

2020  
and  
beyond

# Ness School of Management and Economics Internship Handbook

ADAPTED FROM THE SDSU COLLEGE OF ARTS, HUMANITIES &  
SOCIAL SCIENCES INTERNSHIP HANDBOOK

Approved by Office of Academic Affairs: October 10, 2020

## What is an Internship?

An internship is a form of field-based learning in which students work in an office, clinic, lab, or other organization outside the university, for which the university awards academic credit. During the internship experience, students gain the opportunity to apply the knowledge, skills and abilities they've developed in their academic disciplines, acquire hands-on experience that they can bring to bear in subsequent coursework, and learn how to conduct themselves in a professional setting. Many students view their internship as a highlight of their college careers.

An internship is not merely a job. To receive academic credit for an internship, students must demonstrate that the proposed internship involves meaningful work with a high degree of educational value. In addition, they must show how the internship connects with their coursework through sustained reflection. Internships exist for the benefit of students by contributing to their overall academic development ([University Policy 2:24](#)).

By its nature, the internship experience varies in its particulars based on the student's academic background, the industry the student wishes to experience, and the site hosting the internship. Internships therefore require careful collaboration between the student, the site or employer, and the Ness School of Management and Economics (hereafter referred to as NSME or Ness School). This collaboration helps ensure that the internship provides academic value to the student, benefits the employer, and satisfies learning goals identified by the Ness School.

Internship: an experience in a work setting for individuals who have been studying in a particular academic field. As compared to practicums, internships take on the characteristics similar to real employment and focus on the independent application of skills and knowledge in the workplace setting. Students are under direct supervision of an on-site professional who manages assigned tasks. Additionally, academic program instructors communicate with the student during the Internship to evaluate their academic progress and performance. Internships are usually considered to be full-time experiences, following the work schedule of the assigned placement.

- a. Paid Intern: a student participating in an Internship on a paid basis and whose activities constitute employment under the Fair Labor Standards Act ("FLSA").
- b. Unpaid Intern: a student participating in an Internship for their own educational benefit who receives no compensation and whose activities do not constitute employment under the FLSA.

Students participating in internships offered by a company or organization may or may not decide to enroll in a Ness School internship course. Further, internships do not necessarily have to be labeled as such by the employer in order to qualify as the basis for a Ness School internship course. The Ness School strives for internship experiences that are broad-based and focus on learning activities. Interns are expected to engage in intellectual activities, such as involvement in on-the-job decision-making processes, and conducting research to enhance decision-making. Companies or other organizations with "Internship" positions most likely have already defined these learning activities for the position. Students wishing to convert a summer or part-time job to an internship experience must work with their employer to identify these activities for inclusion in an internship plan.

The South Dakota State University Policy and Procedure Manual ([2:24](#)) lays out policies governing internships and other experiential learning opportunities for university students. Students, site supervisors, internship coordinators, and academic departments are expected to abide by university policy.

## Roles and Responsibilities

All internships include three parties: the student, the site supervisor, and the NSME internship coordinator. All three parties must agree on the parameters of the internship before it begins. The student is therefore encouraged to begin consulting with the internship coordinator and with potential internship hosts as early as possible. Generally, these discussions should take place at least two weeks prior to the end of the semester preceding when the internship will take place.

The INTERN agrees to:

- Complete the Student Internship Application (Appendix A), collect all necessary signatures, and register for internship credits before the internship begins.
- Complete any required background check prior to the start of the internship, where appropriate for the assigned responsibilities.
- Pay all SDSU tuition and fees required for registration in the internship, including the required fee for insurance and the background check.
- Attend all required orientation sessions for the internship.
- Observe the same regulations that apply to other site employees.
- Act ethically and professionally at all times.
- Report to work and complete the agreed-upon number of hours.
- Perform tasks as assigned by the site supervisor and agreed to in the Student Internship Application.
- Satisfy the learning objectives agreed to in the Student Internship Application.
- Complete all requirements for the internship, including reflective writing on the internship experience.
- Report any problems to the site supervisor and/or internship coordinator.
- Follow all policies and procedures described in the NSME Internship Handbook, applicable SDSU and SD Board of Regents policies, and state and federal law.

The SITE SUPERVISOR agrees to:

- Sign the Master Agreement for Student Nonmedical Internships if a current one is not already on file at SDSU.
- Sign the Individual Agreement for Student Nonmedical Internships prior to the start of the internship.
- Provide a meaningful, high-quality work experience for the intern.
- Designate learning objectives and assigned tasks prior to the start of the internship.
- Conduct any necessary and lawful preemployment tests.
- Provide the intern with any necessary training.
- Maintain a safe working environment for the intern.
- Personally supervise the intern or appoint a highly-qualified supervisor.
- Advise the intern as to what constitutes ethical and professional behavior at the site.
- Disclose the reason for termination to the intern and internship coordinator, if the internship is terminated.

