

Environmental Resource Management (ERM) 495 Course Description, Objectives and Internship Guidelines

Course Description

ERM 495 is a supervised practicum in the environmental field that is related to the student's specific specialization area or the ERM curriculum. This course is offered to ERM students who wish to enhance their academic program through practical experience in the environmental field.

Prerequisite: Prior approval of assignment by the instructor.

This course is graded on a satisfactory (SA) or unsatisfactory (UN) basis.

Course Objectives

- To provide an opportunity for an out-of-classroom learning experience relevant to the student's educational program
- To permit students to explore their field of interest and thus assist them in establishing and achieving career goals to enhance their specific professional development
- To increase student motivation for their chosen fields by integrating classroom instruction with planned and supervised practical experience
- To prepare students for employment through field training and professional experience

Registration and Placement Procedures

- Internships are initiated by the student applying for and being accepted for an internship through the sponsoring organization
- Once approved by the organization representative, the student will submit their signed copy of the Internship Agreement Form (page 5) , their 8 specific learning objectives, and their job description to the Internship Coordinator, 206 Agricultural Sciences & Industries Building, University Park, PA 16802
- The Internship Agreement Form must be received in the ERM office no later than two weeks after the internship begins. Students cannot arrange to receive internship credits after this time period
- Credit is based on one credit for each 40 hours of work that the student is engaged in the supervised internship. The Coordinator acts on behalf of the University in granting an appropriate number of credits for the internship, based on the proposed amount of work the intern will perform

Student Responsibilities

While participating in the internship, the student is expected to:

- Complete the tasks and activities outlined in the Internship Agreement Form (page 5)
- Conform with the normal work hours of the cooperating organization including overtime when requested
- Support the employer, keep the employer's business confidential, and work for the employer's best interests
- Request permission from both the employer and Internship Coordinator for extended leave periods
- Submit mid-term and final reports and a log of daily activities as indicated in the approved Internship Agreement Form (see page 3 for report guidelines)

The Cooperating Organization and the Internship Supervisor's Responsibilities

When the organization selects a participant for the internship program, it is expected to provide a variety of experiences for the intern, and a program sufficiently flexible to permit intern involvement on specific projects.

- The organization assigns responsibility for supervision of the intern to a specific individual who agrees to serve as the Internship Supervisor
- The organization representative may collaborate with the intern in the preparation and submission of mid-term and final reports to the Internship Coordinator
- The organization representative completes the Intern Evaluation Form* (pages 6-8) and submits it to the Internship Coordinator within one week of completion of the internship

*Please Note: To make this process more convenient, the Internship Coordinator will send an electronic copy of the Intern Evaluation Form to the Internship Supervisor, which can be completed and returned to the Internship Coordinator as an e-mail attachment.

The ERM Internship Coordinator's Responsibilities

The ERM Internship Coordinator reviews the Internship Agreement Form to determine whether the internship:

- Will be an academically meaningful experience
- Involves initiative, creative opportunities, meaningful tasks and assignments, and is in contrast to routine or continuously repetitive activities
- Provides the student a learning experience and exposes the student to professional, on-the-job responsibilities
- Includes appropriate constructive feedback, supervision and direction

At the completion of the internship, the Coordinator, based on the Internship Supervisor's evaluation and the timeliness and quality of the required reports, determines if the student's performance has been satisfactory or unsatisfactory.

GUIDELINES FOR THE MID-TERM AND FINAL REPORTS

General

Both the mid-term and the final reports should be typed (double-spaced, 1 inch margins, 12 point font) and proofread. Points will be taken off for typographical, spelling, and grammatical errors. All coursework submitted by the student should be of high quality and reflective of a 400-level course. The mid-term report and final report and daily log of activities may be submitted via e-mail as a Word attachment to the Internship Coordinator on or before the due dates (as agreed to in the Internship Agreement Form).

Mid-term Report

Midway through the internship period, students are required to submit a mid-term report to the Internship Coordinator. This should be a 2-5 page typed report, and should include:

- A brief description of the structure and function of the cooperating agency or organization
- A detailed description of what the student is doing on a day-to-day basis
- A discussion of how the student is achieving the learning objectives or what obstacles are being encountered
- The type of final report the student plans to submit (see pages 3-4)

The mid-term report will be graded and a copy will be returned to the student. Any suggestions/corrections made on the mid-term report should be kept in mind when writing the final report

Final Report*

Upon completion of the internship, students are required to submit a detailed final report, typed and 7-10 pages in length. The student has the option of choosing between **two** types of reports to submit for final evaluation.

*Please Note: A daily log of activities is required regardless of which type of final report the student chooses to submit. This includes a record of the significant activities and the actual day-to-day involvement of jobs or tasks completed.

