

TET Internship Report
June 2006

Introduction: Review the nature of your internship, the responsibilities you assumed, and the time commitment required. Provide a brief background of the placement site.

I completed my TET internship at West Central High School and collaborated with the principal, career counselor, district tech team and three colleagues in the English department. My internship spanned nearly the full school year and encompassed a wide variety of activities ranging from tech plan writing to hands-on application of technology skills.

As part of the district-wide technology committee, I spent over 30 hours with my team researching other technology plans and writing our district's 3-year plan, a process that included budgeting, updating technology inventories at all levels, planning professional development for teachers, creating a scope and sequence of technology skills to be taught, etc. Because I was the only English teacher on the team, the task of revising the 50+ page document fell largely on me.

Because I firmly believe in the importance of real-life, relevant, authentic learning experiences for my students, the majority of my internship was spent crafting new resources and activities for a comprehensive 6-12th grade career exploration program that I was instrumental in creating several years ago. I spent over 100 hundred hours in four major tasks:

→Collaborating with my colleagues to review the current program, make additions and revisions, then digitize the resources by creating a career website now accessible to all students.

→Planning and organizing a school wide Career Fair for all high school students in April. I hosted 30 speakers (employees) from the greater Sioux Falls area who each did 25-minute classroom presentations.

→Kickstarting the Senior Project, a component of the Governor's 2010E initiative, which will be piloted next year at West Central. This task involved selecting a team of key players to buy into the program, organizing training, setting up school visits, crafting the requirements for our own program, then recruiting students.

→Kickstarting the Student Internship Program, which will also be piloted next spring under my guidance. This task also involved selling the idea to colleagues and attending a two-day training in early June to study the logistics of an internship program.

Outcomes: Explain the outcomes, including experience gained, products or projects developed. Discuss any constraints or limitations and offer possible solutions. Relate key learnings as appropriate to the TET program (Skills and Dispositions—Leadership, Self-direction, Collaboration, Ethics, Appreciation of Diversity) and (Portfolio Key Areas—Reflective Practitioner, Instructional Design, Technology Application, Leadership & Organizational Change, Research in Ed Tech)

My involvement with the district technology team in the development of the district's 3-year Technology Plan addressed many of the skills and dispositions of the program. We took the lead in surveying our faculty and administration and getting input from students, parents, school board members and community members. We researched and reviewed numerous other technology plans. We collaborated with all of these parties in the creation of the plan. Each member of the team had to be self-directed to complete his/her assigned portion of the plan. Ethics played a role as we discussed and revised our district's Acceptable Use Policy. Our professional development training for teachers takes into consideration an appreciation for the diverse skills of our staff. With regard to instructional design and learning environments, we attempted to ensure that technology used in the district will strengthen our existing curricula and support meaningful, engaged learning.

There were four major components of the remainder of my internship, all related to Career Planning and Preparedness. First, I organized and planned two ½ day work sessions with my principal, counselor and 3 other English department colleagues to revisit our current high school career curriculum that is delivered through our English classes. We began by collaborating to create a "curriculum on the wall" to examine the facets of our current program. I led my colleagues in a discussion of current research, trends and rationale for effective career development programs. As a result of these meetings and with their input, I created the WC Career Central Website, a valuable resource for all of our students that contains links to all of the key components of our career curriculum. I developed the junior level activities utilizing Wiggins and McTighe's *Understanding by Design* curriculum model. The site is accessible through out district's web page under student resources at http://kr012.k12.sd.us/WC_Career_Central.htm.

For the purpose of integrating more technology into the career curriculum, part of my original Internship Proposal was the development of a Career WebQuest appropriate for each grade level in the high school. Research and collaboration with my colleagues convinced me NOT to reinvent the wheel and instead to utilize the best of the numerous career WebQuests already on the net. Instead of writing my own, I believe my time was much better spent locating, researching and completing many career WebQuests to glean the “best in show.” I created a web page within the WC Career Central Site that groups the WebQuests by grade level available at http://kr012.k12.sd.us/career_webquests.htm. After selecting what I believed to be the best quest at each grade level, I then led my students and my colleagues’ students in these activities in my English lab. Thus I was able to observe the application of this technology application in a learning environment where students with diverse abilities collaborated to complete the WebQuests. We were then able to reflect as a department on the value of these webquests and agreed that they should continue to be utilized in our program. Next year, each of us plans to write a Career WebQuest.

