



Department of Geography Internship Program

Geography 4380

Geography 5380

Geography 5680

Nature

and

Heritage Tourism 4302

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TEXAS STATE GEOGRAPHY INTERNSHIP PROGRAM GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS



Read this document carefully.

Be sure that you fully understand the course requirements.

Keep these guidelines for future reference. Direct additional questions to

Mark Carter, Internship Coordinator, 136 Evans Liberal Arts Building.

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Part I. Eligibility

To be eligible for an internship, you should:

1. Be currently enrolled at Texas State in good standing.
2. Be a *Geography* major or minor (occasionally, the Internship Coordinator may accept applications for others).
3. Undergraduates must have completed at least 60 semester hours.
4. Undergraduates must have a minimum of 6 semester hours in course work directly applicable to the internship position (in your concentration area, or as determined by the Coordinator) these courses may be taken the same semester as your internship with approval.
5. Have a demonstrated commitment to a program of study involving some phase of applied geography (i.e., concentrations in GIS / Cartography, Planning, and / or Resource & Environmental Studies).

(The Internship Coordinator shall decide questions concerning eligibility).

PART II. Obtaining the Internship

Students must complete the following items *before* an Internship is approved:

1. Read "Internship Guidelines and Requirements."
2. Complete the "Internship Application Form."
3. Turn in a copy of your current Texas State transcript (CATSWEB Grades) and resume.
4. Complete an interview with the Internship Coordinator.
5. Complete a successful interview with the sponsoring agency.
6. Turn in a signed copy of your "Internship Release and Indemnity Agreement" to Internship Coordinator.
7. Obtain Internship Folder from Internship Coordinator, then deliver it to your Internship Supervisor.
8. Return a signed job description to Internship Coordinator within 10 days from your start date.

PART III. Performing the Internship

Successful completion of the Internship requires that you:

1. Work 150-200 hours for each three hours of credit.
2. Maintain a Daily Log.
3. Complete the "Internship Assessment Report."
4. Provide copies of work products to the Internship Coordinator.
5. Turn in Log, Internship Assessment Report and Work Products by the last class day of the semester.
6. All internship materials are due the last class day of classes. Also remember that a completed application and associated materials must be on file in order to receive a final grade. An Incomplete (I) will generally be assigned should you not be able to submit the required materials by the due date, but you must request an (I) in writing.

PART IV. Policies, Procedures and Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

What about course credit? Undergraduate internships (Geo. 4380) are for three semester hours of credit. This course may be repeated once for a maximum of six hours of internship credit. Upon successful completion of your first internship you may enroll for an additional 3 hours credit, but the internship must be with a different sponsoring agency/organization. Only in unusual circumstances will a student be allowed to enroll for a second internship with the same agency/organization that sponsored his/her first internship. Nature and Heritage Tourism (NHT 4302) may be taken for three hours credit and may not be repeated.

Are Internships paid? We make every effort to match qualified students with paid internships. We encourage our students to recognize their valuable skills and seek compensation for time spent working for their internship employer. Wages typically range from minimum to as much as \$15.00/hour.

What types of internships are available? The undergraduate internship program was initiated in 1971. Since then, internship credit has been earned for a variety of work experiences. The following provides examples of internship possibilities: TNRCC, Planning departments, Nature centers, Mapping Agencies, Health Departments, Parks and Wildlife Department, Water Development Board, Land development firms, Energy Conservation Departments, Private consulting firms. Internships are generally available within nearby Texas cities and towns, but positions may occur from time-to-time throughout Texas and in a few out of state or foreign locations.

Are internships designed for my interests? While we continually seek internship positions relevant to the needs and interests of each student, it is equally important for you to recognize that the current availability of internships involves several factors. One common problem is that your course work does not readily "fit" current agency needs. The importance of sufficient background in one or more of the concentrations and "skill" areas (cartography, planning methods, quantitative methods, etc.) cannot be overemphasized. Therefore, you should work closely with your advisor, as well as the Internship Coordinator, to develop a program of study, which increases both your internship and employment opportunities.

