

**Student Internship Guide**  
M.S. Applied Psychology Program  
San Diego State University

**Overview**

Welcome to the internship component of the San Diego State University M.S. Applied Psychology Program. The goal of the internship experience is to gain field experience, have the opportunity to apply information and skills you have learned in the program curriculum, and learn new skills. The internship will simulate a real job as much as possible. You will learn about different kinds of products and services and get to know a particular San Diego company, its culture, its technology, and its people.

This internship guide provides you with pertinent information on the internship program, your responsibilities for participation, and suggestions on making the most of your experience. Also included are forms to summarize your experience, and evaluate your performance and your internship site. If you have any questions, please contact the Internship Coordinator or Faculty Internship Advisor.

**Eligibility**

In January of each year, the M.S. faculty will determine which students are eligible to begin their internships in the summer. Eligible students will have demonstrated solid performance in class and research activities as well as adequate professional demeanor. Students will be contacted by the Internship Coordinator about internships once they have been determined eligible. The eligibility list will be maintained through communication among the Internship Coordinator, Faculty Internship Advisor, and Faculty Mentors throughout the spring semester and is subject to change based on student performance.

**Timing and Workload**

Students are encouraged to target the summer after their first year to complete their internships, although waiting until the summer after the second year may be advisable in some circumstances. Internships that overlap with the academic year, especially those that overlap with the first year in the program, will be reviewed with extra scrutiny.

For internship opportunities that overlap with the academic year, the M.S. program faculty will determine which students are eligible based on the time commitment involved with the internship, the students' responsibilities to the University, and the students' progress in their program of study.

In addition, working (either as part of an internship or a part-time job) when students are currently employed with a full-time University as a Teaching or Research Assistant position is contrary to department policy. In such situations, students will be encouraged to choose between the two options, allowing enough time to replace them in their assistantship should they choose to terminate it. Exceptions may be made when the assistantship assignment is less than 20 hours a week, but in such cases the combined workload of the assistantship and the outside work should not exceed 20 hours a week.

**Process**

The first step in the process for students is to prepare a résumé that will be sent to the internship sites. After you have prepared your résumé, you will set a time to meet with the Internship

Coordinator to get input on your résumé, and review your skills and qualifications, areas of interest, and possible internship sites.

The Internship Coordinator will notify all eligible students when internships become available. Students can then request that their résumé be forwarded to the site for consideration. A representative of the site will contact students directly to set up interview times.

Students who find internship opportunities on their own should send all pertinent information (refer to the Internship Description Form, Attachment A in the Employer Internship Guide) to the Internship Coordinator and the Faculty Internship Advisor so the company can be reviewed and approved as an eligible internship site. If the site has developed a position description for the internship, that can be submitted in place of the Internship Description Form along with contact information for a site representative.

There are two criteria for an opportunity to meet the requirements of an internship site: 1) it must be related to your degree objectives, and 2) the Site Supervisor must be a specialist in program evaluation, organizational development, human resources, industrial/organizational psychology or organizational behavior. As noted above, the timing of the internship is also taken into account. Internships overlapping with the academic year will be reviewed with extra scrutiny. Once a site is approved, the Internship Coordinator will work with a site representative to put a Service Learning Agreement (SLA) in place and the internship can begin.

Once you have accepted an offer for an internship, you will be given additional information from the company as well as any additional company-specific forms you may need to fill out. You will set your hours with your internship Site Supervisor and report to your internship, just like you would to a regular job. The Internship Coordinator will follow up with you and your Site Supervisor periodically to monitor your progress.

### **Duration/Credits**

MS students in both emphases are required to work a minimum of 300 hours at an approved internship site to earn six units of credit. Although internships vary, students usually work 20-40 hours per week during the summer semester following the first year in the program.

All efforts should be made to complete the internship hours during the summer. If it is necessary to continue your internship into the academic year, you should work with the Internship Coordinator, Faculty Internship Advisor, and your Faculty Mentor to ensure that doing so does not negatively impact your progress in the program.

