

**MASTER OF AGRICULTURE**

**INTERNSHIP**

**HANDBOOK**

**AGRI 587 A or B**

**Revised Spring 2014**

**College of Agricultural Sciences  
Colorado State University  
Fort Collins, CO 80523**

## INTERNSHIP HANDBOOK

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## INTRODUCTION

The field-based Internship experience is intended to be an overarching experience for your educational program at Colorado State University. It will allow you to work full or part time with an internship cooperator to apply and practice content and skills you have acquired through coursework. The internship experience is designed to help you meet competency in the areas needed to be successful in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century workplace—to deal with situations that we can't currently predict, but may arise in the workplace in the near future.

This Internship Handbook is a guide for your professional development during the field-based experience (in an Extension Office or other venues approved by your departmental academic advisor and the course instructor). You will complete portions of the activities with input from staff, teacher educators, and other colleagues.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE INTERNSHIP

The primary purpose of the field-based Internship experience is to help the student develop and become competent in skills, knowledge, and attitudes to be successful in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century workplace. This includes essential skills for success in today's global world, such as critical thinking, problem solving, communication, and collaboration. This also includes life and career skills such as flexibility and adaptability, initiative and self-direction, social and cross-cultural skills, productivity and accountability, and leadership and responsibility (from *Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills*, [www.P21.org](http://www.P21.org); and consistent with *The Degree Profile*, Adelman, Ewell, Gaston, and Schneider). The **measurable** objectives of the internship are as follows:

1. Understand/explain the operations of your internship organization/entity (e.g., Cooperative Extension Office or other venue) (See [Internship log](#), Addendum A, p. 10)
2. Develop a philosophy or mission/vision for your internship organization/entity (e.g., Cooperative Extension or other organization).
3. Develop educational materials and programs for use in the internship setting. ([Project report/presentation\(s\)](#))
4. Organize, implement, and evaluate programs or events. (See [County Survey](#), in Addendum B, p. 17. or see [Alternate Needs Assessment](#), in Addendum B, p. 19 – 20.)
5. Work effectively with clients/customers in a Cooperative Extension Program or other setting. (Supervisor evaluation)

## **INTERN RESPONSIBILITIES**

Once you have accepted an Internship as part of your program requirements, you accept a number of important responsibilities. The following responsibilities were formulated through the observations and experiences of many people in the extension education and other organizations/entities, and may vary slightly for various internship placements. Carefully review and carry out the suggested responsibilities, with the personal intent of enriching your internship experience.

1. Contact your internship supervisor/cooperator as soon as approval is given by your departmental academic adviser.
  - a. Inquire about programs you are expected to conduct or assist (scope of work).
  - b. Request assistance in obtaining housing, if needed and appropriate.
  - c. Share your goals about your internship experience.
2. Personal appearance is important. Dress neatly, appropriately, and according to any dress codes that apply or for work that is needed.
3. Arrive at your Internship site on time and ready to go to work. Be prepared to work past “normal” working hours because irregular hours are a common part of many Extension or similar positions.
4. Immediately after arrival at your Internship site, YOU should make an effort to:
  - a. Meet all other professional staff members;
  - b. Meet office assistants, aides, and any other individuals with whom you will work;
  - c. Become familiar and abide by all policies and regulations.
5. You are expected to become one of the staff members. 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 as an intern to do “odd jobs” which are not required or expected of other staff members.

6. Remember, the person you are assigned to, is your immediate supervisor/cooperator. Use proper channels of communication and always go through your supervisor/cooperator 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/cooperator in carrying out his/her work. Be aware of tasks that need to be completed. Don't always wait for your supervisor/cooperator to tell you what to do next.
8. Learn all you can about the duties of your position during your 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 your site. This should be accomplished with the assistance of your supervisor/cooperator.
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 at all times.
12. Within the first week of the Internship, discuss and plan your work schedule/calendar including weekend and evening commitments with your supervisor/cooperator. **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/cooperator. Criticism should be discussed confidentially with your supervisor/cooperator. A good principle to remember is to praise in public and use constructive criticism (accentuate the positive and the negative will disappear) in private.

14. Set aside times for conferences with your supervisor/cooperator. Invite and accept constructive criticism and suggestions with an open-mind, focus and create a plan for improvement. Suggestions are offered for your professional improvement.
15. Attend programs of staff members other than your supervisor's/cooperator'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, e.g., mileage, etc.
18. Before leaving your internship position, be sure to express your appreciation to your supervisor/cooperator and all other staff members for the Internship experience offered in their office/site. Follow up with a written expression of appreciation. (These may be your future references for jobs or promotions.)
19. The supervisor/cooperator and staff have granted permission for you to do your Internship with them. **The continuance of this privilege for those who will follow you depends a great deal on how well you conduct yourself while there.**
20. Remember that as an intern, you are continuously being evaluated, so be conscious of this at all times.

## INTERNSHIP HANDBOOK

Your 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 Master of Agriculture program or Master of Agriculture, you should carefully record the happenings and events of your entire Internship experience. You will develop an Internship Handbook for this purpose, and this can become part of your own electronic portfolio\* for future use. Because the Handbook is a documentation of what you have experienced in 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.

