

# Academic Internships and Service Learning Policy

## I. INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITIONS

For many years many academic programs on campus have valued internships as an important experiential education and engagement activity for our students. Internships are high-impact practices that promote student learning through active participation within the professional environment in planned and meaningful ways. Approved internship programs are those that involve the University in some active way such as awarding credit for the experience or including the experience as one part of an existing course. At the same time, since 1996, the Community Engagement Center, formerly known as the Office of Community Collaboration, has been training faculty to participate in Service Learning and developed partnerships with hundreds of agencies and organizations throughout the Sacramento region.

This policy is promulgated under the authority of CSU Executive Order 1064 dated September 9, 2011. The Executive Order requires campuses to create an internship policy and mandates the policy contain specific elements. At the same time, this policy is designed to establish guidelines for and maximize efficiencies in the administration of Academic Internships and Service Learning. College Deans, Department Chairs, or their designees are responsible for the implementation of this policy with oversight from the Office of Academic Affairs. This policy does not cover internships that do not fall within the definition of an Academic Internship or Service Learning as set forth below.

### A. Definitions:

- **Academic Internship:** An Academic Internship is a stand-alone course that formally integrates the student's academic study with practical experience in a cooperating organization. It is an on- or -off-campus activity designed to serve educational purposes by offering experience in business, non-profit, or government settings. Academic Internships do not include field trips, teacher preparation placements, or clinical placements, such as nursing, counseling, social work, physical therapy, or occupational therapy. Academic Internships offered by the Sacramento State campus will be designated using the course numbers 195 or 295 with varying unit credit. Current campus policy (FS 13/14-80) states that one unit of credit equals 45 hours of work at a placement site. Departments that currently offer Academic Internships for credit but do not use these course numbers will have two years from the date this policy goes into effect to be in compliance.
- **Service Learning:** Service Learning is a pedagogical strategy that faculty use to help students deepen their understanding of course material by requiring students to participate in on- and off-campus activities and experiences at a business, non-profit, or governmental setting (also known as community partner). Structured reflection is the vehicle for linking service to academic content and assessing student learning. In Service Learning, students are asked to articulate how the service experience affirms, expands, integrates, or calls into question the academic content of the course. This form of

experiential learning is mutually beneficial to the student and the community partner. Academic credit shall be given for learning, not for service: merely putting in the specified number of hours at a service site is not an academic activity and does not earn academic credit. Service Learning is a teaching strategy and typically only one component of a university course; it differs from an Academic Internship, which is typically a stand-alone course that comprises the entirety of a student's learning experience. Some campus departments have a course designation for Service Learning that is of varying hours and can be added to a course.

- Site and Site Agreement: "Site" refers to the placement at which a student engages in either Service Learning or an Academic Internship. A "Site Agreement" is the agreement between the University and the Site relating to relative responsibilities of the University and Site. There is a standard Site Agreement for all placements. (At the time this policy was enacted Site Agreements are managed/executed through the Office of Procurement and Contract Services. However, oversight of this process may be relocated.)

## **II. ACADEMIC INTERNSHIP/SERVICE LEARNING APPROVAL PROCESS**

A. Academic Internship: The Academic Program contacts the Contract Specialist in the Office of Procurement and Contract Services (Contract Services section) to request the most recent list of Sites with which the University already has an existing Site Agreement to determine if a placement with which it would like to work is or is not on this list. (If the site is on the list, and a current Site Agreement exists, skip to Section B.) If there is no existing Site Agreement for an Academic Internship, the academic program must contact the Site to determine what kind of placement is possible, how the Academic Internships will be conducted, whether the placement provides an educationally appropriate experience, and the role of the Academic Program in monitoring the Academic Internship. If the Academic Program's initial inquiry results in a positive evaluation of the placement, the Academic Program will then conduct a Site assessment and/or Site visit and pursue getting a Site Agreement.

B. Site Assessment: The Site Assessment is a written summary prepared for the Academic Internship placement that responds, at minimum, to the following considerations: The academic program must complete a Site Assessment for all Academic Internships, unless the program completed a Site Assessment for the same placement within the prior three (3) years.

- The potential for the Site to provide an educationally appropriate experience;
- Identification of the potential risks of the Site;
- Identification of an appropriate individual from the host organization to supervise the student at the Site (Recognizing that an "appropriate individual" who will supervise a student at a site may change over time, the academic program should always be aware and keep record of the assigned supervisor for every student; however, the academic program does not need to complete a new Site Assessment every time the supervisor changes unless the 3-year period has passed);
- Evaluation of the educational environment;

- Evaluation of the potential for student academic experience and its relationship to the student's academic studies;
- Willingness of Site to meet campus expectations, including entering into a placement agreement with the CSU as well as a learning agreement with CSU and the student which will outline the respective roles of the campus, site and student in the Academic Internship;
- Selection criteria and basic skills required of the student; and
- Any potential risks at the Site (e.g., risks related to physical location and/or access and/or risk associated with population the organization may serve) through observation and questioning of the organization. If the individual conducting the assessment has any concerns regarding potential risks, they should contact Risk Management.

C. Site Visits: The Site Assessment may be completed through a Site Visit to the placement location. However, a Site Visit is not required if the Academic Program can demonstrate and document sufficient knowledge of the Site. Sufficient knowledge of the Site may be demonstrated through review of information located on the Site's website, via email exchanges with Site personnel, telephone contact with Site personnel, prior Academic Internship history with the Site, documents reviewed relating to the Site. If a Site Visit is not to occur, the assessment should be based on at least three (3) of these, or other alternative, sources. The Site Assessment should identify all of the sources relied upon in making the assessment.

