Guide to the Graduate Internship

Master of Agribusiness
Master of Science with Concentration in Agribusiness

Food and Resource Economics

March 2013
I. Internship

The internship is an educational program allows students the opportunity to improve the skills and knowledge needed in their prospective vocation. In turn, the internship student helps the employing agency or firm to meet peak demand for their employees and/or complete special projects.

Enrollment

AEB 6942 Advanced Applications in Agribusiness Experience – 3 credit hours

Course Objectives:

1. Provide an opportunity for learning experiences, on or off campus, relevant to the student’s degree program.
2. Permit students the independent exploration of their fields of interest.
3. Assist students in establishing career goals related to their specific interests and professional aspirations.
4. Prepare students for employment in agribusiness-related occupations through field training and professional experience.
5. Make students aware of additional training/experience/courses necessary to reach their career goals.

Operational Principles:

1. Each student intern shall have well-defined work activities that are regarded as worthwhile by the cooperating agency and the Supervisory Committee Chair.
2. Each intern shall develop specific learning objectives that can be readily identified and reviewed periodically throughout the work period.
3. Each intern shall be supported by a Supervisory Committee Chair and a cooperating agency representative. The roles of these individuals include assisting with task identification, establishing learning objectives, carrying out the task, counseling the intern and carrying through with ideas and projects initiated.
4. Each intern contracts as an independent agent with the cooperating agency to do the work and pursue the learning objectives.
5. Each intern assesses the work of the internship experience in a non-school setting and produces a final report and presentation to the faculty and graduate student body.
Procedures for approval of internship

1. Prior to start of the semester in which the internship is to be taken, the student must arrange a personal or telephone interview with a representative of the cooperating agency. The student's Supervisory Committee Chair and the agency representative must determine whether an available position will provide an experience that supports the student's academic and career objectives. Further, they should be assured that the student's interests and academic preparation will satisfy the demands of the cooperating agency.

2. On approval of the agency representative, and with the work description or schedule of anticipated activities, the student will submit the completed "Plan for Internship" to their Supervisory Committee Chair. At that time, the Internship agreement will be completed.

3. A copy of the completed Plan for Internship must be submitted to the Graduate Office and the student will then register for AEB 6942 Advanced Applications in Agribusiness Experience for three credit hours.

II. Internship Advantages

The Student has the opportunity to:

1. Gain an understanding of the relationship between classroom theory and its practical application.
2. Test career objectives to determine if there is a proper fit between career requirements and student objectives.
3. Improve interpersonal skills.
4. Develop professional work habits.
5. Become acquainted with people in professional occupations for potential job opportunities.
6. Earn funds to help support college education.
7. Prepare for a smooth transition into full-time employment.
8. Retain student status while learning on the job.

The Employer has the opportunity to:

1. Establish a pool of potential professional employees who have demonstrated their abilities.
2. Complete a special project or increase service during peak demand periods.
3. Educate highly motivated students about the industry.
4. Develop an efficient training program.
5. Send goodwill ambassadors back to campus to spread the word to other students about the company.
6. Assist the department in evaluating students as to their potential to perform in postgraduate career positions.
The FRE Faculty has the opportunity to:
1. Receive student and industry feedback that can affect curriculum change.
2. Reinforce positive relationships with the business community.
3. Increase rapport with community interests and encourage community support for University programs.
4. Demonstrate the faculty's concern and support in maintaining the individuality of the student.

III. Responsibilities of the Principal Participants

The Student
Assisted by the student's Supervisory Committee Chair, the student seeks out the potential placement opportunities for the internship program. The student creates a resume, writes a cover letter, develops a job-search strategy, arranges for the job interviews, and procures his or her own employment site. On approval of the employment site by the Supervisory Committee Chair, the student and advisor develop a "Plan for Internship". A signed copy of this plan must be submitted to the FRE Graduate Office before the student begins his or her internship program. While participating in the internship program, the student is expected to:

1. Work approximately 30-40 hours per week for the entire semester (12-16 weeks).
2. Complete the tasks and activities outlined in the "Plan for Internship".
3. Conform to the normal work hours of the cooperating firm or volunteer agency including overtime when requested.
4. Support the employer, keep the employer's business confidential, and work for the employer's best interests.
5. Request prior permission from both the employer and the Supervisory Committee Chair for any leave periods.
**The Supervisory Committee Chair**

The Supervisory Committee Chair recommends internship placement opportunities for students related to the student's interests. Arrangements for such internships are to be initiated by the student and must be approved by the Supervisory Committee Chair following submission of documentation to justify the cooperation of a particular agency in providing the internship supervision. The Supervisory Committee Chair reviews the plan to determine whether the planned internship:

1. Is an academically relevant component of the learning process that is appropriate for University credit.
2. Involves initiative, creative opportunities, meaningful responsibilities and assignments - in contrast to routine or continuously repetitive activities.
3. Provides the student a learning experience and the exposure needed to understand the opportunities, functions, and responsibilities of various agricultural disciplines.
4. Includes appropriate supervision and direction by qualified and interested persons.

The student, the Supervisory Committee Chair, and an agency representative collaborate in processing the internship agreement. At the end of the semester in which the paper and presentation are completed, the Supervisory Committee Chair calculates and reports the final grade for AEB 6942 Advanced Applications in Agribusiness Experience. The grade is based on the guidelines listed on page 7.

The Supervisory Committee Chair maintains regular contact with the agency supervisor in determining the nature of the work and evaluating the student's progress. The student’s final report is submitted during the final semester and focuses on the work experience and its relation to the student's academic objective.

