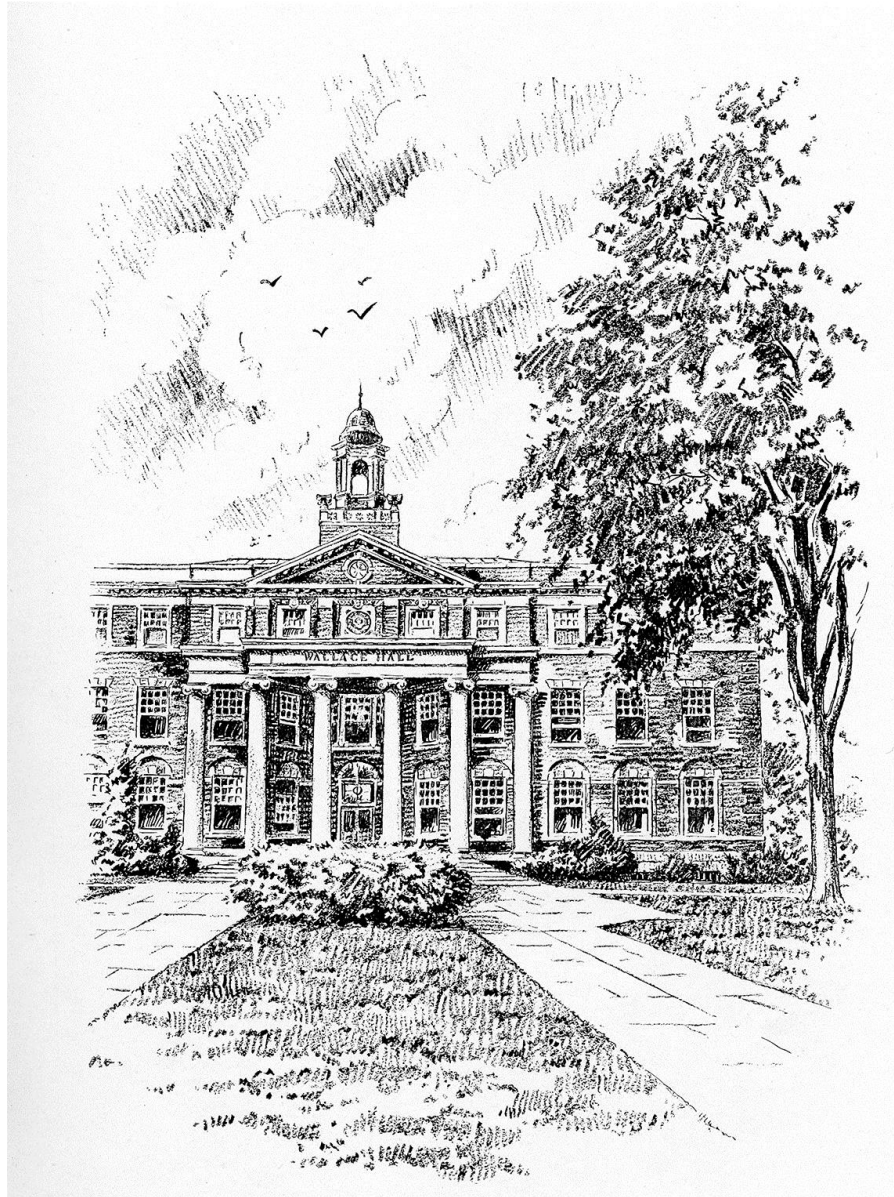


# **Internship Site Supervisor Guidebook**

**Department of Communication Studies  
Monmouth College**

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# Internship Site Supervisor Guidebook

## Department of Communication Studies

Welcome to the Monmouth College Department of Communication Studies Internship program!

And thank you for agreeing to work with one of our students as an intern with your organization. Our students in past years have found internships at organizations like yours to be both educational and enjoyable. An internship is not only a requirement of our major program; it is also a first and very important early professional experience for our students. Internship experiences serve to help students explore career options, extend and develop professional skills and come to understand what it is like to be in a professional workplace often as part of a team. Often the most important outcome of an internship is the increase in self-confidence that occurs by the end of the experience. We are most grateful to you for becoming part of one of our student's future career success. In accepting our student as an intern you have become a partner with us in developing future professionals and leaders in the Communication fields.

### Overview

Because interns from our program engage in such a wide range of organizations and career areas performing so many different kinds of work in and out of office locations, the Communication Studies Internship program has relatively few standard expectations that apply to all internship. However, we do require the following elements for all of our internships. We expect:

- 130 or more hours of internship work for credit bearing internships (or 75+ hours of internship work for non-credit internships).
- Completion at the beginning of the internship of the Communication Studies Department **Internship Learning Agreement** signed by the internship site supervisor, the department's faculty sponsor and the student intern (see page 6).
- Completion at the end of the internship of the Communication Studies Internship Evaluation form by the site supervisor who provides this document to the department Internship Coordinator.

- A review and evaluation meeting (face-to-face at the site or by phone) between the Site Supervisor, the department Internship Coordinator, and the student intern near or at the end of the internship experience.
- Submission of the Communication Studies Internship Activities Log detailing dates worked, hours and activities, maintained by the student and signed by the Internship Site Supervisor. [Typically the student intern records dates, hours and activities related to the internship using a Word document log form. At the end of the internship the student totals the number of hours worked and asks the site supervisor to sign the log. We do not require the site supervisor to record intern work hours and the signature simply indicates that the supervisor believes the total number of hours recorded appears to be a reasonably accurate total. Some internship sites have other methods of tracking intern hours and we are happy to accept other forms of recorded hours. If requested by the internship site, we can specify an alternative in the Learning Agreement.]