You are therefore encouraged to keep an accurate, neat, well-organized Handbook. Your up-to-date Handbook should be available to the course instructor, supervisor/cooperator, and academic adviser at any time and should be turned in at the end of the Internship. These are preferably submitted electronically and must include all assignments required by AGRI 587 A/B.

\*The Institute for Teaching and Learning (TILT) (<http://tilt.colostate.edu> ) offers electronic portfolio formats as well as some simple instructions for a PowerPoint or PDF electronic portfolio... <http://tilt.colostate.edu/pdi/archives/Files/2012/266.pdf> . If you search the TILT website for portfolios, you can see examples of several types of portfolios created by students.

## **Contents of your Handbook:**

(Electronic or hard copy is acceptable)

### 1. a) **Extension Internship**

**County/Area Information:** census records, Extension reports, and clientele lists as appropriate;

### b) **Non-Extension Internship**

**For internships not with an extension office:** organizational chart(s), purpose/mission/vision, sample program descriptions or work plans, etc.

### 2. **Competencies:**

**Core competency areas** address the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century workplace, where sometimes we don't know what competence the job description will require in as few as five years; these include:

1. Critical thinking/creativity/innovation\*
2. Problem solving\*
3. Communication and Collaboration\*
4. Flexibility and Adaptability
5. Initiative and Self-Direction
6. Social and Cross-Cultural Skills
7. Productivity and Accountability
8. Leadership (regardless of your title) and responsibility/commitment
9. Experimental design and interpretation (accessing information, value or validity of information)
10. Ethics and professionalism

\*The use of Bloom's taxonomy/verbs/levels of thinking facilitates #1, 2, and 3

*The above are based on Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, [www.P21.org](http://www.P21.org); and consistent with The Degree Qualifications Profile, by Adelman, Ewell, Gaston, and Schneider (Lumina Foundation funded—Tuning USA) as well as many other sources.*

### 3. **Internship Log: (See Addendum A)**

4. **Project Record:** This should be a detailed account of a major project(s) you have undertaken during your internship. Include needs assessment, 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.

### 5. **Other documents for your use**

**Addendum A:** Internship Log, p. 10

**Addendum B:** County/Area Information template, p. 11

Staff template, p. 12

Office Procedures Checklist, p. 13 – 16

County Survey (for Needs Assessment), p. 17 – 18

Alternate Needs Assessment, p. 19

SWOT Analysis Worksheet, p. 20

**ADDENDUM**  
**ADDENDUM A**  
**INTERNSHIP LOG**

<b>Date(s)</b>	<b>Time Spent— cumulative hours</b>	<b>Worked with (name, title or area)</b>	<b>Activity plus description</b>	<b>Summary and/or Reflection</b>	<b>Supervisor/ Cooperator initials</b>
9/9/13 – 9/11/13*	4 hrs. (a) + 3 hrs. (b) + 4 hrs. (c) = 11 hours (a) getting familiar with the plan (b) gathering information (c) updating the Action Plan	John Smith, Master Gardener Project volunteers (3)	Review School Gardens Collaboration Plans- action plans are in place for assisting with three school gardens, but the plans need to be updated. Each school is at a different stage in developing and maintaining their school garden.	The plan (in action plan format) for assisting with School Gardens at three schools was reviewed. I was asked to update items as needed. This took several phone calls to the lead volunteers at each project/school. I learned I have to take initiative and find out where I can get information in a short amount of time. These projects are large and require many volunteer hours for sustainability. Tasks must be assigned (to whom and when) to insure the work is done.	

**\*Example—your entries may vary. Add rows to accommodate your personal experience.**

**ADDENDUM B**

**If your placement is an Extension Office**, the following templates will be helpful and should be completed before actual internship work begins or during the first two weeks of your experience. These will be included in your final Internship Handbook. **You should include similar information sheets for other types of placements.** Having this kind of information readily available will be a valuable resource and facilitate efficiency.

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 a guide.**

The supervisor/cooperator 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.

**COUNTY/AREA INFORMATION**

**County and area description:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**OFFICE DESCRIPTION/INFORMATION**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## STAFF

Know all 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. (Or you can expand on their organizational chart. If someone has retired recently and not yet been replaced, you may be able to fill that role as an intern...or help them revise the position description to more efficiently address needs—*needs assessment*).

Staff Members

Title/Program Area

Role or Function

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Administrative Staff Members

Title/Program Area

Role or Function

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Specialists

Title/Program Area

Role or Function

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Other Personnel

Title/Program Area

Role or Function

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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.

