

Horticulture, Landscape and Turfgrass Science Internship Handbook



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PURPOSE:

The Horticulture, Landscape, and Turfgrass Science (HLTS) Internship program ensures that students that graduate with a HLTS degree from the University of Arkansas have the practical and professional experiences needed to be qualified professionals in industry, business, education, research and outreach or consulting. In addition to the experiences gained, the internship program should also provide networking opportunities that can lead to future job placement for the student. Therefore, an internship is a degree requirement for the HLTS bachelor's degree program. The intent of the internship experience is to gain experience in operational areas and facets of a horticultural operation, business, institution, or agency. The internship is to be constructed to facilitate the career goals of a student and would include summer research experiences. The internship is not intended to be a "summer job" where the intern only performs a limited number of tasks or duties.

The learning objectives and outcomes of the Horticulture internship include:

1. **Horticulture Skills Development.** During the internship, students should develop skills in horticulture plant growth and horticultural management through the internship experience. Upon completion of the internship, they should be able to describe the operation and explain the value of the operation in which they worked, describe methods and reasons for horticultural operations in which they participated, and the impact of the horticultural operation locally, regionally, or nationally.
2. **Critical Thinking Skills Practice:** During the internship, students should think about the operation in which they work and consider why operations are being conducted in the manner they are at that operation. At the conclusion of the internship, students should be able to describe and critically evaluate different components and processes of the operation in which their internship occurred.
3. **Written Communication Skills Practice:** During the internship and upon its conclusion students will practice writing through journaling and blogging, and/or a final written report discussing their experiences, activities, and what they learned during the internship.
4. **Oral Communication Skills Practice:** At the conclusion of the internship, students will provide an oral account and summary of their experiences (with supporting visual aids) while on internship.

The internship assessment will be based upon students' demonstration of these skills in HORT 4620V and HORT 4720V. Blogging, evaluations, presentations, and reports will be used to assess progress towards achieving learning objectives during the internship experience and assessment.

The faculty of horticulture look forward to working with students and expect the best as students embark on a productive internship learning experience.

DEFINITIONS:

INTERN – The student enrolled and participating in an internship program; also referred to as either "the student" or "student-intern".

ACADEMIC ADVISOR – A faculty member who advises the student on academic progress, including when to participate in an internship. The academic advisor discusses career goals with the student and helps the student decide and may help locate a specific internship program.

INTERNSHIP COORDINATOR – A faculty member in whose specific class-section the intern is enrolled and who has the responsibility for oversight, evaluation, and grading of the internship experience.

INTERNSHIP PROVIDER – A person, company, or organization providing an internship to the student.

HORTICULTURE, LANDSCAPE AND TURFGRASS SCIENCE INTERNSHIP SUMMARY:

- The HLTS degree program requires a minimum of three (3) total semester credit hours of internship experience (1 hr) and internship assessment (2 hr) credit. The student may choose to participate in an additional internship opportunity for horticulture elective credit for a maximum of 6 hours internship credit, but one internship program totaling three hours credit is required to complete degree requirements. Internships generally take place during the summer term, particularly between the sophomore and junior years, but may occur anytime during the year.
- The HLTS internship program consists of two separate courses for a total of three required credit hours per internship experience: HORT 4620V *The Internship Experience* and HORT 4720V *The Internship Assessment*. Enrollment will be added administratively (i.e. upon instructor consent) after receiving approval from both the academic advisor and internship coordinator (i.e. after submission of a signed approval for internship enrollment, Appendix 1 form).
- Students have a primary responsibility for identifying and planning for their internships. A list of internship providers is available on the Horticulture Department website at: <https://horticulture.uark.edu/students/internships.php>. Internships can also be facilitated through the [Bumpers Career Connections](https://bumperscollege.uark.edu/current-students/career-connections.php) (<https://bumperscollege.uark.edu/current-students/career-connections.php>) and the [University Office of Career Connections](https://career.uark.edu/) (<https://career.uark.edu/>). Faculty advisors are a resource for identifying internship opportunities.
- The Horticulture Department will facilitate internship providers in identifying and matching appropriate students for internships and act as a clearing house for internship offerings.
- Internship providers have the responsibility of providing a meaningful experience to enhance the education of the intern.
- Internships will give internship providers the opportunity to select and “pre-train” potential future employees.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY FOR INTERNSHIPS:

To be eligible to enroll in HORT 4620V and HORT 4720V for graded credit students must:

- Have completed a minimum of 60 hours of academic coursework prior to beginning the internship unless an exception is approved by the student’s academic advisor.

