



Anthropology Internship Handbook
ANT 490

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The Anthropology Internship Handbook is designed for faculty, students, and employers to use as a reference guide to the policies, procedures, and practices of the GVSU Anthropology Internship Program.

Goals of the GVSU Anthropology Internship Program

The GVSU Anthropology Internship Program is designed to acquaint students with the work of research libraries, museums, community organizations, government agencies, and other cultural institutions in order to enhance students' knowledge of research methodologies, institutional cultures, and work environments. This helps anthropology students prepare to enter professional employment by working under a site supervisor who provides on-the-job training in a variety of work situations related to anthropology.

GVSU Anthropology offers credit to students who complete internships and enroll in ANT 490. The GVSU Anthropology Internship Coordinator serves as a resource for anthropology majors/minors, helping students to find appropriate placements, guiding them through the internship, and supporting them in demonstrating the importance of the experience to others. The GVSU Anthropology Internship Coordinator maintains close connections to the GVSU Career Center, as well as the Office for Community Engagement and Padnos International Center.

Introduction to Internships

Internships are structured, supervised career experiences that allow students to bring their classroom training into the workplace. As a three-way collaboration among students, their academic departments, and employers, internships merge the worlds of school and work by embedding students into professional settings with defined learning goals, supervision, and evaluation.

Internships offer “real world” opportunities to student anthropologists to engage in a wide variety of professional activities while also earning college credit. Through internships, students are able to see from the inside what a particular career looks like. Such experiences help students to answer questions like, “what expectations are attached to this kind of job? What is the work-life balance for people employed here? How much time is spent on administrative tasks vs. other kinds of duties in this job?” This on-the-ground insight can only be gleaned from working within a field that you are considering. Internships also provide students the chance to “get their foot in the door” with a particular organization, agency or business.

In some majors, like engineering or nursing, the career path from student to employee is clear. For anthropology—as with all disciplines rooted in the liberal arts—the path needs to be deliberately forged. Anthropologists need to be able to both articulate and apply their skills in ways that employers recognize and understand.

As a major or minor, anthropology equips students with particular skills that are valued in the marketplace, including:

- Research design
- Data gathering and analysis
- Record searching
- Transcription
- Grant writing
- Program evaluation
- Diversity training
- Cultural competence
- Public speaking and presentation
- Report writing
- GIS mapping
- Team-based research
- Holistic approach
- Critical thinking

That said, just having these skills is not enough in today's competitive job market. Anthropology majors must be able to *demonstrate competency* in applying these skills. Competency is earned by putting anthropology to use in "real world" situations. Internships comprise one way to do this and can be included on resumes and CV as evidence that future employers recognize.

Internships are also important sources of social networking. Within a particular organization or agency, mentors can help guide students toward specific opportunities. They can introduce students to others working in the field and serve as references for future employment opportunities.

Administration

A successful internship experience brings together four key players: student intern, faculty mentor, site supervisor, and internship coordinator. Each of these has a specific set of responsibilities, as outlined below.

Student Intern

With support from the internship coordinator, faculty mentor, and site supervisor, students are responsible for locating, establishing, and completing internship experiences. Students must identify their particular learning and career goals, and seek out internship experiences that align and support those goals. The duties of the student intern include:

- Identifying individual learning and professional goals
- Researching potential internship sites
- Contacting organizations to locate and secure internship opportunities
- Selecting a faculty mentor to oversee the internship
- Working with the site supervisor and faculty mentor to develop a Work Plan

- Fulfilling the work requirements of the internship, as outlined in the Work Plan
- Completing all ANT 490 requirements

Faculty mentor

Internships require approval from a faculty mentor, someone will oversee the academic requirements of the internship while also providing advice and support. The duties of the faculty mentor include:

- Helping the student intern prepare the Work Plan
- Providing readings appropriate to the internship assignment
- Maintaining contact with the student intern and site supervisor
- Responding to student questions and concerns
- Reviewing progress reports
- Assessing internship products, including the ANT 490 requirements
- Evaluating the internship for credit

