



Undergraduate Internship Handbook 2016 - 2017

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Part I: Overview of Internship Program

This handbook serves as a guide for School of Sustainability (SOS) undergraduate students who are participating in the School of Sustainability Internship Program. The handbook outlines the requirements, processes, and expectations of the Internship Program. This handbook should be an initial resource for questions about the program, but students are also encouraged to consult with the internship coordinator on a regular basis. In person and phone appointments are available.

School of Sustainability Internship Definition

An internship is a planned learning experience that allows students to take the knowledge and skills learned in the classroom and apply them in a professional work setting. Internships offer students the opportunity to learn from professionals in the field and explore potential career options. At the School of Sustainability, internships for credit are combined with academic coursework that encourages critical reflection on the internship experience. The School of Sustainability screens each internship carefully to monitor for a rich experience that directly focuses on an area of sustainability.

Learning Objectives for the School of Sustainability Internship Program:

- Apply the knowledge and skills learned in the academic program in a professional environment.
- Build communication, teamwork, problem-solving and leadership skills necessary for a successful career in sustainability.
- Network with industry professionals.
- Gain information to assist in determining a post-graduation career path.
- Help facilitate the transition from the role of student to the role of professional.

Does the School of Sustainability Require Internships?

Yes. Students in catalog year 2012 and after are required to complete an internship as part of their Capstone requirements. To meet this requirement, the student must obtain an internship and enroll in SOS 484 Capstone Internship credit.

Students with catalog year of 2011 and earlier have the choice to complete an internship, workshop, or research for their Capstone requirement.

All School of Sustainability students are encouraged to complete *at least* one internship; many choose to do more.

Criteria for Successful Internships

The School of Sustainability has identified certain baseline criteria to use when evaluating internships as SOS-approved experiences. These include:

- Relevant experience and direct connection to sustainability issues.
- Regular access to a supervisor or a mentor who can give the intern feedback and who can dedicate time and resources to the intern.
- A balanced, structured experience allowing students to engage in larger, meaningful projects, and day-to-day workplace activities with minimal, if any, routine clerical work.
- Minimal – at most less than 5% – of overall internship responsibilities related to sales, cold-calling, or generating business for the internship organization.
- Exposure to opportunities that build on their academic learning, enhance communication and interpersonal skills, and meet key people.
- The opportunity to learn skills that can be applied in a variety of work environments (transferrable skills).
- Interns should have a chance to get to know other professionals in related fields, either in the organization or through other structured opportunities.
- A minimum length of at least a semester (15 weeks) long so students are exposed to more than just a single project and become more embedded in the organization. During the summer, internships must be at least 8 weeks in length; the recommended summer length is 10 weeks.
- Interns need to complete a minimum of 135 hours. This is about 9 hours a week for a 15 week internship, 17 hours a week for an 8-week summer internship.

What We Cannot Not Approve

With rare exceptions, we do not approve experiences as internships if they are:

- Sales-focused experiences.
 - The School does not permit positions which involve door to door solicitation. This policy is intended to promote safety and security.
- Experiences with organizations that have existed for fewer than five years.
- Students may not intern for themselves, a family member or relative, a friend, a significant other, a current ASU student, or any person that they have a relationship with that may be deemed as a conflict of interest (such as a coach, future in-law, or any person who reports directly or indirectly to any of the above).

- Experiences focused on manual labor (for example: working on a farm doing the work of weeding, planting, etc.).
- Unpaid internships at for-profit companies.
- 100% virtual internships (the “in-person” component to the internship is critical).

Compensation Policy

While payment is not specifically required, the School of Sustainability encourages employers to offer paid internships whenever possible.

The expectation is that for-profit or private companies will provide financial compensation for an intern, based on the criteria outlined by the Department of Labor’s Fair Labor Standards Act pertaining to internships. Please note that most competitive internships pay between \$12 – 15 an hour.

Employers disclose the amount of compensation to the School of Sustainability, but the amount is at the employer’s discretion and the school does not have a minimum pay scale, aside from following federal minimum wage standards.

Government and non-profit agencies are not necessarily held to FLSA requirements, but are still expected by the School of Sustainability to provide a learning experience that benefits the intern. Care must be taken to ensure that if an internship is unpaid, it falls clearly within the legal guidelines that make it a learning experience and not a job.

In summary:

- Students may choose to accept paid or unpaid internships
- Unpaid opportunities at for-profit companies will not be approved for credit

Internship Program Participant Roles:

Student

The School of Sustainability student is responsible for locating and securing the internship opportunity with or without university resources, ensuring that all necessary forms are completed and turned in to the internship coordinator and/or site supervisor prior to the internship’s start date, representing ASU and SOS in a professional manner, and completing the academic coursework.

Internship Coordinator

The School of Sustainability internship coordinator develops partnerships with organizations and reviews proposals for rightness of fit in the internship program. The internship coordinator advises students on internship opportunities, capstone options, other real-world experiences and works with students to ensure that they are working the appropriate option into their academic plan of study. The internship coordinator serves as a liaison between the employer, student, the School of Sustainability and Arizona State University. The internship

coordinator teaches/facilitates the academic/course components of internship and awards grades for the internship classes.

