

Tips for Writing a Great Internship Learning Agreement

What is a Learning Agreement?

A Learning Agreement is a contract that outlines the specifics of your internships. The Learning Agreement includes your hours, learning goals, and assignments. It also defines what is expected of your host site supervisor. A Learning Agreement is developed between the intern, the Faculty Advisor, and the Host Site Supervisor. Thinking through this document is a great opportunity for the intern to individualize their learning experience within the internship framework.

When does the Learning Agreement need to be completed by?

The Learning Agreement must be completed before the intern begins working at the host site.

How does each section get filled in?

Internship Information (Section D)

- Start and End Dates: must fall within one semester; the start date should be the first day of the semester and the end date should be the last day of the semester, unless you plan on ending sooner
- Hours Per Week: divide the number of weeks in the semester by the total number of hours you plan to work
- Number of Weeks: 15 weeks maximum; this is the number of weeks in the semester; if you are starting late or finishing early, adjust accordingly
- Total Hours: 150 minimum; most internships are 150-175 hours; summer internships may be extended to 225 hours
- Typical Weekly Schedule: your schedule is established based on your course schedule and your host site supervisor's availability; a weekly set schedule is best
- Project Description: usually provided by the host site based on the project work agreed upon
- Responsibilities/Tasks: usually provided by the host site; interns can give input on their goals and interests so the work plan can be adjusted to meet their needs

Student Learning Objectives (Section E)

- Learning objectives should be written in the intern's own words and relate to the Food Studies Program's goal to develop the intern's skills in the following areas: leadership, entrepreneurial and business, policy analysis, advocacy and organizing, and oral and written communication.

- Areas selected should focus on the intern’s learning goals. The process should enable the intern to identify specific learning needs, which is the gap between where the student is now and where they want to be as they enter the workforce. The Internship Coordinator and Faculty Advisor can assist in identifying these. Some questions to get the intern thinking about these goals could include:
 - ✓ What knowledge and skills do you currently have?
 - ✓ What is your interest in this professional setting?
 - ✓ How will you gain the relevant knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to be a competent employee?
 - ✓ What knowledge, skills and attitudes are required in order to fulfill your learning goals?
- Develop learning objectives and connect them to the activities in which the intern will participate. Be sure to check if there are resources available at the host site that may assist in identifying learning needs.
- Outline the types of evidence (*i.e.*, deliverables, measurable growth in a skill set, activities) that will determine that learning goals are being met. The ways in which you document this evidence should be decided upon between the intern and the Faculty Advisor.
- In developing outcomes, choose verbs that are observable. For example:

DO NOT USE	USE
know	describe
feel	construct
understand	calculate
be aware	determine
plan	show how to
interpret	list

Woods, D. R. (1994). Problem-based learning. How to gain the most from PBL. (p. 9-7). Hamilton, ON: W.I. Griffin Printing Ltd.

How is the Learning Agreement used throughout the internship?

The Learning Agreement should be referred to often throughout the semester as it will outline work and learning expectations.