Students often make internship decisions based on personal interests and future career goals. Internships can also provide valuable work experience and exposure to potential employers. Some students choose internships to enhance their marketability, while others may seek internships as a means to explore possible career paths. Regardless of the motivation, it is important to research and choose an internship that aligns with your academic and professional goals.

How to obtain an internship

Students are responsible for securing their own work experiences to be used for the internship course. There are several resources available to help students find internships that match their interests and qualifications. The SDSU Office of Career Development maintains the Jacks Career Link Web site, which allows employers to post both internship and permanent job openings. The Office of Career Development can also assist students with developing their résumés and interview skills.

The Department of Economics also provides internship information. The Department’s Professional Advisor seeks to include internship announcements in the weekly “Economics Department Weekly Update” email sent to all students enrolled in Department majors, and on the Department’s Facebook page. The Economics & Management Career Fair is another source for identifying internship opportunities, as are other on- and off-campus career fairs. Internship and career Internet sites, professional publications, trade magazines, newspapers, bulletin boards and other sources may also list internship opportunities. While advertised positions may not always be formally labeled as “internships,” some such opportunities may be turned into internship experiences. Also, depending on expected responsibilities and timing, it may be possible to convert a previously lined-up summer or part-time job into an internship.

Students are advised to identify internships early. Organizations with established internship programs often begin interviewing in the fall for internship positions for the following summer.
Matching the Internship Course with the Internship Experience
The Department of Economics offers five different Internship courses, each described below. The decision on which specific course to register for is determined by the responsibilities inherent to the specific internship experience.

- Acct 494 – Accounting – for students employed in a position with primarily accounting responsibilities.
- AgEc 494 – Agricultural Business – for students employed in a management or sales-type position with an agriculture-related company or organization.
- BAdm 494 – Business – for students employed in a management or sales-type position with any organization.
- Econ 494 – Economics – for students employed in a position involving economics research or analysis.
- Entr 494 – Entrepreneurship – for students employed in certain sales or management positions, and also for those starting or operating their own business. This experience must be approved by the Entrepreneurship Director, as well as by the Internship Coordinator.

An internship may be taken for one to six credits per semester. Internship credit is awarded at the rate of one credit for approximately every 100 hours of employment. Thus, a student enrolled in an internship course during the fall or spring semester would need to average approximately 20 hours of work per week to earn three credits. Students must be enrolled in the course during the same period they are employed. For example, if a student is employed in an internship experience during the summer term, then he/she must be enrolled in the internship course during the same summer term. The student may not use the summer employment experience for internship credit during the fall semester, and may not register for internship credits after completing the internship. Students concerned about how registering for internship credit affects their enrollment status should visit with the internship coordinator.

Enrolling in an Internship Course
Students cannot self-enroll in the internship course through Web Advisor. Enrollment in internship classes requires instructor approval. To gain instructor approval and be enrolled in the internship class, students must complete and submit an Internship Course Application to the Internship Coordinator. The application is online at the Internships page on the Department of Economics’ Website. A key part of the application is the internship plan, briefly described below and more in-depth in a separate document.

Course Requirements
Students enrolled in an internship class must complete four requirements to earn credit for the course. These include the internship plan, the midterm paper, the final paper, and the supervisor’s evaluation of the intern. The internship plan details what the intern plans to accomplish through the work experience. The midterm and final papers explain the extent to which the intern was able to accomplish the internship plan. The papers are then corroborated by the supervisor’s evaluation of the intern. Each of these requirements is described below in more detail.

Internship Plan
A critically important component of the internship course application is the internship plan, which details how the employment experience is expected to develop into an educational experience. The internship coordinator’s decision to
approve or deny enrollment in an internship course is based on the internship plan. The internship plan also forms the basis for the midterm and final papers, so a well thought-out and well-written internship plan will facilitate writing a high-quality paper. No grade is assigned to the internship plan. {hyperlink the title to this section to the “Writing the Internship Plan” document}

Midterm and Final Papers
Major differences between the midterm and final papers are the due date and the paper length. The midterm paper should detail the extent to which each objective of the internship plan was met, describe why an objective was not met, and/or motivate reasons for changes to any objectives. The midterm paper should be used as a starting point for the final paper. The midterm paper has a relatively early due date in order to allow the internship coordinator to provide feedback that may be incorporated in otherwise improve the final paper. The relatively late due date of the final paper potentially enables students to complete the activities associated with each objective outlined in the internship plan, and report them in the final paper. {hyperlink the title of this section to the document “Writing the Midterm and Final Papers”}

Supervisor/Mentor Evaluation
The supervisor is expected to evaluate the intern and complete the “Supervisor Evaluation of Student Intern” form. The Intern enrolled in ENTR 494 and who uses his/her own business as the basis of the internship experience must be evaluated by his/her Mentor using the “Mentor Evaluation of Student Intern” form. In this case, the evaluation provided by the mentor is used in lieu of the supervisor evaluation.

In addition to the requirements described above, students are strongly advised to keep a journal of daily activities associated with the internship. The daily journal of professional activities will serve as an important aid in developing the midterm and final papers, but it is not a formal internship course requirement.