A second major component of the career piece my TET internship was the planning and organization of a West Central Career Fair. After surveying our students to determine which careers they most wanted to learn more about, I invited 30 guest speakers from the greater Sioux Falls area who each did three 25 minute classroom presentations. Once I had commitments from all of the speakers, the nightmarish task of scheduling 365 students in three different sessions began. I again gave all students a list of the 30 occupations that would be represented and asked them to select the three they wanted to learn more about. I mastered the use of Excel for scheduling. This project honed my organizational skills for activities on a very large scale. It required a great deal of collaboration with the teachers (who hosted the speakers in their classrooms) and the speakers themselves. I had to make arrangements for the diverse delivery styles of the speakers (round table,

classroom, auditorium, varied technology needs ranging from VCR to DVD to laptops to projections systems). I got very positive feedback from administrators, faculty and students about the Career Fair. My reflective journal will assist in changes I'd like to make in the future. A photo gallery featuring photos from this event is accessible

http://rm091.k12.sd.us/subsite/Karin/karin's_photo_gallery.htm

A third project that fell within the realm of my internship was the Senior Project Pilot Program, part of the Governor's 2010E initiative. When I learned in January that the Senior Project was part of the Governor's plan, I started the wheels in motion to get WCHS on board. I learned that there are only a small handful of schools in South Dakota currently involved. I started by organizing a training session for key members of our staff who work with our seniors. I invited Scott Fossum from SD Tech Prep and Marsha Kucker from SDDOE to do a presentation for our principal, counselor and 5 teachers who work with seniors. After that initial meeting in early April, I did hours of research on Senior Project programs in other states that I shared with my colleagues. I arranged a trip to Emery, SD the first week of May to watch their senior project presentations. We then hosted Scott Fossum for another in-depth training session at WC where we created the framework for our own program. I developed a PowerPoint to share with this year's juniors to attempt to sell the program and recruit participants. I'm proud to say that West Central's pilot program will begin with approximately 20 seniors next fall! This project also tapped my leadership, organizational and collaboration skills. Selling any new program to staff members is always difficult, especially if it involves a time commitment. But I obviously convinced my colleagues of the importance of this program and the positive impact it could have on the senior year. I also convinced them that West Central's program should require a technology component as part of the final senior presentation.

The final portion of my internship is currently evolving. Part of my original TET Internship Proposal was to create an internship program. I believe that all of the activities that I did complete during my internship have been building toward this goal. After we made the decision to pursue the Senior Project next year and I raised the idea of senior internships as another opportunity for students not in that pilot program, my administrator and colleagues were very leery about the idea of implementing yet another new program next year. But I was persistent! I've earned the reputation of a squeaky wheel during my 15 years at West Central, but I squeak only when it's been in the best interest of my students and it means creating new learning opportunities! While we have a strong career program, a key component missing is an internship program. Many schools surrounding us give students the opportunity to complete a semester-long internship at a worksite. In May, I was informed of the Governor's intent to make the internship a required experience for all seniors in South Dakota. Toward that goal, he is hosting 5 workshops throughout the state in June to train school leaders in the development of internship programs. I attended the 2-day training in Sioux Falls on June 8 & 9 and have offered to help coordinate the program 2nd semester next year. I am now more convinced than ever of the need to start this program at West Central. Participants at my training who currently have internship programs agree that it is the most beneficial learning experience their students have. After the training, I contacted my principal and counselor to request a planning meeting. This is another project that will require strong leadership, organizational and collaboration skills if it is going to be successful. I plan to spend time this summer reviewing the research on best practice in student internships so that I am ready to hit the ground running in the fall when I will have to sell yet another program to my colleagues. I am looking forward to the challenge!

Conclusion: Explain how you will apply lessons learned and experience gained in your current profession. Discuss the internship in the broader context of the role/purpose of an internship experience in a graduate degree program.

All of my internship activities reinforced and gave me hands-on application of the key components of my graduate program. Every one of my internship activities tested and expanded my leadership skills. I continue to be a proactive leader, a facilitator who can anticipate needs and take charge, but also one who can step back and encourage leadership skills in others. I mentioned above that I'm very proactive when it comes to enhancing educational opportunities for my students. I'll continue to use my polished leadership skills in this manner. While I've always been a self-directed learner, I learned a lot about ways I can assist my colleagues and my students in this endeavor. The career website and activities I created utilizing the *Understanding by Design* curriculum model are key to student self-direction. My internship activities all required collaboration, a skill that continues to play a central role in helping teachers deliver their shared vision for education. Because of the success of the "scheduled" collaboration time with my English department colleagues, we have decided to schedule a monthly departmental meeting time. Many of the activities I designed and coordinated had to take into consideration diverse learning styles. Finally, with regard to technology integration, a key components of my TET degree, I utilized and integrated technology for every facet of my internship, including word processing, e-mail, PowerPoint, web development with both FrontPage and XHTML, Excel, WebQuests, and streaming video.

The TET Internship provided me the wonderful opportunity to organize and complete projects and explore opportunities that I wouldn't have had otherwise. It gave me the chance to enhance my leadership, collaboration and technology skills. It also allowed much-needed time for daily reflection. Most importantly, my internship experience gave me time to research and study

best practice in enhancing student learning through authentic, relevant, real-world learning tasks such as the job shadow, career fair, senior project and senior internship.

Faculty Advisor

Date

Worksite Supervisor

Date

Division Chair

Date