Resource Conservation Internship Guidelines

Resource Conservation Internships provide meaningful experience and interaction with professionals while improving student qualifications for employment. Resource Conservation students intern with a wide range of organizations to build professional skills and knowledge relevant to their area of interest. Students can earn 1.0 to 6.0 internship credits for Student-Initiated Internships (i.e., summer internships) or through Degree Coordinated Internships (i.e., “in-semester” internships). To qualify for credit, internships must provide clear learning objectives, usually through substantial leadership or management responsibilities. Internships are generally taken for Credit/No Credit. Internships grades are assigned based on supervisor feedback, evaluation of the reflective paper by the Faculty Advisor, and your professionalism, including the timeliness and quality of interactions with your Advisor, UM’s Internship Services, etc.

COMPLETING THE INTERNSHIP APPROVAL FORM

STEP 1: To receive credit for any internship, students must complete the Internship Approval Form (See RSCN Internship Website) and receive prior approval from their Faculty Advisor. Students complete the contact information (Name, 790#, Major, Minor) and “Step 1: Collect Internship Information” section of the Form. This includes identifying the internship organization; supervisor’s name, phone, and e-mail; start and end dates of the internship; a job description; hours per week; and an explanation of the leadership/management role of the internship. There are three learning objectives that apply to all internships; students must propose two (2) additional learning objectives.

Learning Objectives:
1. To understand and appreciate the professional responsibilities of personnel in your field
2. To relate academic knowledge and experiences to practical professional leadership or management
3. To identify your professional strengths and weaknesses, and ways to build on strengths and overcome weaknesses
4. (write your own learning objective)
5. (write your own learning objective)

STEP 2: Students submit the form to their Resource Conservation Faculty Advisor (in person or via e-mail) who will confirm the semester, course number, section number, CRN, number of credits (generally 30hrs per credit), grade mode (traditional letter or Credit/No Credit), and the final paper due date. Your Faculty Advisor will approve the internship by signing the form and returning to you in person or via e-mail.

STEP 3: Students must officially register their internship with UM via “Handshake” by visiting https://www.umt.edu/career/handshake.php. Record the date of registration on the Internship Approval Form.

STEP 4: Students must register for CFC credits. SEMESTERS VARY (See below)

- Summer internship credits are taken in the Fall semester after completing the internship, but students complete the internship form and receive approval from their Advisor before the summer. Exceptions may be made for graduating seniors (e.g., register for credits the semester before the summer, receive ‘N’)
- In-Semester Internship credits are taken during the same semester as the internship

Record the date of registration on the Internship Approval Form.

STEP 5: Provide your Advisor with a final, completed copy of the Internship Approval Form.

COMPLETING INTERNSHIP REQUIREMENTS

In addition to completing the Internship Approval Form, students must complete a few additional tasks to receive credit.
1. **Respond to check-in communication.** A few times during your internships, your Advisor may ask for a brief status update to make sure things are progressing according to plan. Students must respond to these communications in a timely and professional manner.

2. **Contact your Advisor if there are any issues at any time** – they will work with you to maintain confidentiality while working toward a solution.

3. **Keep a journal (optional).** Many students find it useful to keep a journal during their internship. Reflective papers (see below) are much easier to write if you have taken notes about specific experiences while they happen, rather than trying to recall them several weeks later. Familiarize yourself with the paper requirements (below) and keep a journal of events that relate to specific sections of the paper.

4. **Write a reflective paper after your internship.** The Due Date will be marked on the Internship Approval Form by your Advisor. Your paper will be approximately 4,000 words (1” margins, double spaced, 12pt “normal” font)

Your paper should include:

   a. **Summary of your experience**
      i. Description of the organization in which you worked and your supervisor
      ii. Description of your internship/job, including the specific tasks/project(s) you worked on
      iii. Description of at least two (2) personnel you worked with. Why were they good at their jobs? How could they have improved?

   b. **Reflection on your strengths and areas for improvement**
      i. Provide three (3) strengths and three (3) areas for improvement as related to your internship experience. We seek depth in this answer, not simply reflections on basic skills improvements
      ii. Evaluate your performance during your internship. You can elaborate on your responses to the previous question if you wish. Specifically discuss:
         1. Communication issues – what worked, what didn’t, and how did you solve problems
         2. Taking directions – give an examples
         3. Showing initiative – give an examples
         4. Leadership roles – how well did you perform? Looking back on your leadership, what would you do differently and why?

   c. **Issue analysis**
      i. Describe and use insights from your courses to evaluate ONE of the following issues that emerged from your internship (observed or personal experience). Include a minimum of five (5) references in this section. Reference specific other coursework in your response.
         1. An administrative issue, a leadership issue, OR one resource management or conservation issue you saw or experienced during your internship. Refer back to concepts from your UM courses for your discussion

   d. **Evaluation of your internship overall**
      i. What were the best two (2) aspects of your internship?
      ii. What were two (2) things you wish had been different
      iii. Would you recommend this internship/organization to other students?
      iv. Closing thoughts: how has this internship informed your thinking about your future career?

5. **Take pictures!** This is optional, but we would like to highlight student internship experiences and pictures help.