Activity	Description or Summary	Date Completed	Worked with
<b>1. DAILY ROUTINE</b>			
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			
<b>2. ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES</b>			
a. Office manager			
b. Fiscal manager			
c. Word processing			
d. Clientele contact			
e. Office resource management			
f. Office			

communications			
<b>3. COMMUNICATIONS</b>			
a. Telephone procedures, long distance, etc.			
b. Incoming-outgoing mail procedures (includes Friday mail)			
c. Inter-office communications			
d. Office conferences (purpose, time, dates)			
<b>4. FINANCE AND REPORTING</b>			
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.)			
<b>5. PROGRAM OF WORK</b>			
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			

e. e. Expense accounts (forms, procedures, etc.)			
<b>6. RESOURCES AND PUBLICATIONS</b>			
a. Purchasing procedures			
b. Explanation and use of audio visual equipment and resources			
c. Mailing lists			
d. Duplicating procedures			
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)			

## COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES

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

Titles below will vary by organization/entity	Identify Purpose	List officers
Extension Council/Advisory		
Youth, 4-H Advisory Committee/ Foundation (adult/youth)		
4-H Council (youth)		
Consumer and Family Education Advisory Committee		
Agriculture and Natural Resources Advisory Committee		
Other councils, committees related to Extension		
Volunteers (4-H) (number/names?)		
Volunteers (Master Gardeners)		
Volunteers (Master Food Preservers)		
Other		

## COUNTY SURVEY (for Needs Assessment)

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 can determine where to start your programming. After you have completed this research, write a report stating what you have found using the categories below. (Needs assessments are done in all career areas. Other formats can be used for other organizations/businesses...see below for alternatives.) Here is a list of the areas in which information is needed:

1. General Description
  - a. County and state name
  - b. County location: part of the 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
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 and add a brief description noting any perceived needs
    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

## ALTERNATIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENTS

Various entities/organizations use a variety of needs assessments. Below is an example of a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats). IF your internship site uses a different format, please review with your course instructor—in most cases, it will be appropriate for use in your Handbook.

### SWOT Analysis Template

Situation being analysed: \_\_\_\_\_

The SWOT example below is for a new business opportunity. Many criteria can apply to more than one quadrant. Identify criteria appropriate to your own SWOT situation.

<p><b>criteria examples</b>            Advantages of proposition?            Capabilities?            Competitive advantages?            USP's (unique selling points)?            Resources, Assets, People?            Experience, knowledge, data?            Financial reserves, likely returns?            Marketing - reach, distribution, awareness?            Innovative aspects?            Location and geographical?            Price, value, quality?            Accreditations, qualifications, certifications?            Processes, systems, IT, communications?            Cultural, attitudinal, behavioral?            Management cover, succession?            Philosophy and values?</p>	<p><b>Strengths</b></p>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p>	<p><b>criteria examples</b>            Disadvantages of proposition?            Gaps in capabilities?            Lack of competitive strength?            Reputation, presence and reach?            Financials?            Known vulnerabilities?            Timescales, deadlines and pressures?            Cash flow, start-up cash-drain?            Continuity, supply chain robustness?            Effects on core activities, distraction?            Reliability of data, plan predictability?            Morale, commitment, leadership?            Accreditations, etc?            Processes and systems, etc?            Management cover, succession?</p>
<p><b>criteria examples</b>            Market developments?            Competitors' vulnerabilities?            Industry or lifestyle trends?            Technology development and innovation?            Global influences?            New markets, vertical, horizontal?            Niche target markets?            Geographical, export, import?            Tactics: eg, surprise, major contracts?            Business and product development?            Information and research?            Partnerships?            Volumes, production, economies?            Seasonal, weather, fashion influences?</p>	<p><b>Opportunities</b></p>	<p><b>Threats</b></p>	<p><b>criteria examples</b>            Political effects?            Legislative effects?            Environmental effects?            IT developments?            Competitor intentions - various?            Market demand?            New technologies, services, ideas?            Vital contracts and partners?            Sustaining internal capabilities?            Obstacles faced?            Insurmountable weaknesses?            Loss of key staff?            Sustainable financial backing?            Economy - home, abroad?            Seasonality, weather effects?</p>

© Alan Chapman 2005-09. Free PDF version of this tool and information about SWOT analysis methods are available at [www.businessballs.com/swotanalysisfreemplate.htm](http://www.businessballs.com/swotanalysisfreemplate.htm). This is a free resource from [www.businessballs.com](http://www.businessballs.com), which contains lots more useful tools, diagrams and materials.

Another example...

### SWOT Analysis Worksheet

- For instructions on using SWOT Analysis, visit [www.mindtools.com/rs/SWOT](http://www.mindtools.com/rs/SWOT) .
- For personal career or life strategy, visit [www.mindtools.com/rs/LifePlanWorkbook](http://www.mindtools.com/rs/LifePlanWorkbook) .

<b>Strengths</b> What is done well? What unique resources can be used? What do others see as strengths?	<b>Weaknesses</b> What could be improved? Where are there fewer resources? What are others likely to see as weaknesses?
<b>Opportunities</b> What opportunities present themselves? What trends could be taken advantage of? How can strengths be turned into opportunities?	<b>Threats</b> What threats could be harmful? What is the competition doing? What threats do weaknesses pose?

From: <http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/worksheets/SWOTAnalysisDownload.htm>

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