

# Guide to the Graduate Internship

Master of Agribusiness

Master of Science with Concentration in Agribusiness

Food and Resource Economics

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## The Internship

The internship is an educational program allows students the opportunity to improve the skills and knowledge needed in their prospective vocation. In turn, the internship student helps the employing agency or firm to meet peak demand for their employees and/or complete special projects.

### Course Objectives

1. Provide an opportunity for learning experiences, on or off campus, relevant to the student's degree program.
2. Permit students the independent exploration of their fields of interest.
3. Assist students in establishing career goals related to their specific interests and professional aspirations.
4. Prepare students for employment in agribusiness-related occupations through field training and professional experience.
5. Make students aware of additional training/experience/courses necessary to reach their career goals.

### Operational Principles

1. Each student intern shall have well-defined work activities that are regarded as worthwhile by the cooperating agency and the Supervisory Committee Chair.
2. Each intern shall develop specific learning objectives that can be readily identified and reviewed periodically throughout the work period.
3. Each intern shall be supported by a Supervisory Committee Chair and a cooperating agency representative. The roles of these individuals include assisting with task identification, establishing learning objectives, carrying out the task, counseling the intern and carrying through with ideas and projects initiated.
4. Each intern contracts as an independent agent with the cooperating agency to do the work and pursue the learning objectives.
5. Each intern assesses the work of the internship experience in a non-school setting and produces a final report and presentation to the faculty and graduate student body.

### Procedures for approval of internship

1. Prior to start of the semester in which the internship is to be taken, the student must arrange an interview with a representative of the cooperating agency. The student's Supervisory Committee Chair and the agency representative must determine whether an available position will provide an experience that supports the student's academic and career objectives. Further, they should be assured that the student's interests and academic preparation will satisfy the demands of the cooperating agency.
2. On approval of the agency representative, and with the work description or schedule of anticipated activities, the student will submit the completed "Plan for Internship" to their Supervisory Committee Chair.
3. A copy of the completed Plan for Internship must be submitted to the Graduate Office and the student will then register for AEB 6942 Advanced Applications in Agribusiness Experience for three credit hours.

## Internship Advantages

### ***The Student has the opportunity to:***

1. Gain an understanding of the relationship between classroom theory and its practical application.
2. Test career objectives to determine if there is a proper fit between career requirements and student objectives.
3. Improve interpersonal skills.
4. Develop professional work habits.
5. Become acquainted with people in professional occupations for potential job opportunities
6. Earn funds to help support college education.
7. Prepare for a smooth transition into full-time employment.
8. Retain student status while learning on the job.

### ***The Employer has the opportunity to:***

1. Establish a pool of potential professional employees who have demonstrated their abilities.
2. Complete a special project or increase service during peak demand periods.
3. Educate highly motivated students about the industry.
4. Develop an efficient training program.
5. Send goodwill ambassadors back to campus to spread the word to other students about the company.
6. Assist the department in evaluating students as to their potential to perform in postgraduate career positions.

### ***The FRE Faculty has the opportunity to:***

1. Receive student and industry feedback that can affect curriculum change.
2. Reinforce positive relationships with the business community.
3. Increase rapport with community interests and encourage community support for University programs.
4. Demonstrate the faculty's concern and support in maintaining the individuality of the student.

## Responsibilities of the Principal Participants

### The Student

Assisted by the student's Supervisory Committee Chair, the student seeks out the potential placement opportunities for the internship program. The student creates a resume, writes a cover letter, develops a job-search strategy, arranges for the job interviews, and procures his or her own employment site. On approval of the employment site by the Supervisory Committee Chair, the student and advisor develop a "Plan for Internship". A signed copy of this plan must be submitted to the FRE Graduate Office before the student begins his or her internship program. While participating in the internship program, the student is expected to:

1. Work approximately 30-40 hours per week for the entire semester (12-16 weeks).
2. Complete the tasks and activities outlined in the "Plan for Internship".
3. Conform to normal work hours of the cooperating firm or agency
4. Support the employer, keep their business confidential, and work for the employer's best interests.
5. Request prior permission from employer and Supervisory Committee Chair for any leave periods.
6. Submit a progress report, oral presentation and written paper.

## The Supervisory Committee Chair

The Supervisory Committee Chair recommends internship placement opportunities for students related to the student's interests. Arrangements for such internships are to be initiated by the student and must be approved by the Supervisory Committee Chair following submission of documentation to justify the cooperation of a particular agency in providing the internship supervision. The Supervisory Committee Chair reviews the plan to determine whether the planned internship:

1. Is an academically relevant component of the learning process that is appropriate for course credit.
2. Involves initiative, creative opportunities, meaningful responsibilities and assignments - in contrast to routine or continuously repetitive activities.
3. Provides the student a learning experience and the exposure needed to understand the opportunities, functions, and responsibilities of various agricultural disciplines.
4. Includes appropriate supervision and direction by qualified and interested persons.

The student, the Supervisory Committee Chair, and an agency representative collaborate in processing the internship agreement. At the end of the semester in which the paper and presentation are completed, the Supervisory Committee Chair calculates and reports the final grade for AEB 6942 Advanced Applications in Agribusiness Experience. The grade is based on the guidelines listed on page 7.