The Internship Learning Agreement mentioned above is a document drafted by the student intern with assistance from the Internship's Faculty Sponsor and modified as needed by the site supervisor. This agreement contains the details specific to each internship including such information as learning goals, student responsibilities, evaluation methods and contact information. Its purpose is to insure that all parties start with a similar understanding of the internship experience. Additionally, we believe the elements of the agreement satisfy government expectations that the internship is a valid part of an educational program. We hope this Guidebook clarifies our expectations for internship and answers any questions you may have. More information about our internship program can be found on our "Arranging Internships" web page at <http://department.monm.edu/cata/internships/arranging-internships.htm> or on our main internship page.

We intend to be flexible with our internship arrangements and avoid becoming unnecessarily bureaucratic so feel free to contact the Faculty Sponsor or the Internship Coordinator (listed in the contact section of the Learning Agreement) if you have questions or believe adjustments in our usual procedures would be helpful. Most importantly, we want to encourage you to contact the Faculty Sponsor at any point in the internship if you have questions, concerns, problems or good news. The sponsor's job is to insure not only that the internship is a good career learning experience for the student, but also to assist you in any way possible to make the effort you are putting in with our intern pay off for your organization.

Thank you again for being willing to work with a Monmouth College student in this important pre-professional experience.

## What is a Communication Studies Internship?

An internship sponsored by the Department of Communication Studies is an educational experience that occurs primarily at a work site. Each internship is designed to focus on communication activities and skills in a way that gives students the opportunity to apply knowledge from their coursework, develop new knowledge and skills and discover what it is like to participate in a professional workplace.

Internships are mutual arrangements established between our academic department, an upper-level student major and the workplace site that has agreed to accept a student intern. In this arrangement the workplace offers the student an opportunity to learn new skills, refine existing abilities, explore career possibilities, gain valuable experience and come to understand what it is to work in a professional setting. In return, the student agrees to function as a responsible member of the workplace community performing in activities and tasks that typify the business of the internship site potentially providing some benefit to the organization providing the internship experience. Our internships are one form of experiential learning (learning by doing) in which students, with the guidance of a faculty member and their work site mentor, initiate their own learning goals and strategies and take responsibility for their own work and learning.

## Who are the Parties to a Communication Studies Internship?

A Communication Studies Internship involves three key parties: a student – the *Intern*, the organization's representative – the *Site Supervisor*, and the college's representative, the *Faculty Sponsor*. We see the internship as a partnership between these three individuals who jointly seek to create an experience that meets the learning goals of the student and the needs of the internship site organization. Additionally, the department appoints an *Internship Coordinator* for each of our majors (Communication and Public Relations).

### ***Intern***

An intern is a student who is a temporary member of a host organization. Communication Studies Interns are upper division college students who have completed half or more of a major in Communication or Public Relations. Interns not only gain valuable work experience but also meet a graduation requirement for their college major at the same time. The student intern performs a particular job that has a definite **communication / public relations focus** and allows for the direct application of classroom knowledge and skills to professional workplace activities.

**An Intern Is Not A Volunteer.** Regardless of the financial arrangements, an intern is not the same as a volunteer. An intern earns credit and a grade based on what s/he learns about communication through the work experience; the grade is not solely based on performance of tasks or responsibilities at the site. A volunteer may perform the same tasks equally well but may not be deliberate and self-conscious about the learning derived. An intern must be deliberate and self-conscious in order to successfully earn credit and a grade.

**An Intern Is Not Resident Expert.** Student interns bring special skills, knowledge, and fresh insights to an organization. It is not appropriate, however, to expect an intern to be the resident expert or to fill a gap in an area in which your staff lacks basic skills or knowledge. In fact, the intern is at the site to be mentored while performing tasks relevant to the world of work by professionals from whom s/he can learn.

**An Intern Is Not a Go-Fer.** On the other hand, an intern is not supposed to perform all the routine or uninteresting work with which an organization needs help. An intern may need to perform some of these duties in the process of accomplishing tasks, but these should not be the focus of the internship. An internship should provide a meaningful learning experience, and its educational potential is subject to approval by the faculty sponsor/ Internship Coordinator.

**An Intern Is Not Equal To A Regular Staff Member.** Finally, an intern, whether paid or unpaid, is not the same as a regular employee. S/he is hired for the short-term and has a short-term perspective. Seeing results is important, and in the short time that the intern is with you in this role, s/he should be able to accomplish something valuable and tangible. In addition, even though the intern may be contributing to your organization and must meet expectations for quality work, the role of intern as “learner” drives the intern’s short-term experience in a way not often found in a regular employee’s role.<sup>1</sup>

### ***Site Supervisor***

Each intern is supervised by a professional staff person who has some expertise in the intern’s work area. In many ways, the site supervisor becomes a mentor/teacher responsible for orienting and training the intern as well as guiding and evaluating the intern’s work. The quality of on-site supervision is often the determining factor in successful internships – those which produce maximum learning for the student and benefits for the organization. While our students often work with multiple staff members at the internship site and may be guided by multiple people over time for differing tasks, it is important that the internship site have one person designated as the “site supervisor” for each intern – the “finally responsible, go-to person” for the intern. Because supervision requires extra time and energy, it is important that a site supervisor understands the expectations of the college and be willing to take on an intern. Supervision means being accessible and available on a regular basis to discuss the intern’s work, providing background information and resources, and pointing out opportunities to enhance learning. Planned weekly meetings, even if brief, are an effective strategy for ensuring this accessibility. The return on this investment is high, however, when an intern provides capable assistance, fresh insights, and the personal satisfaction that accompanies a mentoring relationship.

