

Template for Internship Course Proposals
Office of Academic Programs
California State University, Stanislaus

Definition of Internships

Many academic departments offer internship opportunities to undergraduate and graduate students. Placements in a variety of private, non-profit, and public agencies are designed to encourage both pre-professional training and the integration of field and classroom experiences..." An internship requires that students engage in supervised academic study through participation in an applied setting. Most internships are not accompanied by compensation, although interns may receive compensation as determined by the negotiated agreements between the university and the community partner.

Many elements of this template for internships apply to course proposals for clinical practice, cooperative education, fieldwork, and practicum courses.

Departmental Affiliation and Program Administration

Most internship programs are affiliated with an academic department/college. For interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary internship programs, a designated departmental affiliation is necessary for overseeing the internship program.

Course Proposals

Course proposals for internships must adhere to the University's curricular review process and are expected to include the following information:

1. **Catalog Description**
Brief description of the course for publication in the university's catalog and master curriculum file.
2. **Student Learning Objectives**
Listing of student learning outcomes; program goals may be listed as well.
3. **Number of Units Applicable Toward Degree**
Specify the number of internship units applicable toward the degree. Normally, no more than six units are applicable toward a baccalaureate degree and no more than three for a master's degree, as specified in the approval of the degree program.
4. **Internship Hours for Academic Credit**
Normally, a minimum of 3 clock hours per week or 40 clock hours per unit for undergraduate; 5 hours per week or 60 hours per unit for graduate, plus seminars.
5. **Seminar**
Specification of number of seminars required for the internship and the requirements of seminar (normally biweekly or tri-weekly seminars, 1-2 clock hours each seminar).
6. **Course Requirements**
Description of course assignments.
7. **Evaluation**
Description of the methods and grading for determining student's achievement of the stated learning goals, e.g., student portfolio of internship activities, written assignments, seminar presentations, or other appropriate methods of evaluation for the discipline.
Documented completion of internship hours is mandatory for the award of course credit.

8. Selection Criteria/Process
Criteria include academic requirements established by the University and may include other requirements as established by the agency agreement.
9. Bibliography of Readings
If applicable, a bibliography of readings related to the internship may be required.
10. Supervision
Description of the roles and responsibilities for supervision by University professor and site supervisor.
11. Terms and Conditions of Internship
Specify if the internship is paid or unpaid. For example, "For paid internships, interns must comply with the regulations of the specific agency as specified in the employment contract."
12. Insurance and Liability
Specify student expectations for insurance coverage and liability issues. For example, "The University does not provide professional liability insurance to students. The agency may require that students carry professional liability insurance before entering into an intern agreement. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain this type of insurance. Students may not be covered by worker's compensation."
13. Fingerprint Requirements
Specify fingerprint or other clearance requirements. For example, "Interns offered employment in an academic and classified position or on an hourly assignment, as well as those in an unpaid internship, are required to submit to a live scan (fingerprints) and clearance for a background check."
14. Professional Standards
Specify expectations for professional standards of student performance as an intern. For example, "Academic integrity and professional ethics are hallmarks of education. Interns are expected to adhere to professional/ethical standards of performance during the internship as required by the University and the profession, as well as to demonstrate respectful compliance with the workplace standards of the agency."
15. Other
Additional elements unique to each program and/or required by accrediting/licensing bodies should be included in the course proposal.

Internship Handbook

Before the internship commences, it is expected that the departmental faculty will develop a detailed internship handbook for students, faculty, and field supervisors along with other necessary documents to ensure academic quality and liability.

Memorandum of Understanding for Internships

In addition to the course syllabus that governs the academic elements of an internship program, an agreement in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or a formal contract (depending on resources) is developed to specify additional elements necessary for the placement of interns in an agency and to formalize the agreement.

A MOU is defined as an agreement of cooperation between two or more organizations defining roles and responsibilities of each with respect to developing a partnership or project. Its purpose is to indicate a spirit of cooperation between CSU Stanislaus and other agencies prior to any

actions commencing or prior to any contracts that may develop later as a result of the intended partnership. The MOU is distinguished from a contract in that a MOU is not a binding, legal document and does not contain a fiscal commitment.

A Memorandum of Understanding or internship contract normally contains the following information:

- Title (specifying the agencies and topic)
- Purpose, goals, or objectives
- Background
- Roles and responsibilities of each agency
- Roles and responsibilities of other participants (e.g., student or faculty)
- Length of commitment (timeframe)
- Fiscal commitments or services to be provided (if any)
- Process and time frame for continuance or discontinuance
- Signature lines, with names, titles, and dates for approval by the university and external agency.

For most internships, placement sites are approved by the department chair and do not require additional university review.

If the agreement confers resources to the CSU that directly benefit the agency and entitles the agency to receive services, it is generally considered a contract and subject to the university's formal contract procedures. In these cases, approval is required by the following individuals, and possibly others as appropriate to the specific internship: Department Chair, Dean, Procurement Office, and Vice Provost (normally delegated by the Provost and President).