



# California State University SAN MARCOS ACADEMIC INTERNSHIPS

## INTERNSHIP HANDBOOK

### For Faculty Supervisors

If you have questions that are not addressed, please contact the **Academic Internship Program in the Career Center** at (760) 750-7005 or [internships@csusm.edu](mailto:internships@csusm.edu).

#### What is an academic internship?

An academic internship, paid or unpaid, is an educational strategy that links classroom learning and real-life applications. Quality academic internships are learning experiences facilitated by collaborative community partners that help students achieve personal and professional growth and competitive advantage in the global workforce. It is a professional learning experience (paid or unpaid) that offers meaningful, practical work related to a student's field of study or career interest. An internship gives students the opportunity for career exploration and development, and to learn new skills. It offers the employer the opportunity to bring innovative ideas and energy into the workplace, develop talent and potentially build a pipeline for future full-time employees. A quality internship:

- Consists of a part-time or full-time work schedule that includes no more than 20% clerical or administrative duties.
- Provides a clear job/project description for the work experience.
- Orients the student to the organization, its culture and proposed work assignment(s).
- Helps the student develop and achieve learning goals.
- Offers regular feedback to the student intern.

Successful internship experiences combine training and purposeful project assignments. Interns need focused, purposeful roles to keep them motivated, learning, and helping to meet organizational objectives. Virtual Internships are becoming more popular with employers and students; with proper supervisory oversight and guidance, virtual internships can be done well and provide a terrific opportunity. Like any internship, it is important to develop a learning plan with your student and communicate clearly what your expectations are and any assignments you have for them.

#### Approve Internship Placement Sites for Students

Internship activities vary by organization, and each discipline has its own student learning outcomes. Is the organization the right fit for your students? It is the faculty supervisor who

determines if an internship site and/or opportunity meets departmental standards as there is a wide range of organizations seeking interns. Many departments provide students with a list of appropriate internship organizations where their students may pursue an internship. A selective list is extremely helpful for students who need direction and makes the database more manageable for the faculty supervisor. A [Faculty User Guide](#) is available to familiarize you with the function.

## University Community Partnership Agreement

It is important that a fully executed University Community Partnership Agreement (UCPA) be in place **prior** to a student's placement in an unpaid experience at an internship site. The UCPA ensures that students are covered by the University's liability insurance program and reduces or mitigates any risk that may exist in the internship placement. The goal is not to prohibit educational experiences that may seem "too risky," but to find ways to reduce the amount of risk and liability exposure, so that the internship opportunity is a safe, healthful, and fulfilling educational experience for all parties involved.<sup>1</sup>

A fully executed UCPA exists for each organization offering unpaid opportunities listed in the [Internship Database](#).<sup>2</sup> The database has over 1100 approved community partners. We encourage you and your students to work with these approved partners. However, we also understand that you may wish to work with other organizations that are not in our database. If so, please fill out the short "[Faculty Request for Community Partner Form](#)." The Career Center will initiate a UCPA with the organization, if needed, within one business week. Please note that this process takes up to 5 weeks to complete, depending on the organization's decision-making process. Therefore, to ensure the site is approved *prior* to the start of the semester, fill out the [Faculty Request for Community Partner](#) at least 5 weeks before you plan to direct students to the site, or no later than August 1 (Fall semester), May 1 (Summer semester) or December 15 (Spring semester). Until and unless the newly proposed site returns the community partnership agreement, students are not permitted to start their internship at that site.

Sites offering paid opportunities where the student is a W-2 employee earning at least minimum wage, do not need a formal UCPA agreement in place. However, they will still need to complete our [partner application](#) so we may review and post the opportunity to our database for placement.

The faculty supervisor is encouraged to narrow the sites associated with your course so that students only see the sites that you have already approved. If you do nothing, students will default to seeing all the sites in the database, many of which may not be appropriate for your discipline.

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<sup>1</sup> CSU Resource Guide for Managing Risk in Service Learning Copyright 2011, pg. 12

<sup>2</sup> Organizations offering paid internships that are considered W-2 employment and meet minimum wage laws do not require a partnership agreement; however, they are listed in the database to allow students to complete the required student placement documentation.

## Designate Your Course as an Internship

If you are creating a new internship course for your department, it is important to designate it as an internship course so that you and your students have access to the Internship Database and your students can complete the required student placement forms. Please advise your Administrative Coordinator to make this designation during the schedule build or contact Academic Scheduling [acdsched@csusm.edu](mailto:acdsched@csusm.edu) to have it added after schedule build has been completed.

## Determine Eligibility Criteria

Faculty supervisors establish the student learning outcomes for the internship. Faculty supervisors should determine that the student meets the appropriate selection criteria and basic skills required to complete an internship. For example, is there a class pre-requisite, a minimum GPA, or class status students should have before they can intern? International students and students wishing to do an internship abroad should be directed to the Office of Global Education for work authorization and to determine international criteria.