### ***Faculty Sponsor***

The point of contact between the Site Supervisor and the Department of Communication Studies is the Faculty Sponsor. This faculty member works with the student to help determine career interests and learning goals for an internship. The faculty sponsor approves the internship site as appropriate for meeting a major requirement based on the kind of (communication) experience the student anticipates having and helps the student create a preliminary draft of the learning agreement (see more on this below). He/she

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<sup>1</sup> From R. Ross, S. Anderson and K. Neste. Internship Supervisor’s Manual, 2013-2014. Communication Studies Department, St. Cloud State University. 7.

keeps in touch regularly with the student during the course of the internship and with the Site Supervisor as needed to monitor the intern's progress. The Faculty Sponsor is a facilitator who can provide support to the intern or the Site Supervisor in achieving the best internship outcome for both. He/she is available to offer assistance to supervisors on any internship-related matter, yet will keep a low profile within the host agency so to allow the intern-supervisor relationship to develop without interference. At the end of the internship experience the faculty sponsor conducts the closing appraisal interview with the site supervisor and receives his/her written evaluation as well as "final materials" from the student and then assigns a grade (or determines pass/fail for non-credit internships).

#### Communication/Public Relations Major ***Internship Coordinator***

Often the Internship Coordinator serves a dual role both as the Faculty Sponsor for individual student interns and as the faculty member responsible for management of all elements of the major's internship program. The Coordinator sets standards for the internship program, promotes and represents the COMM Internship programs to various constituents, guides the on-campus application process for majors, develops resources for interns and site supervisors, and maintains appropriate records and deals with opportunities and problems as needed.

## How are Communication Studies (Educational) Internships Arranged?

The processes by which our students seek and arrange internships are described on the department's internship web pages [ <http://department.monm.edu/cata/internship.htm> ]. Please feel free to look at this site. Our "Overview of the Internship Process" and frequently asked questions may be especially informative.

Internships are an integral part of the COMM and PUBR majors and the Journalism Minor representing a significant pre-professional learning experience and a jump start to a post-graduate career. All Communication and Public Relations majors and Journalism Minors are required to complete an internship experience.

Internships can be taken in a large variety of job settings including such areas as corporate communications, management, non-profit organizing, event planning, marketing, human resources, training and development, journalism, broadcasting, arts management, public relations. Creative internships can also be arranged by a student in consultation with the Department. A student will normally be a Junior by the time of the internship, will have completed a substantial part of the major or minor and will have been approved by the department to participate in the internship program prior to making arrangements with the internship site.

The department is happy to receive information from organizations of all types concerning the possibilities of for internship experiences that might be valuable to a communication student. We make such information available to students when student interests and abilities match the opportunity. For the most part, however, we do not place students in internships. Rather each student searches for his/her own internship location after discussions with a faculty advisor concerning career directions, current skills and learning goals. This approach sets the expectation that students themselves are responsible for their internship success and it creates a good opportunity for students to hone the skills that will help them later in their job searches. Typically, when students seek internships they make contact with an organization as a result of an announced internship opportunity, because of a recommendation from the college, family, or friends, or simply because the student believes the organization is involved in activities that fit the student's career learning goals. A student internship seeker should provide the organization with a current resume and a cover letter/email. If individuals at the organization believe that have or can create an internship for a qualified student, an interview (in person, by phone or both) is arranged and an offer may be made to the student by the organization.



## **The Learning Agreement**

The actual approval of the student's internship site and learning experience occurs through the development of a Learning Agreement (sometimes referred to as the internship contract) following an indication from the work site that an internship is available to the student. A first draft of the learning agreement based on the departmental template (see attached sample) is created by the student in consultation with the faculty sponsor based on previous discussions with staff at the internship site. Key elements of the contract include: an academic justification of the experience, a set of learning objectives the student seeks to accomplish during the internship (what the intern expects from the internship site), a description of the intern's responsibilities during the experience (what the internship site expects from the student), and a set of requirements the student must complete to meet the major's (or minor's) graduation requirements plus necessary contact information.

When the student and faculty sponsor are satisfied with the draft agreement the student brings it to the site supervisor for conversation and ultimate approval. This conversation provides an opportunity for the site supervisor to understand the student and department's educational learning goals for the experience and for the student to gain clarity as to the expectations and requirements the organization may have to student interns. In the end, it is up to the site supervisor to determine what learning goals are possible and appropriate (adding or subtracting as necessary) and what duties and expectations the student will be expected to meet during the experience. The student responsibilities section should include the activities and responsibilities a student intern will have during the internship to the degree they can be specified in advance. Additionally this section of the learning agreement may include: hours/days for internship work, expected attire, absence procedures, confidentiality requirements, expectations for relations with customers, clients, etc., or other professional expectations.

