The Internship Option Guidelines

All M.A. students pursuing the internship option are expected to participate in an internship in an organization, school, or business. The internship option is designed to generalize theory and research skills acquired in the classroom to the reality of the work situation. At a minimum, students will work in an agency for 8 hours a week for 14 weeks, prepare a weekly journal of activities, and complete a project that provides specific skills that benefit the student in the labor force, as well as provide a needed service for the agency. The outcome of the internship is a final paper reflecting the internship experience, and presentation of a summary to the internship committee or at a public forum. Some internships are paid; others are not.

Specific Requirements:

Select an Internship Chair: The first step in getting ready to do your internship is selecting a chair of your internship committee. This person must be a member of the sociology graduate faculty.

Select an Agency: Students are responsible for locating an internship opening, with help from the sociology faculty. A good step is for the student to take stock of their particular interests, abilities and career goals before choosing the focus and site for the internship. The Sociology Department maintains a listing of agencies that often seek interns. This list is available through the graduate program Web site and from the Director of Graduate Studies. In some cases, a student may use their own place of employment for the internship site; however, the student must then complete duties that are in addition to their current duties (normally a minimum of 6 additional hours a week).

Internship Committee: After you have identified your chair and an agency, you must select one additional faculty member to serve on your committee.

Complete the MA Internship Agreement Form (Appendix D): This form is designed to clarify the expectations and responsibilities of the student, the agency, the faculty committee chair and second committee member, and is completed by each of these parties after an agency is selected. Normally this form is completed at least one week prior to the beginning of the semester in which the student plans to enroll for internship credits. Your form should be no longer than 2-3 pages and must be typed. (Employers may also add a copy of the job description, instead of completing their section of the form). Once approved by your Internship Committee, make 4 copies: provide the original to the Director of Graduate Studies, one to each of your committee members, one to your internship agency, and keep one for yourself.

Begin Internship. After completing 18 credit hours in the program, and once you receive final approval from your Internship Committee, register for SOC-R 594 and begin your internship. Normally this is done at least one week before the first day of the semester in which you plan to enroll for internship hours. Remember, you cannot begin the internship until it is officially approved in writing on the Internship Agreement Form.
Keep a Weekly Journal of Activities: You must maintain a weekly journal of your internship experiences that includes the date, hours spent on the internship that week, details about your activities, and a brief statement that reflects on the sociological relevance of your placement. Journals are submitted to the internship chair every 1-2 weeks. While the specifics of your journal will be decided by your advisor, normally journals follow these guidelines:

- Journals should be typed.
- Include date, hours spent on internship that week, and details of activities.
- Be specific! Give details as though you were explaining your activities to a friend.
- Spell it out! Don’t assume your reader will understand abbreviations and slang terms.
- Include insights gained from your observations that will relate to your final paper.
- Include reflections on the sociological relevance of your experience.
- Write an entry every week.
- An entry will be approximately 2-3 pages.
- At the end of each month, total the number of hours you spent on your internship. This will save you and your employer time at the end of the internship.

Distribute Midterm and Final Evaluation Forms. Internships will be evaluated midterm and at the end, by students and work supervisors, using forms provided for this purpose on the department website. Students are responsible for distributing the forms to their work supervisors, along with an envelope that can be used to mail the evaluation directly to the faculty supervisor of the internship.

Complete an Internship Project and Paper: The internship requires completion of a minimum of a 5000-word paper (approximately 20 double-spaced typed pages) at the conclusion of the internship. The format and content of the paper must be planned in consultation with your Internship Committee. Normally, this paper takes one of the following forms: a research report on a topic of interest to the agency; a research grant proposal for the agency; or a critical reflection on the sociological relevance of your placement. Provide a complete copy of your internship paper to your committee chair at least one week prior to the last day of classes. After your chair approves this final draft, you may then ask your second member to read the paper for his/her approval, normally on the last day of classes. Both members of your internship committee must approve your internship paper.

Make an Internship Presentation. Each student will be required to make a short 20-30 minute presentation on their internship experience before the end of the semester in which he/she enrolls in internship credits. Your presentation may take any of several forms such as a presentation to your committee, the internship agency, at a conference, or to one of our graduate classes.

Summary of Rules Regarding Internships

A student must complete 18 graduate credit hours prior to enrolling in an internship.
Internships must have a social science research component where the student can apply and/or learn methodological skills.

There may be a mid-internship site visit or phone conversation between an IUPUI Internship Program representative and/or your internship advisor.

A student who chooses the thesis track may also enroll in up to 6 internship credits as electives or concentration area courses. In these cases, students only need to have one Sociology faculty advisor to supervise and approve their course work.

No more than 6 internship credits may count towards your degree.

No more than 3 internship credits may count towards a student’s concentration area.

A student who chooses to apply internship credit hours and independent reading credit hours towards their concentration area may count no more than a combination of 6 internship/readings credits towards the concentration area.

A student must work for a minimum of 8 hours a week for each 3 internship credits enrolled (6 if the site is the student’s pre-existing place of employment).

Students who intern in their own place of employment may count no more than 3 internship credits completed in their place of employment towards their degree.

If the internship involved original research work, this may be used as part of a thesis, subject to the approval of the student’s thesis committee and the Institutional Review Board. (See the Thesis Research Project description below.)