

# UC Merced Undergraduate Student Success Internship Program

Training for Supervisors

# What is an internship?

- ▶ An important element that distinguishes an internship from a short-term job or volunteer work is that an intentional “*learning agenda*” is structured into the experience.
- ▶ Learning activities common to most internship include learning objectives, observation, reflection, evaluation and assessment.
- ▶ An effort is made to establish a reasonable balance between the intern’s learning goals and the specific work an organization needs done.
- ▶ Internships promote academic, career and/or personal development.

# Steps to Creating an Internship Program

- ▶ Step 1: Set Project Goals
- ▶ Step 2: Write a Plan
- ▶ Step 3: Develop an Internship Position Description
- ▶ Step 4: Develop an Internship Learning Contract
- ▶ Step 5: Orient the Intern
- ▶ Step 6: Manage/Train/Guide/Mentor the Intern

# Step 1: Set Goals

- ▶ What does your department hope to achieve from the program?
- ▶ Are you a small department searching for additional help on a project?
- ▶ Is your department growing quickly and having difficulty with managing workflow of specific projects?
- ▶ Can your department provide an interesting and rewarding experience?

## Step 2: Write a Plan

- ▶ **Where will you put the intern?** Do you have adequate workspace for them?
- ▶ **What sort of academic background and experience do you want in an intern?** Decide on standards for quality beforehand – it'll help you narrow down the choices and find the best candidates.
- ▶ **Who will have the primary responsibility for the intern?** Will that person be a mentor or merely a supervisor?
- ▶ **What will the intern be doing?** Be as specific as possible. Interns, like others in the process of learning, need structure so they don't become lost, confused or bored.

## Step 2: Write a Plan

- ▶ **A very important part of your plan is to assign intern a mentor/supervisor** – that is, someone from the intern's department who will be in charge of the intern.
- ▶ **Mentor/Supervisor does not have to be a teacher per se, but should be selected because:**
  - ▶ He or she enjoys teaching or training
  - ▶ Has time and energy for an intern

# Step 3: Internship Position Description

- ▶ Internship Position Description
  - ▶ Position Title
  - ▶ Department
  - ▶ Supervisor
  - ▶ Major(s) Desired (Optional)
  - ▶ GPA Desired (Optional)
  - ▶ Experience/Skills Desired
  - ▶ Job/Project Description

# Step 3: Internship Position Description

- ▶ **Draft a internship position description that clearly explains the intern's duties.**
  - ▶ Do you want the intern for a specific project?
  - ▶ How will the intern support full-time staff?
  - ▶ How will you expose the intern to the role and function in relation to the student's academic/co-curricular development, and institutional mission and goals
  - ▶ It is important that the interns perceive their work is making a useful contribution to the sponsoring department.



# Step 3: Internship Learning Contract

- ▶ **Identify the project(s) and activities that the intern will undertake to support, enhance and complete the project(s)**
- ▶ **Develop work activities with measurable learning objectives**
  - ▶ Activities should focus on projects specifically related to the academic major and degree the intern is pursuing
  - ▶ Offer every opportunity to link classroom learning to workplace experience.

# Step 3: Internship Position Description

Sample tasks that interns have provided for their departments include the following:

- ▶ performing laboratory tests
- ▶ writing handbooks or manuals
- ▶ designing posters, charts, graphs
- ▶ generating financial forecast and cost recovery reports
- ▶ performing software/hardware modifications
- ▶ conducting studies and surveys
- ▶ developing slide/sound presentations
- ▶ compiling technical reports
- ▶ creating academic lesson plans
- ▶ conducting research
- ▶ generating marketing plans
- ▶ conducting training packages
- ▶ preparing budgets and financial reports

# Step 4: Developing a Learning Contract

- ▶ **Set bi-weekly 1:1 meeting time to discuss:**
  - ▶ Project status
  - ▶ Offer intern time to connect and seek advice from you
- ▶ **KEY POINTS**
- ▶ Describe challenging, but realistic tasks students can accomplish within the allotted time period.
- ▶ Work with faculty to establish specific learning objectives for students.
- ▶ Identify outcomes or expected products.
- ▶ Be willing to incorporate the students' particular strengths.
- ▶ Show how this work relates to the overall efforts of the department or organization.