**The Cooperating Agency Supervisor**

A representative of the agency, approved to supervise an intern, interviews the potential candidate by telephone or in person where possible, prior to enrollment in the course by the student. The final approval for registration is made by the student's Supervisory Committee Chair.

When the agency selects a participant in the internship program, it is expected to provide a variety of educational experiences for the intern a program sufficiently flexible to permit intern involvement in specific projects. The agency assigns responsibility for supervision of the intern to a specific individual and a final review of the intern's performance is expected. Further, the agency supervisor completes an evaluation form appraising the student's performance. The form is forwarded to the student's Supervisory Committee Chair during the final two weeks of the internship semester.

The supervising agency may provide wages, reimbursement for travel, or other remuneration arrangements while the student is on the internship. These arrangements are to be agreed upon by the cooperating agency and the intern.
PLAN FOR INTERNSHIP

Student's Name: _______________________________________________________

Supervisory Committee Chair: __________________________________________

Name of Cooperating Agency: ___________________________________________

Dates/Duration of Internship: ___________________________________________

Internship Position Title: _______________________________________________

Internship Goals and Objectives: _______________________________________

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1) I agree to prepare a detailed, typewritten, final report explaining my internship activities and to include any suggestions for improvement of the program. The report will be submitted to my Supervisory Committee Chair.

Student Signature _______________________________ Date ________________

2) I have reviewed this Plan and find it consistent with the student's educational objectives.

Committee Chair Signature _________________________ Date _______________

3) The cooperating agency agrees to provide the student an opportunity to obtain actual experience in the areas outlined above and also agrees to evaluate the efforts of the student and forward an evaluation to the Supervisory Committee Chair on termination of employment. The student's immediate agency supervisor will be:

Name ______________________________________________________________

Title _________________________________________________________________

Mailing Address ______________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

Phone ______________________ Email _______________________________
Guidelines for class requirements, paper and presentation.

An internship experience is a valuable part of the educational program in preparation for a professional career. In order to evaluate progress and the outcome of the internship, students must submit a short paper and oral presentation of what was gained from the experience.

The grade in AEB 6942 is based upon successful completion of all three components below. The Supervisory Committee Chair assigns the grade for the AEB 6942 course. Once all requirements for the course have been met, the Graduate Office will submit the required final oral examination report required for non-thesis students.

All students and faculty are to be invited to the presentations.

20%  Internship Project Progress Report

1.  The progress report will contain the following in a typed Word document:
   a.  Name of organization you are interning with
   b.  Duties and responsibilities during the internship.
   c.  Subject/background description of the project.
   d.  Key problems/aspects to be addressed in the project.
   e.  Outline of how you will tackle/solve the problem.

40%  Oral Presentation (Supervisory Committee Chairs must attend)

1.  15-minutes PowerPoint presentation (submitted to their committee chair in advance)
2.  15-minutes question and answer period
3.  Presentation of key points from the paper (background, problems, findings)

40%  Final Paper* (Graded by the Supervisory Committee Chair)

1.  Five page paper, typed, double-spaced, 12 point font, title page
   a.  Paper should be in greater details relative to the oral presentation.
   b.  Background/situation (including name of organization and duties).
   c.  Methods used to solve/deal with the problem.
   d.  Problem Statement
   e.  Findings
   f.  Recommendations
   g.  Exhibits

*Your agency supervisor should be given the opportunity to review the paper before given to the Supervisory Committee Chair to help avoid release of any confidential or restricted information from your employer’s point of view.
Agency supervisor evaluation of student performance during internship

Student's Name ____________________________________________________________

Evaluator name/contact info _______________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

We would appreciate your cooperation in rating this student in terms of his or her performance on an internship placement in your agency. Your response will help the Supervisory Committee Chair in assigning a letter grade and identifying areas requiring attention in the student's continuing professional development. Thank you for your cooperation.

**Rating** | **Excellent** | **Good** | **Fair** | **Unacceptable**
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Cooperates with Management |  |  |  |  |
Cooperates with other workers |  |  |  |  |
Willingness to work |  |  |  |  |
Dependability |  |  |  |  |
Honesty |  |  |  |  |
Ethics |  |  |  |  |
Appearance |  |  |  |  |
Motivation |  |  |  |  |
Accepts supervision |  |  |  |  |
Accepts constructive criticism |  |  |  |  |
Punctuality/Attendance |  |  |  |  |
Professional attitude |  |  |  |  |
Leadership ability |  |  |  |  |
Verbal communication |  |  |  |  |
Written communication |  |  |  |  |
Demonstrates ability to think |  |  |  |  |
Adapts to a variety of jobs |  |  |  |  |
Potential for career in this industry |  |  |  |  |

Please mail this evaluation to: Jessica Clackum Herman, UF Food and Resource Economics Graduate Program, Box 110240, Gainesville, FL 32611-0240
Student’s Evaluation of Internship

Student's Name: _____________________________________________________________

Name of Cooperating Agency: ________________________________________________

Internship Position Title: _____________________________________________________

Executive Summary of major activities.

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___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

Organizational structure of the agency/firm.

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___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
Responsibilities within that structure.

Brief description of activities associated with your area of responsibility evaluated in relation to your educational background.
Appraisal of the internship program relative to your interests and career goals.

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Changes you plan to make due to the experience

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In addition to the specific points to be addressed in the final report, you may describe any other observation or experiences not specified above.

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