

Department of Agricultural & Applied Economics

INTERNSHIP POLICY

The internship program in the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics (AAEC), Texas Tech University, provides select students an opportunity to obtain experience in actual managerial situations. The basic purposes of the program are to:

- Provide students an opportunity to develop a meaningful and relevant professional experience in a business firm or public agency.
- Offer an opportunity for students to explore a field of interest concurrently with their classroom studies and improve their abilities to make a career decision.
- Increase student motivation by demonstrating practical applications of principles and theories learned in formal courses.
- Provide a supply of prospective employees who have had managerial training and experience in positions with industry and public agencies.

The program is administered by the department through Internship Committee, led by the departmental Internship Coordinator. The program provides learning experience for motivated students to observe and participate in managerial decision-making processes. The program also requires an educational commitment from participating firms and agencies to provide appropriate experiences, supervision, and observation. The program is not designed to be a work program where the intern is expected to perform a job normally performed by a member of the firm or agency.

REQUIREMENTS:

The internship program is elective (not required). To be eligible, students must have at least Junior standing, a minimum TTU (institutional) of 2.5 overall, and 2.75 in AAEC courses. Prior to enrollment, students must have completed AAEC 3315 and AAEC 2401. Other courses may be required as prerequisites for specific internships at the discretion of the Internship Committee.

Enrollment is not limited to AAEC majors; however, the minimum requirements apply to all candidates. An enrolled student is required to register for credit hours in AAEC 4000, with a maximum of 12 credit hours. The number of hours to be awarded credit is determined by the Internship Committee. Some of the preceding requirements may be waived in exceptional cases.

Credit will not be given for an internship, which begins prior to receiving approval from the Internship Coordinator.

SCHEDULING AND EVALUATION:

The internship provides a student an off-campus educational experience consisting of placement with an agribusiness firm or agency for a duration of approximately 13-15 weeks. The program is available during the fall, spring, and summer sessions. On completion of the off-campus portion of the program,

in addition to the final internship report, the student may be asked to present a seminar describing their experiences. The seminar should relate to the formal training received and the professional experience at the business or agency. Faculty, students, and cooperating firm/agency representatives may be invited to the seminar.

Upon successful completion, credit is granted for predetermined credit hours of AAEC 4000, recorded in the respective term. The credit hours on the internship program can be used for free elective credit only and may not be substituted for required courses in AAEC departmental programs. The final grade assignment depends on the evaluation of the intern performance given by the participating firm or agency, the midterm progress report submitted by the intern, and the final written report. The final grade will be assigned by the Internship Coordinator in consultation with members of the Internship Committee. One copy of the final report will be given to the cooperating firm or agency and another copy will be retained in the departmental library.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INTERN:

Students interested in an internship must apply (using the online application form) before mid-semester prior to the term when they plan to be off campus.

Students are required to submit a written midterm report on their experiences to the Internship Coordinator. The midterm report is three to five paragraphs, submitted as the body of an email, briefly describing the intern's understanding of (1) the general operations of the firm/agency at the intern's location, (2) the primary responsibilities of the intern's direct supervisor, and (3) the identity of and the needs of the primary customer who is serviced from the intern's location. The midterm report must be submitted by October 31, March 31, and June 30 for fall, spring, and summer internships, respectively.

The final internship report should be written using prescribed guidelines. The final report must be submitted before the final examination week of the respective semester for graduating students.

Non-graduating students may request an extension of the report deadline up to four weeks after the term in which the internship was served.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL AND APPLIED ECONOMICS

The departmental Internship Coordinator, in consultation with the members of the departmental Internship Committee, will inform the applicant the final determination on admission to the internship within two weeks of the receipt of the application. The Internship Committee reserves the right to interview each candidate to determine eligibility.

This Internship Committee will exercise the duties of approving the participating firms. Also, the committee will monitor and evaluate the intern's performance.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF COOPERATING FIRMS AND AGENCIES:

The firms and agencies cooperating in the internship program may interview potential internship participants. Off-campus experience should include a broad overview of the operational and managerial functions of the firm or agency in which the intern is serving. The program should include an opportunity for the intern to meet with top administrators to observe the decision-making process, staff meetings and to discuss operational problems.

The firm or agency will provide a final evaluation of the intern's performance. This evaluation should be completed during the last week of the internship, discussed with the intern, and sent to the Internship Coordinator. In the evaluation, the intern's supervisor should comment on strengths and deficiencies of the intern and suggest types of training which could have improved the intern's performance.

The firm or agency should provide appropriate workspace for interns. This should be a location, where the intern work with a reasonable degree of privacy. The cooperating firm or agency may contribute to the intern an educational stipend to cover extra expenses beyond those normally incurred in residence on campus. The stipend contributed by the firm or agency is subject to the following: 1) The stipend is not payment for past, present, or future services rendered; 2) The stipend is solely for the educational training and development of the intern, such that all benefits to the firm from the intern's activities are incidental; and 3) The stipend is not to compensate for normal educational expenses incurred by full-time students while in school.

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