

For Internship Supervisors

The Information Communication Technology Program

The first of its kind at the University of Kentucky, the ICT program is a part of the School of Information Science in the College of Communication and Information, the official iSchool at UK. The ICT program trains students to effectively apply, use, and manage technology when solving problems specifically related to information and communication. Students who major in ICT work in positions where they are the communication link between people, organizations, and the technologies used to support those organizations' information infrastructures.

The educational philosophy of the program emphasizes experiential learning and connecting academic knowledge and theories to personal and professional practice. We want students to be able to use classroom learning to solve real problems. The coursework builds upon the previous and culminates in a semester long internship experience.

The Internship Experience

All ICT undergraduate majors and graduate students are required to complete a professional experience (internship or practicum) before graduation. The *ICT 399: Internship in ICT* course aims to provide students an opportunity to participate in services that are a part of a professional ICT environment. This is accomplished through supervised work-and-learning experience in a professional environment under the direction of an ICT faculty member and an employee at a participating firm.

For students, the purpose of the ICT internship is to put the knowledge and skills they have acquired to practical use, and to acquire additional skills. They must be supervised by someone who already has those skills; ICT 399 interns **MUST** be supervised by a professional in a relevant field, preferably technology or communications.

We cannot approve internships for ICT 399 credit if the student will be the only person involved in the communications or technology aspect of the organization or if the student will be supervised by another student.

Mentoring ICT Interns

In addition to the work product(s) your intern will provide, there are many benefits to when you mentor an ICT student in an internship: establishing a relationship with the School and its faculty and being introduced to potential employees. However, as the student's supervisor, you play a critical role in the success and quality of the experience for both your organization and the student. You are helping the intern make the transition from student to professional employee.

The learning opportunities, advice, and guidance you provide will serve as the foundation for the intern's future workplace experiences. In this capacity, you are asked to provide ongoing

supervision and help the student formulate goals and activities for the experience. There are several key processes that will require your involvement.

- **Internship Schedule**

Your intern is required to complete 90 hours in one semester (summer, fall, or spring). Please plan to meet with your intern prior to completing the **ICT 399 Learning Contract** to negotiate his/her work schedule.

- **Time Off and Break**

We expect you to treat your intern like an employee, so students should follow established policies to address necessary personal time off, emergencies, and sickness. We expect students to make up hours due to illness. The student should arrange with the supervisor to make-up any missed hours. You should discuss your organization's policy and expectations regarding calling in sick, etc. when you complete the learning contract with your intern.

- **Learning Contract**

All students are required to complete a learning contract to help them focus and maximize their experience. Students will meet with their supervisors prior to completing the contract to discuss the knowledge, skill, and professional objectives they have for their internship. These objectives should be based on the organization's needs, as well as the student's interests and skills.

- **Supervisor Evaluation**

Supervisors will evaluate the intern's performance and achievement of objectives at the end of the internship and we ask that you meet with the student to discuss the evaluation. This is a learning experience for the student and the feedback that you provide is extremely valuable to their professional development and success. The form includes a rating, but the important part of the evaluation is the narrative. These evaluations are submitted to internship course instructors but are **not graded**.

- **Academic Coursework**

All students will receive three (3) credit hours from the University of Kentucky for their internship. Their grade is based upon their performance on a variety of deliverables. However, your involvement and support can contribute to their success, so it is important for you to understand the academic requirements, especially the final project. The final project plays a significant role in the student's development and is a major component of their internship experience.

The Internship Curriculum

This coursework is used to help assess the student's performance. Major deliverables include:

- **Progress Reports**

Students will submit at least four (4) progress reports as part of the internship program.

- **Final Project/Presentation**

At the end of the semester, the student is required to develop a poster that describes what they experienced in their internship. The student is also required to deliver a presentation about their final project in an internship symposium at the end of the semester. Internship supervisors are welcome to attend.

- **Elevator Pitch**

Students will prepare a two-minute elevator pitch where they introduce themselves, state their internship position, discuss what they've learned, discuss how they've applied knowledge from their courses, and summarize their contributions to the organization,

- **Professional Portfolio**

Students will submit a resume, cover letter, and end of the semester summary report. In the report, which will be due before the last week of classes, students will summarize the activities undertaken during the internship with specific reference to what the student did, what the student learned, how the internship affected the student's interest in a career in the field, and what it was like to work at the internship site.

The Learning Contract

The learning contract is a tool for self-directed learning with overall academic guidelines provided by the School. The learning contract helps the intern determine what he or she wants to learn from the internship. Like any successful academic course, we clearly state ICT Program Learning Outcomes. The learning outcomes are in a bulleted list on the learning contract.

The objectives should be periodically reviewed and modified as necessary. The intern's ability to achieve these objectives will become the basis of his or her performance evaluation.

Tips for a Successful Internship

- Involve the interns in planning their projects and tasks. Solicit feedback from them and encourage them to discuss ideas with you.
- Balance the amount of administrative work and practical work given to the intern.
- Give your intern challenging tasks with the understanding that they should ask questions and seek assistance as they need it.
- Create tasks and projects that have a clear beginning and end. This allows interns to gain a sense of accomplishment and allows them to visualize the "larger picture."
- When possible, rotate intern's tasks or provide a variety of tasks within a given project. This allows for a more well-rounded internship.
- Encourage interns to participate in any staff training or professional development activities that you offer your staff.
- Treat interns as members of your staff. When appropriate, allow them to attend staff meetings or events.
- Involve other staff members in training interns or suggesting projects for them.
- Provide feedback when interns complete tasks or projects.