- Have a minimum GPA of 2.00 and be of “good academic standing”. Students on academic or disciplinary probation are not allowed to enroll for internship credit. The internship may be taken when the student resumes enrollment in a non-probationary status and in good standing.
- It is encouraged that students do not take internship credit for working in a business owned by the student or their immediate family or continuing employment at a business where the student is currently or has been employed (unless special arrangements are made with the supervisor in coordination with the internship coordinator for a change in duties and responsibilities for a significant learning experience).
- The expectation is that the student will complete 320-420 hours of contact time during the internship experience. Any deviation from this contact time would have to be approved by the student’s academic advisor and the internship coordinator at the time of the internship application. Internships normally last 10-12 weeks. The academic advisor and internship coordinator must approve the number of hours and the duration of the internship before the student begins the internship.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

- It is the responsibility of the student to complete all eligibility requirements prior to beginning the internship.
- It is the responsibility of the student to identify and work with the student’s academic advisor and the internship coordinator in preparing for and developing an acceptable internship program for the student. Locating and obtaining an internship with an internship provider is the responsibility of the student.
- The student is responsible for meeting the deadlines for applying for and enrolling in an internship experience (see information about Submission Deadlines following below).
- The student is responsible for negotiating compensation with the internship provider. The student must make all arrangements regarding the beginning and ending dates of the internship with the internship provider. The student should be aware of any holiday or vacation leave schedules or other compensation offered by the internship, and previous knowledge or skills (equipment operation, tool operation, special licenses such as pesticide applicators, etc.) that may be necessary for the completion of the internship.
- The student is responsible for making all arrangements regarding transportation, housing and board, insurance (accident, injury, and health), liability insurance, etc. Students are responsible for being insured during their internship through personal or university student medical and accidental insurance, or insurance by the internship provider. Students should check with the Student Health Center Office to see if special criteria are required to be eligible for university student health insurance.
- The student is responsible for making all arrangements regarding scholarships, student loans, financial assistance, etc., which may or may not be continued during or after the internship.

- Prior to beginning the internship, the student must provide the internship provider a copy of the provider's responsibilities from this handbook (see page 5), addresses for Departmental Contacts (see page 11) and a copy of the Internship Proposal – Objectives and Expectations (Appendix 3).

HORTICULTURE DEPARTMENT AND INTERNSHIP COORDINATOR RESPONSIBILITIES:

- The Horticulture, Landscape and Turfgrass Science Internship program will be overseen by the Undergraduate Program Committee (UGPC). The UGPC and the internship coordinator have the responsibility to facilitate the internship program and help students identify potential internships. They will also work with internship providers to identify students who may match their internships.
- The internship coordinator may act as an intermediary in negotiations between a student intern and potential internship provider.
- The internship coordinator will review all internship proposals, reviews, and reports and determine credit and grades for the internship experience as appropriate.
- Students must obtain approval from their academic advisor and the internship coordinator to be administratively enrolled in the internship experience course.

INTERNSHIP PROVIDER RESPONSIBILITIES:

The internship provider's role is that of both employer and teacher. The internship provider has knowledge and experience that cannot be found in a classroom. When this knowledge and experience is shared with the student-intern, it adds a new dimension to the intern's education. The internship provider's responsibilities include:

- Providing the student-intern with an employee handbook or company policy and procedures related to internships and part-time or seasonal employees (if available).
- Providing the student-intern with a learning experience through work and instruction. The purpose of an internship is to acquaint the student-intern with the daily operation of the business including fiscal and management planning. If possible, give the student special projects which require them to identify the problem, list possible solutions, plan the project, develop materials list and costs, and then complete the project. It is hoped that the student will be given a broad range of experiences.
- Encourage the student-intern to become a productive employee of the business.
- Review the student-intern's written Internship Proposal – Objectives and Expectations. Discuss the proposal with the student intern during the first week of employment.
- Furnish appropriate guidance during the student's internship to make it meaningful and to help the student achieve the learning objectives of the experience.
- Provide the student with sufficient information regarding expectations of the internship including, but not limited to, information regarding work conditions, nature and scope of

work to be performed, tool and/or equipment operation, language skills, insurance or additional compensation available, and a list of all holidays, vacation schedules, etc.

- Provide the internship coordinator with a written evaluation of the student-intern's performance and learning during the internship experience (Appendix 5 accessed through the Provider Final Evaluation link at [Internships | Horticulture | University of Arkansas \(uark.edu\)](https://uark.edu/Internships/Horticulture)).
- Special Note: Since most students enrolled in the internship program will be funding part or all of their education, it is important that the intern receive compensation for their internship. The compensation should be negotiated between the student and the internship provider prior to initiating the internship. Although not necessary, it would be helpful if the provider could provide housing for the intern when the intern's home is not in the vicinity.

NOTE TO STUDENTS: A copy of this page should be given to the internship provider prior to the beginning of the internship.