Once the intern and the site supervisor agree on a final version of the learning agreement both should sign and date the agreement (leaving space for the faculty sponsor to sign) and send a copy of the signed agreement to the faculty sponsor. This can be done by scanning and emailing a copy of the signed agreement, faxing it or, if necessary, using USPS mail. Barring unforeseen complications, when the faculty sponsor receives the agreement he/she will sign and send by email a copy of the completed agreement to the student and site supervisor with additional information. This learning "contract" serves as the governing document for the internship and creates a formal relationship between the student, the department and the internship site. This learning agreement also serves an important function in helping establish that the internship is a bona-fide educational experience for various legal purposes.

## **Pay?**

Monmouth College and the Department of Communication Studies approve for academic credit and for meeting degree requirements both paid and unpaid internships. Ideally students and the college appreciate and prefer paid internships but in many cases that simply is not possible. For summer internships students may need to give up or reduce their usual summer job hours in order to complete an internship leaving them with reduced funds for their return to college in the fall. In those cases, compensation is especially helpful. If the internship site is able to offer an intern compensation for their work, that is best described in the student responsibilities section of the learning agreement.

## **How are Communication Studies Internships Evaluated?**

Site supervisors for our student interns play an important role in helping to evaluate the success of the student in completing the internship experience and in providing the department with feedback on our preparation of students for the work place. In the ordinary course of working with a student intern, supervisors routinely provide developmental advice and feedback to our students as they help interns adjust to the job site, beginning a professional role, and developing their communication skills. Formal evaluation of the student for academic purposes (including the grade in “for-credit” internships) is done by the faculty sponsor with substantial input from the site supervisor. This input comes in two forms: an appraisal conversation (in person at the site or by phone) and through completion of a standard evaluation form. Both of these evaluation methods occur near the end (or shortly after) the internship although “mid-point” conversations between the faculty sponsor and the site supervisor can also be useful.

## **The Appraisal Conversation**

Near the end of the internship experience (or just after) the student intern is expected to make arrangements with the site supervisor to find a time and place for a conversation with the faculty sponsor concerning how the internship has gone. Often the student is included in this conversation. When the internship has occurred relatively near to Monmouth, the faculty sponsor will visit the internship site to meet with the site supervisor. A site tour, as appropriate, can also be included. When distance or other causes make a face-to-face meeting impractical, the appraisal conversation can be conducted by phone or conference call.

These discussions usually last 20-40 minutes and can be quite free-ranging. Issues raised generally include:

- a description of the activities the intern performed and how he/she developed over the course of the experience,
- a review of the strengths of the intern for the world of work,
- an assessment of what were the most effective portions of the internship for learning,
- a discussion of the site supervisor's advice to the intern on future professional development, overcoming weaknesses, career advice and the like,
- the site supervisor's (and the intern's) view of how well the program at Monmouth College has prepared the intern for a productive career start and what could be changed or added to the program, and ending with
- thoughts on any changes in career or life perspective occurring for the intern

### **The Written Evaluation Form and Hours Log**

In addition to the appraisal conversation, the Department of Communication Studies requests site supervisors complete a standard written evaluation for. A sample of this form is included at the end of this guidebook. The section asking for numerical ratings is usual to us for program evaluation purposes. Supervisors can base rating on a comparison to other interns who have had similar experiences at the work site or in comparison to recent hires for entry-level position in their first weeks on the job. The second (narrative) portion of the written evaluation permits the supervisor to comment on elements of the intern's experience that are most relevant to the student's work at the site.

The standard evaluation form can be filled out by hand and mailed, scanned and emailed or faxed to the faculty sponsor (whose contact information is on the internship agreement),. Supervisors are also free to fill out the evaluation form electronically and email it to the faculty sponsor from their work email address (that email address serving as the signature and date).

Our interns are also required to record the hours they work on the internship in an "hours log" which includes the date, hours worked and a very brief description of the activity performed. In addition to on-site hours, the hours log can include time spent off-site doing internship work such as research, computer-based projects, travel, etc. We do not require that the site supervisor carefully track the student's hours during the internship experience (although many do); however, we do ask that site supervisors look over the final internship hours log and sign it in hard copy indicating the supervisor's best estimate that the hours seem to be a realistic description of the hours worked by the student. In our experience, concerns about the accuracy of the number of hours recorded by an intern are extremely rare. However, if a site supervisor believes there is a discrepancy in the log it is best to retain a copy of the log and contact the faculty sponsor directly.

## **A Recommendation Letter?**

We encourage our interns to have a discussion with their site supervisor asking about obtaining a letter of recommendation to be used later in their job search. If the internship has gone well, supervisors often do provide such “To Whom It May Concern” letters or agree to serve as a job reference. Whether or not to write a recommendation letter or serve as a job reference, however, is entirely at the discretion of the site supervisor.

Supervisors sometimes help our students network with others in their career field. We encourage and appreciate this assistance but, again, such aid is entirely the decision of the supervisor.

From time to time, internships lead to job offers from the internship site. It is always gratifying when things work out for a student’s employment in a mutually satisfactory way. However, it is never an expectation of the Communication Studies Department (nor should it be for our students) that an internship will lead to employment. Internship sites should not feel that accepting an intern in some way implicitly hints at future employment.

## How to Get the Most Out of Hosting an Intern<sup>2</sup>

In many ways working with an intern is much like working with a new employee who is starting a first professional job. The intern needs to learn the “lay of the land,” come to understand the norms, procedures and values of the organization, and develop skills and abilities useful to the organization based on previous learning and hands-on experience and training at the work site. Like many new employees, interns are likely to want a chance to show their abilities and have some ownership over projects they contribute to. Below are some suggestions that may be helpful in creating a successful internship for the student and for the host site.

