



**The Public, Nonprofit and Health Administration Degree
Program Internship Guide**

An internship, as defined by the School of Public, Nonprofit and Health Administration at Grand Valley State University is a structured academic opportunity that allows students to apply academic skills and knowledge in the work place. Experiential education that is based on a set of learning objectives helps students to prepare to meet career responsibilities after graduation.

GOALS OF THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM: The goals of the program are:

- ✓ To allow students to apply, evaluate, test and integrate academic knowledge and theoretical concepts in a work setting.
- ✓ To develop and expand students' knowledge about themselves and their abilities, goals, and career interests in a work setting.
- ✓ To expand students' awareness of the world beyond the campus by exposure to a variety of careers, disciplines, lifestyles, and environments.
- ✓ To provide students with experience in the disciplined and discriminatory use of evidence in making decisions and solving problems in a work setting.

REQUIREMENTS OF A PUBLIC AND NONPROFIT INTERNSHIP:

In order to earn credit for your internship, you will need to work closely with the internship coordinator who will coordinate certain aspects of your internship experience.

Be sure that you make this request at least one semester before you intend to do an internship. Your internship coordinator will help you develop your learning contract, serve as a liaison between you and your work supervisor, and support you through the internship experience.

Students must complete and submit the Learning Contract. The Learning Contract outlines what you intend to learn and accomplish while you are on your internship. It is an effective tool for gaining agreement between you, your work supervisor and your internship coordinator on your mutual intentions and expectations for the internship, both educational and work related, as well as criteria and techniques for grading and evaluation at the internship's conclusion.

You are expected to maintain contact throughout the internship with your internship coordinator and complete assignments on time so that the progress of your work may be evaluated.

You must evaluate the internship experience on the official evaluation forms or in a format approved by your internship coordinator.

Completing the Student Evaluations will help you to review your internship experience, evaluate your most significant accomplishments, and focus on areas in which you need improvement or would like additional experience.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION

Any extra travel or work related expenses are the student's responsibility. Some student interns may be paid a salary or stipend by their host organization; other internships are unpaid.

Geographic Location

Most internships obtained by our students are local. However, internship opportunities exist in other areas of Michigan as well as in other states in the U.S.

There are also increasing numbers of students who are choosing to do an international internship. International internships are available in a variety of countries.

Timelines

Students should begin exploring internship placements no later than one semester preceding their intended internship. (It should be noted that some very competitive internships have application deadlines of six to eight months prior to the start of the internship.)

Inclement Weather Policy

During times of inclement weather, interns should contact their site supervisor for information on whether the site will be open, delayed, or closed and adjust their schedule accordingly.

ROLE EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Student

The intern should complete a learning contract that defines the nature of the work experience, the learning objectives, and academic expectations. Though this contract is developed collaboratively with the internship coordinator and the work supervisor, the student needs to reflectively plan for the internship since it represents another aspect of his/her academic program. It should reflect a level of academic rigor similar to that encountered in the classroom.

Internship Coordinator

The School of Public, Nonprofit and Health Administration Internship Coordinator, Mr. Quincy Williams, serves as a mentor and facilitator to the student during the internship experience. The internship coordinator should meet periodically with the student at arranged times throughout the internship period to evaluate progress and give advice when needed.

The internship coordinator helps the student develop a learning contract or a suitable alternative that is relevant and workable. The student should play a major role in the initial planning and formulating stages of the internship in order to shape the learning goals to meet his or her individual needs and to fully understand the extent of his or her responsibility for the success of the experience.

The internship coordinator will make contact(s) with the work supervisor during the students' internship. The internship coordinator will monitor the progress of the internship from a variety of viewpoints and to maintain close relationships with all participants.

The internship coordinator is responsible for seeing that the student prior to submitting a grade for the internship completes all course and paperwork.

