

GEOGRAPHY

and

REGIONAL PLANNING

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INTERNSHIP HANDBOOK

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PURPOSE STATEMENT

The goal of this handbook is to aid Geography and Regional Planning majors in having a successful and rewarding internship experience. This handbook clarifies issues and presents information and procedures that will result in greater understanding of our internship program. If you have questions, problems or concerns about internships after reading this handbook in its entirety, please contact the coordinator of the Geography and Regional Planning's Internship Program:

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What is an internship?

1. A professional learning experience taken for academic credit

An internship is an opportunity for a student to have a professional learning experience with emphasis on the application of his or her academic background. The Geography and Regional Planning Internship Program at Indiana University of Pennsylvania enables graduate and undergraduate majors to "bridge the gap" between the University and the world of work by allowing them to test in-school learning with out-of-school performance. A good internship experience will encompass the objectives set forth on page 5 of this handbook. Students usually take an internship in the summer, although some have requested internships in the Fall and Spring. Most internships are between six and twelve credit hours, with each internship credit hour being equivalent to one forty-hour work week. Undergraduate students may take a maximum of twelve hours of internship credit. Graduate students may take a maximum of six hours of internship credit.

2. An opportunity to produce a collaborative, professional project

Each intern must complete an internship project which may take the form of a research paper, planning document, or other project agreed upon by the intern and on-site supervisor. The project is due upon completion of the internship. A few examples of internship projects have been placed on reserve in Stapleton Library. The student is also required to keep a daily log reflecting upon his/her experiences, activities and learning at the work site. More information on responsibilities and grading of internship projects can be found on page 11.

Is an internship for me?

Geography and Regional Planning majors are encouraged (although not required) to take internship credit because we feel that the internship program is beneficial to both students and agencies. The differences between the academic environment and the work environment can be a shock to many students just beginning a professional career. An internship allows students to experience and adapt to these differences.

Students who have successfully maintained a minimum grade point average (GPA) in their major and have completed a sufficient course load may apply for an internship. See Figure 1 below for the necessary academic requirements to enroll in the internship program.

Program of Study	Minimum GPA	Minimum Academic Credits
Undergraduate*	2.5	57
Graduate	3.0	12

*Undergraduate majors must have completed a minimum of 15 semester hours in the department

Figure 1 Academic Requirements for an Internship

To participate in the Internship Program, students require the permission of the Department Internship Coordinator, the Department Chair, and the Experiential Education office.

What are the objectives of the Geography and Regional Planning Internship?

The purpose of the Geography and Regional Planning's Internship Program is to enable "apprenticeships" to be formed between our majors and the world of work. Students are encouraged to use their school-based knowledge and skills in a collaborative work setting. Students will be able to compare their performance with others in the field. By working at internship sites, students will develop and eventually deliver a product at the end of the internship which should meet the standards of both the sponsoring agency and the Geography and Regional Planning Department. The specific objectives of the internship program follow:

- 1. To provide students with an opportunity to test their in-school learning with out-of-school performance.**

In-school learning is often abstract and individualized. Out-of-school learning is concrete and collaborative, allowing for problem-solving in actual work-environment situations. The difference between the two learning environments can be a shock for those just setting out on a professional career. An internship can better prepare a student for the workplace by allowing the student to experience and adapt to these differences.

- 2. To encourage students to obtain an understanding of how their work fits into the overall work operations of the sponsoring agency.**

People work best within an organization if they have an overall understanding of the system. They work more effectively if they know how their work effects and is effected by the work of others. While students may be assigned a fairly specific task, this task should be viewed in terms of the larger workings of the sponsoring agency. On-site supervisors are encouraged to promote an intern's participation in the wider life of the organization: public meetings, hearings, committees, task forces, etc. Exposure to overall workings of the sponsoring agency is important.