DROPPING, DISMISSAL, OR REMOVAL FROM AN INTERNSHIP:

- A student may have to stop an internship for personal or emergency reasons. If this occurs, it is the responsibility of the student to inform the internship provider and internship advisor of the decision and reason for discontinuing the internship. The student must withdraw enrollment from the internship as soon as possible after the provider and advisor have been informed.
- A student may be dismissed from an internship due to financial reasons, changes in employment needs, or other reasons. It is requested that the internship provider inform both the student-intern and the internship coordinator of the need and reason as soon as possible.
- If a student is dismissed for circumstances beyond the student's control or responsibility, adjustments in enrollment may be made to accommodate a partially completed internship experience. This will require an administrative drop or adjustment in enrollment hours.
- An intern may be removed or "fired" from an internship for reasons determined by the internship provider. The internship provider should properly inform the intern of the decision and reasons for the decision. The internship provider should inform the internship coordinator of this decision. A student who has been removed or fired from an internship may receive a failing grade in the enrolled HORT 4620V internship credit.

INTERNSHIP PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS:

The three-hour credit Horticulture Department Internship program has two components:

HORT 4260V *The Internship Experience* (1 hr): This course is the "in the field" or actual work experience that takes place either over the summer (full-time) or potentially during the regular 16-week term (full or part-time). Students with signed approval from their academic advisor and the internship coordinator will be enrolled administratively.

HORT 4720V *The Internship Assessment* (2 hr): This course is the evaluation and assessment component of the internship experience that takes place during the fall semester term.

HORT 4620V (1 hr)

To be enrolled in the internship experience, the student needs to consult with their academic advisor and the departmental internship coordinator (see contact information on page 11 of this handbook). The internship coordinator will assist in the internship application process.

Students must complete all internship eligibility requirements prior to engaging in an internship.

Students must complete an Internship Program Application for enrollment consideration (Appendix 1), provide Internship Provider Information (Appendix 2), and an Internship Proposal (Appendix 3). As part of the proposal, the student must submit a set of learning objectives. **Learning objectives** should address knowledge and understanding to be learned, skills to develop (problem solving, critical thinking, communication, technical, etc.), personal development (e.g. appreciation for diversity, clarification of work values, self-awareness, etc.). The completed application must be submitted to the internship coordinator **NO LATER THAT 30 DAYS PRIOR** (see page 10 for deadlines) to the end of the semester preceding that in which the internship will occur. A copy of the application should also be given to the student's academic advisor.

Approvals: Internship applications will be reviewed by the student's academic advisor and the internship coordinator. Applications must be approved prior to enrolling in the HORT 4620V Internship Experience course and beginning the internship.

The internship coordinator will forward the approved application to the departmental administrator responsible for enrolling the student into *The Internship Experience* course. The student must be officially enrolled for internship credit during the actual internship duration. **Internships without prior approval or without official enrollment will not be accepted for internship credit.**

Students who cannot complete their internship, for any reason, during the semester of enrollment should clearly inform the intern provider and internship advisor that they will not complete the internship and drop their enrollment for the class through the University of Arkansas. Leaving an internship prematurely and/or without notice may result in a failing grade.

Requirements for the internship evaluation and grading are provided in this handbook and the assignment of a final grade for *The Internship Experience* (HORT 4620V) will be made by the internship coordinator. Students will complete all requirements including a written evaluation of the internship provider.

During the internship experience, students should complete and turn in all required forms (see appendices) and complete other assigned activities to be evaluated and to receive a grade.

The student's internship coordinator will evaluate the overall content and quality of the internship and assign a grade based on criteria listed below in this handbook and the course syllabus.

HORT 4720V Internship Assessment (2 hr)

In the fall semester immediately following the completion of HORT 4620V, the student will enroll in HORT 4720V which is the internship assessment and evaluation course. The student will make an oral presentation on the internship experience. The internship seminar will be from 12-15 minutes in length and should consist of appropriate visual or other multi-media content. The student will also complete and submit for a grade all required assignments. The internship assessment instructor will provide a syllabus in which requirements for the assessment credit are fully articulated.

No grade will be assigned for this course until the internship seminar is presented. The failure of a student to present their seminar (unless excused for a documented emergency on the assigned day and time) will result in a "0" grade for the oral presentation.

HORTICULTURE, LANDSCAPE, AND TURF SCIENCES INTERNSHIP SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:

HORT 4620v: *The Internship Experience*

1. BLOG or FINAL REPORT – 100 POINTS

Students are required to blog at least once per week during the internship about their work and activities. **The intern should obtain permission from the organization prior to initiating the blog, as some facilities may not allow this activity.** The blog should include descriptions of activities, pictures that highlight the text, and details regarding the overall operations at the facility. In the event that a student is not allowed to write a blog, the intern is required to write a final report of the internship experience, summarizing the experience. The report should be a critical analysis of the experience, and the operation in which the intern worked. This report will include candid assessments about the internship provider, the duties of the job, special projects assigned, etc. The final report should be a **minimum of 1200 words in length due by the end of the enrollment term for the internship experience (i.e. generally summer session).**

Interns are **strongly encouraged** to use a camera to photo-document the enterprise and their activities. The photos will be used to provide illustration for the daily reports, the final written report, and the final oral presentations.