You will need to register for a total of **six** units of 791 (Internship in Program Evaluation) or 792 (Internship in I/O Psychology) depending on your emphasis. These units are taken during the second year in the program. Students can take all six units in one semester, or spread the units across two semesters (three units in the fall and three units in the spring). To sign up for 791 or 792 units you will need to contact the Faculty Internship Advisor (the person listed on the class schedule that semester for the 791/791 courses) to obtain a schedule number.

Within three weeks after completion of the 300 internship hours, you should complete the Student Internship Report (Attachment A), the Self-Evaluation (Attachment B), and the Internship Site Evaluation (Attachment C), and submit this paperwork to the Internship Coordinator, the Faculty

Internship Advisor, and your Faculty Mentor. Your Site Supervisor will fill out a Performance Evaluation Form for you as well (Attachment D), and will either give that to you to turn in or turn it in directly to the Internship Coordinator. Please note that in order to receive credit in 791/792, students must have completed all 300 hours of their internship and submitted the required paperwork by the end of the first semester in which the student has enrolled for the internship units.

### **Paid/Unpaid**

Some internships are paid and others are unpaid. Not all of our internship sites have the resources to compensate their interns financially. However, the training they provide is invaluable. Keep in mind that your training is a cost to the company.

### **Responsibilities**

In order for the internship experience to be beneficial for both the intern and the internship site, each has specific responsibilities. The fulfillment of these responsibilities is important in maintaining the quality of our program as well as assuring its continuing success.

#### *Intern's Responsibilities*

- Represent SDSU and the Psychology Department in a professional and courteous manner
- Maintain a positive and diligent approach in behavior and attitude
- Diligently apply learned skills and knowledge to develop new abilities
- Participate in carrying out the organization's mission

#### *Field Site's Responsibilities*

- Mentor student interns with regard to knowledge and information about the industry, the career field, and the organization
- Provide supervision and facilitate the learning of new skills
- Utilize the intern's time and abilities by providing meaningful responsibilities and projects

### **Getting the Most out of the Internship Experience**

Below are some reminders and suggestions to ensure a successful internship experience:

- Keep in mind that an internship is an opportunity, not an entitlement. Your Site Supervisor is taking the time from his or her responsibilities to train and coach you.
- Begin the internship with realistic expectations. You are entering a career that requires complex skills that take time and hard work to learn. The internship is part of the training process.
- Communicate your expectations and goals to your supervisor.
- Maintain an open mind to the types of duties and functions assigned to you. Find the relevance of each task.
- Pay attention and be observant. The environment in which you work is as important as the tasks you are performing. How people interact, the company culture, day-to-day situations, different job functions, and the technology the company uses will provide you with information on the industry, particular jobs, and work processes.
- Ask questions.
- Take advantage of as many opportunities as you can. You will have opportunities to learn new skills and will be exposed to new principles and applications. Recognize and take advantage of these opportunities for growth.

## **Internship Report**

### **Student's Name:**

The Internship Report is due to the Internship Coordinator three weeks after the internship is completed. It should be two pages long and cover the following:

Description of the Workplace

Types of Tasks Performed and Performance Results

Relationship with Supervisor and Other Personnel

Description of the Relationship Between Work Experience and Academic Experience

Statement Regarding Quality of Work Experience

**Intern Self-Evaluation Form**  
(Completed by Intern)

Please evaluate your performance and return the completed form to the Internship Coordinator within three weeks of the completion of your internship.

Intern Name:

Date:

Company:

Supervisor:

Department:

Title:

**Performance Characteristics:**

|                      | Needs<br>Improvement |   | Met Site<br>Expectations |   | Exceeded<br>Expectations |
|----------------------|----------------------|---|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Productivity         | 1                    | 2 | 3                        | 4 | 5                        |
| Quality of Work      | 1                    | 2 | 3                        | 4 | 5                        |
| Attendance           | 1                    | 2 | 3                        | 4 | 5                        |
| Initiative           | 1                    | 2 | 3                        | 4 | 5                        |
| Interpersonal Skills | 1                    | 2 | 3                        | 4 | 5                        |
| Dependability        | 1                    | 2 | 3                        | 4 | 5                        |
| Communication        | 1                    | 2 | 3                        | 4 | 5                        |
| Overall Performance  | 1                    | 2 | 3                        | 4 | 5                        |

**Comments to support the above ratings:**

**Major strengths:** Describe those achievements, specific qualities, or responsibilities, which you feel have best displayed your capabilities.

