**GETTING READY FOR THE REAL WORLD IN TEN STEPS**

**The Interdisciplinary Programs Internship Program**

Your internship is designed to be your capstone experience in Professional Studies. By this time you have completed a minimum of 72 credits, finished at least four of the five courses in your emphasis area, and are ready for an opportunity to apply what you’ve learned in course work to the real world.

**FIRST STEP:**

Attend the Interdisciplinary Programs internship information session and secure the Department of Interdisciplinary Programs Internship Planning Packet

-OR-

Schedule a meeting with Alice Del Vecchio, the Department’s internship coordinator, to secure the Department of Interdisciplinary Programs’ Pre-Internship Planning Packet and Application . Online degree completion students will schedule a phone meeting.

**SECOND STEP:**

When you meet (in person or via phone) with the Internship Coordinator, you will:

* Learn about the internship requirements, application process, and how to register for the internship
* Receive the internship Application packet which includes student application form (pages 3-4) and a SAMPLE copy of a site agreement that your internship site must be able to sign (the site agreement will be emailed to online degree completion students)
* Be instructed about setting personal and professional goals for the internship
* Review internship requirements/assignments
* Provide you with the list of internship sites which have previously hosted our students

**THIRD STEP:**

Get your resume ready BEFORE you begin contacting potential sites. Generally, potential sites will ask for your resume. Be prepared!

We recommend working closely with SRU’s Office of Career Education and Development (724-738-4027) in 124 Bailey Library. Best to make an appointment to meet with a career counselor who will give you the personal help you need. This office may also have internship options that might interest you. You can also review their resources at

<https://www.sru.edu/life-at-sru/career-education-and-development>

**FOURTH STEP:**

Choosing your internship is an important decision as an internship has the potential to become a full time job after graduation. To that end, students are encouraged to search for sites that 1) will enhance their skills and provide continued professional development, 2) have the potential to hire them after the internship or will leverage their networks to help them secure employment, 3) offer a mentor who will help prepare them for their future profession.

It’s recommended that you select a site based on what you can *learn* there rather than a site where you know you can *get* an internship. Start with the dream opportunity – i.e. your cousin lives in Washington DC and you can stay with them for the summer while you do a dream internship in DC – and also identify experiences that are near you. It is also suggested that you have several options from which to choose rather than take the first offer.

Contact the site to determine the internship process for that organization. Some sites have very competitive application processes. In those cases, the internship info will likely be available online and will likely be coordinated by the Human Resources Dept. These organizations often require a 3-9 month lead time -- so plan accordingly!

If you don’t see internship info on an organization’s/business’ web site that doesn’t mean they won’t consider you as an intern. Use the TELEPHONE and call the organization rather than sending an email (unless you are directed to do so). The receptionist should be able to tell you who coordinates internship for the site. You may need to leave a message and you may need to follow up. Remember, you are reaching out to them so don’t expect the site to seek you first!

Let the site know that SRU requires the organization enter a site agreement with the University. You have a copy of a
SAMPLE agreement that you should provide the site for review. The site does NOT complete this form. Rather, once you provide the internship coordinator with the Internship Application, they will send a customized site agreement to the organization. Be aware that a signed site agreement is required prior to registering you for the internship.

**FIFTH STEP:**

When you have secured an internship site that is willing to sign the site agreement, complete and submit to the internship coordinator your Internship Application. On-campus students are expected to bring the form to the coordinator’s office. Online Degree Completion students may email the form to the coordinator.

The coordinator will review your application and then contact the site supervisor to confirm that you have been offered a position and to address any questions the supervisor might have about SRU’s internship process. Following the phone call, the coordinator will prepare and send the Site Agreement and other materials to the organization. In some cases, SRU has a current site agreement with the agency and in those cases the site will receive a mailing confirming they have accepted you as an internship and noting that SRU has their agreement on file.

It may take a while for the site to return the Site Agreement and other required forms to the coordinator. To that end, it’s important to plan accordingly. Remember, the coordinator is not able to register you until the signed site agreement and other site paperwork is received by the coordinator.

**SIXTH STEP:**

Students will be contacted by the coordinator when the coordinator receives the signed paperwork from the site. The coordinator will prepare the student’s SRU Internship Registration Form which the student will need to sign. On-campus students are expected to sign the form in the coordinator’s office. Online Degree Completion students will be emailed the form which they will sign, scan and return to the coordinator via email.

Internship registration is different than the process used for registering for classes. The student does NOT sign up for the course via Banner. Rather, the student signs an Internship Registration Form that is prepared by the internship coordinator. The coordinator then seeks approval signatures by the department chair and dean prior to the form being forwarded to Academic Records who adds the internship into Banner. Again, this approval process can take time so please plan accordingly!

When this process is complete you will see that the internship has been added to Banner. Review carefully so that the number of credits you intended to take are noted on Banner. You may not report to your site until the internship appears on Banner. Plan accordingly!

**SEVENTH STEP:**

All approved on-campus interns are *required* to attend an internship orientation meeting that will be held 1-2 weeks before exams week in the semester prior to your internship (generally around Thanksgiving for winter/spring internships and April for summer/fall internships).

