

# THE RUBENSTEIN SCHOOL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

## THE LEARNING CONTRACT

### The importance of the Learning Contract

The following information is meant to offer guidance on completing the Learning Contract thoughtfully and concisely. The Contract is the communication piece between you, your internship employer, your faculty advisor, and the career services coordinator.

The information that you provide here with input from your employer, faculty advisor, and the career services coordinator will affect the quality of your internship experience in a few ways:

- The logistics of your internship will be clearly defined. That is, you will know who your direct supervisor will be, your start and end dates, and any compensation.
- You will understand your intern responsibilities and expectations.
- Your employer will understand your learning objectives and agree to assist you in meeting these objectives.
- Your faculty advisor will help you frame the academic experience by clearly stating the requirements of the academic project to be sub-

mitted after the completion of your internship for a grade and academic credit.

At the very least, the goals for your internship should be to learn as much as you can about the field. The points above will provide a good foundation and the means to achieve this. Bear in mind, goals & objectives can and will change. Completing the Learning Contract will make it easier to respond to changes and to take advantage of opportunities by opening the lines of communication between you and your employer early on.



-Matt Getz, 2005 intern, Lake City, UT

### SEQUENCE OF STEPS FOR FORMALIZING YOUR INTERNSHIP:

- Read about The Rubenstein School Internship Program.  
<http://www.uvm.edu/envnr/?Page=employment/employmt.html>
- Research internship options.
- Contact potential employers and submit your application.
- After identifying an internship, obtain a Learning Contract (go to website above).
- Have your Employer complete the Employer sections of the contract.
- Identify and meet with your Faculty Sponsor.
- Have your Faculty Sponsor complete the Contract Requirements section of the Learning Contract.
- Make an appointment to submit and discuss your Learning Contract with the Career Services Coordinator.

## Completing the Learning Contract

*It is helpful to have a copy of the Learning Contract on hand for reference as you read this.*

### **MAILING ADDRESS:**

Please complete this in full.

### **UVM ID#:**

Your UVM ID# is different from your Social Security number and always begins with “950”. This number should appear on your UVM ID card. If you do not know this number, it is best to leave this line blank.

### **EMPLOYER SPONSOR:**

This is the name of the company or organization where you are interning. Also, be sure to complete your employer’s mailing address in full to insure your supervisor receives a copy of your Learning Contract.

### **POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Describe the tasks you will perform and/or the projects you will be working on.

If your responsibilities already appear in a separate document, you may attach that to the Learning Contract.

### **DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING AND SUPERVISION:**

This should be completed with input from your Employer or Supervisor.

There should be some form of training or introduction to the organization and to your specific responsibilities. Please discuss them here.

By “supervision”, please discuss how and when you will communicate with your supervisor regarding the progress of your internship. Supervision is extremely important in an internship where the supervisor is expected to take more of a mentoring role, helping you process what you are learning and providing opportunities for added learning.

**“This internship has had an impact on me because it shows me that humans can create positive bonds between the environment and humans. We can work together to try and fix the problems we have caused.  
- 2006 First-Year intern**

## Your Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Briefly describe what you wish to learn, academically & professionally, from this internship.

Identifying your learning objectives before your internship begins will help you get the most from the experience, better inform your work towards your academic project, and help your employers identify additional learning opportunities.

You are strongly encouraged to have some ideas prior to meeting with your employer and Faculty Sponsor and then continue to develop these with them.

**There are 3 important aspects to keep in mind regarding objectives & outcomes:**

### **ACADEMIC**

Questions to think about:

How will you apply the academics you have learned thus far?

How will you exercise your major or minor academic interests through this internship?

*Questions best discussed with your Faculty Advisor:*

How does this fit into your overall curriculum?

Will registering for this internship credit assist your progress toward graduation?

### **PRACTICAL**

What hands-on skills do you hope to attain?

Examples: research skills, presentation skills, database creation, learning new software, meeting professionals in your field of interest, developing a network, etc.

### **EMPLOYER NEEDS**

How might you design your objectives to meet the needs of your employer?

Can you produce something that will be of long-term benefit to the organization or the population it serves?

## ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

**1:** Identify specific academic outcomes required for you (the intern) to receive academic credits - papers, journals, field notes, presentations, etc.; and deadline dates. You should discuss the academic “deliverables” with your Faculty Sponsor.

A word about your Faculty Sponsor... most commonly, your sponsor can be your Faculty Advisor but think about the work you are doing and how you plan to apply your academics. Perhaps another faculty member’s research or specialty is more appropriate in developing your academic outcomes.

If you have difficulty identifying a Faculty Sponsor, please speak with the Career Services Coordinator, Marie Vea-Fagnant.

“I guess I am learning how to passively teach. Basically, either having the students answer their own questions, or providing questions that help guide the students’ design. I believe that this can be a stronger tool than anything else, because it gives the student the necessary tools to teach themselves.

- 2006 Greening of Aiken mentor

Examples of academic outcomes or “deliverables” include but are not limited to:

- a **research project**
- a **daily reflective journal** where you think about what you were doing and what it was about/meant (not just a log of what you did... but reflection about what you did).
- a **summary reflection** of the journal (what did I learn at this internship, the kind of work I am doing and how it contributes to the organization, what I learned about myself, what I learned about this kind of job and whether this is what I want to do in the future)
- a **one page internship description** for other students that might be interested in doing an internship in a similar organization (something that would help a prospective intern get a feel for why they might want to do an internship)
- a **300-500 word article for the RSENR News** about your internship (you can go to the RSENR New archives on the WEB for a model of what this might look like)
- a **compilation** of field notes, data, pictures, research from your internship
- a **visual presentation**

**ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS cont.**

2: You may choose one of the following exercises:

a) Completed **internship questionnaire**. Available as a pdf at <http://www.uvm.edu/envnr/?Page=employment/employmt.html>.

b) A **one page article** summarizing your internship experience for publication in the RSENR newsletter.

*Either item must be submitted to the Career Services Coordinator at the completion of your internship.*

3: A completed **supervisor evaluation**. Available as a pdf at

<http://www.uvm.edu/envnr/?Page=employment/employmt.html>.

*This form must be submitted to the Career Services Coordinator at the completion of your internship.*

**Number of Credits:**

Approximately 50 hours on the job equals one academic credit. Training may be included in the total hours. Work hours determine how many academic credits you are eligible, from 1-6 credits total for one internship. The academic grade is determined by the academic product you submit to your Faculty Sponsor.

**Register for Course Number:**

The Career Services Coordinator will determine this. Permission to enroll is required.

The possible course numbers are:

ENSC 195 Internship

NR 185 Special Topics

FOR 191 Forestry Work Practicum

**Semester Registration:**

The Career Services Coordinator will help you determine where best to place the credits.

**Return the completed contract with all required signatures to Marie Ve-Fagnant, Career Services Coordinator, 336 Aiken.**