



Recreation Management and Leadership Student Internship Information and Checklist

The professional internship (Phase III, RECR 472) is a 12 credit-hour professional learning experience that is completed during summer quarter after Phase II. The internship requires professional involvement with an organization or company for a minimum of 400 clock hours, full time (40 hours per week) for 10 weeks. Students in the Therapeutic Recreation concentration must complete a 14-week internship (40 hours per week).

The Internship Information Canvas site contains information you need for searching for and successfully completing your internship (please check your email for an invitation to join the site). It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the information and to stay up-to-date with all messages and announcements posted from this site.

Finding a good internship is your responsibility, although your relationship with your faculty advisor will be a critical part of your search. Professionals in the field and former RML students will also be important resources to assist you. Many students feel intimidated, unclear, or indecisive when they begin the process, but find themselves gaining clarity and enthusiasm as they progress. The internship is an opportunity to learn. You will not be expected to know everything when you start. So, aim high and think big. Go for the internship you really want—the one that best serves your professional dreams.

The goals for an internship experience are to:

- Provide opportunities to engage in on-the-job application of classroom theories and techniques;
- Offer activities that assist in the development of professional skills in the planning, organization, and leadership of a leisure service;
- Provide challenging and stimulating tasks that entail significant contribution to the quality of life for persons served by the agency;
- Offer opportunities to identify strengths and weaknesses of the student's professional behavior;
- Allow the student to experience many aspects of the professional world while under competent supervision and guidance;
- Encourage interaction with professional practitioners in the student's area of expertise;
- Provide programming situations in which the student can investigate human interaction;
- Offer opportunities to evaluate the field as a professional career;
- Offer experiences in leading client/participant programs; and
- Provide an opportunity for observing and/or practice in administration and supervision.

Steps in Locating an Internship

1. Familiarize yourself with internship materials/requirements available on Canvas. Read through the information and checklist document, the weekly reports, evaluation forms, etc. This site will help answer questions during your search and acts as a good source for potential internship sites.
2. Think carefully about your career values, interests, and goals. What are your strengths and limitations in all areas of recreation leadership and management? What experiences do you need to continue to learn the things you'll need to know at graduation? What types of internships might provide the best learning environments for you?
3. Identify top priorities for your internship: location, population, type of agency/organization.
4. Meet with your faculty advisor:
 - a. Clarify your interests and your internship goals and priorities.
 - b. Discuss ideas for potential internship sites.
 - c. Get names of former and current recreation management and leadership students who have completed internships at sites you're interested in.
 - d. Reflect on your practicum visits, Internship Day, fieldwork experiences, and related volunteer and job experiences.
5. Examine internship resources on Canvas. It has extensive information on internship sites of previous phases and links to relevant internet websites.
6. Using the information and resources provided on Canvas and with support from your faculty advisor, identify 3-5 potential internship sites.
7. Develop a list of internship sites that interest you (website URL, phone numbers, emails). Research information and familiarize yourself with their services; get a correctly spelled name for a contact person; inquire about how to best communicate with them, etc. Keep a folder/file with information on potential sites, keeping good notes and reflections and tracking dates and nature of correspondence (e-mails, phone calls, when materials were sent, etc.).
8. Develop or update your resume and write an inquiry/cover letter to send to possible internship sites. Get feedback from Career Services Center <http://www.wvu.edu/careers/> and/or your faculty advisor.
9. Email inquiries to and make phone or face-to-face contacts with internship sites. Clearly state your interests and the nature of the internship. Don't be discouraged if additional follow-up is required. Please note that some places will already have an understanding of our internship program. The Agency Internship Information and Planning Form document available on Canvas is one source you can send to those agencies needing additional information.

Some important things that you may want to include in your correspondence/conversations:

- Internship is a professional, senior-level, 15 credit-hour professional development experience
 - Minimum 400 hours and minimum of 10 weeks
 - Your professional goals and interests
 - What you bring of value to the internship
 - What interests you about their organization/program
10. Examine the responses you get; determine which sites are most interesting to you.
 - Carefully consider the person who would be your supervisor. Will they be a good mentor?
 11. Decide which internship is best for you among those offered to you. Meet with your faculty advisor to discuss your next steps.

Internship Checklist

The following checklist is intended to act as a roadmap for navigating the tasks required to finalize your internship placement. This checklist is meant to be used in conjunction with a close working relationship with a faculty advisor.

Develop 5-8 personal goals for the internship based on your professional interests, prior experience, and areas for growth.

Outline/summarize fieldwork hours on the RML Fieldwork Requirements and Log (available on Canvas).

Develop a draft resume and cover letter. Use Career Services Center resources and faculty advice for designing and reviewing your drafts.

Meet with your faculty advisor to review goals, confirm fieldwork hours, discuss internship possibilities, and go over resume and cover letter.

Research potential internship sites and make initial agency contacts.

Provide internship information to sites you are considering (Agency Internship Information and Planning Form document available on Canvas).

Present final internship site selection to faculty advisor for approval.

Send the Internship Agreement Form to the agency (form available on Canvas and the RML website). Ask them to fill it out, sign it, and return it to you (scanned and emailed copy is fine).

Sign the Internship Agreement Form and send it to your faculty advisor for final approval and signature (scanned and emailed copy is fine). Faculty advisor will then contact your supervisor.

Please make sure that your internship site and faculty supervisors have **completely-signed copies BEFORE your internship begins**.

Develop specific internship goals that you would like to achieve while on the experience. This can be done working with your faculty advisor and your site supervisor (see next page).

IMPORTANT: Register for internship credits: Summer quarter RECR 472. You will **NOT** receive credit for the internship if you do not register for the course.