### **ORIENTATION**

Most student interns have little or no professional work experience. Likely their previous work was in low skill jobs operating a cash register, stocking shelves, mowing grass, flipping burgers. In the *Resources* section of this guidebook you will find an *Orientation Checklist* that may provide ideas on areas to include as you orient the interns to your workplace and to their role and duties. We have found that it is especially helpful to provide interns with an understanding of the overall goals of your organization and the specific department they are working in. When interns understand how their tasks and the activities of the people around help accomplish the larger mission of the organization, they are likely to do better work, become more creative contributors to the site and have a higher level of commitment and motivation through the experience.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Clear communication is the key to effective supervision in every internship. The following guidelines suggest how to establish effective communication during the internship experience:

- Clarify intern’s role through the formal learning agreement (clarify job duties /responsibilities, set goals, set regular work hours, etc.).
- Schedule regular meetings with the intern to discuss new and past assignments, to answer any questions, and discuss dynamics of the organization.
- Give the intern an opportunity to attend meetings (staff, committee, professional conferences or legislative) when possible and appropriate.
- Explain to the intern how decisions are made. What are the options? How did the supervisor draw certain conclusions?
- Discuss career opportunities in the field, and career paths of college graduates.
- Structure and supervise the internship more highly in the beginning, and ease off when the time seems appropriate.
- Remember: Interns need to receive regular descriptive feedback on their progress. Are they meeting expectations? Let them know.

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<sup>2</sup> Adapted from R. Ross, S. Anderson and K Neste. Internship Supervisor’s Manual: 2013-2014. Communication Studies Department, St. Cloud State University. 10-12.

- If problems do occur, speak directly with the intern. If the supervisor is unsure how to deal with a particular situation, a phone call to the faculty sponsor, who can offer support and advice, is recommended.

## **REWARDS**

No rules exist in this area. Supervisors are encouraged to use creativity in rewarding interns for work well done. Some suggestions include:

- Note the intern's name on any finished project to give them credit and recognition.
- Provide opportunities for the intern to attend professional seminars, workshops facilitated within or by the organization.
- Provide the intern the opportunity to interview or observe in other departments/areas for the organization.
- Provide the opportunity for the intern to meet the administration, or board members, VIP's, or director.
- Suggest how the intern could transfer their skills to other positions for which they may apply.
- Write about them in the company newsletter or have them write about themselves.
- Add the intern's name to the telephone directory.
- Post the intern's picture on the bulletin board.
- Recognize the intern for doing things right.
- Give the intern a title other than "intern", "student", or "volunteer".
- Provide student with contact people known to you for help in future job hunting.
- Offer a salary or stipend to help pay for college credits or expenses.
- Offer a paid staff position in your agency following the internship when appropriate.

## **MOTIVATION**

To encourage interns to continue to deliver their best work in a temporary (and sometimes unpaid) position, the following strategies have proven effective:

- Provide opportunities for the intern to feel like a member of the team.
- Challenge the intern and show respect for intern's talents and abilities.
- Give the intern a designated work area.
- Give intern a sense of planning and involvement by hearing their ideas.
- Select/organize assignments so that progress is observable for intern (having the feeling of making a difference is a big motivator!).
- Train the intern for assignments.
- Give constructive, descriptive criticism.
- Help intern to understand their job in relation to other jobs and in relation to the overall mission and goals of the organization.
- Talk about assistance you or the organization may be will to provide after the internship is completed.

## **COMPLETION**

The internship site and the intern must plan for an ending date from the beginning. It is important to create realistic guidelines for completing projects and for transferring tasks to other personnel. This prevents incomplete work, abandoned clients, and helps the intern to keep to a time line. A good way to end the internship is by holding some form of celebration. This is a comfortable means of recognizing the completion of the internship experience and it offers everyone to reflect on and share highlights of the internship experience.

## **Problems?**

Over the course of several decades of sponsoring student internships, the Department of Communication Studies has experienced very few problems of consequence with either students or an internship site. Our interns are normally short on experience (That's why they're students!), sometimes naïve, occasionally a bit shy and perhaps in need of greater self-confidence in the new and challenging environment of a professional work place. But they are typically friendly, excited to learn new things and well-motivated. Nevertheless, sometimes problems arise. When a problem with the intern's performance, work quality or other attributes at the job site arises, it is usually best for the site supervisor to discuss the matter in a friendly but forthright and direct manner with the student (keeping in mind that the student is just transitioning into the professional world). If the problem is such that it may interfere with the success of the internship learning experience, a phone call or email message to the faculty sponsor is in order. In fact, we see the faculty sponsor as a potential resource to the site supervisor in getting to the best outcome for student and organization alike. Site supervisors should not feel that letting the faculty sponsor know about a worksite problem will harm the student's grade or degree progress. Grades are based on a variety of features and are not solely determined by evaluations and reports from the supervisor. Our goal is to help reinforce important lessons in work ethic for our students.

