

MPA Internship Information for Agencies and Supervisors

Public Administration Department

College of Public Service



Contents

Overview	1
Internship Organization Documentation Responsibilities	2
Prior to internship start: Internship award letter and job description	2
End of internship: Supervisor evaluation form	2
Intern Documentation Responsibilities	2
Caveat	3
Questions	3

Overview

Thank you for your interest in hosting a TSU MPA student intern. Typically, host organizations are in the government or non-profit sectors; however, some for-profit business have sponsored interns if the fit is appropriate for a student’s career interests (for example, public affairs firms). What is important to us in the Department of Public Administration is that the students are exposed to meaningful professional learning experiences on the job, and that in doing so they acquire an appreciation of working in service of the public interest.

The MPA internship must consist of a minimum of 300 hours over the term of placement. Typically, interns have been employed half-time for fifteen weeks, but other possible arrangements may fit the criteria for credit as long as the 300-hour total is met. Interns can work part-time or full-time, depending on their availability and interest. This arrangement must be worked out between the organization and the intern prior to placement. While the program – and students – prefer internships to be compensated, unpaid or volunteer internships may be permissible.

This document covers prospective sponsoring agencies and the prospective intern's documentation responsibilities required so that an internship can be considered for credit. Any questions regarding internships should be directed to the Department Chair (contact details at end of document).

Internship Organization Documentation Responsibilities

Prior to internship start: Internship award letter and job description

Preferably at least one month before the planned start date, the organization must provide an internship award letter or other official documentation to the student. This letter should detail the specifics of their internship placement including:

- a job description including a precise, detailed description of your needs
- planned scheduling/duration to achieve the 300-hour total
- contact information for the intern's supervisor.

The student will complete an Internship Details Form to inform the department about the proposed internship content, agency, and supervisor; they must provide a copy of this internship award letter with job description to the department at that time.

End of internship: Supervisor evaluation form

The intern supervisor must submit an [MPA internship supervisor evaluation form](#) for the student upon completion of the internship, *directly to the Internship Coordinator/Department Chair* (contact details on form).

Intern Documentation Responsibilities

Employers hoping to sponsor interns should be aware that interns are, first and foremost, graduate students. They are learning how to conduct themselves and perform as professionals. Their obligations are to fulfill the approved job requirements of the placement agreement between the student and the internship organization. The following is supplied simply to inform supervisors of the kind of products which students are responsible to turn in to the Department to satisfy their credit requirements (a [detailed syllabus](#) is also available).

To complete the Internship for the Public Service (PADM 6500) course, students are required to submit to the Internship Coordinator/Department Chair the following:

- Before beginning the internship:
 - the [Internship Details Form](#) along with the internship placement letter/job description from the internship organization
- By one week prior to the end of semester in which credit is sought:
 - a daily log of internship experiences following the format and content requirements detailed in the syllabus
 - a reflective paper, partly based on the log, summing up lessons learned from the internship and relating these to the competencies and learning objectives of the MPA program, as detailed in the syllabus.

The internship supervisor must provide a completed [Supervisor Evaluation form](#) by one week before the end of the semester in which the student hopes to receive credit, directly to the Dept. chair.

Caveat

Any problem which arises with the student's fulfillment of obligations during their internship to the sponsoring organization should be reported to the Department's Internship Coordinator/Department Chair, as soon as possible. While the University cannot be held responsible for all conduct outside its walls, our students' on-the-job performance is expected to be of a high standard. It is certainly the interest of all parties concerned – sponsoring agency, the university, the intern – for placements to provide a mutually beneficial and rewarding learning experience.

Questions

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