Online Degree Completion students will schedule a phone call with the internship coordinator in lieu of the on-campus orientation meeting. Students should plan accordingly for this conversation which will be held held 1-2 weeks before exams week in the semester prior to your internship (generally around Thanksgiving for winter/spring internships and April for summer/fall internships).

During the orientation meeting you will learn:

* How to access forms, assignments, etc in D2L
* When you are to report for the internship
* How to track your internship hours
* About pre-/post-internship goal setting
* Details about internship assignments
* Due dates for assignments
* Reporting requirements during your internship, including an on-campus meeting mid-way
* How to contact the internship coordinator during the internship

There is also an Internship Orientation PowerPoint found in Internship Tools section on D2L which interns are required to view prior to starting their site. Students are required to send the site coordinator an email following viewing the slides that notes any questions they have or notes that they have read and understand the slides.

**EIGHTH STEP:**

Sites are expected to provide an on-site orientation for their interns either before the start of the internship or within the first few days in placement. The on-site orientation check list, sent to site supervisors, can be found at the end of this packet. Please be sure these questions are discussed when you report to your site.

You are expected to send a brief email to alice.delvecchio@sru.edu within **THREE** days of your start date. The email should include:

* Work schedule (days/hours)
* Telephone and email contact information for you at your site
* Directions regarding scheduling changes – required notice, who to contact, etc if you are sick, have a scheduled vacation, etc
* Any updated contact information for your site supervisor
* Any updates regrading the type of work you will be doing
* Initial thoughts/feelings about your placement
* Any concerns you have regarding the site placement
* A general statement letting me know how things are going – do you have a dedicated workspace? Has the site supervisor reviewed the orientation checklist? Does it feel like things are going to be okay?

**NINTH STEP:**

You will have a variety of assignment to complete during your internships. In general, you will submit the assignment, according to the internship schedule, via the relevant drop box. Assignments include

* Personal and Professional Pre-Internship Goals **must be submitted prior to your first day at your site!**
* Learning Contract
* Organizational Inventory
* Weekly Journal including Goals Progress Sheet **due by noon on the Monday follow a week at your site**
* Weekly Verification Forms signed by your site supervisor or their designee, scanned and put in D2L **due by noon on the Monday follow a week at your site. Original hard copies will be turned in with the Electronic Portfolio**
* Project Prospectus
* Your Final Project – will vary by student – which also includes a 3-4 page paper outlining the methodology used to prepare the project, project outcomes and impact on the organization, project impact on the student
* Final Reflection – written response to the final reflection prompts
* Personal and Professional Post-Internship Goals
* Self Evaluation – student will complete the SAME evaluation form that the site used to evaluate the student
* Student Evaluation of the Site
* Electronic portfolio – CD that includes all the above assignments and the narrated/automated PowerPoint presentation that addresses required prompts

The internship coordinator will need the Electronic Portfolio CD by the Wednesday of finals week in order to submit grades by the required due date. On-campus students can bring the CD and the original signed verification forms to the site coordinator’s office. Online Degree Completion students must mail the CD and original signed verification forms to the site coordinator so that the package arrives by the Wednesday of finals week. Depending on the student’s final project, they may need to include sample work such as flyers, brochures or other publications that do not represent well the student’s abilities in an electronic format.

Site supervisor will also evaluate student’s work. Their evaluation will be included in the calculation of the student’s final grade. To that end, no grade can be submitted until the internship coordinator receives these evaluations. These evaluations should be mailed to Alice Del Vecchio, Dept of Philanthropy, Nonprofit Leadership, and Public Affairs, 200 Spotts World Culture Bdlg, Slippery Rock PA 16057 or emailed to alice.delvecchio@sru.edu

**TENTH STEP:**

A face-to-face meeting of all internships within a given semester will be held at/about the two-thirds mark into the semester. In addition to learning about each other’s’ experiences, student will also be provided professional development training designed to help them consider how to present their internship experiences on their resumes, cover letters and during interviews.

All interns within 100 miles are expected to attend. Online Degree Completion students and those place more than 100 miles from campus will join via ZOOM for a similar meeting (if not the one with the on-campus students). At this meeting each student will present a 10 minute (PowerPoint) overview of their internship, including the following;

* Site name, supervisor, site mission
* Feelings prior to start (expectations, concerns, etc)
* General job description
* Internship highlights (breakthrough moments, new experiences, accomplishments, etc) and how your course work/SRU experiences have helped prepare you for this experience
* Internship stumbling blocks (frustrations, concerns, etc) and how you overcame them
* Focus of Final Project (description, anticipated outcome, how does this project position you for career?)
* Professional and personal growth at this point
* Plans for remainder of the internship
* Impact you think this internship will have in shaping your professional career
* Mix in photos of site, you at work, office space, etc so the audience gets a feel for what the student does at the site

During the final week of the internship or during finals week, each student will meet with the internship coordinator (in person or via phone) where the following will be discussed:

* Overall value of the internship (self, field, workplace)
* Overview of ways in which the student was prepared/underprepared for the internship experience
* Future career goals