

Agency Supervisor/ Mentor HANDBOOK

Northern Rockies Internship Collaborative



Welcome to the NRIC Mentorship Program

Dear Mentors,

I am excited that you are part of the Northern Rockies Internship Collaborative (NRIC) team. Together we will provide college students with real-world hands-on training to complement their academic training.

As a mentor, you will not only guide interns in their daily tasks, but also provide them with an understanding of agency culture and valuable knowledge and skills. You, the mentor, have an opportunity to guide and influence these interns. In most cases the students will be taking the internship experience for academic credit. You should be aware of and support the students in reaching the educational goals for their internship credit.

NRIC interns are the leaders of tomorrow! I look forward to working in concert with you to provide students with the tools, skills, and experiences they will need not only to succeed in their internship, but also in their future endeavors and as future land and resource managers.

NRIC interns are the leaders of tomorrow. Thanks for being a part of the team!

Best,



Lisa Gerloff
NRIC Internship Coordinator

Roles and Responsibilities of Mentor

The role of an agency supervisor/mentor is to support and encourage the development of interns, both academically and in the field, to be successful in their current roles and future careers. A supervisor/mentor is committed to the guidance of interns and challenges them in multiple ways to help them achieve their goals. A supervisor/mentor shares skills and knowledge, provides constructive feedback, maintains a positive attitude, and shows interest in the intern and their work. The relationship between the supervisor/mentor and intern is built on trust and requires each party showing the other mutual respect while maintaining professionalism throughout the internship.

Responsibilities of a NRIC Agency Supervisor/Mentor:

- Establish clear expectations on how to be successful as an intern in your division/team/unit.
- Arrange for specific training if needed for an internship.
- Guide daily tasks.
- Support the learning process for the students.
- Communicate with NRIC Internship Coordinator (Lisa Gerloff) should there be problems with performance, so problems can be resolved.

Contact Guide

Lisa Gerloff

RM-CESU Executive Director and
NRIC Internship Coordinator

lisa.gerloff@umontana.edu

406-552-5938

- Internship program information
- Internship questions and concerns
- Hiring process
- Emergency situations

Main Office

WA Franke College of Forestry & Conservation

406-243-5521

Professional and Academic Development

The purpose of an internship under the NRIC is to both support the professional and academic development of the intern while meeting the needs of the host agency. Each host agency will provide a supervisor/mentor to support this development. The agency supervisor/mentor is a resource professional that has the power and control to provide students with a really good experience. The agency supervisor/mentor provides experiences to allow the interns to gain valuable hands-on experiences and an understanding of resources stewardship ethics while collecting resource data, learning skill in resource management, performing tasks/functions as appropriate in their field of study, and learning the culture and mission the host agency.

Agency benefits of having interns:

- Interns can provide the host agency with a unique perspective and interests of a younger generation.
- Interns provide a host agency with an able person with a desire to learn and work in public lands.
- During the course of the summer, mentors often further their own learning through the unique perspectives offered by their interns.
- Interns provide agency mentors with future opportunities for growth within the agency (ex. mentoring a highly qualified candidate for a potential full-time career with the agency.)
- Interns can provide vital diversity to agencies.
- Interns are an active investment towards “Tomorrow’s Public Land Leaders”.

Performance and Termination

Intern Performance

Every intern is expected to complete their internship in good standing. In cases of sub-standard performance, the agency supervisor/mentor and NRIC internship coordinator will develop a plan that outlines expectations for improvement. Should an intern not make improvements in the designated timeframe, they may be terminated from their internship.

Intern Termination

Termination can refer to a change in an intern’s status, poor performance, or end of an agreement or budget; it is not necessarily a negative action against the intern.

The NRIC is recognized as the disciplinary and supervisory body of all interns. The NRIC reserves the right to terminate an intern and remove them at any time should they feel continued participation is not in the best interest of program and/or its students.

Academic Credit

In most cases, the intern will need to complete tasks related to obtaining the academic credit connected to the internship.

Students taking credit work must:

- Meet with faculty advisor to discuss and agree upon learning objectives.
- Register for internship credit.
- Submit Learning Agreement through Experiential Learning Portal with the University of Montana's Extended Learning Career Services (ELCS). The Learning Agreement includes listing both the faculty advisor and the agency supervisor/mentor.

