

Environmental Studies Internship Pacific Lutheran University *Revised Fall 2007*

Environmental Studies students are required to do an internship for the major. The internship is intentionally designed to tie together your classroom studies and academic program with a work experience (volunteer or paid). Internships provide opportunities to gain substantive knowledge in an applied setting and the academic responsibilities of the internship require the student to record and organize this knowledge. These experiences are supervised, mentored, and evaluated by both your **Work Supervisor** and **Faculty Sponsor**. The Work Supervisor is the person who will oversee you on-site during the internship experience and is a mentor to facilitate your learning and your success. The Faculty Sponsor is the faculty member on campus who will provide the academic guidance for the experience. Students should consider the knowledge, skills and abilities emphasized in the internship duties, and solicit the agreement of an appropriate faculty member to serve as Faculty Sponsor. Discuss this with the Internship Coordinator, or if unavailable, with the Environmental Studies Chair.

Before the Internship Begins:

On the academic side, an internship should provide a rewarding learning situation. Thus the experience should be carefully selected. There are many resources available to help you get started in finding an internship. Begin at the Office of Academic Internships and Cooperative Education in Ramstad Commons (253-535-7324, intern@plu.edu, www.plu.edu/~intern). They can provide you with resources to get started and they have a Student Guide for Academic Internships (<http://www.plu.edu/~intern/studentGuide.html>). Some internship opportunities arise regularly, others are one-time offerings and others are developed and designed by the student. In addition to the Academic Internship Office, the chair of Environmental Studies, the Internship Coordinator for Environmental Studies, and various faculty members receive and post notices about opportunities. You are encouraged to discuss your interests, the special skills you bring to and wish to develop in an internship, and alternatives with your faculty advisor.

In addition to the time spent and work completed at the internship location, several elements are required for the academic portion of the internship (and explained in detail below): a proposal, a learning agreement, maintaining regular contact with the faculty sponsor for the experience (who is not necessarily your advisor), a journal, and a final paper.

- **BEFORE** starting the internship the following must be completed and submitted to the Faculty Sponsor:
 1. Write a **proposal** describing your internship selection. The proposal must include position responsibilities and duties of the internship. The proposal must also include a statement of purpose, to explain how this internship experience relates to your academic career. Finally the proposal must also describe the frequency and form of communication with your faculty advisor and the nature of the final paper. A typical proposal is one page in length.
 2. Complete the **Learning Agreement** (see <http://www.plu.edu/~intern/>) that provides a place to specify the skills to be learned, the resources and methods to be used, and the description of the academic project(s). (This must also be filed with the Academic Internship Office.)
 3. Attach a short **resume** that includes a description of your academic and other relevant background.
- The faculty sponsor must approve the proposal **BEFORE** the internship begins. Sign up for the credits using an Independent Study card. Your faculty sponsor and the chair of the Environmental Studies Committee must sign all independent study registration cards before the internship begins.

During the Internship:

- Maintain regularly scheduled contact with your faculty sponsor, so that you may trade written material and discuss issues surrounding the internship. If the internship is nearby, the faculty member normally will make a site visit during the internship. You are responsible for coordinating the schedule for the site visit.
- Keep a reflective journal. At the beginning of your internship this should include details of your job description, descriptions of your activities and any concern you have about them. The journal will evolve as your advisor asks questions in response to your journal, and assigns readings to incorporate into your entries. You will want to collect background materials on the organization as well.

At the end of the Internship:

- Produce a paper analyzing what you learned as an intern. You should discuss with your advisor the specific content of an appropriate product for the internship. It should be about 10 pages in length. You must submit a draft of the paper to the faculty sponsor for feedback and revision prior to the final version. The paper should include:
 1. Something about the organization where you interned
 2. What you did during the internship (responsibilities)
 3. Reflection about the skills you brought to and those you developed during the internship
 4. Analysis of the experience in relation to the purpose(s) described in your proposal
 5. A critique of the experience - what was good/bad, what worked well/what didn't, what you did well/what you could have done differently, and what your supervisor did well/what your supervisor could have done differentlyYou may also wish to include copies of any materials that you were involved in developing (writing, etc).

Other Information:

- A 4-credit internship is expected for the Environmental Studies major to be taken as ENV 495 (or other by special arrangement with the Chair of Environmental Studies). The typical expectation of time allocated to the internship is 40-50 hours of work for each credit, in time blocks that are a minimum of 4 hours.
- Study abroad opportunities may satisfy this requirement. Information about such opportunities is available through the Wang Center for International Programs. Consult with the chair of the Environmental Studies Committee before making any commitment for study abroad.
- The final grade will be a letter grade, determined by the Faculty Sponsor in consultation with the Internship Supervisor. The grade will be based upon the time and effort spent by the student, the quality of the journal reporting and the final paper.
 - A "C" grade means the internship project was satisfactory. All administrative and reporting requirements were met, the journal and other written products were completed, and they adequately addressed assigned questions.
 - A "B" grade means the internship project was good. "B" projects meet the "C" criteria, plus contains analytical accomplishments-- analysis and critique of the experience contain arguments that explain why you reached the conclusions, the transitions in the arguments are explained clearly, interpretations are supported by appropriate evidence, and there are no discontinuities in presentation logic.
 - An "A" grade means the internship project was excellent. "A" projects meet the "B" criteria, plus contain an unblemished analysis of the topic, or analytical originality.