USM Career Exploration Internship Program: Host Site Community Partner Guidelines

Through the Career & Employment Hub, USM funds career exploration internships that offer students opportunities for applied learning and professional development with community partners in seven target sectors. Students who successfully complete these internships will emerge as leaders who drive the growth of Maine's economy.

Target sectors:
- Advanced Technologies for Forestry and Agriculture
- Aquaculture and Marine Technology
- Arts
- Biotechnology
- Composite Materials Technology
- Environmental Technology
- Humanities
- Information Technology
- Nonprofits
- Precision Manufacturing Technology

The Student Internship Experience

The student internship workplace experience will be an extension of their classroom learning. The internship will give the student the opportunity to gain valuable experience and to make connections in a professional field they may be considering for a career path. It also gives the Host Site Community Partner the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent. The student will be involved in professional research-oriented projects that meet the real world needs of the business; the internship activities will not substitute for work routinely performed by a regular employee. The skills or knowledge learned must also be transferable to other employment settings.
- Sites: All internships must take place in Maine.
- Travel: Work at locations other than the approved host site location is not permitted. Under special circumstances, travel for brief site visits or field trips may be allowed with advance permission from the relevant Program Director/Internship Coordinator and USM's HR Department on a case-by-case basis.
- Compensation: All internships are paid, regardless of whether they are credit or noncredit bearing.
- Minimum Hourly Pay: Students will be paid bi-weekly, based on a minimum hourly pay of $18. This will be paid directly to the student by USM.
- Minimum Hours: An internship requires a minimum of 120 hours. An intern cannot work more than 20 hours in a week in an academic year and more than 39 hours per week during the summer. Overtime work is not allowed.
- Host Site Community Partner Cost-Sharing: As the relationship between Host Site Community Partners and USM grows, community partners will be asked to contribute to the cost of providing an intern at the host site through program contributions.
- Program Director/Internship Coordinator: Each student intern will have a Program Director or Internship Coordinator who will maintain communication with the Host Site Community Partner.

They will work with the student and the Host Site Community Partner to ensure that the internship experience is a fulfilling one for all involved.

- The student intern will submit a monthly status report to the Program Director/Internship Coordinator and Host Site Supervisor.
- The Program Director/Internship Coordinator will check in regularly with the Host Site Community Partner to see how the student is progressing and what supports they might need. This can be done through phone, email, videocall, or site visits.

Student Eligibility and Expectations

- Major: Students from all majors at USM will be eligible to apply for Career Exploration Internships.
- Matriculation and Academic Standing: Students must be matriculated at USM full- or part-time and have at least a 2.7 GPA and a minimum of 30 credits prior to the start of an internship. Students must maintain their good academic standing throughout the internship experience.
- Residency: All USM students regardless of residency are eligible to apply for Career Exploration Internships.
- Existing Employer: A student intern cannot complete an internship with a community partner who is their current employer.
- Term limit: Student interns may not receive more than 12 months of internship funding through the Career Exploration Internship Program.
- Professionalism: Student interns must maintain professionalism in all internship interactions and respect office policies and project deadlines.
- Monthly Status Report: Each month student interns will submit to their Program Director/Internship Coordinator and Host Site Supervisor a status report that includes (a) tasks performed and skills/knowledge acquired in service of their learning outcomes; (b) challenges to address and goals for the next month; (c) days, dates, and hours worked.
- Communication with USM: The Program Director/Internship Coordinator is the USM representative to contact should any problems occur.

Responsibilities of a Host Site Community Partner

Workplace internships can be a win-win experience for both the student and the host site. Having an intern onsite can help a host site connect and build relationships with students early in their academic careers; build a pool of potential candidates who have professional experience and a relationship with employees; and contribute to the economic and workforce growth of Maine. It is expected that all host sites for USM interns will be responsible for the following:

- Research-based Workplace Experience: Commit to providing student interns a minimum of 120 hours of research-based project work that will enable them to enhance their skills and prepare for their future careers. The student should be involved in professional research-oriented projects that meet the real world needs of the business.
- Safe Environment: Provide a safe working environment in a professional office that must be onsite and cannot be in a private residence; explain organizational culture and structure; and foster an environment free of discrimination, where the intern enjoys the same respect as other team members.
- Onsite Supervision: Provide one identified, onsite intern supervisor who has knowledge of and an educational and/or professional background in the industry of the internship who will check in at least weekly with the intern.
- Meaningful Projects: Provide meaningful projects that foster learning and allow the student intern to apply the knowledge and skills they have learned.
- Resources: Provide the necessary resources to ensure the intern can complete their projects.

