

**The Ohio State University
City & Regional Planning, Master's Program**

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

HANDBOOK FOR STUDENTS

Updated January 2018

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Program Overview

All students in the MCRP program are required to complete 560 hours of a planning practice internship with the exception of students completing a practicum in place of the internship. While this can be completed in 2 semesters, the intention of the program is that the students remain in their internships for the full 2 years in which they are in the program. The Internship Coordinator will collect resumes and submit them to the collection of internship partners that work with the MCRP program. Students are responsible for finding their own internships. When a student does secure his/her own internship, s/he must inform the Internship Coordinator of the position with a description of duties and the name contact information of his/her internship supervisor.

Program Goal

There are two main reasons that the MCRP Program has an internship requirement. First, it enables students to learn about what different planning disciplines are like in the real world; and second, it helps students gain valuable real-world experience and connections that build their resume and network prior to graduation. These two reasons help our students attain the ultimate goal of this program – obtaining great jobs upon graduation by making informed decisions about what they want to do with their careers and standing out as superior candidates when competing for available positions.

Getting Started

As soon as students accept OSU's offer for admission to the MCRP program, they must:

1. Submit a 1-page (and ONLY 1 page) resume and a completed Internship Intro Form to the Internship Coordinator, and
2. Activate their BuckeyeBox account (see **Supporting Internship Materials**).

The resume must include their current status as an MCRP student as well as their availability date. The focus of the experiences listed in the resume should be on the skills that would be well applied to planning. (Students can email an updated resume to the Internship Coordinator at any time.) The Internship Coordinator is available to assist with internship program questions.

Additional guidance is provided in the professional development seminar (see **Professional Development Seminar Requirements**) and in the Internship folder in BuckeyeBox and the professional development webpage (see **Supporting Internship Materials**).

Student Eligibility for Internships

The following list of requirements must be met for students to be able to get a planning internship and for internships to qualify toward the 560-hour requirement.

1. Students must be in good standing (3.0 cumulative GPA) in order to participate in an internship.
2. Students on academic probation are not eligible for an internship position. If they are in an internship position at the time of the probation, the student and sponsors are notified of his/her ineligibility. We do this to allow the student to focus on academics as their primary goal is to get back in good standing.
3. In some cases, and not at our recommendation, a student may be asked by the sponsor to stay on as an hourly employee while he/she is on probation. In such cases, the time worked would not count toward the student's 560 hour requirement.
4. Students who were admitted conditionally may not participate in an internship until their conditions of admission have been met.

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5. Students must be considered full-time in the MCRP program (14 hours per semester) in order to hold an internship and use the hours towards the 560 hour requirement. (The Graduate School has an alternate definition of “full time” (8 credit hours) and it is not applicable for the internship program consideration.)
6. Students with full-time planning-related jobs are exempt from this requirement but must discuss with the internship coordinator upon enrollment to attain the exemption.

International Students

International students (F-1 students) must be enrolled in a full course of study for at least 1 academic year prior to being able to get an internship. The exception is if the internship is on-campus - then the 1-year requirement is waived. When/if an international student is eligible for and gets an internship off campus, they are required to apply for Curricular Practical Training (CPT). Directions can be found at this link:

<http://oia.osu.edu/immigration-information/employment/curricular-practical-training.html>

Tuition Waivers

The CRP program has a limited number of tuition and fee waivers. To be considered for a waiver, a student must meet all of the following requirements:

1. Student must be in an internship.
2. Student must have a 3.5 minimum GPA (either in the program or coming into the program if the student is in their first semester).
3. Student must be an in state resident. (Out-of-state students are eligible for the waiver only if their internship is on-campus).

Not all students meeting the minimum requirements will receive a tuition waiver because the number of waivers is limited. Waiver decisions are made by the CRP Section Head in conjunction with the Masters Program Chair and Internship Coordinator.

