



Agriculture Sciences Internship Faculty Supervisor and Student Responsibilities

Internships are one of the most important and one of the most exciting components of the Agricultural Sciences undergraduate major. All Agricultural Sciences majors at Cornell are required to complete an internship for credit as part of their program. One credit is required, but students may take the course multiple times for a total of six credits. Internships allow students to apply classroom knowledge and provide them with the opportunity to:

- Increase their understanding of agricultural systems by participating in real (and often paid) work while being supervised by Cornell faculty and host staff.
- Develop their decision-making skills by observing how professionals develop solutions to complex agricultural problems.
- Interact with members of the agricultural community and form working relationships.
- Gain experience with farming systems, producer and community education, marketing, and policy making and implementation that are part of our food system.

Students are required to identify two main individuals who will work with them to make their internship experience a success: 1) an internship host, and 2) a Cornell faculty supervisor.

FACULTY SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- Helping the student formulate a feasible project within the defined time and chosen credit option.
- Helping the student complete a learning contract.
- Staying in communication with the student during the internship.
- Ensuring that students complete documentation of learning for their internship.
- Ensuring that the student receives a grade for their project after completion of the above.

Faculty supervisors (FS) are not required to be a member of the Agricultural Sciences faculty affiliates. Faculty supervisors must have an interest or expertise in the area within which the student wishes to pursue his or her internship. **They must also be faculty or senior academics who are able to provide a grade via the Registrar's office when the internship is completed.** Students are encouraged to develop relationships with faculty members that are not (yet) affiliated with the Agricultural Sciences major and not their major advisor.

What will the Faculty Supervisor get in return?

Most importantly the FS will get the satisfaction of helping a student explore potential career opportunities, or pursue off-campus work experience. The FS will be listed as instructor for a section of AGSCI 4960, recognizing the FS as a teacher for the guidance offered to the student.

PROCESS

1. Students will identify and meet with a Cornell faculty member and potential FS to discuss project ideas and options. If the faculty member agrees to be the student's FS, the FS will assist the student in identifying an internship host and develop an initial (written) internship plan.
2. The student will then contact the internship host, if not already done, and schedule a meeting to discuss internship project options.
3. A learning contract is then developed by the student in collaboration with the FS and internship host. The learning contract template can be downloaded from the Agricultural Sciences major website (<http://www.css.cornell.edu/agsci/internships.html>) or by contacting the coordinator (ksu2@cornell.edu). In this contract, the student is required to answer the following questions:

- What are your roles and responsibilities during your internship? List your duties, projects to be completed, etc.
- Describe the supervision to be provided by the internship host. What kind of orientation, instruction, assistance, weekly meetings, consultation, mentorship, etc. will you receive and from whom?
- What do you intend to learn (not DO, that is next!) through this experience? Be as specific as possible. Use phrases like "I will learn..., I will gain an understanding of...etc."
- Describe how your internship will enable you to meet your learning objectives. Include projects, research, report writing, meetings, etc. that will be part of your internship, relating them to your learning objectives. These activities should be worked out with your internship supervisor, which is your host in the field. Use complete sentences and active voice: "I will perform..., I will observe..., I will produce.... I will participate in.... etc."

4. After the learning contract draft is complete, an electronic copy is sent to the coordinator for review. The contract will either be accepted as is, or changes will be requested. The student is then responsible for getting the final copy signed and submitted to the coordinator.

5. For evaluation and grading, students have the option of taking their internship for S-U or a letter grade. The FS is responsible for making sure that they get the information needed to properly evaluate the student. Students are required to document their learning and internship activities.

- **Documenting Learning** Students are expected to document their learning during and/or after their internship. It is recommended that the student and FS agree what format would be best (blogging, journaling, final report). The Agricultural Sciences coordinator can assist the student in developing their internship blog.
- **Self-Evaluation** The self evaluation discusses the intern's reflections on his or her performance during the internship. In a separate section at the top of the written evaluation should be written the student's name, organization's name, contact information, and a two to three sentence description of the internship. This will be collected in an Agricultural Sciences program database to keep track of students and the internships being pursued. The self-evaluation should include the intern's:
 - Academic and career goals.
 - Impacts the experience had on the intern's personal growth.
 - How the internship experience could have been improved.
 - Personal strengths discovered through the experience.
 - Areas for personal improvement.
- **Internship Supervisor (site supervisor) Evaluation** Each intern will be evaluated by their immediate supervisor. Attributes for assessment include the intern's work ethic, initiative, ability to collaborate with co-workers and work in teams, and skills gained during the internship.

6. Internships can be conducted at any time of year, but should fall within Cornell's general policy of *one credit hour for each 45 hours of off-campus work*. A student can conduct 'intensive' internship work outside of the semester (e.g., during breaks), or a few hours each week while enrolled in classes. The faculty supervisor will work with the intern to choose the number of credits appropriate for a project. Students can take up to three credits of internship work at one time, with a maximum of six total credits while at Cornell. No credit is offered for work already undertaken at a past time without the development of a learning contract. The student should be aware, if they complete the bulk of their internship work over the summer, and only reporting and documentation work is completed in the fall, they may only apply for ONE internship credit (AGSCI 4960). The only other option for students is to pay summer session tuition for the credit.