



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

Department of Agricultural
Education & Communications™

**Agricultural Communications
Internship Manual**

Updated January 2017

INTRODUCTION

Congratulations. Your internship is an important first step toward a successful career.

Internships are one of the most valuable learning experiences you can have during your collegiate career. During your internship, you will gain real-world experience in the field of your interest. In this manual you will find all the necessary forms and details that must be reviewed and completed prior, during and after your internship.

Please review this content carefully. Within the agricultural communications discipline, there are many diverse internship opportunities. However, each ACOM student enrolled in internship credit hours is expected to complete the same course requirements.

INTERNSHIP MANUAL

- Your internship must be a legitimate communications internship. If you are not sure what constitutes a legitimate internship, please visit with your academic adviser.
- Your internship cannot be with a member of your family.
- You must enroll in ACOM 4000-001 (or ACOM 4000-002 for out-of-state internships) to receive internship credit.
- You must complete the contract and write your initial reflection prior to starting your internship.
 - Failure to turn in these documents on time will result in being dropped from internship hours.
- Semester credit hour enrollment shall be commensurate with length and time of the internship. The student should negotiate this with his or her academic adviser.
- If problems or disagreements arise during the internship, contact your faculty adviser as soon as possible so that a resolution can be achieved.
- Your supervisor must complete an internship evaluation before you give your final internship presentation.
 - This evaluation will be a web-based survey sent to your supervisor by the internship instructor. When your internship is complete, contact the internship instructor so that a link to the survey can be sent to your supervisor. You will not receive credit until your supervisor completes the survey!
- Your final examination will include an oral presentation and a portfolio of your work during the internship. Failure to complete your final examination may result in failure of the class.

PROFESSIONALISM

You are representing the Department of Agricultural Education and Communications, the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, Texas Tech University, and most importantly, yourself during your internship. Please represent all of these entities with the utmost pride and professionalism.

Your time at your internship will be spent applying and developing skills and abilities relative to your degree and career plans. This is YOUR internship and your chance to shine for a potential employer. You will be on time for work, dress appropriately, and contact both the employer and your faculty adviser when problems arise.

Before you begin and during your internship, please adhere to this professionalism checklist

- Google yourself – Many employers will do their homework on you.
- Check your social media accounts for any comments or pictures that could harm your reputation.
- Order a free credit report from Equifax, Experian, or TransUnion.
- Make sure your outgoing message on your voice mail sounds professional.
- Use your TTU email for professional correspondence.
- Be aware many employers will require a drug test.
- Be aware internet information is cached and can be found after you have removed it.

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR INTERNSHIP

Your First Week

Your organization may offer a formal orientation or may show you around and make introductions. Take advantage of this opportunity to get to know more about the company. Although some organization may not offer an orientation, you should observe the following:

- How do people dress?
- Are they formal or informal when they approach each other?
- How do people communicate? (email, phone, in person)
- What are their work habits?
- Does your supervisor work through lunch and then stay late?

During your first week, expect to be introduced to the top officials, meet other interns, learn about the history and mission of the organization, and review organizational policies, such as absenteeism, use of property, sexual harassment, safety practices, dress codes, and specific policies. It is highly recommended you read about the organization in advance to find out about the history and the mission. Ask to attend meetings with departments and have a tour. Arrange to meet key people in the organization. Take advantage of workshops or seminars.

Remember, it is your responsibility to get the most out of this experience.

Tips for a Successful Internship

- Listen more than talk.
- Show respect for all people.
- Show an interest in and commitment to attending organized sessions for interns.
- Come prepared for work.
- Dress in appropriate professional clothing.
- Show support for colleagues by attending social functions.
- Treat your co-workers as you would like to be treated.
- Help out willingly when asked.
- Establish credibility by performing your job competently.
- Ask good questions; avoid asking questions about skills that you are expected to know.

Avoid Certain Behaviors

- Criticizing people, policies or procedures.
- Working on homework or other school tasks or surfing the Internet.
- Spending too much time socializing that you are unable to perform assigned tasks.
- Acting like a know-it-all, but failing to demonstrate competence in your area.
- Criticizing your supervisor, or going behind his/her back to get something.