Internship Site Supervisor

The supervisor serves as the point of contact for the internship host organization, and provides supervision and mentorship in the workplace. The site supervisor plans projects and learning outcomes in conjunction with the internship coordinator and intern. The supervisor verifies hours worked and completes mid-term and final evaluations of the intern's performance for the SOS internship course.

Part Two: Getting Started

Step by step instructions for obtaining an internship and registering for credit

1. Review internships on [SustainabilityConnect](#) and [other resources](#). Think about what kinds of internships you are most interested in (at least 3 months prior to start of semester).
2. Update your resume. Make sure it is in a professional format and content is both current and relevant for each internship you are applying for. For resume review, contact Internship Coordinator and/or utilize ASU Career Services [Resume Dropbox](#) resource.
3. Start applying for internships. Plan/expect to apply for multiple internships. If internship is not already approved via SustainabilityConnect, send job description to Internship Coordinator for review and approval.
4. Work directly with internship provider on application and interview process. Make sure to adequately prepare for interview (thoroughly research organization, be prepared to talk about your experience and why you are a good fit for the position). Expect a formal interview.
5. Accept desired internship and notify SOS Internship Coordinator.
6. Complete required registration paperwork with internship supervisor. Submit paperwork to SOS Internship Coordinator (at least 2 weeks prior to start of semester).
7. Register for SOS 484 course upon clearance from Internship Coordinator.
8. Begin internship and start SOS 484 coursework (first week of ASU semester).

Part Three: School of Sustainability Internship Credit

Even though an internship is a real world learning experience, it is also an academic course.

Students cannot receive credit for an internship without enrolling in SOS 484. Students must be enrolled in the class at the same time the internship is taking place (the School of Sustainability does not award retroactive internship credit). Additionally, the internship must last the entire duration of the course (8 weeks in summer 15 weeks in fall or spring).

There are two internship course sections: SOS 484: Elective (3 credits) and SOS 484: Capstone (4 credits). See below for further details on each section.

Undergraduate Elective Internship (SOS 484 Elective, 3 credits)

SOS 484 Elective credit is an excellent opportunity for sophomores and juniors to receive internship credit.

Many students need an upper division SOS elective course, this credit can fulfill that requirement (review DARS or check with an advisor for specifics).

SOS 484 Elective credit *does not fulfill the capstone internship requirement*, a capstone internship is still required for students in 2012 and later catalog years.

Prerequisites

SOS internship providers expect interns to possess a certain level of sustainability knowledge prior to their internship experience. Typically, internship providers are looking for junior or senior students, though this is not always the case. At minimum, students must have completed SOS 110, SOS 111 and at least 12 credit hours at ASU. Students must be in good academic standing and meet ASU and SOS gpa requirements.

Registration

All internships must be approved **before** the student begins the internship.

Students must contact the internship coordinator for an override in order to register for SOS 484. Registration is only permitted after a student has secured an approved internship and has submitted required documentation (see: [Undergraduate Internship Agreement form](#)).

In order to ensure timely registration, students should have internships secured at least two weeks prior to the start of the semester.

Due to the nature of the coursework and the minimum hours required to complete SOS 484, registration after the add/drop deadline is not permitted.

Credit Hours

SOS 484 Elective is a 3-credit online course.

To successfully complete this course, students must work at least 135 hours at the internship site and complete all associated coursework via Blackboard.

Internship hours must be completed within a regular, Session C semester (15 weeks in fall/spring, 8 weeks in summer).

Grades

SOS 484 courses are graded on the A – E scale. Plus/minus grades are not given. SOS 484 grades are based entirely upon the student's performance on the course assignments. It is possible to perform well in an internship and fail SOS 484. Each student is responsible for monitoring his/her own progress in the course and discussing concerns with the internship coordinator. It is important to also note that students who perform well in the course but do not meet the minimum 135 worked hours will also fail the course. Students are required to monitor their weekly schedule carefully throughout the semester in order to insure meeting the 135 hours.

Undergraduate Capstone Internship (SOS 484, 4 credits)

SOS students are required to complete a capstone internship experience prior to graduation, ideally in their last or second-to-last semester. All students are required to complete a capstone internship in catalog years 2012 and beyond. Students completing capstone internship are required to enroll in the SOS 484 Capstone Internship course.

Prerequisites

To be eligible for capstone internship, students must:

- Have at least junior or senior status
- Meet minimum GPA requirements, be in good academic standing with the University
- Have completed at least three (9 credit hours) of 300-level SOS Challenge Area/Track coursework (SOS courses number 320 – 328)

Students are eligible to complete their capstone internship as soon as they meet the minimum requirements above. However, SOS students have found that they have more fully benefitted from their capstone internships when they:

- Are in their last two semesters of the undergraduate career
- Have completed most of their other SOS major coursework
- Have completed or nearly completed their related discipline
- Have completed or nearly completed their general studies requirements

This allows the student to focus on the capstone experience as the culminating SOS experience instead of fitting it into an otherwise regular semester.