- Provide a written evaluation of the intern’s performance to the internship coordinator at the conclusion of the internship.
- Follow all policies and procedures described in the NSME Internship Handbook, applicable SDSU and SD Board of Regents policies, and state and federal law.

The INTERNSHIP COORDINATOR agrees to:

- Sign the Master Agreement for Student Nonmedical Internships if a current one is not already on file at SDSU.
- Sign the Individual Agreement for Student Nonmedical Internships prior to the start of the internship.
- Evaluate the proposed internship site prior to placement.
- Facilitate the development of learning objectives and assigned tasks along with the student intern and the site supervisor.
- Ensure that the assigned tasks will adequately meet the proposed learning objectives.
- Monitor the intern’s progress through regular site visitation, consultation with the site supervisor by email, phone or Zoom, and/or student reports.
- Complete a comprehensive evaluation of the intern’s work, drawing upon the student’s written reflection, the student’s public presentation of the internship experience (if applicable), and the site supervisor’s evaluation.
- Assign a final grade for the internship in accordance with SDSU and SD Board of Regents policies.
- Follow all policies and procedures described in the NSME Internship Handbook, applicable SDSU and SD Board of Regents policies, and state and federal law.

### **How to find an Internship**

Students can find internship opportunities in several different ways. The SDSU [Office of Career Development](#) located in the Student Union, maintains the [Handshake](#) 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 Ness School also provides internship information. The school’s Professional Academic Advisors seek to include internship announcements in Jacks Biz, the weekly email sent to all students enrolled in NSME majors, as well as on the Ness School [blog](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages. Employers at the [Management and Economics Career Fair](#) held every semester are often seeking students to fill intern positions as well as full-time positions. Internship Internet sites, professional publications, trade magazines, newspapers, bulletin boards and other sources may also list internship opportunities. While advertised positions may not always be labeled as “internships,” some such opportunities may be turned into formal 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 should start looking for 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 Ness School of Management and Economics offers 11 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, finance 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.
- BLAW 494 – Business Law – for students employed in real estate or legal professions
- DSCI 494 – Decision Sciences – for students employed in a data analytics position
- 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.
- FIN 494 – Finance – for students employed in financial analysis, investments, or consumer financial trades.
- HRM 494 – Human Resource Management – for students employed in human resource functions, such as recruiting, hiring, etc.
- MGMT 494 – Management – for students employed with a primary focus on general business management
- MKTG 494 – Marketing – for students employed with a focus on marketing research and application of marketing principles

An internship may be taken for one to three credits per semester. An internship may be repeated for a combined maximum of six credits. Internship credit is awarded at the rate of one credit for approximately every 100 hours of employment. 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.

### **Eligibility Requirements and Enrolling in an Internship Course**

It is the student's responsibility to identify a suitable internship opportunity. After reaching an agreement with the site supervisor, the student submits the Student Internship Application (Appendix A) to the internship coordinator. This application must be signed by the student, the site supervisor, and the internship coordinator prior to the start of the internship. This application documents that all parties agree on the nature of the internship, that it achieves the required learning goals, and that the internship merits academic credit. A copy of the job description and written Internship Plan must be included with the submission for registration. A key part of this application is the internship plan, briefly described below and more in-depth in a separate document. After completion of the three requirements listed above, plus the signed Master Agreement and Individual Agreement from your employer, students are required to meet with the Internship Coordinator to complete enrollment.

In addition, the provider must sign the Master Agreement for Student Nonmedical Internships if a current agreement between the employer and SDSU is not already on file. The internship coordinator will communicate with the site supervisor to facilitate this process. Once the Master Agreement is signed and on file, it does not need to be completed again for additional interns at the same site for the

next three years. However, the Individual Agreement for Student Nonmedical Internships (Appendix A of the Master Agreement) must be completed for every student intern.

### **Grading and Assessment**

Because SDSU awards academic credit for internships, they must meet the same standards of academic rigor as any other course. All internships in NSME must therefore include the following:

- Meaningful work performed by the student and approved by the internship coordinator. The internship should involve significant professional experience, not merely mundane clerical tasks.
- Student's enrolled in the internship class must complete four requirements to earn credit for the course: the internship plan, the midterm paper, the final paper, and the supervisor's evaluation of the intern, each is described below in more detail.