If a waiver student falls below academic requirements and/or loses his/her internship, s/he will lose his/her waiver. Whether that waiver is dropped during the term or following it depends on the individual circumstances. **If a student (waiver recipient or not) loses his/her internship for any reason s/he must contact the internship coordinator immediately to discuss the situation and strategies to get the student back into an approved position.**

Responsibility of Finding an Internship

It is ultimately the responsibility of the student to find an internship, and it is expected that students will be actively looking for internship on their own. The Internship Coordinator is available to assist students in their search, offer comments to improve their resume, etc.

Supporting Internship Materials

1. **BuckeyeBox:** Supporting materials for student internships are provided in BuckeyeBox in the MCRP Internship Program folder. Materials include:
 - Forms, Handbooks and Manuals
 - Job Postings
 - Job Search Materials

Students must set up a BuckeyeBox account and set notifications as soon as their OSU email addresses are assigned. Here are the steps:

- a. Activate online OSU account through <https://my.osu.edu/>
- b. Activate BuckeyeBox account and <https://box.osu.edu>

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- c. Setup BuckeyeBox account notifications (to receive job posting notices):
 - Login to BuckeyeBox
 - Click on your email address in the top right hand corner
 - Click on “Account Settings”
 - Select “Notifications”
 - Under “Email Notifications”, check the box for “Uploads” “in folders I’ve joined”. (You can check other boxes too, but you need to check at least this one.)
 - Click on “Save”
2. **Resource Webpage:** Additional supporting materials for student professional development are provided on a website: <https://u.osu.edu/crpprofdev/>

When to Start an Internship

As soon as they accept the OSU MCRP offer, students are allowed to start an internship as early as the summer prior to their first fall term (or, if they are starting off-cycle, in the term prior to which they begin). Ideally students have accepted an internship at the start of their first term regardless of the term although it may take a full year to obtain an internship.

Interviews & Offers

Sponsors will contact students directly based on the information found in the resume for interviews and potential hiring. Sponsors do not typically have further contact with the internship coordinator in the hiring process. **Students are expected to respond to every request for an interview**, either accepting the request or politely declining. Students who receive an interview are expected, at a minimum, to follow up with the interviewer with a thank you email.

Some students may have the good fortune to receive multiple offers. In such cases, it is critical that the student make no explicit promises to one sponsor while waiting on word from another. Students may request for an extension of a decision notification on an offer. However, students should never accept one offer and then pull out if “something better” comes along. Such behavior is unprofessional and unethical, reflecting poorly on the student as well as the program as a whole. If such a situation happens, that student will no longer be eligible for the resume book.

Length of Internship

It is preferred that if all parties are satisfied with the arrangement, a student will stay in an internship position for at least 1 year but preferably for 2 years (their full tenure in the MCRP program). In this way the student is best able to grow and assume greater responsibilities. Students are required to complete 560 hours of an internship (approximately 1 academic year). However, the length of internship is flexible and negotiable.

Standard Pay Rates & Hours

The current preferred hourly rate for internships is \$13.00 - \$18.50 per hour; however the rates are negotiable between student and employer. In addition, internships can qualify toward the 560-hour requirement if they are unpaid.

An average of 20 hours per week is typically expected, but variations are acceptable as negotiated between the student and employer. No matter the number of hours work, the student must complete 560 hours prior to graduation. (At 20 hours per week, it would take approximately 2 semesters to meet the requirement.) In addition, full-time work (40 hours per week) during summer break, winter break, and spring break is allowed.

Qualifying Internship Work Activities

The internship must be planning-related. This is a broad category, but it must be relevant. The Internship Coordinator makes the determination on relevance. The internship work is flexible – it can be paid, unpaid, volunteering, research (GRA) with a professor, etc.

Internship Student Forms

To confirm internship hours and activities, there are two forms for the students to complete:

1. **Internship Registration Form:** upon acceptance of a new internship, the student will complete this form and submit it to the Internship Coordinator. This form must be completed only once at the beginning of a new internship. The student should also submit a high-quality image file of their employer's logo for placement on the intern program webpage.
2. **Internship Record Form:** at the end of each semester, the student will complete this form and submit it to the Internship Coordinator. This form must be completed every semester. Once a student has reached the 560-hour requirement, no further verification is needed.