- Goal Setting, Mentorship, and Feedback: Facilitate goal setting with each intern, monitor and provide feedback regularly about progress; facilitate opportunities for the intern to apply academic skills and knowledge to the workplace environment; identify the intern's successes and strengths, offering constructive feedback on progress toward goals; and cultivate an environment that promotes mentorship for career planning that includes advice, counseling, and support. The student may share their Academic Map, a tool that can help students link their academic coursework requirements; developmental work-based activities, such as internships; and career pathways.
- Inappropriate Work: Ensure that the student intern does not perform personal errands or clerical work for the host site's employees, duties that require any sort of license or certification, or roles that are commission-based.
- No Overtime Work: Ensure that the student intern does not work more than 20 hours in a week during the academic year and 39 hours a week during the summer.
- Networking: Build an environment that integrates the student intern into work and social activities and help the student intern interact with colleagues throughout the organization and within their field of interest.
- Consent to Communication with USM: Consent to phone conversations, emails, videocalls, or site visits during the student internship with the Program Director/Internship Coordinator.
- Monthly Status Report: Each month student interns will submit to their Program Director/Internship Coordinator and Host Site Supervisor a status report that includes (a) tasks performed and skills/knowledge acquired in service of their learning outcomes; (b) challenges to address and goals for the next month; (c) days, dates, and hours worked.
- Feedback Survey: Respond to an anonymous online survey at the end of the internship and provide constructive comments to help improve the internship experience for the student, for the Host Site Community Partner, and for USM. Information about the feedback survey is included at the end of this document.
- Applicable Federal and State Legal Standards, and UMS Policies: Comply with all federal and state labor laws pertaining to student interns and to the University of Maine System's Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment policies in all interactions with the student intern[1].

Application and Selection Process
Both students and Host Site Community Partners apply to participate in the program, and the Program Director/Internship Coordinator works with both parties to help find a match.
- Application: Complete an internship host site application.
- Matching: The Program Director/Internship Coordinator will guide the Host Site Community Partner through a process that will help to evaluate potential interns and determine a potential match to meet business needs.
- Selection Process: The Host Site Community Partner will interview potential interns to make a final selection. This interview will give both the Host Site Community Partner and the student the opportunity to see if there is a good fit.
- Internship Workplace Agreement: The Host Site Community Partner will complete an Internship Workplace Agreement. This agreement outlines the partnership agreement between the Host Site Community Partner and USM.
- Internship Learning Agreement: This agreement will outline the specifics of the internship, such as the research-based project(s) the interns will be involved in, required number of hours, requirements of the

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[1]https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fact-sheets/71-flsa-internships
https://www.maine.edu/board-of-trustees/policy-manual/section-401/
https://www.maine.edu/board-of-trustees/policy-manual/section-402/

Host Site Community Partner, academic components (if applicable), and intended learning outcomes. The Internship Learning Agreement will be signed by the Program Director/Internship Coordinator, the student intern, and the Host Site Community Partner.

Program Monitoring: Data Collection/Evaluation

The USM Career Exploration Internship Program conducts data collection and analysis annually to assess the quality, impact, and effectiveness of the program. Students and host sites are surveyed at the end of each internship term to track outputs and key short term outcomes. This data is used to highlight successes and lessons learned, and inform decision-making as we continue to adapt and grow the program. The Host Site Community Partner is expected to complete an anonymous online survey at the end of the internship that will capture data about the experience of hosting a USM student intern. The survey will ask for reflections on the intern's performance, the program's design, and working with USM.