
HORTICULTURE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM (HORT 484)

Department of Horticultural Sciences

The undergraduate internship is an educational program offered cooperatively by the Department of Horticultural Sciences and approved employers who furnish facilities and instruction to help students improve the skills and knowledge needed in their prospective vocation. In turn, the internship student helps the employing organization/company to meet peak demand and/or complete special projects.

Course Description

Horticulture (HORT) 484 - Professional Internship (1-4 credits). The course provides academic credit and supervised field experience related to the student's professional interest. Up to 6 hours can be applied towards the degree plan, but a maximum of 4 hours of credit is permitted per semester.

Course Objectives

A HORT 484 Internship is designed to provide students with an opportunity for relevant off-campus learning experiences while encouraging the independent exploration of their fields of interest. Students are encouraged to establish and refine career goals in relation to their specific interests and experiences. Students have the opportunity to apply what they have learned in the classroom in a real-world work environment while networking with professionals in the field.

Eligibility

This course can be used as a free elective in the Bachelor and Arts and Bachelor of Science curricula and is available all semesters. Students should be sophomore rank or higher, but freshmen can enroll with special approval. A cumulative grade average of 2.0 is required, along with the approval of the Internship Coordinator and the completion of the 'Plan for Internship' (Appendix A).

Internship Scope

Interns should have well-defined work activities regarded as worthwhile by both the employing company or organization and the Internship Coordinator. Specific learning objectives will be planned and evaluated. After the internship, students will complete a final report (see Appendix B) and make a presentation focusing on the internship experience.

Enrollment Procedures

1. Prior to the beginning of the semester in which the internship is to be taken, the student must arrange a personal or telephone interview with a representative of the cooperating organization or company. The student's Internship Coordinator and the company or organization representative must determine whether an available position will provide an experience that supports the student's academic and career objectives. Further, they should be assured that the student's interests and academic preparation will satisfy the demands of the job.
2. On approval, the student will submit the completed 'Plan for Internship' (Appendix A) to the Internship Coordinator and be provided with specific registration instructions. The procedures may vary if the internship is located in a city outside of the Bryan-College Station area.
3. Tuition must be paid as indicated in the class schedule book or the course will automatically be canceled, unless otherwise indicated by the registration instructions/procedures.

**Note that for exceptional internships (such as those completed abroad), one additional credit hour may be added at the discretion of the Internship Coordinator, not to exceed 4 total credit hours.*

STEPS FOR FINDING AND COMPLETING AN INTERNSHIP:

Find

- Attend the Horticulture Career Fair
- Browse *Aggies For Hire* and other websites
- Be creative

Prepare

- Contact employer
- Read internship packet
- Check status with your Academic Advisor
- Contact Internship Coordinator
- Prepare paperwork
- Watch orientation video and take quiz

Perform

- Perform internship to the best of your abilities
- Before leaving, remember to ask your supervisor to fill out your internship evaluation form

Report

- Write (and send) a thank-you letter to your internship supervisor
- Prepare a written report (if you didn't select the blog option)
- Prepare PowerPoint presentation or alternative media
- Turn in all documents to the Internship Coordinator
- Make your final presentation on a date determined by the Internship Coordinator

Internship Credit Guidelines:

Course credit is calculated differently for paid and unpaid internships:

UNPAID internships: The standard course hour rule applies so that for each 1 hour of internship credit to be earned, 3 contact hours must be completed each week during a standard fall or spring semester. Summer semester weekly contact hours must be adjusted accordingly to account for the shorter semester length.

<u>Contact Hours/Week for 15 week semester</u>	<u>Maximum Credit Hours Allowed</u>
3 hours/week	1 credit hour
6 hours/week	2 credit hours
9 hours/week	3 credit hours
12↑ hours/week	4 credit hours

Please use the following conversion hours for unpaid internships that are not weekly based.