Site supervisor

All internships require a site supervisor. This person works for the agency, organization, or business that is hosting the intern and is assigned to be the intern's supervisor. This person is the boss in all matters related to work activity. The intern's Work Plan should be developed with the complete consent and cooperation of the site supervisor. It should reflect the expectations of the organization and the judgment of the student and the faculty mentor as to what can be realistically accomplished during the internship period. The duties of the site supervisor include:

- Helping the student develop the Work Plan
- Overseeing daily work activities
- Sending periodic reports to the faculty mentor about the intern's activities and progress
- Assessing the intern's achievement and behavior in order to assist the faculty mentor in evaluating the internship for credit

Internship Coordinator

The internship coordinator helps to administer the GVSU Anthropology Internship Program by serving as the point person linking student interns, faculty mentors, site supervisors, and the GVSU Anthropology Department. The duties of the internship coordinator include:

- Maintaining connections with current and potential internship sites
- Curating current and potential internship opportunities
- Facilitating communications between student interns, faculty mentors, site supervisors, and the Anthropology Department
- Advising students seeking internships
- Designing and leading an internship workshop for Anthropology students
- Maintaining the GVSU Anthropology Internship webpage
- Maintaining internship records for the GVSU Anthropology Internship Program

Arranging an Internship

Both students and faculty mentors have responsibilities related to establishing internships for ANT 490 credit.

Arranging an Internship: Steps for Students

Students should begin planning their internship placement at least one full semester before they will begin the internship. The steps to successfully establishing an internship are:

1. *Define interests and internship goals.* Students should ask themselves, “What do I hope to get out of the internship? What kind of job would I like to pursue after graduation? What kind of internship will best prepare me for working in that area?”
2. *Meet with GVSU Anthropology Internship Coordinator Tara Hefferan* or another faculty member to discuss interests and begin identifying possible internship sites.
3. *Search for an internship.* Many resources—both local and beyond—exist to facilitate an internship search. Visit the GVSU Anthropology Internship page on the department’s website, as well as the GVSU Career Center’s Lakers Jobs and Padnos International Center’s databases. The American Anthropological Association also has internship resources.
4. *Contact potential internship sites.* Set up a meeting to talk with the appropriate staff member of the organization that you are considering.
5. *Establish faculty mentor.* Students meet with the faculty mentor they feel is best qualified to oversee an internship in their area of interest. Students bring with them to the meeting contact information and descriptions for the internships that they are considering. The mentor and student discuss the opportunities and decide the best course of action.
6. *Arrange a meeting between the faculty mentor and site supervisor.* The meeting can be via email, telephone, or face-to-face. The mentor and supervisor discuss the student and their learning goals, and begin working out appropriate tasks, duties, and assignments. Internships require 50 hours of work over the course of the semester for each 1 credit hour of enrollment.
7. *Complete a Work Plan* with the GVSU Anthropology faculty member mentoring the internship, as well as the site supervisor at the internship site. The Work Plan includes: job responsibilities; products to be produced; educational goals for internship.
8. *Obtain permission and register for ANT 490.* Since registration is restricted, the faculty mentor will need to provide the necessary approval to register.

Arranging an Internship: Steps for Faculty Mentors

1. *Accept the internship mentorship role.* Students are responsible for identifying and securing their internships, but they do so with the mentorship of a faculty member who has agreed to work with them.
2. *Guide students in identifying individual interests and internship goals.* While students are responsible for identifying and articulating their own interests and goals, they likely will require faculty support to do so effectively.
3. *Approve the internship.* Having researched internship possibilities, students meet with the faculty mentor to share the internship positions they are considering. Together, the

faculty mentor and student discuss which opportunity best aligns with the student's interests and goals.

4. *Meet with internship site supervisor.* The student provides the faculty mentor with the internship position description and contact information for the person who will supervise the internship. The faculty mentor meets with the site supervisor (via email, phone, or in person) to discuss the student and their learning goals and internship duties.
5. *Approve the Work Plan.* In consultation with the site supervisor, the student completes the Work Plan, which specifies the intern's job responsibilities, products to be produced, and educational goals. After the intern and site supervisor sign the Work Plan, the faculty mentor approves it and sends it to the GVSU Anthropology Unit Head for final approval.
6. *Open ANT 490 for student enrollment.* After the Work Plan is approved, the faculty mentor should provide the necessary overrides for the student to enroll in ANT 490.