Work Site Supervisor

The site supervisor must assist with and agree to the terms established in the Learning Contract. The supervisor should take an active role in mentoring and guiding the student intern to help meet learning goals, and be available for meetings or conversations with both the student and the internship coordinator.

The site supervisor should complete the evaluation forms in a timely fashion and return them to the internship coordinator.

GUIDELINES FOR THE INTERNSHIP COORDINATOR

The internship coordinator provides a direct link between the university and the work place for the intern. In addition to the benefit of working closely with an individual student, supervising internships gives them an opportunity to observe practices and activities in a variety of employment settings and increase your knowledge of workplace trends.

OVERVIEW ROLE OF THE STUDENT

Students are asked to begin the internship search process at least one semester prior to the internship. Though it is not the internship coordinator's responsibility to find an internship placement for the student, any suggestions or personal contact names you may have can facilitate the process for students.

The internship coordinator helps the student formulate learning objectives, suggests academic work that supplements the internship experience, serves as a support system to the intern during the experience, and provides a formal evaluation after the internship has been completed.

ASSISTANCE WITH THE LEARNING CONTRACT

While it is the student's responsibility to complete the learning contract, students may need guidance from the internship coordinator. Interns should pay special attention to the sections related to learning objectives and activities. The learning activities should relate to the objectives. While the work supervisor will determine many of the activities, you may ask the student to follow through on other activities such as reading, research, or informational interviewing that will add an additional dimension to the internship.

CONTACT WITH INTERN

The internship coordinator plays a supportive role in a student's internship experience. The internship coordinator will make contact midway through the students' internship to check on the student's progress and provide any needed assistance.

The internship coordinator will make onsite visits whenever feasible.

CONTACT WITH WORK SUPERVISOR

The internship coordinator is asked to make at least two phone contacts with the work supervisor over the course of the internship. An initial contact at the outset and a second call within week 8 or 9 should prove useful. In addition, a site visit would enable you to evaluate the placement for future interns.

GUIDELINES FOR WORK SITE SUPERVISORS

As supervisor for a Grand Valley State University intern, you are responsible for the intern's work activity and schedule. You will facilitate the transition between academic studies and the work of the workplace.

Your willingness to provide an opportunity for a Grand Valley State University student to expand his or her education beyond the classroom is deeply appreciated. Student interns have the potential to provide your organization with genuine assistance, as well as a fresh perspective and new energy and enthusiasm.

ASSISTANCE WITH THE LEARNING CONTRACT

One of your responsibilities as a work supervisor is to assist the student in developing the learning contract, which is an outline of what he or she intends to learn and accomplish during the internship. The learning contract is an effective way to establish agreement about mutual intentions and expectations for the internship, and develop criteria for supervision and evaluation. A sample-learning contract is available in a separate section of this manual.

As a site supervisor, you can be especially helpful to the student in developing realistic goals and providing suggestions for possible activities, tasks, and projects to accomplish these goals.





ORIENTATION

Listed below are some guidelines for helping the student adjust to the work setting.

1. Since the student is with you such a short time, it is recommended that your organization literature be shared with the student in advance to save time. This material will help the student understand where his or her position fits in the “big picture.”
2. Please make whatever physical arrangements are necessary in regards to work space and equipment, and provide other appropriate materials.
3. You and the student should be in agreement about reporting time and place, hours, dress, degree of independence, on the job supervision, and confidentiality.

CONTACT WITH INTERNSHIP SUPERVISOR

The internship coordinator will be contacting you as the internship progresses. Some topics that might be appropriate to discuss are:

1. Is the intern performing as expected?
2. Are there major discrepancies between your perception and the intern's?
3. Is the student developing appropriate professional behavior toward both staff and supervisors?
4. Is the student accepting direction, supervision and constructive criticism?
5. Are there ways the internship could be improved?
6. If there are concerns, please contact the internship coordinator so that problems might be resolved promptly.