## Help Students Define Their Internship Goals

Students may approach a faculty member for advice as they begin to brainstorm potential internships, seeking input on the types of experiences or sites that have the potential to move them toward their academic and career goals.

- What are their specific career interests?
- What does the student hope to gain from the experience?
- What type of organization is the student interested in?
- Is the student properly prepared to contact the internship site for an interview?

## Develop a Learning Plan

As set forth by the Department of Labor's [Fact Sheet #71](#), which defines criteria for legal internships, an internship must be an extension of learning outside the classroom and there must be learning objectives set up ahead of time.

A learning plan serves as a contract between you and the student by specifying the expected work to be done by the student intern, the learning outcomes, the logistics, and specific number of hours per unit of academic credit to be granted upon the successful completion of the internship course. (See the [CSUSM credit hour policy](#) regarding the amount of instruction and student work expected for each credit hour). The learning plan should be developed in consultation with and approved by the faculty member; it is submitted by the student through the Internship Database as part of the student placement. Some departments have developed a syllabus for their internship course(s); a syllabus may satisfy the learning plan. Click [here](#) to find a "Faculty Toolkit" that has examples of learning plans and syllabi. It is a good idea to have the student share the learning plan with the site supervisor.

## Students with Special Needs

If you have students requiring special needs accommodation, please consult with the Disability Support Services for guidance. The DSS staff is available Monday thru Friday from 8am to 5pm and can be reached at (760) 750-4905 or (760) 750-4909 (TTY) and their FAX is (760) 750-3445. Email inquiries can be sent to [dss@csusm.edu](mailto:dss@csusm.edu).

## International Students and Students Studying Abroad

International Students or Domestic Students in an International Experience should consult with the Office of Global Education for work authorization. (760) 750-4090.

## Forms (Compiled by Career Center)

To reduce and mitigate risk for all parties involved, it is important that students complete the following documents **prior** to starting the internship. If your students are going through the Internship database, they should have direct links to these forms and will upload them directly to our office through the [Internship Database](#):

- ✓ Student participation form
- ✓ Liability release form
- ✓ Liability release form (when student is under 18 years of age, a parent or legal guardian must sign the document).

## Checklist for Faculty Supervisors

- ✓ If this is a new course, ensure it is designated with the internship attribute (NTRN) which syncs the enrollment database to the internship database. Either select the internship attribute in the course build or contact Academic Scheduling [acdsched@csusm.edu](mailto:acdsched@csusm.edu) to have it added after schedule build has been completed.
- ✓ Select appropriate internship sites for your students from the list of approved partners in the [Internship Database](#).
- ✓ If necessary, submit a Faculty [Request for Community Partner](#) at least 3-6 weeks before you plan to direct students to the site, but no later than August 1 (Fall semester), May 1 (Summer semester) or December 15 (Spring semester).
- ✓ Develop a learning plan and/or syllabus that is discussed with and signed by student. (Students are responsible for submitting to the Career Center to the [Internship Database](#)).
- ✓ Direct students to the [Internship Database](#) to complete their student placement, view the "Orientation and workplace safety video," and take a short quiz to demonstrate their understanding of workplace safety and code of conduct expectations.
- ✓ Meet with interns as necessary to offer guidance.
- ✓ Provide end of internship evaluation and assign grade/credit.

## Things to Consider for Initiating New Internships Sites

- ✓ Does the internship offer a learning experience for the student that will be supervised by a professional with expertise, educational and/or professional background in the field of the experience?
- ✓ Consult the [Fair Labor Standards Act](#) to help determine appropriate activities for interns.
- ✓ The intern should work in a professional setting with frequent interaction with and feedback from a supervisor/mentor.
- ✓ Clerical and routine office duties should be kept to a minimum (less than 20%).
- ✓ Students are not permitted to intern at any site associated with cannabis, tobacco, or vaping, or those that violate federal law or campus policy.
- ✓ Home-based businesses may be approved once required criteria are met. Furthermore, a site visit may be required but does not guarantee approval.
- ✓ The internship should avoid all conflicts of interest that can diminish the learning experience. Toward that end:
  - Students are not permitted to intern in family-owned businesses (in other words, if a member of their own family owns the business) or to be supervised by an immediate member of the family (i.e., father, mother, sibling).
  - Students are not permitted to intern at businesses in which their current faculty supervisor has an ownership stake, nor may a faculty member be both a site supervisor and a faculty supervisor.
  - Students may not transport clients/consumers of their field internship agency at any time for any reason.
  - Students are not permitted to participate in door-to-door sales, telemarketing, or cold calling of any kind.
  - Students using their job as their internship experience must seek pre-approval from the course instructor to ensure the experience is above and beyond the student's regular work duties.
  - Student interns that are not considered a W-2 employee cannot work 1:1 with minors unsupervised.