

Western Washington University Recreation Program

<http://www.wvu.edu/pehr/Recreation/index.shtml>

Recreation 473 (or 471/472) ~ INTERNSHIP

"To hear is good; to see is better; to do is best."

John Dewey

INTRODUCTION

The internship is the primary opportunity for students to experience practical application of leisure theories and concepts in the world of professional practice. An internship is an integral part of a student's total educational preparation for a professional career. Through the internship, the student is provided with a supervised experience in a setting that offers recreation experiences as a direct or indirect service. The primary purpose of the internship is to provide opportunities for professional and personal educational growth for students through on-the-job experiences in recreation leadership and administration in settings such as hospitals, public park and recreation departments, travel and tourism organizations, social service agencies, and outdoor companies. This internship manual is offered to assist the student, faculty advisor, and agency supervisor in the pre-internship preparation, internship assignment, and post-internship responsibilities.

INTERNSHIP DESCRIPTION

Students enroll in Phase III (Internship) during either Spring or Summer quarter. For a Spring Quarter internship, students enroll in Recr 473 for 15 credit hours. For a Summer Quarter internship, students enroll in Recr 472 for 12 credits during summer quarter and Recr 471 for three credits either the quarter before or the quarter after their internship. This gives the student the full 15 credits for their internship. NOTE: Rec 471 provides the additional three credits only; there is no work to be done for this class as all the work is done during the summer quarter internship. If the internship spans parts of both Spring and Summer quarters, students should discuss registration with their advisor.

Once a student selects an internship site, they report to the agency and work under agency supervision for an agreed period of time, a minimum of 400 hours over the 10-week university quarter. Students working towards Therapeutic Recreation Certification are required to complete a 480-hour, 12-week internship under the supervision of a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist.

Prior to the internship, students are expected to complete 240 hours of approved recreation field experience. Students in the therapeutic track are required to complete 200 hours of approved recreation field experience.

Although the internship may be either a paid or unpaid experience, it differs from a job. It is expected that the student will have the opportunity to experience the full range of professional responsibility within the participating agency. This includes programming, administration and management, leadership, operation of areas and facilities, and other general work-related functions.

INTERNSHIP GOALS

While the major focus of the internship experience is on the operations of the agency at which the student accepts assignment, the total value of the internship takes other goals into account. By providing a vast array of learning experiences, the student, educator, and practitioner can work together to help the student's development as a recreation professional. In turn, the student makes contributions to the operations and growth of the sponsoring agency.

For the student, the internship should;

1. Provide opportunities to engage in on-the-job application of classroom theories and techniques;
2. Offer activities that assist in the development of professional skills in the planning, organization, and leadership of a leisure service;
3. Provide challenging and stimulating tasks that entail significant contribution to the quality of life for persons served by the agency;
4. Offer opportunities to identify strengths and weaknesses of the student's professional behavior;
5. Allow the student to experience many aspects of the professional world while under competent supervision and guidance;
6. Encourage interaction with professional practitioners in the student's area of expertise;
7. Provide programming situations in which the student can investigate human interaction;
8. Offer opportunities to evaluate the field as a professional career;
9. Offer experiences in leading client/participant programs; and
10. Provide an opportunity for observing and/or practice in administration and supervision.

For the Recreation Program, the internship should;

1. Provide a laboratory setting for the testing and application of theoretical models;
2. Strengthen the educational process of preparing future professionals;

3. Assist in the development of a cooperative working relationship between educators and practitioners;
4. Offer a means to assess the quality and relevance of classroom courses;
5. Provide an opportunity to evaluate the student's needs, abilities, and progress in professional development;
6. Facilitate sharing of resources and pursuit of common goals with professional agencies and institutions;
7. Provide the faculty with up-to-date information about issues and innovations in recreation and leisure services; and
8. Emphasize the primary educational concern of the Recreation Program as the preparation of students to advance within the realm of the profession.

For the cooperating agency, the internship experience should:

1. Offer the practitioner the chance to provide expertise related to theory and practice obtained in the classroom setting;
2. Provide an expanded ability to serve clientele through the contributions of the intern;
3. Allow employers an opportunity to survey and evaluate prospective employees;
4. Provide an opportunity to improve in-service training for permanent employees;
5. Establish opportunities for cooperative relationships which extend beyond the internship;
6. Provide a means for comparing in-class preparation of the intern with what is practiced by the agency; and
7. Offer an opportunity to be a partner in the professional preparation of future recreation professionals.