1). The final report can be an Internship Evaluation Report, which should include:

- An overall assessment of how the learning objectives were met and implemented throughout the duration of the internship
- An appraisal of the internship experience relative to the student's career goals
- Constructive comments for improvement of the organization

Remember, the final internship evaluation report is not an extended version of the mid-term report. The final report should be a critical analysis of the internship experience rather than a superficial description of daily activities. The report may include a photographic essay, articles written, newspaper articles documenting events the student supervised, etc. (in addition to the 7-10 pages of text). It should be creative and professionally presented.

2). Alternately, the final report can be a Technical Report, where the student identifies a portion of the internship experience and:

- Develops an analytical paper, not simply a compilation of data
- Analyzes the internship as it relates to career goals

The technical report will be especially useful in research-based internships. Also, there is a great deal of flexibility in the nature of this report. For example, consider an internship where the major responsibilities involve collecting and analyzing water samples. Once the procedures are learned, the internship becomes very routine. The student might take some of the water quality data and do some interpretive work. The data could be used to determine the cause of a recent fish kill, or to investigate the effect of rainfall patterns on the suspended solid levels in the aquatic system. The important factor is that the report reflects creative effort and not simply a compilation of data.

*Please Note: In addition to the technical report, a report of 1-2 pages should be appended describing how the internship duties specifically relate to the student's career goals.

INTERNSHIP AGREEMENT FORM

STUDENT INFORMATION

Name: _____ PSU ID #: _____

Local Address: _____ Local Phone: _____

Home Address: _____ Home Phone: _____

Semester of Internship: _____ Credits Applying For: _____

I agree to prepare a mid-term report and a detailed final written report. The reports should be submitted to the Internship Coordinator; mid-term by _____, and the final report and log of daily activities by _____.

Student's Signature

Date

Along with this signed form, the student is required to submit a one paragraph job description and 8 specific learning objectives to the Internship Coordinator, no later than two weeks after the internship begins. ***The student should enlist the help of their Internship Supervisor in accomplishing this task.*** All paperwork may be mailed, faxed (814-863-0109) hand delivered, or e-mailed as an attachment to (thg110@psu.edu). The ERM office address is:

Environmental Resource Management Program
c/o Internship Coordinator
The Pennsylvania State University
206 ASI Bldg.
University Park, PA 16802

INTERNSHIP SUPERVISOR INFORMATION

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Title: _____ E-Mail: _____

Organization Address: _____

Dates and Duration of Internship: _____

Intern Position Title: _____

The cooperating organization agrees to provide the student with the experiences outlined in the attached materials. ***The student's internship supervisor agrees to evaluate the efforts of the student and forward the Intern Evaluation Form to the Internship Coordinator within one week after the completion of the intern's work activities.***

Internship Supervisor's Signature

Date

Penn State University through the College of Agricultural Sciences agrees to grant _____ credit hours for ERM 495 to the student upon satisfactory completion of this internship.

ERM Internship Coordinator's Signature

Date

INTERN EVALUATION FORM

Please complete both sections of the Intern Evaluation Form, as well as your final assessment of the intern's satisfactory/unsatisfactory overall performance.

SECTION 1.

Student's Name:

Date:

Position:

Name of Organization Representative Performing the Evaluation:

Please rate the student in terms of his or her performance in their internship with your organization. Your responses will help in identifying areas requiring attention in the student's continuing professional development. Thank you for your cooperation!

Superior (4)

Very Good (3)

Good to Fair (2)

Poor (1)

N/A (non-applicable)

Please indicate your rating with an 'X' in the appropriate box, based on the above number scale.	4	3	2	1	N/A
Attendance and punctuality throughout duration of internship					
Ability to develop an understanding of the organization's role, policies and procedures					
Development of effective working relationships with staff					
Ability to accept supervision and constructive criticism					
Demonstrated ability to relate learning to new experiences					
Portrayal of a professional attitude toward clients of the organization					
Effectiveness in communication of observations, impressions, and ideas					
Displayed ethical behavior as expected of professionals					
Motivation and initiative					
Competence (given the level in the field)					

Additional Comments regarding Intern's Performance:

SECTION 2.

Please provide constructive information related to the following questions in the spaces provided.

1. Was the student adequately prepared to work in your program?

2. What additional preparation would have been useful to improve the student's skill to work in your program?

3. What kind of training or orientation did you provide before the student began working?

4. Ways the student showed evidence of mature skills in working with particular age levels complex situations?

5. Did the student show responsibility for program planning and implementation?

6. In your opinion, what are the student's areas of greatest strength, areas for improvement?

7. What recommendations do you have for us to include this student's academic program to more adequately prepare this student for future professional roles?

8. Would you re-employ this student or employ another student with a similar background?

9. Do you object to our giving out the name and address of your organization to students interested in applying for internships?

Additional comments to help us improve our internship program:

Based on your observations, the student's overall performance with your organization has been:



SATISFACTORY



UNSATISFACTORY

This completes the Intern Evaluation Form. Thank you again for your cooperation!