The Supervisory Committee Chair maintains regular contact with the agency supervisor in determining the nature of the work and evaluating the student's progress. The student's final report is submitted during the final semester and focuses on the work experience and its relation to the student's academic objective.

## The Cooperating Agency Supervisor

A representative of the agency, approved to supervise an intern, interviews the potential candidate by telephone or in person where possible, prior to enrollment in the course by the student. The final approval for registration is made by the student's Supervisory Committee Chair.

When the agency selects a participant in the internship program, it is expected to provide a variety of educational experiences for the intern a program sufficiently flexible to permit intern involvement in specific projects. The agency assigns responsibility for supervision of the intern to a specific individual and a final review of the intern's performance is expected. Further, the agency supervisor completes an evaluation form appraising the student's performance. The form is forwarded to the student's Supervisory Committee Chair during the final two weeks of the internship semester.

The supervising agency may provide wages, reimbursement for travel, or other remuneration arrangements while the student is on the internship. These arrangements are to be agreed upon by the cooperating agency and the intern.

## Guidelines for paper and presentation

In order to evaluate progress and the outcome of the internship, students must submit a short paper and oral presentation of what was gained from the experience.

Students will register for the appropriate credit hours in AEB 6942 which is generally 3 credit hours but may vary in certain situations. The Supervisory Committee Chair assigns the grade for the AEB 6942 course. Once all requirements for the course have been met, the Graduate Office will submit the required final oral examination report required for non-thesis students.

In order to complete requirements to earn the MAB or MSAB degree, the student must complete the following:

**I. Internship Plan**

- a. Name of internship organization.
- b. Duties, responsibilities, objectives, goals.
- c. Signatures of student, supervisory committee chair, and cooperating agency supervisor.

**II. Oral Presentation (final oral non-thesis examination requirement)**

- a. Fifteen minute presentation with five to ten minute Q&A session
- b. Presentation of key points from the paper (background, problems, findings)

**III. Final Paper (AEB 6942 grade requirement)**

- a. Paper is guided by student's supervisory committee chair.
- b. Should be written in greater detail relative to oral presentation
- c. Background/situation
- d. Methods used to solve/deal with the problem
- e. Problem statement
- f. Findings
- g. Recommendations
- h. Your agency supervisor should be given the opportunity to review the paper before given to your Supervisory Committee Chair to help avoid release of any confidential or restricted information from your employer's point of view.

All students giving presentations are required to be on campus to give the presentation and remain present for the duration of all presentations. When necessary, students may present from an alternate location if requested and approved in advance.

## Forms

### Plan for Internship

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisory Committee Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Cooperating Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates/Duration of Internship: \_\_\_\_\_

Job title/Duties/Responsibilities: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Goals, Objectives: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I agree to prepare a detailed report explaining my internship activities and to include any suggestions for improvement of the program. The report will be submitted to my Supervisory Committee Chair.

**Student Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

I have reviewed this Plan and find it consistent with the student's educational objectives.

**Committee Chair Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

The cooperating agency agrees to provide the student an opportunity to obtain actual experience in the areas outlined above and also agrees to evaluate the efforts of the student and forward an evaluation to the Supervisory Committee Chair on termination of employment.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Cooperating Agency Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

Agency supervisor evaluation of student performance during internship

**Student's Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Evaluator name/contact info** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

We would appreciate your cooperation in rating this student in terms of his or her performance on an internship placement in your agency. Your response will help the Supervisory Committee Chair in assigning a letter grade and identifying areas requiring attention in the student's continuing professional development. Thank you for your cooperation.

<b>Rating</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Unacceptable</b>
Cooperates with Management	_____	_____	_____	_____
Cooperates with other workers	_____	_____	_____	_____
Willingness to work	_____	_____	_____	_____
Dependability	_____	_____	_____	_____
Honesty	_____	_____	_____	_____
Ethics	_____	_____	_____	_____
Appearance	_____	_____	_____	_____
Motivation	_____	_____	_____	_____
Accepts supervision	_____	_____	_____	_____
Accepts constructive criticism	_____	_____	_____	_____
Punctuality/Attendance	_____	_____	_____	_____
Professional attitude	_____	_____	_____	_____
Leadership ability	_____	_____	_____	_____
Verbal communication	_____	_____	_____	_____
Written communication	_____	_____	_____	_____
Demonstrates ability to think	_____	_____	_____	_____
Adapts to a variety of jobs	_____	_____	_____	_____
Potential for career in this industry	_____	_____	_____	_____

**Please send to:**

Jessica Herman, UF Food and Resource Economics, Box 110240, Gainesville, FL 32611-0240 or [jherman@ufl.edu](mailto:jherman@ufl.edu)



Student's Evaluation of Internship

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Cooperating Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Internship Position Title: \_\_\_\_\_

**Executive Summary of major activities.**

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**Organizational structure of the agency/firm.**

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**Responsibilities within that structure.**

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**Brief description of activities associated with your area of responsibility evaluated in relation to your educational background.**

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**Appraisal of the internship program relative to your interests and career goals.**

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**Changes you plan to make due to the experience.**

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**In addition to the specific points to be addressed in the final report, you may describe any other observation or experiences not specified above.**

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