Agency collaboration is critical in fulfilling academic learning objectives. **ELCS will send the Learning agreement to both the faculty advisor and the agency supervisor/mentor for review and approval.**

Example Email

Subject: Experiential Learning Agreement Approval Required

From: ELCS=umontana.edu@mg.gradleaders.com

To: Agency Supervisor/Mentor

Hello,

Your response is required to process an Experiential Learning Agreement for a University of Montana student:

Student Name: Samantha Que

International student? No

Experiential Learning Activity: Internship **Employer:** NRIC

Position: Developed and Dispersed Recreation Student Trainee, USFS Missoula Ranger District

Semester: Fall 2024

Start Date: 5/20/2024 **End Date:** 8/20/2024

Estimated hours per week: 40

Pay Type: Hourly rate **Stipend:** 0

Hourly Rate: 17

Additional Compensation:

Other Pay Details:

Faculty Advisor e-mail:

Supervisor e-mail: Agency Supervisor/Mentor

Course: WILD 398

Credits: 2

CRN: 72211

Grade Type: Credit/No Credit

Learning Objectives: Learn how to manage USFS lands Learn how to educate and manage the public Learn how to maintain USFS property.

Job Description: Assists in the implementation of recreation operation and maintenance plans for developed and dispersed recreation sites. Monitors the scope of the approved operating plans. Gathers, complies, and recommends improvements for developed and dispersed recreation sites on the unit

Please visit <https://glcc.gradleaders.com/umontana/Public/CoopApproval.aspx?J1AZ7gGjDZTihDpgUtWeRA2> to review the contract, and e-sign. The deadline to complete this action is {**deadlinedate**}. Learning Agreements are not available for review after approval, so be sure to save this e-mail for future reference. If you have questions please contact our office. Thank you!

University of Montana Experiential Learning & Career Success
ELCS@umontana.edu 406-243-2022

Intern Orientation

All interns must attend the NRIC Orientation prior to beginning their internship. Individual or small group orientations can also be arranged should interns need them in the offseason or during the school year.

For a summer internship, orientation will take place in April. Topics at orientation include:

- Overview of the NRIC program.
- Policies and procedures.
- Human resources paperwork.
- Payroll information.
- Upcoming trainings.
- Internship Q & A.

Intern Training

To prepare students for their internship, two soft skills training sessions are required. For a summer internship, the training will take place in April. These training sessions may cover:

- Making the most of your internship.
- Navigating different work styles.
- Dos and don'ts of difficult conversations.
- Cultural awareness and generational awareness.
- Alumni panel sharing experiences on internships and career paths.

The agency host will provide agency and position-specific training.

Career Guidance

Career guidance is another component of the NRCI program. Besides working closely with their agency supervisor/mentor, interns are required to schedule an appointment with an appropriate agency representative to discuss topics such as career paths in the agency to are they taking the right courses for their career interest. The NRCI Internship Coordinator and/or the agency supervisor/mentor will identify this agency contact for the intern. The agency supervisor/mentor will give provide work time for this appointment.

The NRIC will also provide a resume building and navigating USA Jobs session.

Evaluations

As the internship concludes, interns and their agency supervisor/mentor are sent evaluations from ELCS to complete and submit electronically.

Workweek

The UM workweek is defined as the period between Saturday morning at 12:01 AM through the following Friday night at 11:59 PM.

Interns may have certain hour restrictions during their internship based on several factors such as student, holiday breaks, semester, and internship budget. Please contact NRIC Internship Coordinator if you have any questions regarding workweek hours. Examples of basic intern workweek hours are as follows:

- Summer: 40 hours a week may be worked by any intern.
- Spring/Fall: 29 hours a week may be worked if a student is in school.

-Holidays

Student hourly employees may work on holiday days (Independence Day, Labor Day, etc.) without incurring overtime. Student employees do not receive holiday pay. They should not record holiday hours on their timecards. They should only record actual hours worked.

Time and Pay

Interns are paid bi-weekly, and you can view the [pay schedule here](#).