Professional Development Seminar Requirements

In addition to the 560-hour internship requirement, students must take the internship seminar (CRP6191S) for at least two semesters. Concurrent enrollment is not required; the student may take the course either fall or spring semester at any time while pursuing their degree.

Practicum

If a student is unable to find an internship by the beginning of their last two semesters, they must pursue a practicum instead to meet the 560-hour internship requirement. The practicum should be treated as a last-resort option because an internship is much better for the student's experience and career. Practicum courses may be best described as studio meets independent study. Below is the process for the practicum:

1. **Semester 1 (2 semesters prior to graduation)** – the student must notify the Internship Coordinator and register for a 1-credit hour independent study with the Internship Coordinator for that semester. For the independent study, the student must develop a proposal that outlines the expected project(s) and deliverable(s) for the following semester's practicum. This will allow for the student to sufficiently research opportunities that would reflect an internship level of contribution and effort. The outcome of the fall term is a formal practicum proposal with timeline and expected contributions.
2. **Semester 2 (last semester)** - For the student's final semester, the student must enroll in the practicum (CRP 8300) with the Internship Coordinator to carry out the proposal. Should an internship be found during this time, the student should discuss with the Internship Coordinator how to adjust the practicum workload.

Often students will do a practicum with a non-profit or other volunteer based organization to provide a planning related service (e.g., code review, design proposal, market analysis). The practicums, like studios, represent a significant amount of work. It is possible for a practicum to not to involve a client per se, though this will also need approval by the Internship Coordinator.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

The fact that the interns are students also means that any information about them is covered by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). No information about students of any

kind may be shared with anyone unless you have the student's permission in writing. FERPA supersedes the Ohio sunshine laws. For example if your policy is to put all employee contact information on a web site, you will need to get the student's permission before including the student's information. If you are reviewing resumes for a possible intern you may not discuss them with anyone outside the decision process. The record of the student selected may not be discussed with others. Even telling others which student resumes you have or have not seen may be a violation of privacy.

Expectations & Issues

1. **Student Conduct:** students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. They are not only representing themselves, but also the program. This means, at a minimum, to be on time, properly attired, and diligent while on the job. If you have questions about an assignment, you should request details from your supervisor. Any poor conduct will be reported by the supervisor to the Internship Coordinator for discussion and review. Students who are consistently problematic may be dismissed from their internship; if hours are still needed, the student must find another position.
2. **Student Expectations:** students receive instruction on professional behavior and expectations while they are in an internship. That said, there are occasions where a student may not live up to such expectations. In these instances we encourage the supervisor to have a meeting with the student to discuss shortcomings. If the meeting does not result in changed behavior, the supervisor should contact the Internship Coordinator to discuss the situation. The internship coordinator will meet with the student and determine with consultation with the supervisor the appropriate course of action, including the possibility of termination.
3. **Internship Activities:** the internship partners are all planning-focused or related entities. Interns are expected to grow in their positions over the course of his/her tenure with the sponsor. That said, interns – especially those in their first term – will likely be expected to complete tasks such as copying, filing, etc. If these tasks constitute the majority of the intern's experience over the course of a few months, the student should speak with his/her supervisor to reconfirm the job description of the specific internship. If this does not resolve the issue, the student should contact the internship coordinator who can advise and reach out to the supervisor directly. A similar approach should be taken if there are other issues (e.g., consistent weeks over 20 hours).
4. **Match:** in many cases, students hope for a match between their specialized planning interest and their internship. While this is ideal, it does not always work out. We feel strongly that any planning position provides students with valuable experience regardless of the specialization fit. That said, if the match between student and sponsor is not mutually satisfactory, the supervisor and student should meet to discuss potential alternatives within their organization. If a satisfactory alternative cannot be found, supervisor and student should notify the Internship Coordinator to discuss alternate students for the position.
5. **Time Management:** if a student is unable to manage the academic and internship load due to personal or other issues, s/he should notify his/her supervisor and the internship coordinator as soon as possible. It may be possible to temporarily reduce hours or provide other accommodations. In all cases, it is critical that the student communicate with his/her supervisor and internship coordinator as soon as possible. The program and the sponsor are unable to assist students who "go missing" from an internship or similarly fail to communicate.