

Recreation & Leisure Services
OUTDOOR RECREATION



**INTERNSHIP
MANUAL**

Murray State University
College of Health Sciences & Human Services

Department of Wellness & Therapeutic Sciences

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INTRODUCTION

The internship experience can be one of the most valuable and rewarding experiences in the college curriculum. An internship is a requirement for the Bachelor Degree with a major in Recreation and Leisure Services. The application of classroom learning to professional activities is a crucial element in the education of young men and women preparing for professional careers in recreation and leisure service settings. The internship is designed to provide on-the-job experience and learning under the direction of an organization supervisor and a university supervisor. The Recreation & Leisure Services internship at Murray State University is based on the following tenets:

1. The primary goal of the internship program is to bridge the gap between theory and learned skills obtained through coursework and the job realities.
2. One of the best means of education is experiential learning. The internship builds on various hands-on experiences that are part of previous coursework.
3. As students learn through participation in the internship experience, they should become progressively more independent in their work with the organization.

DEFINITION OF TERMS USED IN THIS MANUAL

Internship: Refers to a supervised, pre-professional work experience for which upper-level undergraduate credit is earned. The internship involves participation by the student in planning, implementation, and evaluation of organizational programs.

Organization Supervisor: A qualified professional staff member of the organization in which the student is placed who will assist and supervise the student during the internship. The Murray State University Recreation & Leisure Services faculty will determine whether individual professionals are qualified to supervise interns.

University Academic Advisor: A Recreation and Leisure Services faculty member assigned to the student for academic advising. This faculty member typically has advised the student in coursework throughout his/her Recreation and Leisure Services major.

University Internship Advisor: A member of the Murray State University Recreation & Leisure Services faculty who is assigned to supervise the student interns. In most cases this individual's name appears as the instructor of record for the internship course.

Student Intern: A student who is enrolled in REC421 – Professional Experience.

OBJECTIVES OF THE INTERNSHIP

The internship should provide students with new experiences and responsibilities and supplement, as well as add to, the academic education and professional preparation. Through the internship experience the student should:

1. Gain knowledge and leadership experience in working in a professional position
2. Gain an understanding of the job culture and appropriate professional relationships with other staff members
3. Integrate academic knowledge with information learned on the job
4. Gain from the experiences of a variety of professional workers employed by the organization
5. Develop skills in the operation of an organization or business
6. Become aware of personal strengths and weaknesses in professional areas and develop a plan to enhance strengths and overcome weaknesses
7. Have a deepened commitment to a profession in the recreation and leisure services field

BENEFITS TO PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

The Internship experience can be an important asset to participating agencies through the following:

1. Provides the organization with the opportunity and responsibility for part of the training of future professionals
2. Enlarges the organization's staff and capabilities by allowing students to assume leadership roles in its programs
3. Provides an opportunity for the organization to compare its services with current professional curriculum
4. Stimulates the organization's professional staff and encourages development of in-service training programs
5. Provides the organization with the opportunity to view and evaluate potential job applicants

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY FOR INTERNSHIP

1. Students must have attained 12 hours of core REC courses and junior standing.
2. Undergraduate students must have a minimum of 2.0 GPA prior to enrollment in the internship (REC 421 – Professional Experience).
3. Students who desire to complete an internship must attend the mandatory internship meeting held during the semester prior to the internship semester.

4. Application and contract completion deadlines must be adhered to in order for a student to register for and begin an internship.

GRADING & CREDIT HOURS

Four hundred (400) contact hours (8 credit hours in REC 421) must be obtained over a 10-week period. Exceptions can only be made to this with written agreement through the academic advisor. For example, sometimes summer camps are not in session an entire 10 weeks.

If a student leaves an internship early, for any reason, the hours accumulated will NOT carry over to a new placement. The student must complete all the required hours at the new placement.

Students will earn a grade of P (passing) or E (failing) at the completion of the internship. The University Faculty Internship Advisor determines each student's final grade based upon the student's total performance and the Organization Supervisor's recommendations. The grade will be based upon the following components:

- ✓ weekly reports
- ✓ quality of portfolio
- ✓ evaluation of Organization Supervisor
- ✓ evaluation of University Internship Advisor
- ✓ activity outlines

CHOOSING AN INTERNSHIP & APPROVAL OF THE INTERNSHIP

Students should consult with their academic advisor at the beginning of the fall semester if the internship is planned for the spring semester or at the beginning of the spring semester if the internship is planned for the summer or fall semester to begin to look for an appropriate placement. Students should seek to find internships in the area in which they plan to seek employment following graduation. There are many internship resources available including various listings provided by professional organizations as well as a variety of internet resources. Your advisor can point you to these resources as well as other opportunities in the area, throughout the country and around the world. The student's academic advisor MUST approve each internship placement. To receive credit, students must register for REC421 for 8 hours of academic credit.

PRE-INTERNSHIP MEETING

The fall or spring semester prior to the internship, the faculty member responsible for supervising and evaluating internships will hold an informational meeting for all students

participating in internships. This meeting is mandatory for all students registering for internships. Students, who fail to attend this meeting, risk the possibility of delaying their internship for an additional semester. The date, time and place of the meeting will be posted on the division's website and in Recreation and Leisure Services classrooms and other areas announcing this meeting each semester.

INTERNSHIP REQUIREMENTS

The internship is designed to provide the student with a wide range of job-related experiences. As part of the educational experience the student will be required to fulfill the obligations outlined in this manual as well as perform the duties required by the organization supervisor.