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INTERNSHIP CHECKLIST

The following checklist is intended to act as a roadmap for navigating the tasks required to successfully search, develop, and complete a professional internship that meets the requirements of the Recreation Program. This checklist is meant to be used in conjunction with a close working relationship with a faculty advisor.

Preparation Phase (6-9 months prior to internship)

- _____ Develop personal goals for the internship.
- _____ Outline/summarize field work hours.
- _____ Develop a draft resume and cover letter. Use Career Center resources for designing and reviewing your drafts.
- _____ Meet with your faculty advisor to review goals, confirm fieldwork hours, discuss internship possibilities, and go over resume and cover letter.
- _____ Research potential internship sites and make initial agency contacts.
- _____ Provide internship information to sites you are considering (pages 1-3 and Agency Information Sheet attached).
- _____ Present final selection to advisor for approval.
- _____ Develop a tentative Internship Agreement with agency (form attached).
- _____ Submit agreement to faculty advisor for revision and approval. Faculty speaks with site supervisor.
- _____ Discuss weekly reports, evaluations, and other internship requirements with faculty advisor.
- _____ Register for internship credits.

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AGENCY INFORMATION

Thank you for your interest in working with a Western Washington University Recreation student. The internship has the potential for supporting students in their professional growth and for contributing to the program and clients of the sponsoring agency. Please review the following agency roles and responsibilities as you consider sponsoring a Western student for their professional internship.

The agency must be approved by the faculty advisor and have a willingness and commitment to provide the student with a high-quality internship by:

- Assigning the student to a supervisor with appropriate training and experience who will work with the faculty advisor to supervise the intern for the duration of the internship experience
- Providing the assigned supervisor with appropriate time for the express purpose of supervising the student (including individual weekly meetings)
- Approving specific goals and objectives for the individual intern prior to the start of the internship
- Providing a training program to meet the learning objectives of the student, agency and Recreation Program
- Providing a variety of experiences ranging from program, leadership, administration and management, areas and facilities, general responsibilities, and specialized functions
- Supplying the student with agency materials appropriate to the internship, including guidelines and a prearranged schedule of assignments
- Agreeing to provide an evaluation of student involvement and performance at mid-term and at the completion of the internship

WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE AGENCY SUPERVISOR?

1. To be responsible for the agency's end of the relationship between the university and agency. The agency supervisor should help create a working environment within which students grow in regard to their duties and responsibilities.
2. To interpret the internship program to the agency board or controlling body and to the community, and to obtain official agency approval of the internship program.
3. To interpret the internship program to the agency staff and help students gain acceptance as staff members.

4. To help students understand their work as it relates to the agency and the community it serves.
5. To define student responsibilities and facilitate their growth and development through:
 - a. Meetings with students to lay out the program they will pursue.
 - b. Meeting weekly with students to discuss problems, leadership techniques, operational methods and other matters which will assist students in fulfilling their internship functions.
 - c. Keeping students informed of all rules and regulations to be observed.
 - d. Supportively require performance standards facilitating the student's professional growth.
6. To evaluate student work through:
 - a. Scheduled and unscheduled conferences with the student as they are necessary; scheduled conferences with the student and university advisor.
 - b. Cooperation with the university advisor in establishing evaluative criteria for student work. The organization supervisor should use the criteria for:
 - (1) Oral evaluations of student work during the internship.
 - (2) Written mid-term and final evaluations, a copy of which may be kept by the student.

WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE UNIVERSITY ADVISOR?

1. To be responsible for the university's end of the internship.
2. To confer with the student and provide advice and support.
3. To supervise arrangements for and give final approval of internship agreements
4. To evaluate internship reports, the student's overall performance, and communicate progress to the student.
5. To communicate with the organization supervisor.
6. To be available for consultation as necessary.
7. To serve as a resource person for both the organization supervisor and intern student.
8. Exchange ideas directed toward improvement of the internship program and related academic experiences.

INTERNSHIP FORM 2 - INTERNSHIP AGREEMENT

_____ hereby accepts _____
(Name of Agency) (Name of Student)

as an internship student and employee for the time and under the specifications listed below.

Starting Date _____ Terminating Date _____

Salary Per Week _____ Agency Telephone _____
(if applicable)

Agency Fax _____

Agency Supervisor _____ Email _____

Agency Address _____

Brief Description of Internship Assignment:

Please attach a more detailed outline or description of internship goals and activities.

Date _____ Signed _____
(Agency Internship Supervisor)

Date _____ Signed _____
(Internship Student)

Date _____ Signed _____
(Faculty Advisor)