



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

Department of Agricultural
Education & Communications™

**Agricultural Communications
Internship Manual**

May 2020

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INTRODUCTION

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 REQUIREMENTS

- 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 4000-051 for out-of-state internships) to receive internship credit. Please see ENROLLING IN ACOM 4000 for more details.
- 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.
- You must complete the contract and write your initial reflection prior to starting your internship.
- 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 the end of the semester when you are enrolled in internship credit.
- 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 the digital (video) presentation and an online portfolio of your work during the internship. Failure to complete your final examination may result in failure of the class.

ENROLLING IN ACOM 4000

As discussed above, students must enroll in ACOM 4000 during the semester when they are completing the internship in order to receive credit for participation in an internship. The ACOM degree program requires all students complete at minimum of three (3) internship credit hours before they can graduate. This hour requirement was updated from the previous requirement of two hours.

Variable Credit Hours

ACOM 4000 is a **variable credit hour course**. This means you must MANUALLY change the number of hours you will be enrolling in for the semester. Please review APPENDIX B for instructions on changing variable credit hours.

Course Permit

To be able to enroll in ACOM 4000, you must first receive a permit through the AEC departmental office. Without a permit, you will not be able to register for the course. To do so, you must contact the internship course instructor, Dr. Lindsay Kennedy, to request a permit. Once permitted, you may enroll in the course.

In-state and Out-of-state ACOM 4000 Sections

There are two sections for ACOM 4000: 001 is the in-state section and 051 is the out-of-state section. If you are completing an internship anywhere in the state of Texas, you will enroll in section 001. If your internship requires you to leave Texas for the duration of your internship (e.g., a congressional internship in Washington, D.C.), you will enroll in section 051. Both of these sections require permits before you can enroll in them.

COMMUNICATION WITH INTERNSHIP INSTRUCTOR

While enrolled in ACOM 4000, you will receive regular communication from the course instructor, Dr. Lindsay Kennedy. This communication will be in the form of emails or Blackboard correspondence. It is your responsibility as a student to regularly check your email and Blackboard for updates related to the course.

If you have questions regarding your internship, please first refer to the course Blackboard page, internship FAQs (found on Blackboard and in this document), and this internship manual. If your question has not been answered, please contact the internship course instructor via email for further assistance.

Please note: Your internship contract and number of credit hours is determined by your academic adviser – not the internship instructor. For questions related to the number of hours you should enroll in or items related to your agreement, please contact your academic adviser.

Internship Instructor Contact Information

Dr. Lindsay W. Kennedy
Agricultural Communications, Assistant Professor of Practice
Texas Tech University
Department of Agricultural Education & Communications
Room 108
Box 42131, Lubbock, Texas 79404-2131
806-834-8240
lindsay.kennedy@ttu.edu

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.

Deadlines

Due to the diverse nature of the internships, timelines, and enrollment schedules for each student, the deadlines for internship assignments will follow a different structure than your normal courses. The general rule of thumb is as follows:

- You should have your internship contract signed, completed, and submitted (original hard copy) to the internship instructor immediately after it is completed, regardless of when you enroll in internship credit hours.
- The internship information assessment and the internship initial reflection narrative should be completed and submitted on Blackboard within the first two weeks of the semester when you enroll in ACOM 4000. If you are enrolling in credit hours one semester and completing your internship in another, you should complete your internship initial reflection narrative before starting your internship, save it, and submit it when you enroll in ACOM 4000.
- All other assignments should be completed at the conclusion of your internship, but before the end of the semester when you enroll in ACOM 4000.

Assignments & Point Values

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

1. Internship Contract & Agreement – (25 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 (Dr. 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 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.

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:

- MS Word Document
- Narrative must be written in paragraph form; do not use numbered or bulleted lists to answer questions.
- 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:

- MS Word Document
- Narrative must be written in paragraph form; do not use numbered or bulleted lists to answer questions.
- 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 Video – (100 points)

At the end of the semester you are enrolled in internship credit hours, you will produce a final video about your internship.

This video project will challenge students to use the technical skills learned during their ACOM degree program to produce a brief two- to three-minute video that details the experiences, key learning opportunities, and major take-aways from their internship. Your video should address the following information:

- 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?

There are many options available for the production of your video. Students are free to utilize Adobe Premiere, iMovie, QuickTime, or any video production software application they wish to use. Videos should be high-quality with no pixilation. Videos can be uploaded to YouTube or Microsoft OneDrive, and then shared (using a link) to Blackboard for grading. Students are encouraged to use the following elements in their video:

- Audio voice over narration
- B-roll video and/or still images that visually communicate your internship experiences.
- Interviews with co-workers
- Video titles and nameplates

Students will be graded on their effort and attention to detail when producing this final internship video project. It is the student's responsibility to ensure the shared link to the video is working and viewable by the instructor. A working link **MUST** be provided in

order for the student to receive credit for the video. Un-exported Premiere files or other incomplete video projects will NOT receive credit. It is the student's responsibility to follow all directions when creating, exporting, and sharing a working link to their video.

Videos may be shared to the Department of Agricultural Education and Communication's social media accounts.

5. **Digital Portfolio – (100 points)**

As our ACOM program evolves to reflect the digital nature of the agricultural communications industry, we want to also encourage our students to develop their professional digital presence. Students will develop and submit an online portfolio rather than turning in a printed and bound internship portfolio.