3. To assist others in carrying out the work-day activities of the agency.

One of the purposes of the internship program is to provide "support personnel" to the sponsoring agency. Students are expected to interact and cooperate with others. We wish to avoid a situation where a student is isolated or "pigeonholed" into a narrowly-defined task assignment--an assignment whose large purpose would be unclear to the intern. We encourage situations permitting students to become practiced in active, collaborative, and highly interactional work assignments.

4. To require students to develop and deliver a professional product within an out-of-school setting.

Each student is required to deliver a product at the end of the internship experience. It may be any "deliverable" project agreed upon by the intern and on-site supervisor. The nature of the product--a report, an exhibit, a series of maps, a summary of findings--is flexible. Students will walk away from the internship experience with a collaboratively-produced professional product, as opposed to an individual academic product. We hope that this product will be a useful resource to the sponsoring agency.

5. To share the internship experience with other students and faculty.

Students will be encouraged to "tell their tales" concerning their internship experience. Every fall a forum will be provided for internship students to present their internship work to students and faculty. This is normally held within the first four weeks of the fall semester. Students wishing to pursue internships in the future will be strongly encouraged to attend. While students will be expected to present their experiences, this presentation will not be evaluated as part of the internship.

How do I prepare myself for an internship?

Some of the most interesting internship opportunities appear long before actual internship dates, so you want to be prepared to take advantage of such opportunities as they arise.

The following prerequisite activities should be completed as soon as possible, preferably within the first four weeks of the semester immediately preceding your anticipated internship experience. We have provided you with a Summer Internship Timeline (See Appendix A), which is designed to help keep you "on track" throughout the internship process.

Intern Prerequisite Activities

1. Prepare a resume following the guidelines of the IUP Career Services office (302 Pratt Hall, 357-2234). Career Services has a **Resumes and Letters** packet which contains detailed information on writing resumes and cover letters. A sample resume is located in Appendix B. You may use this copy as a basis for drafting your own resume. Schedule an appointment with a counselor at Career Services to go over your resume.

Your resume should be laser-quality, printed on quality paper, and include the following:

- Name
- Permanent Address and Telephone Number
- University Address and Telephone Number
- Professional Objectives
- Work/Professional Experience
- Summary of Qualifications
- Education
- Honors and Achievements
- Activities/Interests
- Summary of Major and Related Courses
- References

2. Write a brief summary description of the type of internship experience desired.
3. In this summary description, delineate the geographic area in which you would prefer to work.

4. Locate an internship site, if possible. You are encouraged to contact planning agencies in or near your hometown to inquire about possible internship positions..

5. Submit your resume and summary description to the internship coordinator to activate your file.

How do I find an internship site?

It is the student's responsibility to locate an internship site. This is an exercise that will give the student valuable job search experience.

1. You begin by listing a number of agencies to contact to inquire about internship opportunities. This list could include municipal offices (Borough, State and/or Federal) as well as private consulting firms.
2. Call each agency to find out the name of the person with whom you could discuss an internship possibility. (NOTE: With large agencies and State and Federal agencies, ask that your call be directed to the Personnel Department.)
3. Follow-up on your initial telephone inquiry by forwarding a letter requesting an internship opportunity to the contact person. Be sure to include a copy of your resume.
4. It's a good idea to "cultivate" several internship prospects. If one internship prospect should "fall through," try to have another readily available.
5. Be aware that paid internships are available--look for posted announcements. Further employment information is available in the office of Experiential Education, 306 Sutton Hall, or by calling (412) 357-7904.

How do I apply for an internship?

After you have read this handbook in its entirety, you need to initiate the internship process. Please use the following checklist as a guide:

- _____ 1. Complete the **Intern Prerequisite Activities** listed on pages 7-8 of this handbook and submit your resume with your summary description to the internship coordinator.

- _____ 2. Locate an internship site.

