

## **Introduction to Environmental Studies Internship (ENVS 680)**

ENVS 680 is a graduation requirement for all ENVS Program students. The purpose of the internship is to provide students with a real world experience that complements their academic studies and, ideally, their future career goals. Students should seek an internship sometime after their first semester as a declared major and before their last semester (or before they take the Senior Seminar - ENVS 690 - if they are planning on graduating in the fall). Generally, it is better to do the internship a year before graduating so that, if for some reason the internship does not work out, the student has some latitude to take the course again.

In the past CAS 580, a special internship program offered through California Studies was an alternative way to fulfill the ENVS major internship requirement. However, CAS 580 is currently not being offered.

Students can earn 1 – 3 units of credit depending on how much time they devote to their internship. 1 unit = 5 hours per week, 2 units = 10 hours per week, and 3 units = 15 hours per week. Internships can be either voluntary or students can earn income from the internship if the sponsoring organization funds the position.

Sometimes students are able to devote large blocks of time in the summer to do the internship. If the student chooses to do an internship in the summer, it is essential to communicate with the faculty instructor of the course who will teach in the following Fall semester. You will be required to develop a Work Agreement, keep a Journal/Log of your experience, gather information about your organization, and facilitate a Supervisor's Evaluation upon completion of your internship (see below). For a sixteen week semester, if the internship is done over a summer, this equates to 80 hours for one unit, 160 hours for two units, and 240 hours for 3 units. Students doing an internship in the summer must then enroll in ENVS 680 the following fall semester.

Locating an internship is the student's responsibility; however, there are numerous resources that are intended to assist students in their search. Check out the database of Bay Area organizations that have internships on the ENVS program web site - <http://bss.sfsu.edu/envstudies/>. Go to the web page, click on "for majors", then jobs and internships. To access the database you will need a login and password which are login: secure password: @ntid0te

Campus resources for advice about internships can be obtained from Nicky Trasvina (BSS Director of the Student Resource Center, 405-0900, [trasvina@sfsu.edu](mailto:trasvina@sfsu.edu)), Perla Barrientos (Director of the Office of Community Service Learning, 338-3282, [barrient@sfsu.edu](mailto:barrient@sfsu.edu)), and the Community Involvement Center (338-1486).

Once an internship organization is selected, students must work out their internship commitments with supervisors from approved agencies or organizations that agree to sponsor the internship. The following components must be completed by all students:

1. **Work Agreement.** – The Work Agreement defines the nature of the internship requirements and also reflects the desired learning outcomes on the part of the student. It is important (and to the student’s benefit) that supervisors understand that the purpose of the internship is to provide students with a learning experience as much as to contribute to the needs of the organization.
2. **Log of Activities and Journal of Reflections** - Students will need to maintain a record (log) of the days, times, and activities that they conduct during their internship. Students will also be required to keep a journal of reflections on their work experience.
3. **Information about Sponsoring Organization** - Students will need to collect materials and develop information about the internship organization to be shared with other members of the class at some future date. This material can be attached as enclosures with the Log/Journal document.
4. **Final Presentation and Assessment** – During the last class session, students will be required to share their experience with the rest of the class in a final presentation and turn in a short paper.
5. **Supervisor’s Evaluation** – A portion of your grade will depend upon a supervisor’s evaluation. The instructor will send or email this evaluation to the supervisor. The student may have to help make sure that the evaluation is turned in on a timely basis.

ENVS 680 meets during the Fall and Spring semesters once per month (four sessions). You cannot pre-register for this class. Stay tuned to further information near the beginning of each semester for a day, place, and time for students taking ENVS 680 to meet for the first session.

## **Environmental Studies Internship Work Agreement**

*This agreement should be developed by the intern and supervisor together, typed by the intern and signed by both. An electronic version of this page will be available from the instructor.*

### **Seven components of work agreement:**

#### **1. Basic Information**

- a. Intern's name, sfsu email address
- b. Supervisor's name, position, phone, email
- c. Agency name, address, phone, web site address

**2. Work objectives:** Describe the kind of work the intern will do and the specific tasks which should be completed by the end of the semester.

**3. Educational objectives:** Describe the kinds of things the intern should learn from this experience , including substantive knowledge, skills, broader analytic insights into issues facing this kind of organization

**4. Provisions for learning about the overall operation of the organization:** One of the purposes of the internship is to allow students to learn about organizations as a whole as they deal with various aspects of the environment.

**5. Provision for regular access to the supervisor:** it is critical that interns have regular access to their supervisor both to effectively perform the tasks they are assigned and to give them some opportunity for broader discussion. How will this be accomplished?

**6. Work schedule.**

**7. Signatures of intern and supervisor.**

## Activity Log and Reflective Journal Assignment

Each student in ENV5 680 will be required to document their experience. The goal is two-fold: to keep a record of time spent during the internship and the kinds of activities the intern participated in and more importantly to stimulate the student to reflect upon their experiences, particularly with respect to what they have learned about these experiences. The Activity Log/Reflection Journal is a key element to evaluating the student's performance and also to evaluating the sponsoring organization's appropriateness as an internship partner.

The activity log should contain dates and times for all work activities and simple one sentence description of activity. For example: June 5<sup>th</sup>, 9am-12. Researched land ownership documents in the Calera Creek watershed online using the San Mateo County Recorders database.

Writing in the reflection journal should be reflection rather than description. Reflection can be on what you are learning from the internship, and what the internship makes you think about. This can be on a personal level, about your career, or about broader environmental issues. Look at the questions for the final paper assignment for some suggestions on what you might reflect on. The journal should not be simply describing what you did for your internship work. Please see the example journal entries posted at: <http://bss.sfsu.edu/cdavidson/envs680-journal-examples.htm>

The final reflection journal should be roughly 8 single spaced pages. This is half a page of writing (roughly 260 words) reflecting on your internship activities a week if you are doing your internship over the course of 16 weeks. If your internship is shorter you will need to write more each week to achieve the 8 page length. The activity log/journal should be typed. It may be easier to hand-write the original in a notebook, and then create a typed version to hand-in.

The journal may also include any materials you create while working at the internship. These may be attached at the end of the final journal.

If you do your internship during the course of the semester, the Activity Log/Reflection Journal should be handed-in in three installments at the second, third and fourth class meetings. **For the fourth class meeting please hand in your third journal installment along with the two graded previous installments attached to the back.** If you do your internship over the summer or winter break then the full journal is due the second class meeting of the semester.

## **Final Paper and Presentation Assignment**

The culmination of the student's internship is a short written paper and public presentation. The paper and presentation is intended to motivate the student to review their Log/Journal, pull together all resources produced or gathered during the internship, and to share their experience with the class.

The final paper should be 3-4 pages long (double spaced, 12 point type, one inch margins all around). The presentation should be 6 to 10 minutes long and include a few minutes for questions. The Final Paper and Presentation should cover the following topics:

1. What kind of work did you perform and with what organization?
2. What environmental problem did this work address?
3. Did the work directly contribute to solving this problem, if so how? If not, why not?
4. Was the group you worked with effective in lessening or helping to solve the environmental problem?
5. Are there other alternatives to solving this particular environmental issue? If so what are they?
6. What did you personally gain from your internship experience?