## **Legal Issues**

As in all areas of life these days, legal concerns can impinge on student internships. For unpaid internships the U.S. Department of Labor requires that an internship must be fundamentally an educational experience for the student and not displace regular employees. We believe that our approach of creating an educational partnership between organizations that sponsor our interns and the Department of Communication Studies in conjunction with our usual learning agreement that specifies learning goals for the student and training, responsibilities and activities that facilitate that achieving those goals establishes the fundamental nature of our internships as learning experiences. Further information on this issue can be found at

[www.nacweb.org/about-us/advocacy/position-statements/position-statement-us-internships/](http://www.nacweb.org/about-us/advocacy/position-statements/position-statement-us-internships/)

Monmouth College is expected to meet requirements established by federal and state law and by the standards of our accreditor as well as by our own commitment to respect the dignity of all persons. In all of our educational programs, including internships, we act to prevent or remedy discrimination and harassment (including sexual harassment) based on sex, race, religion, ethnicity or national origin. For example, if the college becomes aware that a student (intern) may have been involved in an incident of sexual harassment, as victim or perpetrator, we are legally required to investigate and take appropriate action. Likely your organization has similar requirements and policies. Should a site supervisor become aware of any incidence of harassment or discrimination (or other matters of legal consequence) contacting the faculty sponsor as soon as possible is necessary.

As in all cases of legal responsibilities, in these and other matters, we encourage internship sites to seek guidance from their own legal advisors.



## Elements for a Successful Internship

Inkster and Ross (1998) have identified the following six basic working principles to help supervisors build an internship that's a success for the student, the site supervisor and the academic representative:

**1. The primary goal of an internship is experiential learning – and both concepts, the experience and the learning, are fundamental.** It is crucial for the intern to experience the realities of working in a professional organization, including the vital importance of deadlines, the interdependence of team members who are relying on each other to carry out their respective responsibilities, and the necessity of doing the tasks that may be less glamorous or less interesting as well as those that are more stimulating. In doing your organizational audit, and also later in developing job descriptions and learning plans, you are actually doing interns a disservice if you try to shield them completely from any stress or hard work or tedium that is a part of the normal reality of the workplace. The lived experience of a real work situation is perhaps the most important learning goal of an internship.

On the other hand, the specific work experience is not the only goal. Even if an intern is assigned a specific, precisely defined project for the entire duration of the internship, the intern's goal is to learn how that project fits in the context of your wider organizational mission, the further context in which your organization operates, and the intern's prior learning, both theoretical and practical, as well as the intern's plans, goals, and aspirations. As you do your informal organizational audit, and later as you negotiate learning plans and supervise interns, you need to stay aware of staff development workshops and seminars, special staff meetings, meetings with clients or vendors, professional association meetings, and other, similar learning opportunities for interns.

**2. Experiential learning needs to be supported by a clear set of learning goals, with tasks and other learning opportunities identified in relation to those goals.**

Experience alone does not ensure that the learning is taking place. The intern needs to be an active learner. The supervisor should be aware of the student's learning objectives and help identify specific tasks and opportunities in the organization that support those learning goals. It is appropriate, ethical, and fair to expect an internship, like any other kind of work, to include a certain amount of routine "go-fer" kinds of tasks. However, these kinds of tasks should not consume a preponderance of the intern's work schedule.

**3. The learning plan for an intern needs to provide and schedule systematic reflections and self-assessment for the intern.** Both theory and practice tell us that effective experiential learning requires time for learners to reflect on the experience and to self-assess attitudes, assumptions, behaviors, and skills in the light of the situation just experienced, and to speculate about the implications of this experience for the future. Creating opportunities for supervisor-intern discussions is one strategy for supporting this reflection.

**4. Finding just the right level of responsibility for an intern will require a thoughtful audit, careful planning, and continued monitoring and some fine tuning after the internship is underway.** From the beginning, an intern needs a sense of challenge and

significance in the internship assignment, but the intern also needs a growing sense of accomplishment and confidence based on some initial successes. The initial organizational audit and assessment of the incoming intern's abilities and experience should inform the initial assignments, and ongoing monitoring can inform the pace of increasing responsibility and challenge.

**5. The host organization shares the responsibility to monitor, support, assess, and provide feedback to the intern throughout the internship.** To host an intern is to share the commitment to the intern's learning goals and to a philosophy of proactive, self-motivated, lifelong experiential learning. The host organization best demonstrates this commitment by appropriately challenging the intern and providing the resources and supervision necessary to meet these challenges, achieve an excellent performance, and meet the goals of the learning plan.

**6. The host organization is not just a passive host, but an active, full partner in the educational enterprise, with the potential to participate in improving the curriculum.** The internship site is more than a work site. It is a vital and vibrant site of learning for all three partners to the internship; and all three partners, certainly including the site supervisor, have valuable learning resources and ideas to share. As site supervisor, you can share insights with the intern and with the academic advisor that ultimately can have an impact on the academic institution and its curriculum.

(From: **The Internship as Partnership: A Handbook for Businesses, Nonprofits, and Government Agencies**, Robert Inkster and Roseanna Ross, the National Society for Experiential Education, Simon and Schuster Custom Publishing, 1998.)

## **RESOURCES**

### **Internship Site Needs Assessment Form<sup>3</sup>**

1. How many interns can we support?
2. What will the intern's title be?
3. To whom will the intern report? If the intern will have a mentor different from the supervisor, who will that be?
4. Will the intern work in several different areas or departments or be assigned solely to one person?
5. What will be the preliminary projects or responsibilities of the intern you select?
6. What other activities will the intern do?
7. Will there be daily tasks that the intern will be assigned to do?
8. How much general support work will the intern do?
9. What are the desired skills and qualifications?
10. Is there a specific major/minor that you require? Is there any specific course work that is essential for doing the internship?
11. What are the desired start and end dates? Are there desired times when your agency needs an intern more?
12. How many hours per week should the intern work?
13. Are there specific hours or shifts required for the intern?
14. Can you pay an intern or provide some type of monetary compensation? If so, how much?
15. If monetary compensation is not possible, are you able to meet the requirements for the intern to receive academic credit?
16. Where will you locate an intern within your facility?
17. Is there any other information needed to consider an intern?