The Work Plan

All internships require the completion of a Work Plan, which must be filed with the GVSU Anthropology Department before the internship begins. The Work Plan is the "contract" that the student, site supervisor, and faculty mentor create to outline the intern's scope of responsibilities, work hours, and anticipated products. The contract consists of contact information for the student, faculty mentor, and site supervisor, a description of planned activities, education goals, and any expected products. The student should be allowed free time comprising at least the last week of the internship to complete structured academic assignments, such as a research paper, report, or exhibit. The Work Plan must be signed by the student, the faculty mentor, and the Anthropology Department Unit Head. It is filed with the Internship Coordinator.

During the Internship

During the internship, students will carry out the job responsibilities outlined in the Work Plan. They will also complete any products agreed to as part of the Work Plan.

Faculty mentors will advise student interns and monitor their progress during the internship period. They will be available to both the student and site supervisor for consultation regarding internship activities, student evaluation, and work site guidance.

In addition, because internships require that students take an analytical and reflective approach to work, students keep an academic journal during the internship period. The journal provides space for considering the experience as a whole, including observations of daily life within the organization, the benefits and challenges of the internship itself, and consideration of how the internship can be linked to future career goals.

Students also keep a work log, which tracks the number of hours they are devoting to the internship each day.

Evaluation of Internship Experience

Internships are graded on a credit/no credit basis. In order to receive credit, students must uphold their responsibilities, per the Work Plan. They must also submit the following documents to their faculty mentor no later than the Monday of final exam week:

1. The academic journal kept during the internship
2. Work log of internship activities
3. A one-page internship report, which describes the work experience for future interns. The report should be considered “public,” since it will be shared with future interns and might be posted to the GVSU Anthropology website or published in other ways.
4. A reflection essay of 2-3 pages, which considers what was learned and how the student’s educational goals were met as a result of the internship experience.
5. An updated CV/resume, which lists the internship under work experience.
6. Any other documents or products assigned by the faculty mentor.

ANT 490 requirements

The “ANT 490 - Practicum: Career-Service” course description is: Agency experience in the community relating practical training and independent study in a specialized area. Limited to 10 credits maximum. Offered every semester. Prerequisites: 15 hours of course preparation and permission of instructor. Graded credit/no credit

- Prerequisite: 15 credit hours of relevant coursework
- Approval from the Internship Coordinator or another anthropology faculty member who can serve as faculty mentor.
- Enroll for 1-9 credit hours (most internships are 3 or 6 credit hours)
- Limited to 10 credit hours, maximum.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

How many internship hours should I work each week?

GVSU expects that over the course of the semester, student interns will work about 50 hours for each 1 credit hour enrolled. While students can enroll for 1-9 internship credit hours in a semester, often students in anthropology enroll for 3 credit internships, which equal about 150 working hours. Students pursuing the Applied Anthropology Certificate are required to complete a 6 credit internship experience, typically during the summer.

What kind of organization should a student seek out for an internship?

Because internship placements reflect the learning goals and interests of the individual intern, there is no single “type” of agency or organization that works best for everyone. GVSU Anthropology students have had successful experiences in a variety of organizations, including in museums, universities, non-profit social services agencies, and for-profit businesses. That said, students are required to work with an organization that:

- Is well-established and has the capacity to provide students with a structured internship experience
- Supports student interns and recognizes the internship experience as a professional obligation

- Has projects or programs that can meet the learning goals of the student
- Has staff who are willing and able to supervise the student and help the student meet their learning goals
- Provides the necessary material supports to complete the duties outlined in the Work Plan (e.g., office supplies, work space, etc.)

When should a student do an internship?

