

AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION EDUCATION

INTERNSHIP

HANDBOOK

**Colorado State University
College of Agricultural Sciences
Fort Collins, Colorado**

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INTERNSHIP HANDBOOK

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INTRODUCTION

The field-based Internship experience is intended to be a capstone for the educational program at Colorado State University, especially preparing people for employment in Cooperative Extension. The experience allows you to work full time in a Cooperative Extension office applying the skills you have acquired in your campus education and gaining new "real world" experience with a Cooperative Extension county staff. This experience is provided through the cooperation of the Colorado State University Cooperative Extension staff, College of Agricultural Sciences, and the many Cooperative Extension County Offices. We will, however, attempt to accommodate those of you who are not using this as your capstone experience.

This Extension Internship Handbook is the guide for your professional development during the field-based experience. You will complete portions of the activities with input from the county staff or teacher educators but it is your responsibility to complete the activities.

OBJECTIVES OF THE INTERNSHIP

The primary purpose of the field-based Internship in Cooperative Extension is to help the student develop the skills, knowledge, attitudes and competence necessary to become a successful Cooperative Extension staff member. The following objectives are directed toward that purpose:

1. Observe a Cooperative Extension office in operation,
2. Further develop a personal philosophy of Cooperative Extension,
3. Develop and conduct educational programs in an informal setting,
4. Develop the ability to organize, implement and evaluate programs or events,
5. Demonstrate the ability to work effectively with all clients in a Cooperative Extension program (i.e., youth, families, communities, organizations, producers, business/industry, public officials, and policy makers).

INTERN RESPONSIBILITIES

Once accepted for a position in the Extension Internship program, you accept a number of important responsibilities. The following responsibilities were formulated through the observations and experiences of many people in Extension education. Carefully review and carry out the suggested responsibilities, with the personal intent of enriching your Internship experience.

Responsibilities

1. Make contact with your on-site supervisor as soon as approval is given by your University supervisor. Contact should include:
 - a. Inquiring about programs you are expected to conduct or assist with;
 - b. Requesting assistance in obtaining housing, if desired;
 - c. Sharing your goals about your internship.
2. Personal appearance is important. Dress neatly, appropriately, and according to any dress codes that may apply.
3. Arrive at your Extension office on time and be ready to go right to work. Be prepared to work past "normal" working hours because irregular hours are a common part of many Extension positions.
4. Immediately after arrival at the Extension office, YOU should make an effort to become acquainted by:
 - a. Meeting all other professional staff members;
 - b. Meeting office assistants, aides and any other individuals with whom you will be in close contact;
 - c. Familiarizing yourself with and abiding by the policies and regulations of the Extension office.
5. You are expected to become one of the Extension staff. You must be willing to accept certain obligations expected of all staff members and do your fair share. Keep in mind that you are not assigned to the Extension office to do "odd jobs" which are not required or expected of other Extension staff members.
6. Remember, the person you are assigned to is your immediate supervisor. Use proper channels of communication and always go through your supervisor before contacting someone in a different position.
7. Initially, you may only have the opportunity to observe programs which have been planned and

are being conducted by someone else. Gradually, you will be expected to lend assistance. Always be alert for ways to assist your supervisor in carrying out his/her work. Look ahead to tasks that remain to be completed. Don't always wait for your supervisor to tell you what to do next.

8. Learn all you can about the duties of Extension staff during your Cooperative Extension Internship experience. Become involved in as many different types of programs as possible. The experiences you gain will be very helpful in your future endeavors.
9. You may be expected to complete a work plan after your arrival at the Extension office. This should be accomplished with the assistance of your supervisor.
10. Be prompt in meeting appointments. It is much better to arrive ahead of schedule than to arrive even a few minutes late!
11. Maintain a professional attitude in all contacts made in the Extension program.
12. Within the first week of the Internship, discuss and plan your work schedule/calendar including weekend and evening commitments with your supervisor. Arrange for any foreseeable absences in advance.
13. Treat discussions in staff meetings, with staff members, supervisors and clientele as confidential. Never criticize any client to another, or to your fellow staff members, or to your supervisor. Criticism should be discussed confidentially with your supervisor. **A good principle to remember is to praise in public and criticize in private.**
14. Set aside times for conferences with your supervisor. Invite and accept constructive criticism and suggestions with an open mind. Suggestions are offered for your professional improvement.
15. Attend programs of staff members other than your supervisor's programs whenever possible.
16. Attend as many civic/community organization functions in the area as possible.
17. Before leaving the community, clear up all financial matters that may be pending.
18. Before leaving your Extension office, be sure to express your appreciation to your supervisor and all other staff members for the Internship experience offered in their office. Follow up with a written expression of appreciation.
19. The local Extension staff has granted permission for you to do your Internship in their office. The continuance of this privilege for those who will follow you depends a great deal on how well you conduct yourself while there.