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<sup>3</sup> From *Employer Internship Handbook*. Stetson University, DeLand, FL, N.D., 8.

## Intern Orientation Topics Checklist<sup>4</sup>

Experience shows that employers who take adequate time at the beginning of the internship to orient the student reap productivity and effectiveness more quickly than those who do not. Some issues to consider in orienting your intern to your site:

- **Explain the Mission of the Organization**
  - How did the organization start? Why?
  - What is unique about your product or service?
  - Who benefits from your product or service?
  - What are the organization's current objectives?
  - What are the goals of this department and how do they support the mission of the organization?
  - How may the intern contribute to goals of the organization and the department?
- **Explain the Organizational Structure**
  - Who reports to whom?
  - Who, specifically, is the intern's supervisor?
  - What is the intern's department responsible for?
  - How are decisions made?
  - Which personnel can answer different kinds of questions?
- **Outline Organizational Rules, Policies, Decorum, and Expectations**
  - Is there special industry jargon?
  - What are the specific work standards and procedures?
  - What form of interaction with the site supervisor (days, times, and duration) will the intern have?
  - How do the office IT and communication systems work?
  - Are there specific safety regulations? What periodic forms or reports need to be completed?
  - Are there security or confidentiality issues the intern should be aware of?
  - What is acceptable with regard to dress and appearance?
- **Define the Intern's Responsibilities**
  - What is the intern's role?
  - What projects will be assigned?
  - What resources are available to the intern?
  - What training will be provided and how?
  - What expectations does the organization have for how the intern will deal with various constituents?
  - What tasks can be completed without supervisory approval?
- **Do other employees understand the intern's role?**

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<sup>4</sup> Adapted from *Employer Internship Handbook*. Stetson University, n.d, 16.

## Department of Communication Studies Internship Learning Agreement Template

### INTERNSHIP LEARNING AGREEMENT FORM

#### *Department of Communication Studies Monmouth College*

\_\_\_\_\_, Internship Site Supervisor, \_\_\_\_\_, Monmouth College Student Intern, and Prof. \_\_\_\_\_, agree to fulfill the requirements for the following course:

COMM (Or PUBR) 49 – Internship in \_\_\_\_\_ (use descriptive title & appropriate course number)

**Justification:** This internship will allow \_\_\_\_\_ (student name) to \_\_\_\_\_ (Explain how this internship represents an important addition to your work as a major in COMM or PUBR and to your preparation for work after college.)

**Learning Goals – Skills and Concepts to be Mastered:** [List the learning goals (skills developed, experiences, knowledge obtained) you hope to achieve during the internship. Try to link your goals to your coursework and your career plans.]

•

**Amount and Kind of Instruction:** Training and instruction will be provided by \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Responsibilities During the Internship:** (Include here all anticipated projects or tasks the intern will work on AND include all expectations the organization has for this or any interns, e.g absence policy, attire expectations, confidentiality, attitude, relations with clients, etc.)

**Progress Reports and materials to submit to the Faculty Sponsor:** The intern will...

- Keep a log of experiences in the internship noting on a daily basis what activities and experiences are encountered and recording on-site hours each day worked.
- Contact at regularly scheduled times (at least at mid-terms and finals) with the Faculty Sponsor submitting log entries at those meetings.
- Submit FINAL MATERIALS following the conclusion of the internship during the semester for which the student receives internship credit. These materials shall include...
  - “A Portfolio Internship Work” (i.e. written documents and reports, electronic products or other materials) the intern develops or assists in preparing during the course of the internship) at the end of the internship.
  - A self-evaluation of the internship reflecting on progress toward meeting internship objectives (at least 4-6 pages).
  - A one paragraph summary/abstract (in electronic form) of the internship experience for posting on the COMM web site.
  - A “Poster” submitted to the department describing the internship experience including: Description of the internship site/supervisor, location and principal activities conducted there, Learning goals of the internship, Listing of the intern’s activities and experiences, and a Brief reflection on the value of the experience, photos.
  - A professional “press release” on the internship experience to be included with the final materials submitted.
- Additionally, the Communication Studies Internship Performance Evaluation Form will be submitted to the Faculty Sponsor by the Site Supervisor by the end of the internship.

**Evaluation Methods:** By the end of the internship the Faculty Sponsor will make an on-site visit to the internship site to meet with the Site Supervisor (and normally the intern) for an appraisal interview. (*When the site is considerably removed the evaluation may take place by phone.*) The Intern may be asked to present a discussion of his/her experience to the department (faculty majors, and minors) in a public presentation. The grade (or successful completion) will be determined by the Faculty Sponsor based on the Site Supervisor Evaluations, submitted materials and personal discussions with the intern. To receive one course credit the intern is expected to complete at least 130 hours of work for the internship site.