Many students enrolled in ACOM 4000 will have already developed an online portfolio during your coursework in the ACOM degree plan. It is completely acceptable to add the internship materials to that portfolio for submission in ACOM 4000.

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

ALL students must submit an online portfolio. No exceptions.

Portfolio Requirements

Content should include examples of the student's writing, design, photography, web design, social media management, and/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, include a YouTube link or embed the video in your website. Your portfolio must also include digital assignments you posted to Blackboard including: 1) a copy of your internship contract, 2) initial expectations narrative, and 3) internship reflection narrative.

Agricultural communications is a diverse discipline. Therefore, it is understood that no two internship experiences are alike. We purposefully designed the ACOM internship program to be flexible and representative of the diverse nature of our industry. Therefore, it is your responsibility, as the student, to do your part in collecting, documenting, and archiving as many examples of your internship work experience as possible.

In instances when your internship may not allow you to keep or post documents, as often seen with governmental internships, get creative: interview a co-worker about their job responsibilities, write a narrative about a specific policy or issue that is of interest to you and your career goals, or produce a video about the organization or entity where you are employed. **Simply saying you "couldn't keep anything" from your internship is not acceptable.**

Remember, this internship portfolio is meant for you to create and have something that will be of use to you as you seek out full-time employment after graduation. Make this something you'll be proud of!

ALL students must turn in a portfolio. No exceptions.

6. Thank You Note to Supervisor – (50 points)

You are expected to write a thank you note to your internship supervisor at the conclusion of your internship. Before the last day of the semester, you must provide your internship adviser with this thank you note and a self-addressed, stamped envelope. **Do NOT seal the envelope.** The internship instructor, Dr. Kennedy, 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 to your internship supervisor 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

- **When should I enroll in internship credit hours?**

Beginning in fall 2020, students MUST enroll in internship credit only when actually working in their internship. Students may no longer complete an internship one semester and then enroll in credit hours in another semester. Therefore, if you secure an internship in April, and that experience will start in May, you must enroll in internship credit for summer.

- **I am going to continue working at my internship after this semester. When should I do submit my final internship video and online portfolio?**

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

- **Do I still have to do an internship presentation?**

Starting in the fall of 2018, students will no longer do a face-to-face internship presentation. Instead, students will produce an internship video that they will upload to YouTube. Please refer to the assignment requirements for details on the video presentation.

- **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 an online 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 online internship if you are unable to provide any other tangible examples of your work.

- **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. It is possible to fail the internship course if you do not turn in assignments.

- **What does a “PR” grade mean?**

A PR grade simply means the work you are doing is still “in progress” and a final grade has not yet been awarded to the student. Students in the ACOM 4000 internship course commonly receive PR grades when they continue their internship work beyond a defined semester in which they are enrolled in internship credit hours. Once the student

completes all of their final assignments, a “change of grade” request is made by the internship instructor to give the student their final earned grade.

To be clear, failing to turn in assignments is NOT grounds for receiving a PR grade. Only students who have satisfactorily completed their requirements while continuing their internships into the next semester will be given a PR grade.

- **Is it possible to fail the ACOM 4000 internship course?**

Absolutely. Failure to turn in the required assignments and failure to respond to communication from the internship instructor or their academic adviser about internship course-related items can result in a failure from 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, Dr. 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.

Changing Variable Credit Course Hours

Once you enroll in a course that is variable credit hours, the system will automatically enroll you in the minimum number of hours for that course.

REGISTER FOR CLASSES

Find Classes | Enter CRNs | My Schedule and Options

Enter Your Search Criteria

Term: Fall 2014 TTU

Subject:

Course Number:

Keyword:

Search | Clear | Advanced Search

Schedule | Schedule Details | Summary

Class Schedule for Fall 2014 TTU

Time	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1pm		Interpersonal Communication		Interpersonal Communication		Interpersonal Communication	
2pm							
3pm							
4pm							

Title	Details	Hours	CRN	Schedule Type	Status	Action
Interpersonal Communi...	COMS 1301,...	3	15445	Lecture	Registered	None
Research	EDLD 7000, ...	1	16698	Indepe...	Registered	None

Total Hours | Registered: 4.0 | Billing: 4.0 | CEU: 0.0 | Min: 0.0 | Max: 15.0

Click on **"My Schedule and Options"** to change the number of hours that you are enrolled in.

REGISTER FOR CLASSES

Find Classes | Enter CRNs | My Schedule and Options

Summary

Term: Fall 2014 TTU

Title	Details	Hours	CRN	Schedule Type	Grade Mode	Level	Study Path	Date	Status	Message
Interpersonal Communication	COMS 1301, 001	3	15445	Lecture	Standard Grading	Undergraduate - TTU	None	04/17/2014	Registered	Registered on ...
Research	EDLD 7000, 001	<u>1</u>	16698	Independent St...	Standard Grading	Graduate	None	04/17/2014	Registered	Registered on ...

Records: 2

Click on the credit hours and it will give you credit hour range for the course in question.

Title	Details	Hours	CRN	Schedule Type	Grade Mode	Level
Interpersonal Communication	COMS 1301, 001	3	15445	Lecture	Standard Grading	Undergraduate - TTU
Research	EDLD 7000, 001	1	16698	Independent St...	Standard Grading	Graduate

Must