D. Site Agreements: Once the Site Assessment is successfully completed, a Site Agreement must be entered into between the University and the Site. These Agreements are managed through the Contract Services section ("Contract Specialist")(these assessments will be included as exhibits to the Site Agreement). The Academic Program shall provide the Contract Specialist with: (1) a copy of the Site Assessment; (2) full legal name of the Site (2) name, phone number, and e-mail of the point of contact at the Site. Site Agreements shall outline the following **Site responsibilities**:

- Identify the student's supervisor. The supervisor agrees to meet with the student regularly to facilitate the student's learning experience, provide support, review progress on assigned tasks, verify student hours and give feedback.
- Provide an orientation that includes a Site tour, an introduction to staff, a description of the characteristics of and risks associated with the Site's operation, services and/or clients; a discussion concerning safety policies and emergency procedures; and information detailing where students will be working and how they will track their time.
- Provide student with a description of their tasks and responsibilities.
- Provide appropriate training, equipment, materials and work area for student prior to student performing assigned tasks or working with the Site's clients.

- Inform student of the need for a background check, fingerprint, and/or a Tuberculosis Test (if required).
- Evaluate the student at the end of the Academic Internship/Service Learning experience. If the student fails to perform assigned tasks or engages in misconduct, the agency Site supervisor will contact the student's University Academic Internship Supervisor and/or Academic Program chair and/or Service Learning faculty member.
- Notify the identified Contact Person in the Site Agreement as soon as is reasonably possible of any injury or illness to a student participating in an activity at the Site.
- Provide the student an emergency preparedness orientation and retain emergency contact information on file and ensure it is accessible in the case of an emergency. Sign student's time logs (if required) confirming hours worked.

E. Term: A Site Agreement must specify the length it remains in effect, up to a maximum of five (5) years. A new Site Assessment must be completed prior to a Site Agreement being renewed.

F. Academic Internships/Service Learning in Other States: In addition to the requirements set forth in this policy, the academic program is responsible for seeking and obtaining any required state authorization from other states for Academic Internships/Service Learning pursuant to federal law.

G. International Academic Internships/Service Learning:

- In addition to the other requirements set forth in this policy, Site Agreements involving a placement outside of the United States must be approved as an International Agreement in accordance with Executive Order 1080.
- If an international Academic Internship/ Service Learning is approved, any international travel by students or faculty relating to the Academic Internship must be separately approved through the campus International Travel Approval Procedure.

H. Orientation: The Academic Program must provide an orientation to the student prior to beginning their Academic Internship/Service Learning experience. This orientation should include: appropriate conduct/behavior expectations, health and safety instructions and ensuring that students complete an emergency contact form identified in III B of this document, and, if required, that they complete Time Logs to track hours at the internship site.

I. Service Learning: The same process outlined above will also be followed for the approval of Service Learning, including the required Site Agreement, Site Visit, Site Assessment, and Orientation, but is managed through Procurement and Contract Services or the Community Engagement Center.

### **III. STUDENT REQUIREMENTS**

A. Student Learning Agreement: All Academic Internships (this is not required for Service Learning. Service Learning faculty determine whether or not to use a Student Learning Agreement) require a Student Learning Agreement signed by the student, the supervising faculty member, and the Site supervisor. The Student Learning Agreement must include the following elements:

- General scope of work to be completed by the student during the course of the Academic Internship;
- Anticipated learning outcomes;
- Amount of Academic credit to be awarded for successful completion of the Academic Internship;
- Accommodation plan for students with disabilities as defined by the Office of Services to Students with Disabilities (SSWD);
- Identification of an appropriate contact from the Site whose responsibilities will include student intern supervision and evaluation;
- Placement logistics, including hours and, when appropriate, wages to be paid;
- The requirement that the student complete a written assessment of the Academic Internship shall be completed and retained as part of the Academic Internship materials; and
- A waiver stating that the student authorizes the University to share any information directly related to the student's performance in the Service Learning/Academic Internship with the Site that would otherwise be protected from disclosure by the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

B. Liability Release, Emergency Contact, Time Logs (if required) and Code of Conduct Forms: All students participating in Academic Internship/Service Learning must complete and sign the CSU liability release, Emergency Contact, Time Logs (if required), and Code of Conduct forms,

C. Accommodations: Students who need an accommodation based on a disability relating to any Academic Internship/Service Learning shall be referred to Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD). The academic program, in coordination with SSWD, will discuss with the Site in advance whether the Site can provide the requested accommodation.

#### **IV. ANNUAL REVIEW/RECORDS**

A. Annual Review: To assess the value of the Academic Internship/Service Learning experience and its appropriateness for future interns vis-à-vis the educational value and safety of the Academic Internship site, the Academic Program, University staff, students and Academic Internship Site Supervisors will be asked to complete an on-line survey on an annual basis, the

results of which will be reviewed by the Academic Program Academic Internship coordinator and shared and reviewed with College Deans, Department Chair and the Provost (or Provost Designee). (Academic programs will have two (2) years from the implementation of this policy to develop a mechanism for annual review).

B. The academic program is responsible for retaining copies of Site Assessments and Liability Release, Emergency Contact, Time Logs (if required), and Code of Conduct forms for three (3) years commencing with the date the Service Learning/Academic Internship ended for each student from the date of execution.

*Approved by the Faculty Senate December 3, 2015 (FS 15/16-64)*

*Approved by President Nelsen January 14, 2016*