How are students placed with agencies/organizations? The Internship Coordinator maintains a listing of internship positions that are available. During your conference with the Coordinator (when you are making application to the program) you will have an opportunity to review the listing to determine the agencies/organizations that you would like to contact. It is possible that you could secure a potential internship "on your own", and this is, in fact the preferred method of obtaining an internship. As the internship is designed to be a "real world" experience, consider the fact that you will, after graduation have to find your own position in the workplace. All internship positions must have the prior approval of the Internship Coordinator.

If I am already working at an appropriate agency, is it possible to count my work toward an Internship? No.

When should I apply for the internship program? Applications from eligible students will be accepted at any time. However, if possible, you should actively seek an internship several semesters prior to your expected date of graduation. You should have at least 60 hours of course work, including a minimum of (preferably more) hours in your concentration area, before making application. Your GPA needs to be at least 2.3 to be eligible for an internship.

What are the steps in the application process?

1. The Application Form is available from the Coordinator's office or on the Geography Department's Website. Answer each question fully and legibly.
2. Return the completed form to the Coordinator's office. All applicants should arrange to meet with the Internship Coordinator when (or shortly after) submitting their completed application. You are required to submit a copy of your current transcript (CATSWEB Grades) and resume at the time of your meeting with the Internship Coordinator.
3. After you have accepted a position with a sponsoring agency/organization, request an internship folder from the Internship Coordinator and submit a signed Internship Release/Indemnity Waiver
4. Deliver the folder to your supervisor; complete the job description.
5. Return the completed job description (signed by your supervisor at the sponsoring agency/organization) to the Internship Coordinator. *You are not formally accepted into the internship program until the job description and release/indemnity waiver forms are on file with the Internship Coordinator.*

What criteria are used in recommending a student for a particular agency/organization placement?

Foremost, we seek to recommend the applicant who best fits the agency's needs and who will likely benefit the most from that intern position. Another very important factor in recommending a student is his/her GPA. Among other common considerations include willingness to accept a non-paid internship, evidence of commitment to a professional career, class level, willingness to commute, and, in a few cases, qualification for Work-Study. Also, some agencies prefer or accept only graduate interns. The Internship Coordinator may consult with other faculty before recommending an applicant.

How does the sponsoring agency/organization make a final selection of an intern? Although several factors enter into the selection of a student for an internship, the Internship Coordinator does not make the actual hiring decision. The Coordinator is, however, involved in the selection process. A typical example is where the sponsoring agency specifies the requirements of the internship and requests to interview one or more applicants who meet their requirements. The Coordinator then examines the applications on file and recommends the candidates whom he regards as the best suited for that internship. Final selection, including the decision not to accept any applicant, is up to the Sponsoring Agency.

What should I expect as far as the interviewing process? Generally, you will interview for an internship position one to two weeks prior to the beginning of the semester, although the timing varies. It is your responsibility to arrange an interview with the agency or agencies you are interested in contacting. Most of the sponsoring agencies/organizations submit their required application procedures along with the position descriptions that are on file in the Internship Coordinator's office. When you are reviewing the various placements that are available you will generally be instructed to phone the agency in advance to arrange a meeting time. Some agencies/organizations, however, are more formal and require submission of a resume and cover letter prior to making contact.

If an internship position is offered to me, how should I respond? You are free to *decline* the offer of an internship position, but you should keep in mind that the availability of internship positions might be limited. Therefore, weigh your decision carefully. In declining an offer you should do so as promptly as possible and with a clear expression of your appreciation for the time taken by agency/organization staff to interview you. Should you decide to *accept* an offer, you should do so in accordance with the procedures that were suggested to you at the time the offer is extended (e.g., the agency/organization may request that you give them an answer within a certain number of days). Regardless of your decision with respect to an offer, you *must* immediately notify the Coordinator of your decision by e-mail or phone.

When should I register for the program? The Internship Program is designed to coincide with semesters. Therefore, you must register for internship credit during the same semester that you are with the agency. Summer Internships are 10-week sections which are enrolled during Summer 1 registration periods.