The Basic Work Requirements

- Report when scheduled.
- Notify your supervisor if you cannot be at work.
- Keep your supervisor informed about what you are working on.
- Take appropriate safety precautions if working around people and equipment.
- If problems arise . . . You are encouraged to talk directly with the person with whom you have the problem first. If the problem is with a coworker that cannot be resolved, then talk with your site supervisor. You are encouraged to address the issues, come up with solutions and reach an agreeable solution. If this cannot happen, then approach your faculty supervisor for advice. Always maintain good communication, respect for others and an understanding of the expectations.

REQUIRED ASSIGNMENTS & EVALUATIONS

While you are enrolled in internship credit hours, you are required to complete a set of assignments and evaluations. These assignments and evaluations will be used to assess your performance in your internship. (Please pay attention to formatting guidelines for each assignment. Failure to follow formatting guidelines will result in point deductions.

A total of 400 points are possible within the internship course.

You will receive a final grade for the enrolled internship credit hours based on the following assignments and evaluations:

1. Internship Contract & Agreement – (50 points)

All students completing internships for credit hours must first complete the internship contract and agreement form (Appendix A) before the end of the second week of your internship. The completion of this contract means your academic adviser deems the specified duties and responsibilities make your work experience a valid internship worthy of credit hours.

- A hard copy containing the signatures from you and your academic adviser must be provided to the internship instructor (Lindsay Kennedy).
- A digital version of the contract and agreement (all 3 pages in PDF format) must be uploaded to Blackboard.

2. Initial Internship Expectation Narrative – (25 points)

You are expected to write a short narrative (1-2 pages, double-spaced) that details your expectations for your internship. This narrative should be uploaded to Blackboard no later than the end of your second week at your internship. *When you give your presentation at the conclusion of your internship, be sure to include this document in your portfolio.* Your narrative should answer the following questions:

- In your narrative, answer the following questions:
- What are your expectations for this experience?
- What do you hope to accomplish in this internship?
- What are your specific goals?
- What were your initial reactions to your first few days?
- What are you looking forward to?
- Is there anything you are disappointed about?
- What is going to be your biggest challenge in your internship?

- How does this internship relate to your long-term educational or career goals?
- How are you planning to overcome it?

Narrative Formatting Guidelines:

- One to two pages - (Must be at least one full page to receive full credit).
- Place your name and the assignment in the header of the document, right aligned. (Example: Jane Doe, Internship Expectation Reflection) – Do NOT include a title or information other than your narrative in the body of the document.
- One-inch margins
- Double-spaced
- Times New Roman, 12-point font
- *Please refer to Blackboard to see a formatting example.*

3. Internship Reflection Narrative – (50 points)

You are expected to write a two-page narrative that details your experiences at your internship. This document should be uploaded to Blackboard within one week of completing your internship. *When you give your presentation at the conclusion of your internship, be sure to include this document in your portfolio.* Your narrative should answer the following questions:

- Were your expectations for this experience realistic?
- Did you accomplish your goals during your internship experience? Why or why not?
- What did you learn about yourself through this experience?
- How did you grow and change professionally?
- What specific skills did you develop and/or enhance?
- What was the most rewarding aspect of this internship?
- What was the most challenging aspect of this internship?
- What changes would you make (in your own behavior, attitude, performance, available opportunities, etc) if you had the chance to do this internship over again?
- What recommendations would you give to other students doing an internship at this location?

Narrative Formatting Guidelines:

- Two pages - (Must be two full pages to receive full credit).
- Place your name and the assignment in the header of the document, right aligned. (Example: Jane Doe, Final Internship Reflection) – Do NOT include a title or information other than your narrative in the body of the document.
- One-inch margins
- Double-spaced
- Times New Roman, 12-point font
- *Please refer to Blackboard to see a formatting example.*

4. Internship Presentation – (100 points)

At the end of the semester you are enrolled in internship credit hours, you will present a final oral presentation about your internship. Ideally, this will be completed during the last week of classes of the semester of your internship. If necessary, other scheduling arrangement will be made.

The internship coordinator will schedule a day (or two) in which all students who are completing their internship credit hours may sign up for a 15-minute presentation time slot. Students who are no shows without prior communication with the internship instructor before their scheduled presentation time will receive a zero for this assignment.

Your presentation will be made to the internship instructor and your academic adviser (if their schedule permits).

Your final presentation may be PowerPoint, Prezi, or any other media to demonstrate what you have learned. Your presentation needs to answer these questions:

- Where did you intern?
- What were your responsibilities?
- What did you learn, and what was your biggest area of growth?
- What was your favorite/ most exciting part of your internship?
- What was your least favorite/ exciting part of your internship?
- What are your plans for the future based upon this internship?