# Step 5: Orient the Intern

## ▶ **Prior to the First Day**

- ▶ Set up an organized work area for the intern
- ▶ Set up phone, voicemail, PC, email, and internet access and/or other resources necessary for them to accomplish the tasks you have stipulated in the internship position description and learning contract
- ▶ Outline work expectations for the duration of the internship
- ▶ Prepare forms to be signed, including a confidentiality agreement, if necessary

# Step 5: Orient the Intern

- ▶ **Orient your intern to his or her new workplace.**
  - ▶ This might take the form of a conventional orientation program or merely a walk around the office.
  - ▶ Give interns an overview of your department.
  - ▶ Give talks or hand out information about the department's history, vision and services.
  - ▶ Explain who does what and what the intern's duties will be.
  - ▶ Introduce him or her to co-workers.

(See Orientation Check List)

# Step 5: Orient the Intern

## Personnel Structure

- ▶ special industry jargon
- ▶ specific work standards and procedures
- ▶ reporting relationships
- ▶ access to the supervisor (days, times, and duration)
- ▶ tasks that can be completed without supervisory approval
- ▶ work processing requests and timeliness
- ▶ mail and telephone systems
- ▶ approved form(s) for correspondence
- ▶ safety regulations
- ▶ procedure for signing off completed work
- ▶ periodic forms or reports to be completed
- ▶ security and confidentiality issues, if relevant
- ▶ acceptable dress and appearance
- ▶ maintaining the premises and work station
- ▶ productive interactions with others at the work site
- ▶ personnel who can answer different kinds of questions
- ▶ how the organization wants the intern to deal with clients, customers, and vendors

# Step 6: Manage/Train/Guide/Mentor the Intern

- ▶ **Keep an eye on the intern.**
  - ▶ Watch for signs that the intern is confused or bored.
  - ▶ Silence means that an intern is busy, it also could mean that he or she is confused and shy about telling you so.
  - ▶ See whether the intern is trying to do anything that requires someone else's input.
  - ▶ Paying attention early helps you head off problems and bad habits early on.
- ▶ **Give lots of feedback!**
  - ▶ Especially if your interns have never done this kind of work before, they'll want to know if their work is measuring up to your expectations.
  - ▶ Periodically, examine what your intern has produced and make suggestions.

# Step 6: Manage/Train/Guide/Mentor the Intern

## Evaluate the intern's progress every now and then.

- ▶ Remember those goals you outlined before? A few weeks after the internship begins, it's time to see how well you and your intern are meeting those goals.

### Suggestions

- ▶ Formal as written evaluations every three weeks
- ▶ Informal as occasional lunches with the internship coordinator and/or the intern's mentor.
- ▶ Have the intern evaluate the experience and the department as well.
- ▶ \*Add in assessment piece here\*\*



# Step 6: Manage/Train/Guide/Mentor the Intern

## ▶ KEY POINTS

- ▶ Maintain an open channel of communication with formal and informal meetings.
- ▶ Keep the interns busy and directed towards their learning objectives. Students rarely complain of overwork, but they do complain if they are not challenged.
- ▶ Provide opportunities for increasing responsibility.
- ▶ Encourage professionalism by assisting the interns in developing human relations skills, decision-making abilities, and managing office politics.
- ▶ Remember that you are a role model.
- ▶ Develop connections.

# Upcoming Dates to Remember

- ▶ Student applications will be due on **DATE**
- ▶ Resumes and cover letters will be forwarded to selection committee for review
- ▶ Interviews will be held at the beginning of September
- ▶ Final hiring decisions made mid-September