ANT 490 credit is offered each semester. Since at least 15 credit hours in relevant coursework must be earned before enrolling in ANT 490, internships are usually completed during the junior or senior year.

How do interns get to and from their internship site?

Student interns are responsible for their own transportation to and from their internship site, as well as for paying their own living expenses. This includes travel expenses, should a student choose to complete an internship outside of the local area.

Are interns guaranteed a placement in their agency of choice?

No. Every organization has its own process for assessing and selecting interns. Often, the selection process is similar to a traditional job interview, with the interested student submitting their application materials and resume to the organization, after which they might be called in for a formal interview. Some organizations require that interns pass a background check. If students have concerns about being able to pass a required background check, they should talk with the Internship Coordinator about how to proceed.

Are student interns paid?

While sometimes paid opportunities are available to students, the internships that most GVSU Anthropology students pursue are unpaid. The GVSU Career Center does have a limited number of internship grants (\$500) to support students, based on economic need. Information at the Career Center's Internship Award can be found here: <https://www.gvsu.edu/careers/career-center-internship-award-59.htm>

What application materials should students have prepared when approaching a possible internship sponsor?

While sponsoring organizations differ in the types of materials they might require of internship applicants, many will request some (or all) of the following documents:

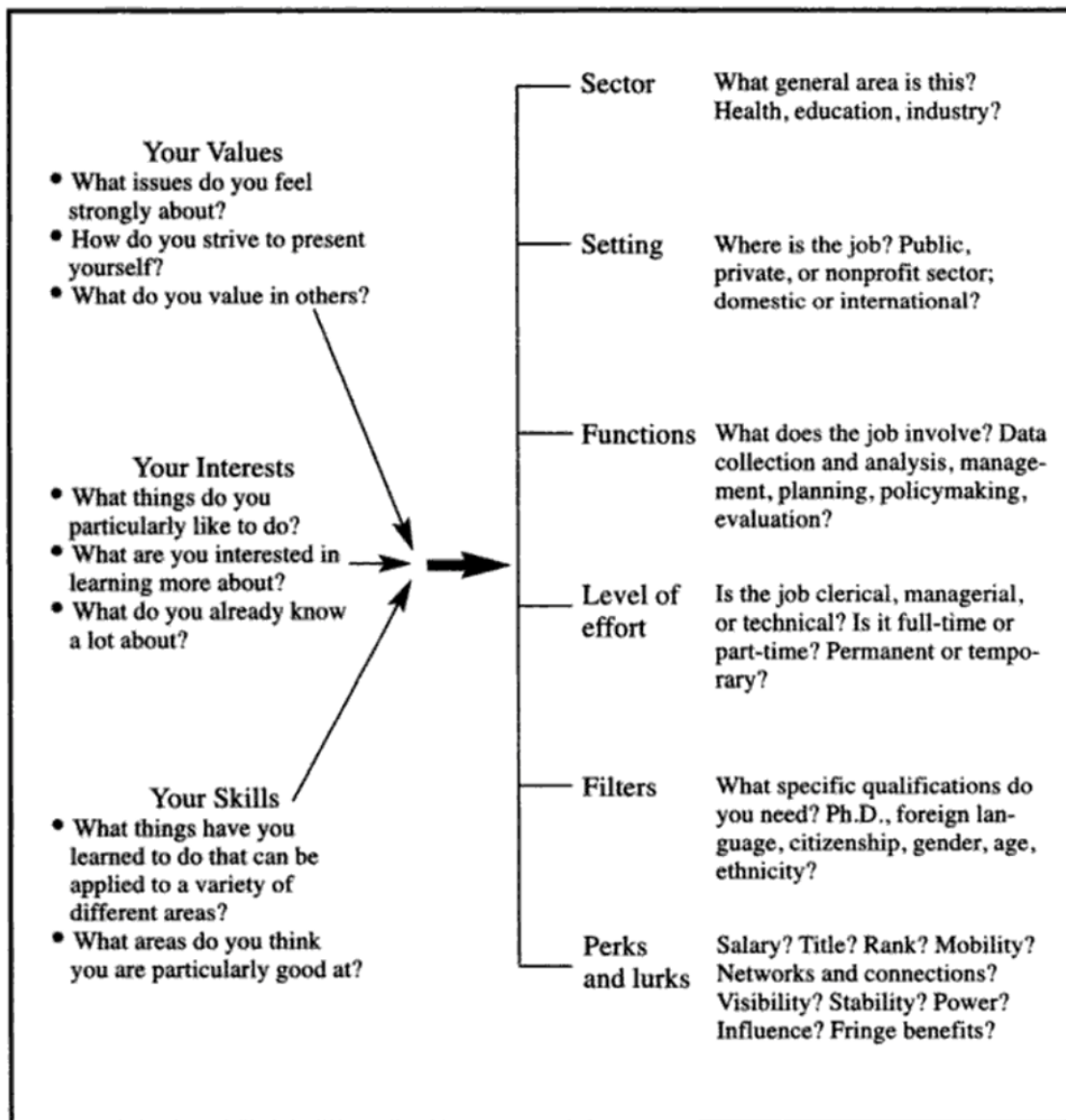
- CV/resume
- Professional references
- Transcripts
- Cover letter or statement of interests
- Application form