5. Professional Portfolio – (100 points)

During a student's internship, they should collect and archive examples of their work to include a professional portfolio. This portfolio must be given to the internship instructor during the student's internship presentation. These work samples in the portfolio should represent the student's best work and overall experience during the internship.

ALL students must turn in a portfolio. No exceptions.

Portfolio Requirements

- The portfolio must be bound and professionally presented. (Using a three-ring binder is acceptable as long as items are organized and professionally presented.)
- Content should include examples of the student's writing, design, photography, web design, social media management, or other tangible examples that demonstrate what the student learned during the internship.
 - *This can include, but is not limited to, writing samples, published articles in your organization's newsletter or magazine, photography, print materials developed by the intern, letters, presentations, advertisements, etc.*
 - If your internship was video-based, bring a DVD or CD of your work. You may also present video material during your internship.
 - Your portfolio must also include copies of the assignments you posted to Blackboard including: 1) a copy of your internship contract, 2) initial expectations narrative, and 3) internship reflection narrative.

6. Thank You Note to Supervisor – (25 points)

You are expected to write a thank you note to your internship supervisor at the conclusion of your internship. At your final presentation, you must provide your internship adviser with this thank you note and a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Your internship adviser will then mail your thank you letter to your internship supervisor.

7. Supervisor Evaluation – (50 points)

Near the conclusion of your internship, the internship instructor will send an email containing a link to an online evaluation. In this evaluation, your supervisor will rate your performance as an intern. The internship instructor will be the only individual who sees the results of this evaluation. The student being evaluation should not be involved in this evaluation process. Filling out your own evaluation is considered plagiarism and can result in failure from this course and possible consequences at the university level.

ASSIGNMENT GRADING

The assignments required in this course, ACOM 4000, will be graded just like any other course you are enrolled in during the semester. The assignments must be completed and turned in on Blackboard by their respective deadlines, unless otherwise noted.

You will receive a specific number of points for each assignment as noted above. The number of points you earn for each assignment will be based on:

- The quality of work you turn in for the assignment.
 - *Narratives and assignments should be absent of grammar, spelling and punctuation errors.*
- Student's ability to follow each assignment's formatting guidelines and requirements.
- The timeliness in submitting each assignment based on your internship.

Presentations will be graded on:

- Overall quality of oral presentation.
 - *Student displays an understanding of their job responsibilities.*
 - *Student provides a thorough overview of their responsibilities, challenges, achievements, and benefits from their internship.*
- Quality of the presentation materials.
 - Student developed and presented a quality PowerPoint/Prezi/video presentation.
 - Presentation is absent of GSP errors.
 - Presentation follows the guidelines specified in the assignment.
- Student's ability to answer questions about their internship.

Professional portfolios will be graded on:

- Overall quality
 - Portfolio materials are presented in a bound manner.
 - Materials are organized. (Tabs may be used to organize content).
 - Portfolio displays the student's effort in assembling their materials.
- Completeness
 - Portfolio is a comprehensive example of the student's work during their internship.
 - Portfolio contains all the required materials as specified by the assignment.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **I completed my internship last semester, but I am enrolled in internship credit hours this semester. How do I complete the assignments?**

This scenario is very common among our students. When you begin an internship, you should receive the internship manual containing all the information and requirements associated with the internship process. It is advised that you go ahead and complete the assignments listed in the manual as you complete your internship. When you enroll in internship credit hours, you will have access to the course's Blackboard page. You can then upload those assignments to the Blackboard portals for each assignment. If you did not complete the assignments while you were doing your internship, complete them once you enroll in the course.

- **I am going to continue working at my internship after this semester. When should I do my presentation?**

Many students continue to work at the business/organization where they were completing their internship. This is a good thing! Students should complete their presentation and turn in their portfolio at the end of the semester when they are enrolled in internship credit hours.

- **Who will be in the room when I give my internship presentations?**

The internship instructor and your academic adviser will attend your presentation. You may invite other individuals to your presentation, but you should make the internship instructor aware of any other individuals who may attend prior to your presentation time.

- **Where will the internship presentations take place?**

Internship presentations will take place in the conference room located in the Agricultural Education and Communications building (Room 215) unless otherwise noted.

- **My internship does not allow me to keep or save my work items. What should I include in my portfolio?**

Some students work in places where the supervisors are not comfortable with the student keeping or saving items from their work. It is advised you discuss with your supervisor at the beginning of your internship about what items you can keep for your portfolio. ALL students must turn in a portfolio. No exceptions.

