School of Planning, Public Policy and Management

PPPM Internship Program: Information, Goals, and Requirements

Program Introduction & Goals

Thank you for your interest in the School of Planning, Public Policy, and Management (PPPM) Internship Program. Our internship program aims to develop and support robust internship opportunities for PPPM students in support of student learning and skill development, as well as capacity-building and workforce development for local nonprofit and public sector organizations (community partners).

PPPM students eagerly apply their learning and research to real-world problems facing society and organizations. Internships are hands-on learning experiences for students to work on relevant, meaningful projects for public agencies and nonprofit organizations. They also provide community partners with academically trained students who are eager to learn and accomplish real-world projects and tasks. Core components of our program include integration of Career Readiness Competencies developed by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) and the reduction of equity and access issues for students through paid internship opportunities.

This guide overviews important information, goals, and requirements of the PPPM Internship Program. It is intended to help community partners thoughtfully develop opportunities that fit their agency needs and craft internship postings that speak to student learning goals.

Identifying Community Partner Needs. In conversations with community partners, the following themes emerged regarding knowledge, skills, and abilities recent graduates need to obtain to be ready for the workplace:

- Professional and appropriate workplace communication: verbal, written, and email.
- Problem-solving, being proactive, addressing mistakes.
- Office skills, including Microsoft Office and other software/technology.
- Time-management, timeliness, reliability.
- Interpersonal skills and cultural competency.
- Attention to detail and ability to take appropriate initiative.
- Curiosity, flexibility, and willingness to try new things and stretch/grow when challenged.
- Critical thinking: deduction, language, attention to detail.
- Ability to self-manage and self-direct.

The above list includes things community partners want to see in entry-level job applicants, which means students need to develop or strengthen these skills before they graduate.

Focus on Skill Level and Development. There will always be skill-level variation within a group of students, but internships can support all students in learning or strengthening these and other skills. Internships are developed to be opportunities for the student to gain knowledge and experience to become an effective member of the workforce upon graduation. While interns are expected to support the work and mission of the organization, students should be gaining as much from the internship as they would in any other upper-division or graduate-level elective course.

Addressing Challenges and Barriers for Community Partners. While not all barriers to internship participation can be fully addressed, the internship program aims to mitigate barriers with the following support:

- Stronger internship postings and competitive pay attract a stronger, more diverse applicant pool with better aligned interests and goals.
- Community partners receive support from PPPM Internship Program faculty when developing and refining internship postings, including scope of work, learning goals, tasks and responsibilities, intern requirements, and onboarding plans.
- Community partners and students receive support prior to the start of the internship as they finalize details and expectations of the internship experience (e.g., scheduling, workplace professionalism standards, intern/supervisor communication plans).

Thoughtfully Developing Your Internship and Posting

Internships are an investment in the future workforce, emerging professionals, and our community. In addition to the program goals mentioned above, it is important for internships to include opportunities for students to gain the knowledge, skills, and abilities they want and need, as well as experiences and outcomes students will be excited about.

Effective Internship Postings. An internship is an opportunity to apply classroom learning in a work-like environment and gain experience in a professional workplace, including exposure to office norms and appropriate communication within and outside of the organization. Supervisors are encouraged to introduce students to new and different opportunities and assign meaningful tasks and responsibilities. In conversations with students, the following themes emerged regarding internship opportunities that would be seen as compelling:

- Clear, tangible deliverables: opportunities to create work products that can be shared in the future and mentioned on their resume; opportunities to present their work to constituents.
- Measurable skills: new or strengthened skills students can add to their resume; technology or software skills.
- Networking opportunities, opportunities to put faces to names within and outside of the organization.
- Invitations to join events, meetings, and other opportunities to connect with staff and learn about related processes and purposes; experiences that help interns feel like a valued part of the organization.
- Opportunities to join external meetings, perhaps initially as an observer, but eventually contributing as appropriate.

- Opportunities to develop critical thinking skills: deduction, self-management, problem-solving.
- Professional development: specific opportunities to improve leadership and inclusivity skills; students often see joining their supervisor in work duties as professional development.

Career Readiness Competencies. You can read more about the eight [NACE Career Readiness Competencies](#) online. Five of the competencies stand out as most compelling and/or needing to be taught through an internship:
- ***Critical Thinking***
- Professionalism
- Leadership
- Equity & Inclusion
- Technology

Focus on Critical Thinking. For many students, an internship might be the first opportunity to develop critical thinking skills. Often, supervisors want interns to have more autonomy, but an internship is commonly a student's first experience with this much freedom. Students often feel unsure and less confident when they are getting started with an internship, and they crave feedback and want to know when they are doing something right or wrong. Internship supervisors can challenge and support students in making the transition from a very structured and "syllabus-focused" academic life to the critical thinking required in a professional workplace.

