ANTHROPOLOGY CAREER READINESS NETWORK

How do you set up an internship program?

An **internship** is a short-term work experience that teaches skills to interns (typically students) while providing temporary assistance to organizations. An **internship program** is the set of policies and procedures that ensure these professional learning experiences offer meaningful, practical work related to a student's field of study or career interests. A successful internship program is a collaboration between the student interns, their university supervisors, and their organizational hosts.

Frequent communication among all three parties is key! The university supervisor, often an anthropology instructor or internship coordinator, can enhance the internship process and outcomes by checking in with the interns and host supervisors at least bi-weekly.

What are the benefits?

For the Interns:

- Gain exposure to the work world to discover their own interests, including employment features they appreciate as well as dislike
- Contribute to projects and tasks that offer hands-on work experience and benefits (e.g., conducting interviews, making presentations, writing reports)
- Use their existing skills in real-world situations as well as acquire new skills
  - While still relatively protected, interns can and should start to experience the pressure and accountability of real-world work; learn how to arrive at and defend their decisions; and understand the decision-making process used in their host organizations
- Learn to interact and collaborate with new colleagues
- Expand their professional networks (e.g., with other interns, seasoned leaders)
- Enter the larger community of working professional anthropologists
- Find it easier to land a future position in the same industry
- Gain confidence in their ideas and choices
- Learn how to fail and recover from making mistakes

For individual departments or the university as a whole:

- Offer workplace experience to students to enhance their academic learning
- Develop relationships with organizations in the wider community, strengthening their connections and reputation
- Launch students into the work world, thereby improving their job placement rate post graduation
- Develop a reputation as a talent incubator

For the host organizations:

- Secure access to a source of temporary workers
- Observe, train, and assess these workers for their future potential
- Build a pipeline of new hires with a known university (or one or more of its programs)

How do internships differ between undergraduate and graduate students?

Question	Undergraduate Students	Graduate Students
Who participates in internships?	Typically students in their Junior or Senior Year	Students at any point during their degree
How long do internships last?	Usually one term; internship credit hours vary from one to three and may be repeated	Internship length varies but typically involves deeper interactions with host organizations
What is the time investment?	Often full time during the summer months and part time during the spring and fall	An internship may be part of a student's practicum or thesis work and last longer than a term
What do internships focus on?	May either be narrowly-focused, or broad but shallow, given the short time period and student's lack of prior experience	Generally build on previous experience

Can students get paid for their internship work and still earn credit?

Yes! Many internship programs allow students to get paid and earn university credit. Differences exist across programs, host organizations, and U.S. states:

- At some universities, students can earn internship credit for work they are already doing in their job—as long as they can define and meet specific goals relevant to anthropology
- Some nonprofit organizations may not have the budget to pay interns, though in some cases, anthropology departments may have funds available to support unpaid interns
- In some U.S. states, interns receiving academic credit may be unpaid; while in others if they are receiving academic credits, they must be paid at least minimum wage

Interns should never be solely free labor. Regardless of financial compensation, internship value related to student learning, skill-building, and networking must be clearly evident.

How do students get credit?

In the short term, an instructor may be able to supervise internships through a “directed research” course. From a longer-term perspective, an instructor may develop a dedicated course such as:

ANTH 4970 INTERNSHIP at the University of Memphis
The ANTH 4970 Individual Directed Internship in Anthropology is available for 1-3 course credit hours which can be applied to the major or minor (no more than 3 credit hours can apply to the major or minor). Typically, each credit hour requires 50 hours of internship work (i.e., 3 credit hours requires 150 hours of internship work). Internship goals are: (1) To offer the student practical, professional knowledge and experience relevant to the discipline of anthropology; (2) To provide the host agency with valuable assistance in the achievement of a specific objective or product. The Internship may be focused on any area relevant to the discipline of Anthropology. Each internship is to be defined and agreed upon by the student, the host agency internship supervisor, and the Anthropology faculty member who agrees to supervise the internship and serve as instructor of record.

An established campus career center may facilitate approval of credit through coordination between the department and host organization.

On the University side, who oversees interns?

Anthropology Department

- Some departments have an internship coordinator
- Undergraduate interns may be the responsibility of the undergraduate advisor while graduate students report to their committee chairs
- Alumni relationships with the department often lead to the establishment of an internship pipeline for successive student cohorts

Individual Instructor

- Students enroll in an organized class for their internships
- Instructors may offer courses with internship options embedded in them
- Students may approach instructors based on common affinities, with internships functioning like directed reading courses and course credits based on hours worked
- Instructors may be able to negotiate extra compensation or course reductions to supervise interns

University Internship or Career Center

- Students may find internships through a dedicated campus office
- Career centers typically manage internship advertising and tracking, act as liaisons between departments and host organizations, facilitate decisions on course credit, and offer scholarships for unpaid internships

How do you find host organizations?