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY SUPERVISION OF INTERNS

During your Internship, you may be observed and visited by University faculty and staff from the Extension state office. Visits are intended to provide an opportunity to review your progress and observe you in your working environment. State Extension staff, specialists, and Extension faculty outside your county may also contribute to the education process, as they will be working closely with other Extension offices.

EXTENSION ADMINISTRATION

Local and area Extension administrators will treat you as one of the professional staff members. Each Extension staff member has certain responsibilities to the Extension program. Consequently, every Extension Intern must be willing to do his/her share in making the Extension office an effectively managed organization. Every Extension office has regulations and policies that Extension Interns will be expected to follow.

THE AGENT SUPERVISOR

Your supervisor has been selected by the director of the Ag Extension Education program at Colorado State University. Supervising Extension Interns is an added responsibility to an already heavy work schedule. The Extension office and the supervisor receive no financial incentive for the additional time and energy required to work with Extension Interns; but do so because they consider it a worthwhile and appropriate professional responsibility.

INTERNSHIP HANDBOOK

Your Extension Internship will expose you to a variety of new experiences. Some of these experiences may be routine while others will leave lasting impressions. As a student in the field of Ag Extension Education, you should carefully record the happenings and events of your entire Internship experience. Your Internship Handbook will be used for this purpose. Because the Handbook is a recording of what you have done during your Internship, it will be used as a basis for determining the extent to which you participated in the Internship experience and this will play a major role in determining your final grade.

Therefore, you are encouraged to keep an accurate, neat, well-organized Handbook. Your Handbook should be available to the University coordinator at every visit and should be turned in at the end of the Internship. Your Handbook will be returned to you after it is graded. In addition, you may wish to keep a personal and confidential journal of your thoughts and impressions. This should be kept in a secure place of your choosing.

Contents of Handbook (see following pages):

- I. **County/Area Information:** i.e., census records, Extension reports, and clientele lists as appropriate. DO THIS SECTION BEFORE YOU START THE INTERNSHIP OR AT THE FIRST PART OF THE INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE.
- II. **Competencies:** There are three competencies with examples and activities for each one. You must write a paper recording and explaining the activities you performed within the appropriate competency. You do not have to complete every item in order to have a successful experience. You may also wish to keep significant pieces of literature you receive at meetings, etc., in your handbook (but not everything).
- III. **Daily Journal:** You are asked to reflect on the happenings of each day and commit in writing your perceptions of these incidents. You are encouraged to be open with your thoughts. The aim of the journal is self-discovery and its purpose is fulfilled by its daily entries.
- IV. **Project Record:** This should be a detailed account of a major project(s) you have undertaken during your Internship. Include objectives, evaluation plans, and results. Utilize supporting materials such as news clippings, programs, agenda, as well as a narrative account of what you did to carry out the project(s). This may be a separate notebook or folder attached to your Internship Handbook.

I. COUNTY/AREA INFORMATION

THE EXTENSION OFFICE

Learning experiences outlined in this section will help acquaint you with office organization and procedures unique to every office and organization. The Internship time will go by quickly so it is important to learn staff members' names and the office procedures as soon as possible. To facilitate this orientation, use the following worksheets: Staff; Extension Councils and Committees; and the Office Procedures Checklist. **Note: You do not have to complete everything listed; this is merely a guide.**

Your supervising agent or a person designated by him/her will help you become familiar with each item suggested. You may have other questions and the staff will also want to discuss with you other items about office procedures. **Complete this assignment during the first two weeks of the Internship.**

COUNTY EXTENSION STAFF

1. Know all the staff members by name, title, and role. Achieve this by meeting each staff member and discussing their role and function of their position. Record appropriate information in the space provided.

Agent Staff Members

Title/Program Area

Role or Function

Administrative Staff Members

Title/Program Area

Role or Function

<u>Specialists</u>	<u>Title/Program Area</u>	<u>Role or Function</u>
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<u>Other Personnel</u>	<u>Title/Program Area</u>	<u>Role or Function</u>
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OFFICE PROCEDURES CHECKLIST

Please go through the office procedures with the office assistant and/or your supervisor and check off each as you go. It is important that you know where to find the resources in the office both for your own information and to assist others.