**Credit:** One course credit, Term: Year 2016

*This agreement serves as a learning contract between the Internship Site and Supervisor, the Student and the Department of Communication Studies. The Internship Site Supervisor agrees to make a good faith effort to provide adequate opportunities to the student to achieve the learning goals listed above. The Student agrees to make every effort to meet the student responsibilities listed above. The Faculty Sponsor (normally the COMM internship coordinator) serves to make an academic evaluation of the student's work on the internship, to determine if departmental requirements have been met and to mediate any problems that may arise between these three parties that relate to completion of the internship agreement.*

**Agreed to:**

**By:** \_\_\_\_\_ (student)                      Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**And:** \_\_\_\_\_ (site supervisor)      Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**And:** \_\_\_\_\_ (faculty sponsor)      Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Starting Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Tentative Ending Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**N.B.:** If this form is not completed, signed and submitted within 10 days of beginning the internship credit for the internship might not be granted. You must include all of the requested contact information below

### **CONTACT Information During the Internship**

Student (include – Name, Address during the internship period, Phone Number)

Site Supervisor (include all contact information – Name, Title, Department, Mailing Address, Phone Number, E-mail Address, Fax Number)

COMM Internship Director: Dr. Hayley Hawthorne, 700 East Broadway, Monmouth, IL 61462. Ph. 309-457-2403, Fax 309-457-2310, email: [hhawthorne@monmouthcollege.edu](mailto:hhawthorne@monmouthcollege.edu)

PUBR Internship Director: Dr. Joshua Hawthorne, 700 East Broadway, Monmouth, IL 61462. Ph. 309-457-2244, Fax 309-457-2310, email: [jhawthorne@monmouthcollege.edu](mailto:jhawthorne@monmouthcollege.edu)

Faculty Sponsor (include name and contact information if the sponsor is different from the Internship director)

# Potential Learning Goals for Communication Interns

## Skills and Knowledge Often Developed by our Majors and Valued in the Post-Graduate World

### **Message Construction**

- Can construct effective informative presentations (in various media)
- Can construct effective persuasive messages (in various media)
- Able to use a variety of message forms
- Able to design messages strategically - adapted to various audiences
- Able to link goals to message construction
- Trained in designing persuasive campaigns
- Can construct policy making cases and arguments
- Effective oral communication skills (in various media)
- Effective written communication skills (in various media)
- Strong abilities in layout and visual presentation of messages (print, video, web)
- Strong research skills for developing supporting materials for reports, presentations, etc.
- Experienced at critiquing and coaching others in communication skills
- Can critically evaluate message effectiveness in various contexts
- Knowledgeable in the design of training programs

### **Interpersonal / Organizational Skills**

- Effective group communication and teamwork skills
- Knowledgeable in group decision-making techniques
- Knowledgeable of conflict management techniques
- Skilled/experienced in managing conflict, building teams, etc.
- Strong interpersonal skills
- Experienced in working in teams
- Experienced in leading \ coordinating complex activities (e.g. managing a radio station, producing a cable TV show, managing a large service project, etc.)
- Listening for a variety of purposes (for information, empathy, support, criticism, etc.)
- Reasoning logically and critically
- Being aware of the influence of non-verbal elements of communication

### **Field Knowledge**

- Familiarity with current theory and knowledge in various areas of Communication and Public Relations
- Familiarity with the history/background for various areas of communication practice.
- Can identify and use strategies for enhancing organizational and individual effectiveness in the workplace

### **Technology**

- Ability to use various types of software
- Ability to use specific features of technology in interesting ways (e.g. video clips on web pages and social media, survey research, creating twitter content, etc.)
- Audio / video / web / social media production skills

**Performance Ability**

- Effective oral communication skills (in various media)
- Effective written communication skills (in various media)
- Skilled \ experienced [graphic designer, announcer, editor, photographer, copywriter, public speaker, etc. ]
- Scriptwriting experience
- News gathering, news writing experience.
- Sales / marketing experience

**Personal**

- organized, self-motivated, people-oriented, goal driven, energetic



# Internship Performance Evaluation

## Monmouth College

### Department Of Communication Studies

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Internship Site \_\_\_\_\_

Site Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_ Faculty Sponsor \_\_\_\_\_

Directions to Site Supervisor: Objective items outlined below are assessed at the end of the internship experience. After your final evaluation conference with your Intern, please provide one copy to the Intern and another copy to the Faculty Sponsor. Retain the original for your records.

**RATINGS: 5 = Excellent 4 = Above Average 3 = Average 2 = Below Average**  
**1 = Unsatisfactory 0 = Not Applicable**

<b><u>SECTION A</u></b>	<b>Final</b>
1. Overall performance of assignments	
2. Proficiency in communication skills.....oral	
.....written	
3. Ability to deal with clients/other personnel in the organization	
4. Reliability	
5. Accepts responsibility and follows through with assignments	
6. Demonstrates initiative / works proactively	
7. Seeks help and advice when appropriate	
8. Is responsive to supervisor's direction	
9. Is self-directed, self-motivated in completing work	
10. Recognizes need for corrective action in problem areas.....with job	
.....with self	
11. Attempts to facilitate solutions to problems.....with job...	
.....with self	
12. Technical skills --	
13. Ability to adapt to organizational environment	
14. Approaches work with a positive attitude	

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Internship Site \_\_\_\_\_ page 2

Site Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_ Faculty Sponsor \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION B** Final Comments (Describe overall assessment of strengths, weaknesses and progress. Feel free to offer career advice.)

**Final** Signature of Internship Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Return to:

COMM Internship Director: Dr. Hayley Hawthorne, 700 East Broadway, Monmouth, IL 61462. Ph. 309-457-2403, Fax 309-457-2310, email: [hhawthorne@monmouthcollege.edu](mailto:hhawthorne@monmouthcollege.edu)

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