

Department of Agricultural & Applied Economics
Texas Tech University

UNDERGRADUATE INTERNSHIP POLICY

The Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics (AAEC) undergraduate internship program at Texas Tech University allows select students to gain experience in an actual professional work environment. The primary purposes of the program are to:

- Provide students with an opportunity to develop a meaningful and relevant professional experience in a business firm, a public agency, or a relevant organization.
- Offer students an opportunity 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.
- Supply prospective employees with managerial and other substantive training and experience in positions with industry and public agencies.

The department administers the program through the Internship Committee, which is led by the department's Internship Coordinator. The program provides a learning experience for motivated students to observe and participate in a professional work environment. 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 usually performed by a member of the firm or agency.

REQUIREMENTS:

The internship program is an elective and not a requirement. To be eligible, students must have at least Junior standing and a minimum TTU GPA of 2.5 overall. Before enrollment, students must have completed AAEC 3315 and AAEC 2301. Exceptions to these requirements may be permitted at the discretion of the Internship Coordinator.

Enrollment is not limited to AAEC majors; the minimum requirements apply to all candidates. An enrolled student is required to register for a maximum of 6 credit hours in AAEC 4000. Credit will not be given for internships completed before receiving approval for the internship.

SCHEDULING AND EVALUATION:

The internship provides a student with an off-campus educational experience consisting of placement with a firm or agency for several weeks, depending on predetermined credit hours of AAEC 4000. 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 professional experience at the business or agency. Faculty, students, and representatives from cooperating firms or agencies may be invited to the seminar.

Upon successful completion, credit is granted for the predetermined number of credit hours of AAEC 4000, as recorded in the respective terms. The credit hours from the internship program can be applied toward free elective credit and one three-hour course from the AGBS Curriculum Group (for Agribusiness and Dual Degree majors). They may not be substituted for required courses in AAEC departmental programs. The final grade assignment is based on evaluating the intern's performance as

reported by the participating firm or agency, the midterm progress report submitted by the intern, and the final written report. The Internship Coordinator will assign the final grade and may consult with other members of the Internship Committee. The Internship Coordinator will retain one copy of the final report.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INTERN

Students interested in an internship must apply (using the online application form: https://www.depts.ttu.edu/aaec/Undergraduate-internships/internship_application.php) before mid-semester of the term before the term they plan to be off campus.

Students must submit a written midterm report on their experiences to the Internship Coordinator. The midterm report is three to five paragraphs (12 pt. font, double spaced) 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.

The final internship report should follow the prescribed guidelines (https://www.depts.ttu.edu/aaec/Undergraduate-internships/report_guidelines.php) and 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 will inform the applicant of the final determination on admission to the internship within two weeks of receiving the application. The Internship Coordinator reserves the right to interview each candidate to determine eligibility.

This Internship Coordinator will approve the participating firms and monitor and evaluate the intern's performance. The Internship Coordinator will serve as the intern's direct supervisor.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF COOPERATING FIRMS AND AGENCIES

The firms and agencies participating in the internship program may conduct interviews with potential internship participants. The off-campus experience should include a broad overview of the operational and managerial functions of the firm or agency the intern serves. The program should also allow the intern to meet with top administrators to observe the decision-making process, attend staff meetings, and 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 emailed directly to the Internship Coordinator (sukant.misra@ttu.edu). In the evaluation, the intern's supervisor should comment on the intern's strengths and deficiencies and suggest types of training that could have improved the intern's performance.

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