**Areas for improvement:** Describe areas where you feel you can improve your performance or skill-set.

**Internship Site Evaluation**  
(Completed by Intern)

Please evaluate the internship site and return the completed form to the Internship Coordinator within three weeks of the completion of your internship.

Intern Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Please rate your agreement with the following statements using this scale:

| <b>Disagree Strongly</b>   | <b>Disagree</b> | <b>Neutral</b> | <b>Agree</b> | <b>Strongly Agree</b> |   |  |  |  |  |
|--|-----------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| <b>1</b>   | <b>2</b>        | <b>3</b>       | <b>4</b>     | <b>5</b>              |   |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The company's goals and objectives were sufficiently explained. | 1               | 2              | 3            | 4                     | 5 |  |  |  |  |
| 2. I have a better understanding of the industry as a whole.       | 1               | 2              | 3            | 4                     | 5 |  |  |  |  |
| 3. I now know what types of jobs I am qualified for.               | 1               | 2              | 3            | 4                     | 5 |  |  |  |  |
| 4. I learned new skills.   | 1               | 2              | 3            | 4                     | 5 |  |  |  |  |
| 5. I learned new applications for my skills.                       | 1               | 2              | 3            | 4                     | 5 |  |  |  |  |
| 6. My supervisor was regularly available and accessible.           | 1               | 2              | 3            | 4                     | 5 |  |  |  |  |
| 7. I was given sufficient instruction for projects I worked on.    | 1               | 2              | 3            | 4                     | 5 |  |  |  |  |
| 8. The projects I participated in were challenging.                | 1               | 2              | 3            | 4                     | 5 |  |  |  |  |
| 9. My time was well utilized.                                      | 1               | 2              | 3            | 4                     | 5 |  |  |  |  |
| 10. Overall, I feel that my internship was a valuable experience.  | 1               | 2              | 3            | 4                     | 5 |  |  |  |  |

Please list the new skills and techniques you learned in your internship:

Other Comments:

**Applied Psychology Program - San Diego State University  
Intern Evaluation Form**

(To be completed by Site Supervisor)

At the completion of the 300 hour internship requirement, please evaluate the intern's performance using this form. We encourage you to review the feedback with the student. Once completed, the form can be given to the student or e-mailed directly to Brittany Bermingham, Internship Coordinator, at bberming@sciences.sdsu.edu.

Intern: \_\_\_\_\_ Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_ End Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Hours: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Internship Description:**

(Please describe the nature of the projects the intern worked on, types of tasks performed, duties, level of responsibility, etc.)



**Performance Characteristics:**

|                      | Needs Improvement |   | Met Site Expectations |   | Exceeded Expectations |  |
|----------------------|-------------------|---|-----------------------|---|-----------------------|--|
| Productivity         | 1                 | 2 | 3                     | 4 | 5                     |  |
| Quality of Work      | 1                 | 2 | 3                     | 4 | 5                     |  |
| Attendance           | 1                 | 2 | 3                     | 4 | 5                     |  |
| Initiative           | 1                 | 2 | 3                     | 4 | 5                     |  |
| Interpersonal Skills | 1                 | 2 | 3                     | 4 | 5                     |  |
| Dependability        | 1                 | 2 | 3                     | 4 | 5                     |  |
| Communication        | 1                 | 2 | 3                     | 4 | 5                     |  |
| Overall Performance  | 1                 | 2 | 3                     | 4 | 5                     |  |

**Comments to support the ratings above:**

**Major strengths:**

(Describe achievements, qualities, or responsibilities that have best displayed the intern's capabilities.)

**Areas for Development:**

(Describe areas where you feel the intern can improve his or her performance and/or skill set)

**Supervisor's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Intern's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_