Part V. Definitions/Standards

Internship Description: You must provide a detailed job description of the internship. This description must include a job description with your duties and responsibilities outlined. It must also include a description of the project(s) upon which you will be working. This document must also include your supervisor's name, title, mailing address, and telephone number. Both you and your internship supervisor must sign this document. ***The document must be turned in within 10 days of your having started working on your internship job.***

Work Hours: You must work the total minimum number of hours as specified by the Sponsoring Agency and the Internship Coordinator. The actual times that you work are between you and the Agency. The number of hours you work each day is to be recorded in your LOG. A "typical" internship requires an *average* number of hours as follows:

<u>SEMESTER</u>	<u>CREDIT HOURS</u>	<u>NO. OF HOURS (p/wk)</u>	<u>NO. OF WEEKS</u>
Fall or Spring	3 hrs.	12 - 14	12 - 14
Summer	3 hrs.	15 - 18	10 - 12

Log: You are to keep a day-to-day LOG in a spiral notebook showing the particular tasks you worked upon during each day, including the time spent on each task. Be specific. The number of hours you record will be verified.

SAMPLE LOG

1-16-02	4:00 to 8:00. Matched USGS Quadsheet map roads to Arc Info. Generated map roads and labeled the roads on the Arc Info maps.
1-17-02	9:00-1:00. Matched USGS Quadsheet Map roads to Arc Info. Generated map roads and labeled the roads on the Arc Info maps.
1-18-02	3:00-7:00. Matched USGS Quadsheet Map roads to Arc Info. Generated map roads and labeled the roads on the Arc Info maps.
1-20-02	2:00-5:00. Matched USGS Quadsheet Map roads to base map. Generated roads and traced new roads to be digitized for Shingle Hills, Signal Hill, Rough House Hollow, and Dripping Springs files.
1-23-02	2:00-3:40. Digitized map for Shingle Hill file. 3:40-6:00. Checked and corrected road names on the base map for the Dripping Springs file.

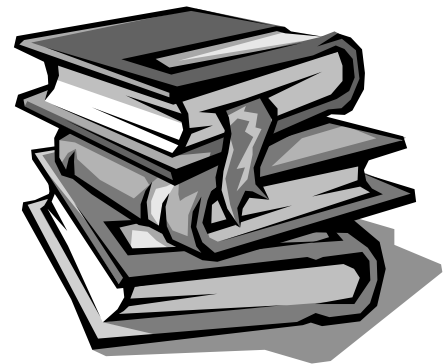
Internship Assessment Report: This formal (double-spaced; typed) report shall include the following:

1. Description of the agency (organization, firm, etc.) for which you worked, including its principal functions and activities;
2. Names, positions, and phone numbers of your Intern Supervisor and of key administrative personnel with whom you had contact;
3. Description of your position within the agency;
4. Complete summary of your duties and responsibilities (summary of the log);
5. Detailed overview of the tasks assigned, including an assessment of their status upon completing your internship;
6. Overall assessment of the internship, including what you feel you gained from the experience, and any suggestions or criticisms;
7. Description of the internship regarding how your experience differed from the job description that you originally wrote;
8. Evaluation of how your general as well as specialized college education assisted you in your internship.

The assessment report *must* follow the above outline. Each element of the outline must be incorporated into a separate and appropriate section in your report.

Consider your Internship Assessment Report a valuable record of your work experience to include with your professional portfolio, resume and cover letter as a tool to help you demonstrate your skills and knowledge to prospective employers as you continue develop your career. Present you best work in a format that shows that you know how to produce a professional report. Include digitized photos, graphs, charts and maps if appropriate. A well-designed report cover and appropriate binding will further demonstrate your professionalism. Examples of outstanding Internship Assessment Reports are available for review in the Internship Coordinator's Office.