Registration

All internships must be approved **before** the student begins the internship.

Students must contact the internship coordinator for an override in order to register for SOS 484. Registration is only permitted after a student has secured an approved internship and has submitted required documentation (see: [Undergraduate Internship Agreement form](#)).

In order to ensure timely registration, students should have internships secured at least two weeks prior to the start of the semester.

Due to the nature of the coursework and the minimum hours required to complete SOS 484, registration after the add/drop deadline is not permitted.

Capstone Internship Course Structure

SOS 484 Capstone Internship is a 4-credit course.

During fall and spring, class meets once a week as a group, with the majority of the coursework completed via Blackboard. On campus students are recommended to take this section of the course, but there will be a limited number of seats available in the iCourse for those that absolutely cannot make it to the in-person class.

(ASU Online students will take the class fully online in fall and spring)

Summer session course is offered as an online/icourse to all SOS students.

To successfully fulfill the Capstone Internship course, students must:

1. Work at least 135 hours at the internship site. Internship hours must be completed within a regular, Session C semester (15 weeks in fall/spring, 8 weeks in summer)
2. Attend weekly in-person class meetings (for those taking the class in person)
3. Complete academic course assignments via Blackboard
4. Earn a “B” or better grade

Capstone Internship Grades

SOS 484 courses are graded on the A – E scale. Plus/minus grades are not given.

Students must earn a “B” or better grade in SOS 484 for it to fulfill the capstone requirement.

SOS 484 grades are based entirely upon the student’s performance on the course assignments. It is possible to perform well in an internship and fail SOS 484. Each student is responsible for monitoring his/her own progress in the course and discussing concerns with the internship coordinator.

It is important to also note that students who perform well in the course but do not meet the minimum 135 worked hours will also fail the course. Students are required to monitor their weekly schedule carefully throughout the semester in order to insure meeting the 135 hours.

Part Four: Finding an Internship

It's highly recommended to start researching and applying for internships at least one semester in advance of when you plan on completing the internship/registering for credit.

You may find an internship really quickly, or it might take a while. You will save yourself stress if you start early.

Also, some internships have early application deadlines and you don't want to miss them (example: February application deadline for summer internship, or September deadline for spring internship).

Resources:

- [SustainabilityConnect.asu.edu](https://sustainabilityconnect.asu.edu): Recommended to start here for local (Phoenix area) internships. This is where we post ongoing opportunities with established partners in the Valley. All internships listed on SustainabilityConnect have been reviewed and approved for credit by the SOS internship coordinator.

You may wish to consult the following sites for leads, but understand that internships resulting from these resources still need to be approved by the SOS Internships Coordinator. The following list is a resource only, and not all opportunities listed on these sites will be eligible for SOS credit.

- [ASU Sun Devil Career Link](#)
- [ASU Career Services Internship Resources](#)
- [Internship for Science-Practice Integration \(spring only, sponsored by DCDC\)](#): The Decision Center for a Desert City (DCDC) undergraduate internship program bridges the world of scientific research and water management by placing students within agencies to carry out their own unique projects (paid internship opportunities).
- [School of Geographical Sciences and Urban Planning](#) has an internships board, and lots of resources for those interested in geography and planning.
- [CAP Central Arizona Project](#) (paid opportunities, summer only)
- [Maricopa County Leadership and Education Advancing Public Service \(MCLEAPS\) Program](#): Full-time compensated internships for fall or spring semester, including opportunities with Air Quality Department, Environmental Services Department, Flood Control District of Maricopa County, and others
- [NASA DEVELOP program](#): Part of NASA's Applied Sciences Program, addresses environmental and public policy issues through interdisciplinary research projects. Applicants with a strong interest in Earth sciences, remote sensing, environmental science, computer science, GIS, technology, and environmental policy are strongly encouraged to apply. (summer)
- [Arizona Legislative Internship](#) (spring only, full time, stipend & tuition waiver)
- [Clinton Foundation Internships](#)

- Search engines such as [indeed.com](https://www.indeed.com) and [idealists.org](https://www.idealists.org) or [internships.com](https://www.internships.com)
- Company websites: If you have a company in mind that you want to work for, see if they have any internships posted on their websites. Or you could contact them directly (see below, “creating your own internship”).
- Networking: Use your personal network. Talk to the SOS Internship Coordinator, SOS faculty with whom you have a relationship and/or who specialize in your area of interest, and of course your fellow students.
- Job or Internship Fairs: Attend on-campus career and internship events. ASU Career Services hosts a number of events per year. Many SOS students miss these opportunities because they don’t think the organizations will apply to them, but you never know. This is a great way to meet employers and find out what they are looking for in terms of internships and full time employment.
- Create your own internship: Call an organization of interest and ask to speak with someone who works in a position/area of interest to you. Tell them you are seeking advice on learning about the field and ask them to meet with you to conduct an informational interview. If things go well, ask for advice on how to set up an internship.

Contact Information

For more information please contact the School of Sustainability internship coordinator by calling 480-727-6963 or emailing caroline.savalle@asu.edu

School of Sustainability majors can schedule advising appointments through the [online appointment scheduling system](#).