- _____ 3. Pick up an **Experiential Education Student Handbook** from Experiential Education, 306 Sutton Hall, along with the following forms:
 - Experiential Education Application Form (Appendix C)
 - Activity Fee Waiver (Appendix D)
 - Health Fee Waiver (Appendix E)

- _____ 4. Fill out the forms listed above according to the instructions in the **Experiential Education Handbook**. NOTE: a description of internship job duties should be attached to the application. If you do not have a description from your site supervisor, attach a copy of the Geography and Regional Planning Internship Objectives (pages 5-6) as a substitute.

- _____ 5. Submit the Experiential Education Application form to the Geography Department's internship supervisor before the deadline(s) listed on the form.

- _____ 6. If applicable, submit the Activity Fee Waiver to the Student Coop Office.

- _____ 7. If applicable, submit the Health Fee Waiver to the Accounts Receivable Office.

- _____8. Filling out and submitting the Experiential Education Application form **DOES NOT** register you for the internship. You must still register for the internship by telephone registration (TELREG) or computer terminal (TERMREG). Figure 2 below contains course numbers with the equivalent number of credits. Use this table to determine the course and section number you need.

Undergraduate Course/Section Credits		Graduate Course/Section Credits	
GE 493 001	3	GE 698 001	3
GE 493 002	6	GE 698 002	6
GE 493 003	9		
GE 493 004	12		

*Each credit is equivalent to one 40-hour work week.

Figure 2: Internship Course and credit equivalency*

How will I be evaluated on my internship?

Your performance as an intern will be monitored by the internship coordinator who maintains contact with both yourself and the on-site supervisor. Your evaluation will be based upon three categories:

1. Intern performance as evaluated by the on-site supervisor and internship coordinator **50%**

You are required to fulfill the responsibilities of your on-site position in a professionally sound manner. The on-site supervisor will be asked to write an evaluation of your performance. We want you to be aware of the specific categories on which you will be evaluated and ranked, so a copy of the Post-Internship Evaluation Form has been attached in Appendix F.

2. Daily log submitted for review to the internship Coordinator **25%**

You are required to maintain, complete and submit a daily log after the internship is over. This daily log should consist of a summary of each day's activities, your reflections on those activities, and your understanding of how your work fits into the overall workings of the agency. In short, the log should reflect your total on-site involvement.

3. Quality of the final project **25%**

Complete your internship project in a timely fashion. The final project may consist of field research, library research, secondary data analysis, or some combination of these. The final report should be professionally sound. **The project and daily log are due two weeks after leaving the site.** Prepare three typed copies of your final deliverable project:

- Retain one copy for yourself
- Submit one copy to your on-site supervisor
- Submit one copy to the internship coordinator.

The final project will be evaluated by the internship coordinator in consultation with your on-site supervisor.

Post-Internship Evaluation Form

This form should be completed by the on-site supervisor after the internship experience is complete. It is helpful if the post internship evaluation is discussed with the intern. In this way the intern is made aware of his/her performance. Upon completion, a copy is to be mailed or faxed to the internship coordinator.

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Name of Intern _____

Name of On-site Supervisor _____

Date Completed _____

This checklist has been designed to assist you in your evaluation. The following descriptions apply to category rankings shown on the checklist.

1. Superior performance exhibited.
2. Above average performance, continued improvement over the course of the internship.
3. Average level of performance, commitment to improve.
4. Average level of performance, minimal effort to improve.
5. Less than satisfactory performance.
6. Unacceptable level of performance.
- NA Insufficient evidence to evaluate in this category.

Internship Check List

Evaluation Categories	Rankings						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Communication with on-site supervisor							
Cooperation with site personnel							
Enthusiasm toward assigned responsibilities							
Reliability in completing assigned tasks							
Initiative to take on additional responsibilities							
Skill in utilizing facilities and equipment							
Basic knowledge of field							
Effort to improve knowledge of field							
Flexibility/Adaptability							
Response to criticism							
Leadership potential							
Overall on-site performance							

APPENDIX F: POST-INTERNSHIP EVALUATION FORM