Rights and Responsibilities of the Student Intern
• The intern must be enrolled in either ACCT 494, AGEC 494, BADM 494, ECON 494 or ENTR 494 while performing the internship.
• The intern must submit a mid-term and final paper by their designated due dates.
• The intern must be willing to work hard and complete the goals and objectives established in his/her internship plan.
• The intern must conduct him or herself in a professional manner and must act ethically and responsibly in accordance with the standards set forth by the employer and SDSU.
• The intern assumes any liability for his or her actions and the related potential risks by accepting placement at an internship site. SDSU does not assume any liability for any injury or damages sustained by the intern. Further, there is no coverage by the university’s insurance policies for any damages sustained by the internship site as a result of the intern’s conduct.
• If the intern is dismissed from the internship for cause, he or she will receive a grade of F for the internship. Interns cannot receive partial credit for the internship after dismissal.
• The intern acknowledges that any intellectual property created while working as an intern
• The intern cannot be under the supervision or mentorship of a close relative as defined by BOR 4:22.
• Neither students nor faculty nor the employer’s personnel shall discriminate against the other on the basis of age, religion, race, color, creed, national origin, disability, sex, or military, veteran status, or other protected status.
• No form of harassment of or by students, faculty, or others associated with South Dakota State University or of or by any personnel associated with the employer shall be permitted under any circumstances. All reported incidents will be investigated, and acts of prohibited behavior will result in corrective action.
• Neither South Dakota State University nor the employer shall be responsible for the transportation of the intern.
• This course acknowledges the importance of ADA requirements. Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Coordinator of Disability Services privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Office of Disability Services at (605-688-4504) to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.
• Under Board of Regents and University policy student academic performance may be evaluated solely on an academic basis, not on opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards. Students should be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled. Students who believe that an academic evaluation reflects prejudiced or capricious consideration of student opinions or conduct unrelated to academic standards should first contact the instructor of the course to initiate a review of the evaluation. If the student remains unsatisfied, the student may contact the department head and/or dean of the college which offers the class to initiate a review of the evaluation.
• Plagiarism, is defined as, but not limited to, the following: the use of paraphrase or direct quotation of published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement and the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers of other academic materials. Plagiarism could result in disciplinary action. For additional information please check the SDSU policy on cheating and plagiarism at http://studentaffairs.sdstate.edu/JudicialAffairs/StudentCode/SDSU_Student_Code.pdf

Rights and Responsibilities of the Employer/Supervisor
  1 The employer must make the student aware of any potential risks inherent to working at the internship site.
  1 The supervisor is required to complete the “Supervisor Evaluation of Student Intern” form. The supervisor is encouraged to review this with the student as part of the exit interview/evaluation.
  1 The supervisor must provide the intern with employment during the internship period as long as the employment criteria are being met.
  1 The supervisor must provide the intern with the opportunity to become an integral part of the daily activities of the company.
  1 The supervisor must notify the Internship Coordinator if the student’s performance presents any problems in the completion of the internship plan and/or the effectiveness of the firm’s goals and objectives.
The supervisor must be willing to guide and assist the intern in the successful completion of activities described in the internship plan.

The employer assumes responsibility for any background check or other pre-employment test of the intern.

The employer acknowledges that it may be allowed access to or receive confidential student records and information (“Student Information”) as defined by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99)(“FERPA”). The employer agrees to abide by the limitations on re-disclosure of personally identifiable information from education records set forth by FERPA and with the terms set forth herein. The employer agrees to hold Student Information in strict confidence. The employer shall not use or disclose Student Information received from or on behalf of South Dakota State University or its students except as permitted or required by law, or as otherwise authorized in writing by South Dakota State University. Upon completion of the internship the employer shall return all Student information to South Dakota State University or, if return is not feasible, destroy all Student Information. The employer shall use appropriate measures to preserve the confidentiality, integrity and availability of all electronically maintained or transmitted Student Information received from, or on behalf of South Dakota State University or its students. The employer shall notify South Dakota State University of any improper disclosure within thirty (30) days and take reasonable steps to mitigate damage caused by any improper disclosure.

The employer must make the Intern aware of the professional and ethical standards regarding their position in the company.

Rights and Responsibilities of the Mentor (only relevant to some students enrolled in ENTR 494)

The mentor is required to complete the “Supervisor Evaluation of Student Intern” form.

The mentor is encouraged to review this with the student.

The mentor must notify the Internship Coordinator if the student’s performance presents any problems in the completion of the internship plan.

The mentor must be willing to guide and assist the intern in the successful completion of the internship plan.

The mentor that it may be allowed access to or receive confidential student records and information (“Student Information”) as defined by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99)(“FERPA”). The mentor agrees to abide by the limitations on re-disclosure of personally identifiable information from education records set forth by FERPA and with the terms set forth herein. The mentor agrees to hold Student Information in strict confidence. The mentor shall not use or disclose Student Information received from or on behalf of South Dakota State University or its students except as permitted or required by law, or as otherwise authorized in writing by South Dakota State University. Upon completion of the internship the mentor shall return all Student Information to South Dakota State University or, if return is not feasible, destroy all Student Information. The mentor shall use appropriate measures to preserve the confidentiality, integrity and availability of all electronically maintained or transmitted Student Information received from, or on behalf of South Dakota State University or its students. The mentor shall notify South Dakota State University of any improper disclosure within thirty (30) days and take reasonable steps to mitigate damage caused by any improper disclosure.