Internship Host Requirements. The following program requirements address common internship "green flags" that support both students and supervisors.

Internship Supervisor and Site Requirements:
- On-site workspace for the intern, including all physical equipment and technology required to complete the internship duties (e.g., computer, software, office phone).
- ***Interns should receive pay*** as an hourly wage or stipend. Recommended minimum pay is $15/hour or equivalent stipend (e.g., $1,350 stipend for interning 9 hours/week during a 10-week academic term). Stipends should be prorated and paid at intervals during the internship.
- A plan and commitment to provide the intern with networking opportunities as part of the internship (internal and/or external to the organization).
- A plan and commitment to welcome the intern and integrate them as a part of the organization/team, including opportunities to join meetings/events with the supervisor.
- A plan and commitment to meaningful supervision/mentoring of the intern and how the intern's questions and learning will be addressed and managed.
- Willingness to work with PPPM Internship Program faculty on developing/finalizing an internship posting with NACE Career Readiness Competencies embedded in intern learning goals.
- Provide selected intern with clear tasks and responsibilities that will support developing the identified Career Readiness Competencies and internship learning goals.
- A commitment to completing and submitting thoughtful midterm and final student evaluations, including observable behaviors that demonstrate intern's level of career readiness in selected NACE competencies.

Focus on intern pay. Paid internships have become increasingly common, in both the nonprofit and public sectors. Many students forego paid employment to make time for an internship, so paying interns helps mitigate equity and access issues by ensuring the opportunities are truly open to all

students. Students who complete internships tend to have better success with the post-grad job hunt and also receive higher pay in their initial jobs. A failure to offer paid internships only increases inequality issues; often, students who can afford an unpaid internship already have adequate resources to fund and support their education and are better positioned for the post-grad job hunt. Paid internships also improve outcomes for both the student and the organization – everyone, especially organizations, tends to take the experience more seriously when pay is included as part of the internship.

Preparing Your Internship Posting

It's our goal to make the internship posting process as simple and straight-forward as possible. To do this, we are using a Qualtrics survey with clear prompts to support community partners as they think through the beginning framework for an internship.

Prepare for Qualtrics Form. Start by considering what an internship might look like for you and your organization.
- Will this be a single- or multi-term internship?
- Is this internship entry-level or do you need the intern to have some basic skills or knowledge to be eligible? How might the student be able to articulate required skills if this is their first college-level internship?
- Are there projects or other initiatives at the organization that would be interesting for an intern to plug into?
- Which Career Readiness Competencies can you teach and support as part of the internship?
- What are the learning goals for the internship? What knowledge should the student gain from the experience?
- What tasks and responsibilities could you assign to the intern to support their learning and development?
- What are the other outcomes for the student? (e.g., deliverables, measurable skills)
- What is your plan for the intern's workspace?
- How will you structure supervision and mentoring for the intern?
- What is the plan for networking, team building, meetings, etc.?
- Does the intern need to follow a specific schedule? What happens if there is a required course conflict? If this is a multi-term internship, can the student change their specific schedule in subsequent terms?
- How much will you be offering to pay the intern and is it hourly or stipend?

Complete the Qualtrics Form. We strongly encourage you to review the PDF preview copy of the Qualtrics survey and begin mapping out your responses before you click the link for the live form. The online form has several prompts, and if you close your browser you will need to start over when you return. Preparing notes in advance for each prompt will make completing the online form simpler.

Internship Posting Deadlines. Posting deadlines align with the UO academic calendar and the times when students are planning their schedules for the following academic term. To guarantee consideration of your internship posting you must submit the Qualtrics form on or before the following dates. Forms received after these deadlines may not be eligible for promotion to PPPM students and/or the internships posted may be ineligible for academic credit.

Academic Term	Approximate Internship Timeframe	Deadline to Submit Qualtrics Form	Deadline to Select and Confirm Intern
Winter 2025	January 6 - March 14	November 1	November 22
Spring 2025	March 31 - June 6	February 1	February 28
Summer 2025	June 23 - August 29	May 1	May 23
Fall 2025	September 29 – December 5	August 1	August 18

<u>Thank You!</u>

Next Steps and Connecting. The Qualtrics form is designed to capture your initial ideas and plans so we can work together to create a posting that aligns with the PPPM Internship Program requires and will be of interest to PPPM students. Please complete the Qualtrics form to the best of your ability, and one of us will follow-up with you to finalize the structure and details of the internship. If you have questions, need more information, or would like help thinking through any components of the internship program, feel free to reach out via email. We look forward to partnering with you!

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