

MARA 294 - Professional Experience Internships Guidelines

What is an internship?

The internship course (MARA 294) is a field-based, supervised, professional learning experience that takes place in an archival records repository, records center, or another information organization. An internship allows the student to obtain work experience while pursuing defined learning outcomes. It is designed to provide the student an opportunity to test theories and to apply skills learned in other courses taken during the student's program.

The internship is a graded credit/no credit course (MARA 294).

MARA students may elect to participate in a 3-credit, 135-hour internship during their final semester in the program.

The faculty supervisor for MARA internships is Dr. Patricia Franks.

Who is eligible?

A MARA student must be in their last semester in the MARA program and be in good academic standing (3.0 GPA or above) and no outstanding incompletes) to participate in an internship.

An internship may not take place at a student's regular place of employment.

Students must work with the MARA program advisory during the spring semester before their final year to determine if the internship experience is right for them. Students are expected to perform work consistently every week of the term (as scheduled with the site), and build their work experience gradually over the semester. Students may not concentrate work hours during any time of the term in order to end an internship early or start an internship late.

All students should be covered by their own health insurance at all times during the internship experience. However, SJSU does provide professional liability coverage for student interns enrolled in MARA 294.

How do I enroll?

During the fall semester immediately preceding the Internship course, students should find and confirm their internship placement and submit the [MARA 294. Professional Experience: Internship Application](#) form (see [Responsibilities of Student](#)) 4 to 6 weeks before the beginning of the course.

Responsibilities of the Student

- *Identifying the internship site.* Students may apply for currently available internships, or may wish to design a new internship that more directly relates to their professional interests and goals by contacting a current or previous internship site or a new site. All students, including those creating their own internship, must submit a MARA 294. Professional Experience: Internship Application form and have the internship and site approved by the appropriate internship faculty supervisor before the start of the semester.

Employers (companies, libraries, or information organizations) sometimes advertise internship or co-op positions on job sites or thru listservs. These may or may not meet the requirements for a SLIS credit internship (MARA 294). Please make sure the internship site and the site supervisor is aware of and will comply with the requirements for a MARA 294 credit internship (see Responsibilities of the Site Supervisor). This will facilitate approval of the internship and the site when the application is submitted to the internship faculty supervisor. MARA 294 internships must be approved by the internship faculty supervisor.

- *Applying to the internship site.* Some internships have a formal internal application process and deadlines, but not all do. If the internship site has a formal application process and deadlines, it is the student's responsibility to apply in a timely manner so that decisions may be made by the internship site in advance of registration dates for that semester. Once the student has been notified of his/her acceptance by the site, the SLIS internship application needs to be submitted.
- *Timing.* The student is responsible for finding, applying for, and then obtaining the internship faculty supervisor's approval of an internship in a timely manner. The student must identify an internship, apply to the internship site, and submit the MARA 294. Professional Experience: Internship Application form to the faculty supervisor at least 4–6 weeks in advance of the instruction start date for the semester of the internship.
- *Deciding what is to be learned.* The student should consider what type of environment is desired and what the learning outcomes will be. The learning outcomes and tasks should be agreed on in consultation with the internship site supervisor, and a statement of those outcomes submitted to the appropriate internship faculty supervisor (via the MARA 294. Professional Experience: Internship Application form) for approval before the internship begins.
- *Negotiating internship with faculty supervisor.* Each semester, one faculty member will serve as faculty supervisor and instructor of record for MARA internships (currently Dr. Franks. Internship students should consult with the appropriate faculty supervisor regarding the internship site, learning outcomes, required forms, deadlines, and course-related submissions.
- *Negotiating internship with site supervisor.* Once an internship site has been selected (or the student has applied to the site and been accepted), the student will work with a professional at the site who will act as site supervisor. The student and the site supervisor will develop various projects / activities that the student will pursue to accomplish the defined learning outcomes. The student and site supervisor will also negotiate the work schedule to be followed, as well as handle any additional paperwork that may be required by the site.
- *Completing and submitting the MARA 294. Professional Experience: Internship Application form.* In addition to any application forms or other materials required by the internship site, the student must also complete and submit this form to the internship faculty supervisor. Please

remember to include your e-mail address, and to keep a copy for yourself of your defined learning outcomes.