<u>Contact Hours</u>	<u>Maximum Credit Hours Allowed</u>
40-89 Hours	1 credit hour
90-134 Hours	2 credit hours
135-179 Hours	3 credit hours
180↑ Hours	4 credit hours

PAID internships: Course credit is based on a standard 35-40 hour work week. Course credit is determined for paid internships according to the following guidelines:

<u>Length of Internship</u>	<u>Maximum Credit Hours Allowed</u>
1-4 Weeks	1 credit hour
5-8 Weeks	2 credit hours
9-12 Weeks	3 credit hours
13↑ Weeks	4 credit hours

Please use the following conversion hours for paid internships that are not based on full time

<u>Contact Hours</u>	<u>Maximum Credit Hours Allowed</u>
40-160 Hours	1 credit hour
161-320 Hours	2 credit hours
321-480 Hours	3 credit hours
481↑ Hours	4 credit hours

Grading Scale and Rubric:

Internship Grades: Final grades for internships will be assigned based on the assessment of the required components to be submitted after internship completion. For a description of the required components please see Appendix B.

Grading Scale: 100 point scale, A=90-100. B=80-89. C=70-79. D=60-69. F<60.

Written Component (Blog or Final Paper)	20 Points
Final Presentation (Presentation or Alt. Media presentation)	20 Points
Supervisor Evaluation (Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory)	40 Points
Thank You Letter (Sent to supervisor and copy to department)	10 Points
Pre-registration Materials	10 Points
TOTAL:	100 Total Points

Student Responsibilities

- Work the agreed upon minimum hours per week (usually 40) for 1-14 weeks. The pay rate should be commensurate with industry standards.
- Complete the tasks and activities outlined in the 'Plan for Internship' (Appendix A).
- Do the job to the best of intern's abilities and keep the employer's business confidential.
- Request prior permission from both the employer and the Internship Coordinator for any leave periods.
- Submit a final report (Appendix B) at a mutually agreed upon time. The 'Checklist for Horticulture Internship/HORT 484' (Appendix D) contains a summary of requirements.

Special Note:

Problems may arise during an internship. For example, students may encounter assignments differing from those described, they may experience interpersonal conflicts (with other employees or supervisor), or may themselves accrue excessive absences, late arrivals, etc.. Many situations can be remedied with good communication. However, if the student is unable to resolve the situation by speaking with the supervisor, it is the student's responsibility to inform the Internship Coordinator as soon as possible. Problems should be addressed as they occur, not in retrospect.

Termination or withdrawal from an internship must be approved by the Internship Coordinator. Failure to contact the Internship Coordinator prior to leaving an internship will result in an Incomplete (I) grade, which could lead to failure of the class. It is recognized that termination of employment can be due to a variety of justifiable reasons. Therefore, each case will be considered individually by the Internship Coordinator, and will be subject to normal grade procedures of review and appeal.

The Internship Coordinator

The Internship Coordinator(s) can recommend internship placement opportunities for students related to their interests, but arrangements for such internships are to be initiated by the student and must be approved by the Internship Coordinator following submission of documentation to justify the cooperation of a particular company or organization that will provide the internship opportunity. The Internship Coordinator reviews the plan to determine whether the proposed internship:

- Is an academically relevant component of the learning process that is appropriate for University credit.
- Involves initiative, creative opportunities, meaningful responsibilities and assignments - in contrast to routine or continuously repetitive activities.
- Provides the student a worthwhile learning experience and the exposure needed to understand the opportunities, functions, and responsibilities of various horticultural disciplines.
- Includes appropriate supervision and direction by qualified and interested persons.

The students' final report (see guidelines in Appendix B) is submitted to the Internship Coordinator by the predetermined date. A grade of I (Incomplete) will be assigned until all requirements have been met.

The Supervisor A representative of the organization or company approved to supervise an intern will interview the potential candidate by telephone or in person (where possible) prior to student's enrollment in the course. When the organization or company selects a participant for the internship program, it is expected to provide a variety of educational experiences for the intern as part of a program sufficiently flexible to permit involvement in specific projects. Final approval for registration is made by the Internship Coordinator.