- **I did not produce many tangible items during my internship. What do I include in my portfolio?**

If your internship required you to complete tasks such as plan events, work at trade shows, etc., you may have fewer tangible items to include in your portfolio. Therefore, you should take photographs of the events and provide some sort of documentation of your work. You may also write a brief narrative to explain individual work responsibilities or events you participated in during your internship if you are unable to provide any other tangible examples of your work.

- **If I remain in my internship past the semester when I am enrolled in credit hours and wait to give my presentation during the following semester, how will I be graded?**

If you choose to give your internship presentation in the semester following the semester you registered for credit hours, you will receive a “PR” grade for that semester. This means your status is “in progress” and your performance has been satisfactory. A “PR” will not count against your grade point average. Once you have completed the internship requirements, your grade will be updated to the grade you earned.

- **Does everyone enrolled in internship credit hours get an “A”?**

No. Your grade will depend on your level of performance both in your internship and on the required assignments associated with the ACOM 4000 course.

- **How do I determine how many credit hours I will receive for my internship?**

The number of credit hours you will enroll in for your internship are determined by your academic adviser. Several factors are used to determine the number of hours, including length of internship, number of hours you will work each week in the internship, location (will you have to move for a semester?), etc. Contact your adviser for further information.

Still have a question? Contact the internship instructor, Lindsay Kennedy at Lindsay.kennedy@ttu.edu. Do not wait until the end of your internship or the end of your semester to ask questions as this can potentially have an adverse effect on your grade for ACOM 4000.

APPENDIX A

Internship Contract & Agreement

(3 pages)

Before completing your internship, you must complete this contract. There are three parts: the checklist, the agreement, and your signatures.

Internship Checklist

As part of your internship contract, you must complete this checklist. It signifies that you have read and understood the information provided in the internship manual. Please initial in the space provided to signify that you have read the internship manual.

Before your Internship

- _____ I have read the internship handbook.
- _____ I understand this must be a legitimate communications internship approved by my academic adviser.
- _____ I have discussed credit hours with my adviser.
- _____ I have read and understood the professionalism section and will act in a professional manner.
- _____ I have enrolled in ACOM 4000.
- _____ I have provided a signed internship contract to the internship instructor.
- _____ I have completed my internship expectation reaction.
- _____ I will upload a digital copy of my signed internship contract to Blackboard.

During your Internship

- _____ I will report to my internship when I am scheduled.
- _____ I will arrive at work on time, exhibit a positive attitude, and show a willingness to learn throughout my internship.
- _____ I will dress appropriately for the job.
- _____ I will contact my academic adviser if any problems arise during my internship.
- _____ I will save examples of my work for my professional portfolio.

At End of Your Internship

- _____ I will make sure my internship supervisor completes the online survey evaluation.
- _____ I will create a final presentation.
- _____ I will write a thank you letter to my internship supervisor.
- _____ I will place my thank you note to my supervisor in an addressed and stamped envelope that will be turned in during my presentation.
- _____ I will provide a professional portfolio during my presentation.

Internship Contract & Agreement, Page 2 of 3

Internship Agreement

As part of your internship contract, you must complete this agreement form. It provides the necessary information for faculty within the Department of Agricultural Education and Communications to stay in contact with your internship supervisor. Please provide information for the following questions and statements:

General Information

Your Name: _____

Academic Adviser: _____

Internship Title & Location: _____

Internship Supervisor: _____

Note: Internship Supervisor should be the person overseeing your work and the most likely person to evaluate you at the end of the internship.

Internship Address: _____

Internship Supervisor Email: _____

Internship Supervisor Telephone: _____

Internship Logistics

Internship Start Date: _____

Internship End Date: _____

Is the internship paid? Amount? _____

Estimated hours per week: _____

Hours of semester credit (as agreed upon by your academic adviser): _____

Internship Duties and Requirements

In the space provided, please describe the duties and requirements of the proposed internship. Discuss any major projects or daily tasks that are expected:

Internship Contract & Agreement, Page 3 of 3

Internship Contract

This internship agreement has been made between _____(adviser)
and _____ (student name) on _____(date).

By providing my signature at the bottom of the page, I agree to abide by the guidelines of the internship manual throughout my internship.

(Printed Adviser Name)

(Printed Student Name)

(Signed Adviser Name)

(Signed Student Name)

(Date)

(Date)