- *Registration.* Students should first find and confirm their internship placement and submit the MARA 294. Professional Experience: Internship Application form (see Responsibilities of Student) before they will be registered for the course. By the first day of the semester in which you will participate in the internship, you will be enrolled in an Angel class site by the MARA faculty internship supervisor.
- *Evaluating the internship site* by completing a brief Student Evaluation of Site form at the end of the semester. This confidential form allows the student to provide feedback on the internship site's effectiveness in hosting a SLIS intern, and to recommend the site's continuance or discontinuance as an internship site.

Responsibilities of the Faculty Supervisor

- *Discussion the Internship Option with MARA Students.* Students interested in an internship during the upcoming academic year should contact their MARA advisor to arrange a meeting to discuss the internship option.
- *Approving the learning outcomes.* The faculty supervisor will insure that the student's learning outcomes are realistic with regard to what the student hopes to accomplish, the time allotted, and any limitations inherent within the internship site itself.
- *Monitoring the student's progress.* The faculty supervisor is responsible for monitoring the students' progress toward achieving their learning outcomes and communicating with the student about their progress.
- *Serving as liaison between SLIS and the internship site.* The faculty supervisor will request feedback from the site supervisor regarding the student's performance. This feedback may derive from site visits and/or telephone, written, or e-mail contact depending on the schedules of the faculty and site supervisor and the particular needs of the student.
- *Evaluating the student's performance.* The faculty supervisor is responsible for collecting the student's assignments (in the form of journal, logs, or other reports), and the student's evaluation forms, and assigning a grade of credit or no credit. Feedback from the site supervisor is used to determine the student's final grade.

Responsibilities of the Site Supervisor

- *Scheduling/assignments.* The site supervisor shall be someone in a professional position (preferably a librarian or archivist) at the internship site who is able to make commitments on behalf of the organization and who will work closely with the student during the course of the internship, providing sound professional judgment and mentoring in the skill areas assigned. The site supervisor should set up a regular work schedule for the student and assign various projects and tasks. The student's work assignments should represent professional-level activities, although SLIS recognizes that in certain environments some non-professional and/or clerical tasks are a part of the professional's responsibilities.
- *Providing guidance and feedback.* The site supervisor should provide the student with a thorough orientation to the site and should meet regularly with the student to provide feedback and assess performance. The site supervisor is also responsible for helping integrate the student into the organization's work culture and daily operations.

- *Maintaining contact with faculty supervisor.* While it is the faculty supervisor's responsibility to contact the site supervisor during the internship, the site supervisor should not hesitate to contact the faculty supervisor when the situation warrants it.
- *Completing a brief written evaluation form.* To assist the faculty supervisor in assigning the student a grade, the site supervisor will be asked to complete and submit a brief written Site Supervisor Evaluation of the student's performance during the internship.

Faculty reserve the right to deny approval or revoke an approved site and their internship opportunity should they feel, at any time, that the professional qualifications of the site supervisor are not sufficient or the student experience is not of professional-level caliber. Student feedback for sites and site supervisors is collected every semester and a review of sites is made as conditions warrant.

Evaluation of the Student's Performance and Experience

There are several instruments used in evaluating a student's internship performance and experience, some optional and others required. The actual method or combination of methods used for evaluation will depend on the student's established internship goals, learning outcomes, and assignments. All students, however, are required to submit to the faculty advisor some or all of the following documents upon completion of the internship:

- *Log.* This provides a daily record of activities and an analysis of what was learned, problems encountered, and questions generated. This log should be more than a collection of unrelated facts or impressions but truly a reflection of the student's learning experience. Students may be asked to post their log entries on the internship ANGEL site according to a schedule set by the faculty supervisor.
- *Final report.* At the conclusion of the internship, the student may be required to submit a final report indicating how the learning outcomes established for the internship were met. If for some reason the learning outcomes were only partially met, or not met at all, some discussion of what happened will be necessary. The deadline for the final report will be set by the faculty supervisor.
- *Site evaluation form.* The Student Evaluation of Site form allows the student to provide feedback on the internship site's effectiveness in hosting a SLIS intern and to recommend the site's continuance or discontinuance as an internship site.
- *Site supervisor's evaluation form.* The Site Supervisor Evaluation form provides formal written feedback by the site supervisor on the student's internship performance. A portion of the student's grade will be based on this evaluation.
- *Additional requirements.* In addition to the above, students may also be asked to submit supplemental materials to the faculty supervisor such as written reports, bibliographies or reading lists, portfolios, or samples of professional work.