INSTRUCTIONS FOR CREATING AN INTERNSHIP LEARNING CONTRACT

Each student enrolled in a School of Business Internship negotiates a learning contract with a faculty sponsor. The learning contract outlines what you intend to accomplish on your internship, and how this will be evaluated. Think of the learning contract as a tool for generating shared expectations between you and your faculty sponsor. It is also a way to help you plan your internship and maximize your benefit from it. **Given that an internship is intended to be a self-directed learning experience, the student is responsible for developing the learning contract.**

Draft a learning contract using the format outlined below. Submit the first draft of your learning contract to your faculty sponsor for approval before beginning the internship. Using feedback from your faculty sponsor revise the learning contract until it is approved. **You are encouraged to discuss the development of the contract with your employer and to provide them with a copy of the final version.**

**PART I: DESCRIPTION OF THE WORK EXPERIENCE [to be negotiated with employer]**

A. **Job Description.** Obtain written objectives or a job description from your employer. Describe your role and responsibilities. Include a description of any meetings, trainings, job shadowing, workshops, and other related events that you may be attending.

B. **Work Site Supervision Evaluation.** Describe the supervision and assistance you will receive at the work site. How and when will your employer evaluate your work performance? Indicate if someone other than the supervisor listed on the internship approval form will evaluate your performance or if a form other than the one sent to the employer by the University is to be used, attach a copy.

**PART II: DESCRIPTION OF THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE [developed by student and approved by faculty sponsor]**

A. **Learning Goals.** What do you plan to learn during this experience? Goals may relate to:
   - knowledge you hope to acquire about the organization, business practices, or the functioning of organizations in general,
   - skills you hope to develop or apply, or
   - insight you hope to gain into your career direction, your strengths and weaknesses, and your ability to operate in professional settings.

**PART III: DESCRIPTION OF LEARNING ACTIVITIES AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS [include all but Part D which is determined by the faculty sponsor]**

What activities will help you obtain each of your learning goals? Activities may be assigned by the employer as part of the job, required by the faculty sponsor for the course, or included for your own development. All students are required to:

A. **Progress on all of my learning goals will result from my on-the-internship (job) activities.**

B. **Meet with faculty sponsors periodically when needed to:**
   - address student questions,
   - discuss the student's job performance and internship experience,
   - discuss career opportunities and the student's career direction, and
• demonstrate accomplishment of the goals in the learning contract

C. Prepare a midterm progress report memorandum. The memo is to be directed and submitted to your employer, and copies given to your faculty sponsor and the internship coordinator. It should address the work accomplished during the period, problems encountered, a self-assessment of performance and the goals for the remainder of the internship. Ask your employer to meet with you to provide verbal feedback as well as written feedback that you can show your faculty sponsor. The latter can be brief, handwritten comments on your memo, or a separate memo, indicating the employer’s agreement with your memo. An example memo is available on the School of Business Web site.

D. Academic Requirements. Submit a final paper/project and/or keep a journal (Your faculty sponsor will determine your academic requirements.)

The focus of this might be:
• A portfolio of the work you produced on-the-job and a reflective essay on that work.
• Reflection on the accomplishment of your learning goals.
• What insights did you gain about the field? What are your observations about organizations and professional roles and norms?
• How did the internship experience change your view of yourself and contribute to your professional development? What knowledge and skills were developed? What strengths and weaknesses were uncovered by the experience? How did you think, feel, and act in a professional setting, and how did others in that setting think, feel, and act toward you? What insights did you gain into your attitudes, values, and behaviors?
• How did the internship affect your academic or career plans?
• Reflect on your approach to problem resolution in organizations.
• How could you have benefited more from the internship experience?

E. Act professionally on the job as a representative of USM and the School of Business. I will assist my faculty sponsor in setting up at least one site visit.

F. Complete an evaluation of the internship experience.

• You will receive an official evaluation from the School of Business.
• The employer and the faculty sponsor also complete an evaluation.

G. (Optional) Students are encouraged to:

• Submit to the Coordinator of Career Services and Internships an updated resume that includes the internship position.
• If you need assistance updating your resume, see the Coordinator of Career Services and Internships.

To Register:

1) Complete the School of Business Internship Approval Form. The School of Business Internship Approval Form includes a place for the student and faculty sponsor to sign to indicate their acceptance of the contract. It also includes a place for the employer and academic advisor or graduate director to sign. All applicable signatures must be present to register. This form can be found on the School of Business Web site.

2) Attach a copy of the Learning Contract to the School of Business Internship Approval Form and register for the course with the School of Business Coordinator of Career Services and Internships. You can not self register through Maine Street.

Revised 07/29/10