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Date Completed</u>	<u>Worked with</u>
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1. Daily routine:
 - a. Office hours
 - b. Parking arrangements, regulations
 - c. Location of assigned desk
 - d. Location of personal files
 - e. Desk and files for other staff members
 - f. Keys for building and office
 - g. Janitorial services, restrooms, etc.
 - h. Place for hat, coat, etc.
 - i. Coffee, refreshments
 - j. Security
 - k. Safety
2. Administrative responsibilities and procedures

- a. Office manager
 - b. Fiscal manager
 - c. Word processing
 - d. Clientele contact
 - e. Office resource management
 - f. Office communications
3. Communications
- a. Telephone procedures, long distance, etc.
 - b. Incoming-outgoing mail procedures (incl. Friday mail)
 - c. Inter-office communications
 - d. Office conferences (purpose, time, dates)
4. Finance and Reporting
- a. Office budget and travel allowances
 - b. Special funds (coffee, flowers, etc.)
 - c. Travel approval procedure
 - d. Weekly/ Monthly itinerary
 - e. Reports
 - f. Expense accounts (forms, procedures, etc.)
5. Program of Work
- a. Plan of work (may or may not be available)
 - b. Affirmative action plan
 - c. Staff program reports
 - d. Procedures for requesting an Extension Specialist
(download a CSU Extension Personnel Directory from CE web site)
 - e. Expense accounts (forms, procedures, etc.)
6. Resources and Publications
- a. Purchasing procedures
 - b. Explanation and use of audio visual equipment and resources
 - c. Mailing lists
 - d. Duplicating procedure
 - e. Facility management and maintenance
 - f. Computer, e-mail, and Internet use
 - g. Satellite use
 - h. Publications display and distribution

- i. Orientation to office resources (reference books, files, etc.)
- j. Other (specify)

EXTENSION COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES

Identify Extension-related groups, such as councils and committees, and attach a list of their names.
(These may not all be present in your county/area.)

1. Extension Council/Advisory
 - a. Identify purpose

 - b. List officers

2. Youth, 4-H Advisory Committee/Foundation (adult/youth)
 - a. Identify purpose

 - b. List officers

3. 4-H Council (youth)
 - a. Identify purpose

 - b. List officers

4. Consumer and Family Education Advisory Committee
 - a. Identify purpose

 - b. List officers

5. Agriculture and Natural Resources Advisory Committee
 - a. Identify purpose

 - b. List officers

6. Other councils, committees related to Extension

- a. Name and purpose
 - b. List officers
7. Volunteers (number)
- a. 4-H
 - b. Master Gardeners
 - c. Master Food Preservers
 - d. Other

COUNTY SURVEY

For county Extension staff, the community of interest is the entire county. All aspects of agriculture, people and other demographics are necessary to complete a usable needs assessment. By searching through the County Plan of Work (if available) or using other resources for the highlights of the county, you may now know where to start your programming. **After you have completed this research, write a report stating what you have found using the categories below.** Here is a list of the areas you need to find information on:

1. General Description
 - a. County and state name
 - b. County location: part of state, landmarks, major cities, county seat, etc.
 - c. County size
2. Population
 - a. Total population
 - b. Population per square mile
 - c. Town/City name and population within county
 - d. Number of households
 - e. Persons per household
 - f. Population by age and sex
 - g. Racial composition
 - h. Racial composition per household

3. Education
 - a. Number and types of schools (private, public and college)
 - b. Years of school completed by males and females over the age of 25
4. Housing
 - a. Family income distribution
 - b. Median income
5. Employment
 - a. Number of workers (16 years and older)
 - b. Distribution of types of jobs, major employers
6. Agriculture Description
 - a. Number of farms/ranches and the average size of them
 - b. Approximate number of acres in farmland, rangeland, and public land
 - c. Most common crops and acreage's
 - d. Livestock and numbers
7. Clubs and organizations
 - a. Number of 4-H clubs
 - b. Number of 4-Her's in community and club projects
 - c. Family and community education clubs
 - d. High school clubs and numbers
 - e. County wide organizations (sororities, VFW, etc.)
8. County publications
 - a. Newspapers (Daily or weekly)
 - b. Radio stations
 - c. Television stations
9. Programs and Departments
 - a. Chamber of Commerce
 - b. County Economic/Community Development programs
10. Agriculture related organizations
 - a. List any of these that exist and note which ones you have attended
 1. Fair Board
 2. Livestock Producers
 3. Farm Organizations
 4. Farm Credit
 5. Farm Service Agency

6. Natural Resources Conservation Service
7. Pest Control District
8. Soil Conservation District
9. Water Conservation District
10. Groundwater Management District
11. Other

II. COMPETENCIES

Extension personnel need specific competencies to be effective in their job. Below are listed several competencies along with suggested activities. When accomplished, the activities should provide you with the knowledge, skill or attitudes expressed in each competency. You **MUST** complete the three competencies to the best of your ability.

These are only examples; you may use any activity you deem appropriate. Write a two page report explaining what you did within each competency. Any support material for the competencies may be sent directly to Dr. Lamm.