EVALUATION

A standard evaluation form is provided in a separate section of this manual that should simplify the written evaluation process. A prompt return of the evaluation to the internship coordinator at the end of the internship will be greatly appreciated. Student interns are encouraged to discuss this evaluation with you to aid in reviewing their experience and clarifying comments made on the evaluation form.

Some topics that might be appropriate to discuss with the student are:

1. Did the intern perform as expected?
2. How did the intern's performance compare with people in comparable positions?
3. What are major problems the student will face as a professional, and what sources of information can be used to address these problems?

GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS

Why complete an internship?

What is it about an internship that is so valuable? Why should you consider doing one? What advantages will you have over students who do not participate in an experiential education experience?

An internship:

- ✓ Gives you a chance to explore career fields through first hand experience.
- ✓ Promotes development of confidence, maturity, responsibility, and skill in human relations.
- ✓ Increases the development of decision-making and analytical skills through experience in actual work environments.
- ✓ Creates a better understanding of theory by its actual application in practice.
- ✓ Helps you develop a more positive attitude toward coursework as a result of seeing its usefulness on the job, which often leads to better grades.
- ✓ Helps you gain professional experience to include on your resume, which can significantly improve your marketability to employers.
- ✓ Provides useful contacts that may lead to future employment.

TIPS FOR MAXIMIZING YOUR INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

1. Make a good first impression

- ✓ Dress professionally.
- ✓ Always be prompt.
- ✓ Maintain a positive attitude; it is one of your greatest assets.
- ✓ Find out about and follow company regulations.
- ✓ Respect the time of others.

2. Orientation

If there is no formal orientation program for you, try to give yourself one by:

- ✓ Reading everything you can about the organization.
- ✓ Introducing yourself to your co-workers (keep notes so you can connect names and faces).
- ✓ Making lists of questions so that you can use your supervisor's time wisely.

3. Getting the job done

- ✓ Schedule your time; keep a to do list.
- ✓ Space out your tasks; one big task can be broken down into stages.
- ✓ Pace your energy. Too much enthusiasm at first may overwhelm you and leave you burned out at the end.

PROBLEMS WITH WORK ASSIGNMENTS

You may encounter some of the following challenges in your internship:

1. “Busy” works. As a member of a team, you will want to help with routine tasks occasionally, but you don’t want them to become your permanent job. A good learning contract should prevent this problem, but if you feel your work activities are not challenging enough, consult your work supervisor. Make sure that if you ask for additional assignments, you have demonstrated your capacity to handle them.
2. Pressure. Meeting deadlines is your responsibility, but if the pressure to finish assignments on time begins to overwhelm you, let your supervisor know. The quality of your work is as important as the time element. The best planning can fall through, so don’t be afraid to say you can’t finish on time or think that the project is too much for you to handle.
3. Overtime. You may be asked, or feel pressured, to work late or on weekends, and working extra hours may help you learn more by experiencing roles or situations not otherwise available. Your commitment to your supervisor and your organization may demand that you put in the extra work. However, you are an independent person, and everyone has a personal life to maintain. So, if you feel confused about work hours and time, talk to your supervisor and negotiate a solution that takes into account both your needs and those of the organization.
4. Discrimination or Harassment. In compliance with federal and state discrimination laws, Grand Valley State University prohibits illegal discrimination or harassment against students and employees. Accordingly, the School of Public, Nonprofit and Health Administration is committed to providing students participating in its Internship Program an educationally enriching experience in an environment free of discrimination and harassment.

Harassment is defined as verbal or physical conduct relating to an individual's membership in a protected class that has the purpose or the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment; or has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance; or otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.

If you feel you are being sexually harassed on the job, contact the School of Public, Nonprofit and Health Administration’s Internship Coordinator, Mr. Quincy Williams, **immediately** at quincy.williams@gvsu.edu or 616-331-2362.

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GATHERING CAREER INFORMATION

An internship is an excellent opportunity to explore a career of your choice. You will be able to gather information, clarify how you feel about specific work environments, and test your abilities as you learn which skills are essential for various positions. You can also develop professional contacts that can be used once you actually begin your post graduation job search.

