

Bachelor of Individualized Study [BIS]

...LEARNING WITHOUT LIMITS

INTERNSHIP APPLICATION

Please return a copy of this application to Mark Sistik, BIS, George Mason University (5A9), 4400 University Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030-4444, or fax a copy to 703-993-9476.

Student Information

Student Name: _____

E-mail: _____ Student G-# _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

BIS 495 _____ [1-2-3 Credits] BIS Concentration: _____

Faculty Mentor Signature _____ Phone _____

Internship Information

Agency Name: _____

Agency Contact: _____

Type of Work: _____

Anticipated Semester of Enrollment: _____ Expected # of Credit Hours: _____

Estimated Start and Finish Dates: _____

How did you learn about this internship?

Please attach any information you may have about the organization or the internship program.



Revised August, 2004

Internship Policies and Procedures

Policies

1. Students may not register for an internship if they have a previous internship still in progress (this includes hours left on site and/or incomplete assignments.)
2. An internship can be taken as BIS 495.
3. Students may register for 1,2, or 3 credits for any individual internship, and require a minimum of 45 contact hours [actual onsite, not including travel or writing time] per credit.
4. Students may not use current work assignments as internships. Under certain circumstances a work site may be used, with the permission of the BIS Director. Internships may be completed at the same workplace only if a student is completing different work under a different supervisor.
5. Internships are generally considered to be off-campus experiences.
6. All interns must have a GMU faculty advisor.
7. All internships must have clear learning objectives. These learning objectives and assessment methods for the internship must be agreed upon by both the faculty advisor and the student before the internship begins.
8. All students receiving internship credit must keep an internship journal and complete a final portfolio to receive full credit.
9. All students are encouraged to purchase *The Successful Internship: Transformation & Empowerment* by H. Frederick Sweitzer and Mary A. King for use throughout the internship.

Procedures

1. Prior to registering, students must meet with the Internship site and submit paperwork to register for BIS 495.
2. Students **must** register for their internship by the end of the university's add period.
3. Finalized contracts (signed by both the faculty advisor and on-site supervisor) **must** be submitted to the BIS office by the BIS 495 submission deadline for that semester.



... guidelines for the Internship Contract

Structured appropriately, internships provide an exceptional opportunity for “learning by doing”.¹ Students are expected to take an active role in establishing structure by developing a learning plan with the faculty advisor and the internship site supervisor. This learning plan—which becomes a formal **Internship Contract** after being approved and signed by the student, the faculty sponsor, site supervisor and BIS Director—should describe your academic objectives for the internship and the strategies or methods for accomplishing the objectives.

The Internship Contract is the most important document for your internship. It is your plan of action and your reference point for assessing how you are learning and growing during the internship. Thoughtful development of objectives forces you to think about why you have chosen this internship and what you hope or expect to learn. You will go to the internship with ideas, theories and plans, giving you a template against which to compare what actually happens.

Once the internship is underway, students often find that their objectives are changing—new tasks and unexpected opportunities often require adjustments or refinements to the objectives. That’s okay. This revision process is part of the learning cycle and you can document the changes through your journal entries and other documents in your portfolio. Thus, even though you may have some uncertainty about exactly what objectives would be best for a site, go ahead and develop a plan to prepare yourself intellectually for the experiential learning ahead.

What are some examples of learning objectives and strategies?

Objectives should describe what you will learn, not what you will do. As you prepare your objectives, think about the reasons why you are doing the internship and what you want to gain from it intellectually and personally. Try to use concise, measurable words to describe these goals, e.g., identify, improve, define, compare, understand, apply, solve, write, contrast, initiate, develop, etc. Be creative in thinking about your own learning objectives for the internship. Think about theories or texts you have covered in courses, specific career or professional information you have wanted to acquire, or ask during your preliminary site interviews about what learning opportunities the organization can provide. In addition, it may be helpful to think about how the internship will be a culminating project as it specifically relates to your area of concentration.

Strategies should describe the specific processes or tasks that will help you meet your objectives. Will you undergo orientation or training of any kind? Will you have responsibility for a specific task or project? Will you attend any meetings? Can you interview professionals at the internship site? What kinds of daily tasks will you undertake? Will you do any professional reading at the site?

For each internship, a student should develop 3-6 objectives. The following examples are provided to spark, rather than limit your thinking:

Sample Objectives

Proposed Strategies

¹ John Dewey

- To describe how public policy is developed and enacted in the state legislature
- To develop a preliminary network with public relations professionals
- To improve my theoretical and practical understanding of group communication
- By following legislation, researching legislative histories, reviewing public policy text and articles, interviewing Assembly staff and lobbyists, observation in daily/weekly meetings
- Develop data file of new contacts, conduct informational interviews with agency professionals and clients, attend professional conference, write follow-up thank-you letters
- Observe interaction in project meetings for leadership styles; roles; critical and creative thinking techniques; decision making techniques; nonverbal communication; and kinds of group tasks

You may want to prepare a draft to take with you when discussing the Internship Contract with your supervisor. Asking for his or her assistance in finalizing your objectives gives you the opportunity to clarify what your goals are for the internship and to receive feedback from the site supervisor about how realistic you are being. Such a discussion may help your supervisor think of additional possibilities for you in terms of projects, meetings, conferences, training, etc.