- Approach the campus internship or career center to identify internship opportunities
- Reach out through your department's alumni network
- Take advantage of instructor contacts in organizations and communities
- Search online, including for specific organizations—local to global
- Rely on the initiative of individual students and their peer networks
- Do the legwork and build your own relationships with particular organizations

How do you vet and evaluate potential internship hosts?

- Make at least one site visit to begin developing relationships with members of the host organization, observe aspects of its organizational culture, gain insight into the host organization's interest in internships, and discuss the intern's potential contributions
  - A supervisor from the host organization will need to allocate time to support an intern (e.g., with training, mentoring)
  - Work tools for the intern will be necessary (e.g., computer, computer access)
  - **Ask:** To what extent does the host-organization supervisor understand that the learning component of the internship is at least as important as the intern's contributions to the host organization?
- When a site visit is not possible, frequent and early communication between the university and host organization may be an option
- Universities may have their own permission systems:
  - San Jose State University has two paths for approving host organizations depending on whether the internships are associated with course credit

What is involved in preparing for individual internships?

- To maximize student choices, it is best if internship planning occurs early in the program
  - Reminders to students from instructors and department advisors are helpful
- Time is necessary to search for appropriate placements, conduct informational interviews, and/or attend job/internship fairs on campus
  - Students can be directed to the campus career center for assistance
- Internship deadlines may have a long lead time: many organizations have their own fiscal and bureaucratic cycles that do not align well with academic terms
- To meet organizational deadlines, students will need to develop and submit resumes and cover letters
  - Campus career center professionals, along with instructor input are useful
- At the interview stage, applicants should practice their responses to interview questions and get feedback from peers and instructors
  - Mock interview sessions can improve student confidence

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What are some helpful strategies when setting up an internship program?

Develop a **departmental template** on **internship planning** that consists of learning objectives and basic internship parameters. If necessary, the template can be customized for individual students. This short document will help guide conversations with students and host organizations. Consider these steps:

- **Gather student resumes and cover letters**
- **Articulate intern learning objectives**
  - Skill development and/or refinement
  - Acquisition of professionalization skills (e.g., decision making, problem solving, teamwork)
  - Timely completion of work tasks
  - Expansion of professional networks
- **Agree on the internship parameters**
  - Length of internship
  - Number of internship hours
  - Provision of work tools (e.g., laptop, special software)
  - Specific learning opportunities (per learning objectives)
  - Compensation from host organization, university course credit, or both
  - Internship assessment: who will do it, how it will happen, and when it will happen
  - Roles and responsibilities of the university and host supervisors
- **Determine if the intern will engage in research and if so,**
  - Will Institutional Research Board approval be required?
  - Will the university or the host organization secure the necessary permissions?

How do we manage the diverse range of possible internships?

Develop a **departmental template** for a **written internship agreement** signed by all parties. It should be finalized before the internship is approved for credit (at or before the beginning of the term). An internship agreement does not need to be long (about one page) or complicated but should include:

- Contact information for the intern, host supervisor, and academic supervisor
- A brief, clear description of intern work duties drafted by the host supervisor with feedback from the intern and academic supervisor
- A short, clear academic statement of how this internship builds on or enhances experience relevant to anthropology (including learning outcomes) which can be drafted by the academic supervisor or the intern, with feedback from the other party
- A work schedule showing the total planned hours for the term
- Particularly for graduate students, a list of products (e.g., thesis, marketing plan, customer survey summary, board presentation) that are anticipated from the internship

How do we evaluate the student's work in the internship?

- The host supervisor prepares a brief written evaluation of the intern's work
- The intern composes a brief summary report with reflections on the experience, goals achieved, challenges faced, and ties to anthropology
- The intern maintains a log of internship hours
- These forms of evaluation are useful information for the intern, academic supervisor, and host organization. The most challenging part is getting all this information before the end of the term!

How do we raise the visibility of our internship program?

- Post on the department's website, as does the University of North Texas:
  - Undergraduate Research/Internship Opportunities | Department of Anthropology

ANTH 4920 Internship in Anthropology
The Department of Anthropology is happy to consider course credit for undergraduate internship experiences. Students who have been accepted into either a paid or unpaid internship program are encouraged to apply for academic credit. "Internship programs" may be defined in various ways, please consult with the department for questions regarding what constitutes an "internship".

- Recognize interns at your awards and recognition ceremonies, inviting host supervisors to attend
- Ask interns to write a short, bulleted summary of the value of their internship to be shared with future interns; consider posting these summaries on the department's website
- Highlight selected internship experiences with prospective students and their parents

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