You will no doubt discover much career related information during the hours you work each week. A systematic effort to obtain information, however, can yield an even greater dividend.

1. Each week, ask several co-workers a few questions about their careers and compare answers. You will reap the benefit of learning about a particular career field from many different viewpoints.
2. Schedule several 20 to 30 minute "information interviews" with selected co-workers throughout the experience.
3. If possible, get involved in company activities, training sessions, or professional development seminars. You may also want to participate in social events planned for employees to learn more about the culture of the organization.
4. Use a scheduled evaluation meeting with a supervisor at the end of the internship to discuss career concerns.





School of Public, Nonprofit and Health Administration
401 W. Fulton SW
Grand Rapids, MI 49504
Tel: 616.331.6575
Fax: 616.331.7120

Liability Waiver / Credential Release

During my participation in the Grand Valley State University The School of Public, Nonprofit and Health Administration Internship Program, I for myself, my heirs, executors, administrators, and assigns, hereby waive and relinquish any and all rights, claims, or demands against Grand Valley State University and its employees should injury or death occur during my participation in the School of Public, Nonprofit and Health Administration Internship Program.

I further agree regarding the above consideration for myself, my heirs, executors, and administrators that I will not present any claim, or file any suit against Grand Valley State University or any University employee. I hereby attest and verify that I have full knowledge of the risks involved in my participation.

I further agree to indemnify (take personal and financial responsibility) and hold harmless Grand Valley State University and its employees harmless from any claim or suit arising out of any alleged malfeasance (wrongdoing, unjustified, harmful, contrary to law), misfeasance (wrongful exercise of lawful authority), nonfeasance (neglect), or any alleged acts or omissions constituting malpractice in connection with such an experience.

I understand that I will be supervised at the work site by my employer and have the right not to work in a hazardous environment. Also, I agree that my automobile liability insurance will be current/active if I am driving an automobile during my work assignment.

I understand I can acquire professional liability insurance through Grand Valley State University if I so desire or if my work supervisor requests said insurance.

I hereby give the School of Public, Nonprofit and Health Administration Internship Program Office at Grand Valley State University permission to release my transcript and other materials compiled by the Program Office, to potential employers for the purpose of evaluating my qualifications for employment.

Student Participation Agreement

I, _____ (print name), have received and read the Liability Waiver /Credential Release statement and the School of Public, Nonprofit and Health Administration Internship Program Policies and agree to abide by the same.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix D: Letter of Internship Agreement

This form represents an agreement between the School of Public and Nonprofit Administration at Grand Valley State University and _____ regarding an internship for the
(Public/Nonprofit Agency)
following student: _____
(Student's Name)

It's the responsibility of the student to work with the internship site and supervisor to complete the letter of internship agreement. The completed, signed letter of agreement must be approved by the Internship Coordinator prior to commencing the internship.

COMPLETED AND SIGNED FORM (by both student and supervisor) MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE INTERNSHIP COORDINATOR PRIOR TO THE START OF THE INTERNSHIP

Student Name: _____ Graduation Date: _____
Student Work Phone: _____ Student Work E-mail: _____

(If you do not know this information at the time you complete this form, contact your Internship Coordinator once you know it.)

Agency Name: _____
Agency Sector: Nonprofit Public Private

Mailing Address of Agency: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Supervisor Name: _____ Title: _____

Supervisor Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Date of Internship: Start _____ End _____ Work Schedule: _____

Rate of Pay: _____

The agency will recognize the student as an intern and to that end will provide varied experiences and adequate supervision; will ensure as safe and healthy working condition as possible; will notify the Internship Coordinator and/or academic advisor if, for any reason, termination of the students is necessary. It is not required that interns be paid, but it strongly recommended. This can be an hourly wage or stipend.

Supervisor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Internship Coordinator: _____ Date: _____