The organization or company assigns responsibility for supervision of the intern to a specific individual and a final review of the intern's performance is expected (Appendix C) during the final two weeks of the internship. Wages, reimbursement for travel, and other

APPENDIX A - PLAN FOR INTERNSHIP

Student's Name _____ Student's UIN _____

Student's Cell Number _____ Student's Email _____

Name of Internship Company or Organization _____

Internship Supervisor _____

Dates and Duration of Internship _____

Select a Report option:

AND Select a Presentation option:

Blog Option ____ or Final Report ____ / In-person Final Presentation ____ or Alternative Media (video, etc.) ____

Internship Goals and Objectives:

Emergency Contact (full name, relationship to student, and cell number required):

Mark one: PAID INTERNSHIP _____ UNPAID INTERNSHIP _____

Number of Credit Hours (circle one; reference page 2 for credit hour guidelines): **1 2 3 4**

Semester for Course Enrollment (may differ from semester internship is completed): _____

Agreement:

I agree to prepare a detailed, typewritten, final report explaining my internship activities and to include any suggestions for improvement of the program and to present a seminar arranged by the Internship Coordinator upon completion of the other internship requirements. I agree to submit the report by the date required by the Internship Coordinator.

Student's Signature _____ Date _____

The hiring company/organization agrees to provide the student an opportunity to obtain actual experience in the areas outlined above and also agrees to evaluate the efforts of the student and forward an evaluation to the Internship Coordinator on termination of employment.

Name of Company _____

Company Address _____

Name and Phone Number of Company Internship Supervisor _____

Signature _____ Date _____

I have reviewed this Plan for Internship and find it consistent with the student's educational objectives.

Texas A&M Horticulture Internship Coordinator _____ Date _____

APPENDIX B - FINAL REPORT & PRESENTATION

HORT 484 Professional Internship

An internship experience is much more than a job. It is a valuable portion of your educational program in preparation for a professional career. For the evaluation of your progress and the outcome of your internship program, a final report and presentation are required. Both must include elements of the guidelines presented below. These activities offer the opportunity for reflection and will help you evaluate your professional development and career goals.

Final Report & Presentation Guidelines

The final report and presentation are due on the date the Internship Coordinator has predetermined and should include the following:

- A record of the significant activities (not a daily log, but an executive summary of major activities) including relevance to your career goals and interests.
- A description of the organizational structure and function of the cooperating organization/company sponsoring your internship. Describe your responsibilities and indicate your assignment within the overall organizational structure. ➤ A discussion of how your preplanned objectives (from your Plan for Internship) were implemented and the outcome of each.
- An appraisal of the internship program relative to your interests and career goals.
- Your suggestions and recommendations to other students who might wish to pursue an internship with the same cooperating organization/company.
- Any changes you plan to make due to the internship experience (i.e. courses to take, career plan changes, etc.). In addition to the specific points to be addressed in the final report, you may describe any other observation or experience not specified above, but avoid disclosing confidential employer information.

Blog Option

Students may elect to keep a blog *during* the internship experience according to guidelines provided by the Internship Coordinator *in lieu* of the Final Report requirement. All blogs must have a total of at least **10 posts** during the time of the internship. Blogs should contain relevant photos, be professional in nature and content, and be free from grammatical and spelling errors. Students must also be careful not to share any confidential information. If you are unsure about the inclusion of something, consult with your internship supervisor to obtain permission prior to posting. The blog URL must be communicated to Tammy Neel within 15 days from the start of the internship. Additionally, the blog has to show regular activity throughout the course of the internship. Failure to communicate the URL or to add regular postings to the blog will result in switching back to the report option.