1. Administration

- a. Prepare reports and maintain records in Extension programs
 - 1). Fill out a COERS report, and/or monthly travel report. Ask your supervisor for more information about these items.
- b. Make a diagram explaining the chain of authority from state to region to county.
- c. After observing the office assistants' duties, assume that you were faced with the responsibility of training a new office assistant. Include an outline of the areas requiring training.
- d. Observe the office's routing for handling correspondence. Under your extension staff's supervision (be sure to get permission for all steps!), answer some of the correspondence received in the office.
- e. Observe and describe how the office space is used. Include a floor plan with comments on office arrangement, if needed.
- f. Observe and assist with the filing system.
- g. List the ways your supervisor deals with limited resources, i.e., the county's limitations on finances, office materials, etc.
- h. Identify financial records for which the Extension office is responsible.

2. Program Planning, Communication, Teaching and Evaluation

(The purpose of this competency is to have you plan, teach and evaluate an educational program. Normally, it will begin with a Needs Assessment).

- a. Understand the purpose and various methods of a Needs Assessment
 1. Review and discuss a previous Needs Assessment with you supervisor
 2. Plan the steps and timeline of conducting a Needs Assessment for a given situation/issue to identify client needs
- b. Understand how Extension advisory groups are utilized in Needs Assessment processes, evaluation/feedback of Extension programming, and providing advice on future program efforts.
- c. Identify priority programs after reviewing the county Plan of Work or ask your supervisor
- d. **Design (plan), deliver and evaluate a non-discriminatory educational program**
- g. Involve clientele in teaching process if possible
- e. Describe how two forms of publicity were used and what each purpose was
- d. Write newsletters, news releases, and feature stories as appropriate
- e. Prepare and develop a World Wide Web page article to include in the county/area Web page (where available)
- f. Use any audio-visuals as appropriate for your experience and describe how they were used
 1. Audio tapes
 2. Overhead projectors
 3. Posters
 4. Photography
 5. Video tapes
 6. Exhibits
 7. Power Point presentations
 8. Video projectors and LCD projection panel
 9. Digital Media
- h. Plan and evaluate field trips if appropriate
- i. Conduct on-site field visits with supervisor
- k. Use computer systems for filing and program development

3. Human Relations

- a. Identify principles of good human relations you used during your field experience (i.e., listening, problem solving, visits, etc.)
- b. Identify marketing techniques used to develop local support for Extension programs
- c. Describe any personal conflicts, or ones you observed, and how they were handled
- d. Describe the social action process:
 1. Identify problem
 2. Plan action
 3. Mobilize resources
 4. Evaluate process
- e. Identify methods of working with diverse audiences
 1. Identify audiences
 2. Identify how they have been reached in the past
 3. Identify possible ways to reach them
 4. Use these audiences in an Extension activity during your field experience
- f. List/identify types of leaders and leadership behavior (i.e., DISC personal profile) you encountered during your field experience
 1. Dominance--Motivated to solve problems and get immediate results, tends to question the status quo, and prefers direct answers, varied activities and independence.
 2. Influence--Motivated to influence and persuade others, tends to be open and verbalizes thoughts and feelings, prefers working with people rather than alone.
 3. Steadiness--Motivated to create a stable, organized environment, tends to be patient and a good listener, and prefers participating in a group rather than directing it and listening more than talking.
 4. Conscientiousness--Motivated to achieve high personal standards, tends to be diplomatic and carefully weighs pro and cons, prefers environments with clearly defined expectations.
- g. Design and conduct (or assist supervisor) a recruitment program for leaders or resource people during your field experience. (i.e., 4-H leaders, assistance with workshops and fair volunteers)
- h. Conduct (or assist supervisor) a leader training workshop in an appropriate area
- i. Identify components necessary for a productive meeting, list the meetings you attended, and what observations or conclusions you can draw about the meetings.

III. DAILY JOURNAL

This is where you record all your experiences throughout the Internship. It should be kept up daily. Along with the activities you were involved in and the competencies you performed, you may add your thoughts and feelings on the day's activities. This is a good way to monitor your progress throughout the Internship, make sure you are participating in all the activities you intended to do, and is simply a great way to look back and remember your activities.

This section will be read over by Dr. Lamm so if you are uncomfortable having him read some of the more personal entries you may write, it is your option to create a separate journal. However, remember it is important to record some of your thoughts on the activities you perform and the Internship itself.

IV. PROJECT RECORD

At the end of the Internship, you will have accumulated a lot of material, created a lot of documents, and you will have finished your daily journal. For your final grade, along with the completed Handbook, you will need to organize all the material into a notebook, i.e., project record, to be turned in to Dr. Lamm. There will be a timeline provided as to when this will need to be done.

This is your notebook to keep so organize it in a way that you will understand and the material will be easily accessed. You may include any news clippings, programs, or agendas you have acquired. This could serve as a portfolio for future jobs so it is in your best interest to do a good job when putting it together.