When first approaching an organization, students should have prepared a resume/CV and an "elevator pitch" of their interests and skills. It also a good idea to have a cover letter or statement of interests prepared, though letters should always be tailored to the particular

position a student is pursuing. Writing these documents both helps students to articulate their own experiences, skills, and training, and it also helps them to identify what they hope to learn or gain from the internship experience.

How do I decide what I want to do?

Identifying one's interests and goals takes effort, including being willing to engage in reflexive self-analysis. Scholars have designed a number of tools to help students begin this self-assessment. Some of these resources are shared here:



Source: Adapted from Newhouse 1993, p. 5–7.

Questionnaire 1: Interests and Academic/Career Goals

Answer the following questions to the best of your ability to help you articulate the kind of internship that would work best for you. You can write as much or as little as you feel is necessary, as long as you are clear about your objectives.

After you answer the questions, summarize your response in a written statement.

1) List and Evaluate your Personal Interests:

- a) What are your hobbies:
- b) What do you do for entertainment?
- c) What are you interested in that you have not yet had the opportunity to experience?

2) Academic Interests:

- a) What drew you to Anthropology?
- b) Are you in an intensive track (cultural, physical or archaeology)?
- c) If doing the standard track, are you interested in a specific sub-discipline?
- d) Do you have a minor or a second major? How does it compliment your anthropology major? Are you interested in combining the two? How?

3) Career Goals:

- a) What career do you see yourself in? Short or long term.
- b) Do you want to work with a specific group or in a specific geographical area (e.g. working with youth, a particular minority group, in Africa or Latin America)?

4) Reflect on Career Goals:

- a) How do you want to spend your average work day in five years? In an office? In the field? In grad school?
- b) What are your financial needs or hopes?

c) What skills and experience will you need?

Exercise:

After brainstorming, write an analysis of your interests, academic and career goals. Come up with a clear statement about your objectives for an internship.

- After brainstorming and writing circle any key words (words that seem important to you).
- List them. Then examine them for grouping and/or priorities.
- Rewrite your objective statement based on this second round of thinking and organizing.
- Examine the statement for clarity. By the end of this exercise, which might take some time, you should be clear about what you want.
- Try your statement on other people. Do they understand it?

Source for Questionnaire 1: Delgado, Guillermo.
n.d. Internship Handbook. Anthropology Internship
Program. UCSC.

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Questionnaire 2: Choosing an Internship

To help you research and choose an internship, answer the following questions:

- How will the internship fit into your academic and career plans?
- What skills do you want to gain from an internship?
- Do you want a local, national or international internship?
- What experience are you looking for, and in what field?
- Consider your personal values: what work do you feel needs to be done?
- Do you want to work in a team or independently?
- Do you like to work under supervision?

Source for Questionnaire 2: Delgado, Guillermo. n.d. Internship Handbook. Anthropology Internship Program. UCSC.