Presentation Options

Each intern must make a final presentation about her or his internship experience. Following are presentation options that interns may choose from with the approval of the Internship Coordinator:

1. **Oral Presentation:** The student will present in front of a class, in a meeting of the Horticulture Club or similar, in a departmental seminar, or other related venue. The presentation will likely be in power point format.
2. **Alternative Media Presentation:** The student will prepare an alternative/multimedia presentation describing her/his internship experience that may be posted on the hortsciences.tamu.edu website. **Examples of this type of presentation include but are not limited to the following:**

**A student records a professional interview of her or himself describing the significance of the internship experience and may include an interview of the intern's supervisor as well.*

Example: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vnRCZ7lo47E&list=PL2B6C223846A09B8D>

**A student prepares a 'Ken Burns-style' slideshow with voiceover describing the significance of the internship experience.*

Example: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F4mwOtDWpZc>

**A student utilizes other creative media (animation, motion graphics, video, etc.) to present an overview of the internship experience and its significance to the student's education.*

APPENDIX C - ORGANIZATION/COMPANY SUPERVISOR EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE DURING INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Student's Name _____
 Name of Supervisor Making Rating _____
 Business Phone Number and Email address _____

We would appreciate your cooperation in rating this student in terms of her or his performance of internship activities in your organization/company. Your response will help the Internship Coordinator in assigning a grade and identifying areas requiring attention in the student's continuing professional development. Thank you for your cooperation.

Rating	Excellent	Good	Fair	Unacceptable
Cooperates with management				
Cooperates with other workers				
Willingness to work				
Dependable				
Honest				
Ethical behavior				
Shows initiative				
Appearance				
Personality				
Motivation				
Accepts supervision				
Accepts constructive criticism				
Punctuality and attendance				
Professional attitude				
Shows leadership ability				
Communication - speaking				
Communication - writing				
Shows ability to think				
Learns new operations easily				
Adaptable to variety of jobs				
Potential for career in this industry				

SUPERVISOR'S EVALUATION, *continued*

**For yes/no questions, please elaborate*

-
1. Was the student adequately prepared to work in your program?
 2. In your opinion, what are the student's areas of greatest strength and areas that need improvement?
 3. Was the student's contribution to your company/organization worth at least as much as you paid them?
 4. Do you have any recommendations for in this student's academic program to better prepare the student for future professional roles?
 5. Would you be willing to hire another student for a future internship at your organization/company?

If yes, we will add your name and address to our list of approved internship sites. If no, would you please indicate the reason why your organization/company can no longer participate in our Internship Program? This information may assist us in future planning.

Please circle the grade that you believe the student should receive for his or her performance during this internship.

Satisfactory Unsatisfactory

Supervising Organization/Company Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

PLEASE REMIT TO:

Tammy Neel
2133 TAMU HFSB
College Station, TX 77843-2133
Phone: 979-862-3116
E-Mail: tneel@tamu.edu

APPENDIX D – CHECKLIST FOR INTERNSHIP (HORT 484)

	Read and understand the HORTICULTURE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM (HORT 484) packet available in the internship coordinator's office OR online at http://hortsciences.tamu.edu/
	Complete the mandatory Internship Orientation tutorial online at http://tinyurl.com/aggieinternship
	Determine the implications of potential internships on financial aid, scholarships, insurance eligibility, and other financial considerations.
	Find and secure an internship that fits your educational objectives. Sources for internship postings include (but aren't limited to) the Internship Coordinator, the Experiential Learning Program Coordinator, your undergraduate advisor, Aggies for Hire, http://hortsciences.tamu.edu/undergraduate-programs/aggies-for-hire/ , Hort Jobs, http://www.hortjobs.com/ and the Experiential Learning section of the departmental website, http://horttest.tamu.edu/experiential-learning/
	Complete and submit APPENDIX A - PLAN FOR INTERNSHIP with student's and supervisor's signatures for approval to Internship Coordinator. Discuss working conditions, housing, and financial agreements with the participating company/organization prior to submission.
	Register for HORT 484 according to instructions provided by Internship Coordinator.
	Pay your tuition and fees by the University specified deadlines.
	Perform your internship duties to the best of your abilities.
	Confer with your supervisor regarding the completion of your student evaluation form during the last two weeks of the internship.
	Notify the Internship Coordinator of your current contact information by the beginning of the semester following your internship.
	Arrange the time, date, and location of your internship seminar/presentation with the Internship Coordinator. Complete and turn in your internship final report by the deadline set by the Internship Coordinator.