- **Internship Plan**

A critically important component of the internship course application is the internship plan, which provides a template for the internship experience. The internship plan details how the employment experience will develop into an educational experience. The internship plan also forms the basis for the midterm and final assessment, in that it enables interns to report on the degree to which goals and objectives were achieved during the internship, what was needed to achieve the objective, why some objectives may not have been achieved, and any suggestions for ways to improve the internship. A well thought-out and well-written internship plan will facilitate producing a high-quality final assessment. The internship coordinator approves enrollment in the internship course based on the internship plan. No grade is assigned to the internship plan. (See also the separate document describing the internship plan.) Final approval of the internship plan by the employer is required, and they must attest to approval by signature on the internship application.

- **Midterm Assessment**

A midterm paper comprising thirty percent of the final course grade will be required near the midpoint of the term. The midterm paper should include a title page and table of contents, an introduction, main body, and final section with a brief summary and concluding comments.

The introduction should state the purpose of the paper and include a general statement about the status of the internship including any changes in the position or internship plan. The main body of the paper should describe the internship goals and objectives and describe the extent to which each objective of the internship plan has been met. If an objective will not be met, then the paper should include a description of why this occurred.

The midterm paper should describe your activities as they relate to your duties in the job description, what you are learning from these activities, and any relationships to academic coursework. Include learning objectives and accomplishments toward those objectives. This section may also include any unexpected benefits and costs. After reading the paper, the Internship Coordinator should have a sufficient interpretation of the work that the student is doing and be able to describe the work to the NSME Director or a reporting entity. The main body must be divided into logical sections with proper headings associated with the specific objectives or other aspects.

Additional instruction on writing the midterm paper will be provided by the Internship Coordinator during the term.

- **Final Assessment**

Each student will have the option of completing a paper, presentation, or project for final assessment at time of registration. The election must be approved by the employer and Internship Coordinator and documented with objectives in the internship plan. The final assessment will account for sixty percent of the final course grade. While some of the final assessment will be customized for the individual internship experience, consideration should be given to the specific objectives of your internship plan detailed in the instructions.

For students creating projects for final assessment, permission must be given by the employer to share any internal work with the Internship Coordinator for grading. Option for final assessment must be chosen at time of submission of the internship application. The outline of assessment is included in the internship plan with consideration to objective and rubric requirements.

Additional instructions will be provided by the Internship Coordinator during the term.

- **Supervisor Evaluation**

The Supervisor is expected to evaluate the Intern. This evaluation includes a confirmation that the Intern has achieved the stated objectives of the internship plan. The evaluation will account for ten percent of the final course grade. The evaluation must be completed by the supervisor and sent directly to the Internship Coordinator. A blank supervisor evaluation form is included in the appendix to this document.

### **Academic Policies**

Under no circumstances will a student intern be supervised or evaluated by a close relative, as defined by [BOR Policy 4:22](#).

Students will not receive internship credit, including partial credit, if the internship is terminated by the employer. If the student is terminated for cause, he or she will receive a failing (F) grade for the internship.

Internships are subject to the same academic policies as other courses offered by SDSU, and students are expected to abide by the [SDSU Student Code](#). Students and internship coordinators should remain aware of the following university and BOR policies:

**Syllabus:** Internship coordinators are expected to provide students with a syllabus outlining the expectations of the internship, in compliance with [University Policy 2:3](#). The NSME internship handbook satisfies this requirement.

**Student Academic Integrity and Appeals:** The University has a clear expectation for academic integrity and does not tolerate academic dishonesty. [University Policy 2:4](#) sets forth the definition of academic dishonesty, which includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, facilitating academic

dishonesty, misrepresentation, and other forms of dishonesty related to academics. The policy and its procedures also set forth how charges of academic dishonesty are handled at the university. Academic dishonesty is strictly proscribed and if found may result in student discipline up to and including dismissal from the university.

**ADA Statement:** South Dakota State University strives to ensure that physical resources, as well as information and communication technologies, are reasonably accessible to users in order to provide equal access to all. If you encounter any accessibility issues, you are encouraged to immediately contact the instructor of the course and the Office of Disability Services (Phone: 605-688-4504; Fax: 605-688-4987; Email: [Nancy.Crooks@sdstate.edu](mailto:Nancy.Crooks@sdstate.edu) or [SDSU.Disabilityservices@sdstate.edu](mailto:SDSU.Disabilityservices@sdstate.edu) ; Address: Room 271, Box 2815, University Student Union, Brookings, SD 57007).

**Freedom in Learning Statement:** Students are responsible for learning the content of any course of study in which they are enrolled. Under Board of Regents and University policy, student academic performance shall be evaluated solely on an academic basis and students should be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study. Students who believe that an academic evaluation is unrelated to academic standards but is related instead to judgment of their personal opinion or conduct should first contact the instructor of the course. If the student remains unsatisfied, the student may contact the director, dean, or both of the college which offers the class to initiate a review of the evaluation.