The Internship Contract is a key document for assessing your learning. You should keep your copy to refer to throughout the internship and, ultimately, to place in the Internship Portfolio.



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INTERNSHIP CONTRACT

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Student Name _____ E-mail: _____

Agency Name: _____

Agency Mailing Address: _____

Agency City/State/Zip Code: _____

Agency Contact/Position: _____ Phone#: _____

Contact E-mail Address: _____

Complete the following information. Feel free to attach a typed-page with your objectives and proposed strategies.

Student Learning Objectives:

Examples of Activities/Proposed Strategies

TOTAL INTERNSHIP HOURS AT THE HOST AGENCY: _____

Signing this form affirms that the learning objectives, activities, and hours listed above are acceptable to the host agency and meet the student's educational goals.

_____	Student Signature	_____	Date
_____	Agency Supervisor	_____	Date
_____	Faculty Mentor	_____	Date
_____	BIS Director	_____	Date



Revised August, 2004

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George Mason University ... *guidelines for the* *Internship Portfolio*

All students enrolled in an internship MUST document their learning by completing a portfolio, in addition to other requirements specified by the faculty sponsor. Please use the following information as a guide throughout your internship so that you will be ready to submit, in person, the portfolio at the end of your internship. Your final portfolio should be submitted to your faculty advisor sponsoring your internship.

What is an internship portfolio?

An internship portfolio is a collection of materials assembled by the student intern to demonstrate the knowledge and skills acquired through a particular set of experiences. By documenting their experiences, students focus on assessing their successes and failures as part of the life-long nature of learning. By reflecting on their experiences, students prepare themselves to take the next step toward their learning objectives. The portfolio should follow closely the cycle of learning itself: **planning, doing, observing, and reflection.**

Why develop an internship portfolio?

Your Internship Portfolio is the capstone experience of the internship and of your BIS concentration, and will provide substantial documentation of the learning for which you are earning credits. You might think of the portfolio as an ongoing formative plan in which you set goals, document evidence of goal attainment, analyze and reflect on changing knowledge, identify areas for improvement and establish additional directions for continued growth. This project should help you move beyond “here is what I have done” to “here is what all this means” for your learning goals. You will substantiate your claims for learning through reflection and explanation, but also assume responsibility for charting a future course for growth and learning. Specific reasons for completing the portfolio include:

- To assess your learning;
- To connect your work experiences with your knowledge base;
- To encourage reflection on personal and academic goals;
- To provide evidence of performance;
- To document acquisition of specific skills or knowledge;
- To record your intellectual and personal growth; and
- To prepare yourself for the next learning step



What must be included in the portfolio?

Although the portfolio is a creative product documenting your learning in the internship, the following structure should be followed:

1. On outside front cover and on the spine [your name, semester, internship site]
2. Title Page [name, date, semester, faculty sponsor]
3. Table of Contents [with page or section numbers]
4. Introduction
 - a. Introductory Essay [2-3 pages] on why you planned this internship
 - b. Job or Internship Description
 - c. Organizational description and other materials
 - d. Internship Contract [your Learning Plan]
5. Documentation of Learning (place each item in context; relate to concentration courses and theory where appropriate)
 - a. Internship Time Sheet
 - b. Samples of internship work, affirmations or honors
 - c. Revised Resume [incorporating your newly completed internship]
 - d. Sample Cover Letter [showing how you would present yourself for the next internship/job]
6. **Reflective Integrative Essay: a minimum of a 3500-word written component that include citations from scholarly literature related to your concentration field**
7. Excerpts from journal entries written while completing the project references to observations of and/or interviews with people who have expertise related to the project topic, feedback from other individuals relative to the on-going development of the end product, etc.
8. Bibliography [annotated list of professional and academic readings]
9. Assessment of the Internship Placement Site

Any tips for preparing my portfolio?

You might start a working portfolio (use an accordion file or file box) to keep original documents or samples of all of the items associated with your internship. The working portfolio should contain everything from your application phase and Learning Contract to your actual experiences at the site. Examples of materials that you might include are:

Work

Reports, brochures, policy briefs, agendas, databases, proposals, legislation, memos, artwork, videotapes, others???

Affirmations

References, commendations, evaluations, certificates, citations, awards, published articles, thank-you notes, others???

Assignments

Reflective essay, interviews, papers, notes, readings, research, resume, sample cover letter, journal entries, others???