While participating in the internship, the student not only represents him or herself, but also represents the Murray State University Recreation and Leisure Services program. Individual success will depend upon the impressions the student creates and the abilities s/he displays in performing assignments, working with other employees, and fitting into the job culture. The first days on the job should be spent in orientation. This exchange of information is designed to benefit both parties. The orientation should provide students with a thorough introduction to the broad components of their assigned programs and organization. A checklist of these components is included in the Appendices. At this time the student has the opportunity to provide the organization supervisor with background information relative to his/her capabilities and professional objectives.

SPECIAL PROJECT

Each student will complete a special project as part of his/her internship experience. The student should consult with the University Intern Advisor and the Organization Supervisor for an appropriate special project. The student must complete the Internship Special Project Proposal form found in the appendix. This form must be signed by the student, the Organization Supervisor and submitted to the University Internship Advisor for final approval.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The University Recreation Faculty will:

1. Determine the academic eligibility of students for internships.
2. Approve the internship placement of the student in each specific organization for each of their advisees through a consultation process with the student.
3. Provide organizations with Internship Manuals.
4. Provide organizations with background information on students.
5. Assist organizations as necessary in developing appropriate programs and materials and in the provision of varied experiences needed by internship students.

6. Assess the suitability of organizations and professionals as placement sites and intern supervisors.

The University Internship Faculty Advisor will:

1. Hold a pre-internship meeting during the fall and spring semesters and assist students in preparation for the internship.
2. Visit the organization to observe students unless the location of the internship is beyond 200 miles. In the event that the distance is too far, the faculty advisor will consult regularly with the intern and the organization supervisor through one or all of the following: telephone, fax, email, and mail.
3. Evaluate student reports and discuss the reports with the student and organization supervisors.
4. Evaluate internship performance and job potential and assist the students in self-evaluation.
5. Determine each student's final grade based upon job performance at the site, organization supervisor's evaluations, and weekly reports submitted by the student.

The Organization in which the Student is placed will:

1. Interview and select students in consultation with Recreation & Leisure Services faculty.
2. Interpret the purposes and objectives of the internship program to the organization's controlling body, staff, and the community in which the organization operates..
3. Orient, introduce, and train the student for successful participation in the organization.
4. Assign a qualified organization supervisor to each student.
5. Define the role of the student intern through:
 - ✓ conferences to determine the student's responsibilities
 - ✓ periodic evaluations of student progress, areas of weakness and compliance with organization requirements
 - ✓ efforts to make the student feel valued and needed
 - ✓ setting reasonable standards for student work performance

The Student will:

1. Formally apply for placement with both the organization and the Recreation and Leisure Services Internship advisor the fall or spring semester prior to the internship.
2. Secure approval for internship placement from his/her academic advisor.
3. In consultation with the Internship Advisor and the academic advisor, contact an approved organization to secure placement.
4. Be on the job a minimum of 40 hours a week for ten weeks or until the total number of required hours are met. (The total number of hours per week may be adjusted through consultation with the academic advisor and the internship advisor.)
5. Complete all duties and responsibilities specified by the organization and the

- University Internship Advisor in a professional manner. (These responsibilities may include such things as: participation in training sessions, attendance at weekly conferences, and completion of reports required by Organization Supervisor and University Internship Advisor, etc.)
6. Become knowledgeable in all pertinent aspects of the organization operation, facilities, functions, regulations, and procedures.
 7. Professionally represent the organization in all contacts with the public.
 8. Prepare and submit weekly reports, planning schedules and activity planning reports as required to the University Internship Advisor.
 9. Prepare a portfolio of detailed information including supervisory conference notes, organizational policy statements, forms, brochures, worksheets, record reports, outlines, and a critical analysis of the organization.

FORMS

The Appendices at the end of this manual include all of the forms that must be completed before the internship grade is submitted. It is important that each form be turned in on time. The application and contract should be completed well in advance of the start of the internship. The weekly logs must be submitted at the conclusion of each week on the job. The midterm evaluation should be turned in half way through the internship. The final evaluation must be turned in immediately following the conclusion of the internship, before the end of the finals period for the corresponding semester.

Forms Students must complete or sign:

1. Application for Internship (complete)
2. Internship Contract [TR students MSU general counsel approved] (sign)
3. Internship Orientation (complete and sign)
4. Weekly Contact Hour Log (complete and sign)
5. Mid-Term Evaluation (sign)
6. Final Evaluation (sign)
7. Evaluation by Student Intern (complete and sign)

Forms Organization Supervisor must complete or sign:

1. Internship Contract [TR students MSU general counsel approved] (sign)
2. Internship Orientation (sign)
3. Intern Special Project Proposal (sign)
4. Weekly Contact Hour Log (sign)
5. Mid-Term Evaluation (complete and sign)
6. Final Evaluation (complete and sign)

Forms University Supervisor must complete or sign:

1. Application for Internship (sign)

2. Internship Contract [TR students MSU general counsel approved] (sign)
3. Intern Special Project Proposal (sign)
4. Mid-Term Evaluation (sign)
5. Final Evaluation (sign)
6. Evaluation by Student Intern (sign)

Forms University Academic Advisor must sign:

1. Application for Internship (verify senior status, GPA, and approve with signature)
2. Evaluation by Student Intern (sign)

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