviews by the student or professional enhancement.
 - iii. Serving as a volunteer for the CAFNR Career Center or other professional development programs, such as helping organize the career fair. In this case, the student will need to write and sign a contract agreed among the student, the director of CAFNR’s Career Center and the internship coordinator.
 - iv. Other ideas are strongly encouraged and welcomed from any entrepreneurial applicant and need to be negotiated with the internship coordinator.
7. After completing the credit hours, the student will meet with the internship coordinator to discuss the student’s evaluation and performance in the course.



INTERN PLACEMENT CONTRACT

Student intern's name: _____
 College address: _____
 Phone(s): _____
 Beginning and termination dates (approximate) of internship: _____
 Credit hours requested: _____

Will the intern receive compensation during the internship period? _____
 If so, please specify stipulations: _____

Will the intern be covered by accident insurance during the internship period:
 _____ Yes _____ No

Name and address of firm or company: _____ _____ _____ _____	Employer or agent of employer who will direct student intern: _____ _____
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Phone number(s) where above individual can be contacted: _____

The above name firm agrees to accept _____
 for the internship period noted, and during that period will endeavor to give the intern an opportunity to become familiar with all aspects of the phase of the business as developed in the proposed program (copy attached). The agent of this firm has read and is familiar with the objectives of an internship program as outlined in the Agricultural Economics Department's Internship Guidelines.

 Date

 Firm Agent

 Date

 Internship Coordinator

 Date

 Student Intern



EMPLOYER EVALUATION OF INTERN
 TO BE COMPLETED AT THE END OF THE INTERNSHIP

Important Note on Confidentiality: Before you complete this form please be aware that as a public institution we are required to release this evaluation at the student's request unless the student signs a consent with us agreeing not to request this in the future. If you would like the student to sign such agreement with us please notify us as soon as possible.

Internee: _____ Date: _____

	Needs Progress		Average		Above Average		Outstanding			N.A.
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
1. Organizing own work										
2. Completing assigned tasks on time										
3. Initiative										
4. Task oriented										
5. Adaptability										
6. Teamwork ability										
7. Professionalism										
8. Communicating with staff & superiors										
9. Judgment										
10. Appearance										
11. Other (please specify if any) _____										
12. Other (please specify if any) _____										
13. Other (please specify if any) _____										

What are his/her strengths? _____

Would you want this trainee working for you?

What would be a good, brief description of this trainee?

Do you have any other relevant comment you feel is important to share with our department regarding the position or the intern? (Please use the back of paper or attach a page)

Signature of Rater _____
 Institution _____ Division (if applicable) _____

Please mail to: Maria Rodriguez-Alcala, Internship Coordinator
 Agricultural Economics Department: 203 Mumford Hall
 University of Missouri-Columbia
 Columbia, MO 65211-6200
OR Scan this document and e-mail to: rodriguez@missouri.edu