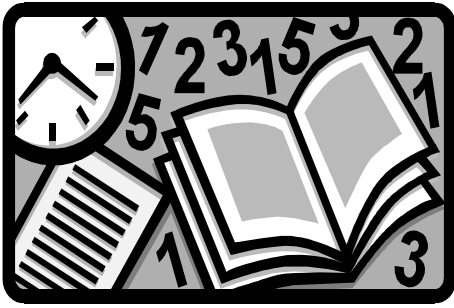
Work Products: Work products are any materials on which you worked, individually or with others (clearly identify your contribution). Work products need not be "finished" documents, e.g., field notes or research data are examples of a work products. Copies of these materials must be turned in to the Internship Coordinator, unless the Sponsoring Agency requests otherwise. In the absence of any significant work products to submit, you are to arrange an "exit interview" with the Internship Coordinator.



Graduate Students Only:

Project Report Proposal (required of graduate students only): This is a written proposal for the project report (see below). Both the Internship Coordinator and Agency Sponsor must approve the project before the report is written. A typical proposal consists of a one-page typed description of the report. The proposal should state how the report will benefit the Agency. ***The proposal must be written and approved before you have completed 75 hours of internship work.***

Project Report (required of graduate students only): This report is to demonstrate your ability to produce sophisticated research for a firm or agency. The report should be a comprehensive treatment of a topic or problem and be between 15 - 20 pages in length.



Part VI. Evaluation and Grading

The Sponsoring Agency assigns your Intern Supervisor. You are responsible to this person when on the job. Near the conclusion of your internship, your Intern Supervisor will submit an "Intern Performance Evaluation Report." The factors for evaluating your performance include: Observing work hours, Generating volume of acceptable work, Accepting responsibility and direction, Initiative, Work judgment Displaying professional image, Meeting deadlines, Written and verbal communication, Presentation, Planning and

organization, Quality of work, Effective use of time, Project reports, Other factors, as appropriate. Additionally, your Intern Supervisor will be asked to write a short statement assessing your strengths and calling attention to areas that need improvement. The Instructor of Record assigns your grade in the course. Your final grade will be determined by an assessment of (1) the evaluation given on your Intern Performance Evaluation Report, including direct communication with your Intern Supervisor, (2) the quality of Work Products submitted, (3) the types of tasks you worked upon, as evidenced by your Log and Internship Assessment Report, (4) the number of hours you worked, (5) your evaluation of the internship, and (6) any other considerations which the Internship Coordinator regards as pertinent (e.g., quality of written work, including organization and proper use of the language). While the internship program requires that you be able to work in an independent fashion, you should not assume that mere completion of the requirements will result in the assignment of an 'A' as the final grade.

Final grades for undergraduate students will be determined by an assessment of : (1) 35% for the evaluation given on you Intern Performance Evaluation Report, including any direct communication with your Intern Supervisor; (2) 15% for the quality of Work Products submitted; (3) 5% for the number of hours you worked; (4) 25% for your evaluation of the internship; and (5) 20% for any other considerations which the Internship Coordinator regards as pertinent (e.g., quality of written work, including organization and proper use of the language, timeliness in the submission of requirements). Final grade assignment rests with the Instructor of Record.

Final grades for graduate students will be determined by an assessment of: (1) 35% for the evaluation given on you Intern Performance Evaluation Report, including any direct communication with your Intern Supervisor; (2) 10% for the quality of Work Products submitted; (3) 5% for the number of hours you worked; (4) 10% for your evaluation of the internship; (5) 20% for the project report; and (6) 20% for any other considerations which the Internship Coordinator regards as pertinent (e.g., quality of written work, including organization and proper use of the language, timeliness in the submission of requirements). Final grade assignment is Pass or Fail for graduate students only.

Please note that you are strongly encouraged to complete all internship requirements on time. While it is possible to request and receive an *I (incomplete)* because you are not able to complete the requirements in the allotted time, your final course grade may suffer. All requests for an *I (incomplete)* must be submitted to the Internship Coordinator, in writing, and you are also to have a conference with the Coordinator to discuss the reasons for your request and any final grade-related consequences. Failure to complete requirements to remove "I" from your transcript within ONE - YEAR, will result in an automatic change of grade from "I" to an "F."