2. MID-TERM EVALUATION – 25 POINTS

Approximately half-way through the internship experience, the intern will have a mid-term evaluation by the internship advisor. The mid-term evaluation may be conducted either on-site or Zoom/Teams video call. If an oral mid-term evaluation is not possible, the internship advisor may request a written report. If a mid-term report is used, it should follow the outline of the final report given below. A written mid-term report is **due no later than the 6th week** of the internship.

3. EVALUATION FORM – 25 POINTS

Completion of an evaluation form that critiques the internship provider's entire program (Appendix 4) is required. This information will be an important tool for placement of future interns so a thorough evaluation will be crucial.

HORT 4720V: *The Internship Assessment*

Course requirements will be specified in the syllabus for HORT 4720V. One important requirement will be the oral report of the internship experience.

1. FINAL ORAL PRESENTATION – 100 POINTS

A final oral presentation will be presented by each student-intern during *The Internship Assessment* course after the conclusion of the internship. The presentation should last 12-15 minutes. The content of the oral presentation should present information on the internship provider, the tasks, jobs, and responsibilities during the internship, and provide summary comments about the industry, the company, and the experience. The content of the presentation should address all learning objectives (knowledge learned, skills developed, and personal development). The oral presentation evaluation will be based upon quality of the presentation (organization, content, delivery and professionalism (e.g. grammar, public presence), etc.) and visual quality. Please see your internship coordinator if you are not clear on what should be covered in the oral presentation.

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM CHECKLIST

Attend Horticulture internship workshop during fall of the first year of enrollment.

Discuss internship requirements with departmental faculty and academic advisor the first semester enrolling in the HLTS major. Review eligibility requirements and receive instructions on completing the application process as a freshman.

Meet the department internship coordinator. Identify and make initial contact with the internship provider (6-12 months prior to experience).

Complete *The Internship Experience* course enrollment application, internship provider information, and the intern proposal forms (Appendix 1, 2, and 3 of this handbook (mid-semester prior to the internship term).

Send completed forms to your departmental faculty academic advisor and internship coordinator for approval **NO LATER THAT 30 DAYS PRIOR** to the end of the semester preceding that in which the internship will occur. Secure approval signatures to be enrolled administratively in the internship prior to participating in the internship experience.

After approval by the academic advisor and the internship coordinator, the internship coordinator will forward your application packet to the horticulture department for manual

enrollment in one hour credit of HORT 4620V Internship Experience and 2 hours of HORT 4720V Internship Assessment during the fall semester following the internship experience.

Once the internship has started, maintain contact with the internship coordinator to arrange a site visit or otherwise make arrangements for the mid-term evaluation to be completed no later than six (6) weeks into the semester of enrollment.

Complete all internship experience requirements by the end of the internship term.

Complete HORT 4720V the fall semester after the internship experience.

IMPORTANT DEADLINES AND INFORMATION:

- **Submission Deadlines** for internship application, internship provider information, and internship proposal:

Semester of Internship	Submission Deadline
Summer	April 15
Fall	July 15
Spring	November 15

- Enrollment deadlines: Review expectations to obtain departmental academic advisor and internship coordinator approval signatures and to meet enrollment deadlines for HORT 4620V and HORT 4720V
- **Work Expectations** – You are representing the U of A Horticulture Department!
 - Attitude – Be passionate about your work. Volunteer. Ask questions.
 - Punctuality – Early = on time, on time = late, and late = unacceptable.
 - Professionalism – Remember that an internship is a professional experience and students are expected to act as professionals.
- **Blog** - Students are required to **summarize internship activities every week (starting week 2) via blogging.**
 - Wix and Wordpress are free sites for blogging. **Send your advisor and internship coordinator your blog site address within two weeks of the start of the internship.**
 - Students who complete a satisfactory blog, as determined by the internship coordinator, will not be required to produce a final report (see below).
- **Midterm Evaluation** - Arrange and complete the meeting for a discussion of progress on the internship with the internship coordinator no later than six weeks into the semester of enrollment.
- **Final Report** – If the student was not able to blog, the final report will be due at the conclusion of the internship experience term.
- **Final Student Evaluation of Internship Provider** – (Appendix 4) Due at the conclusion of the internship term.
- **Oral Presentation** - 12-15 minute presentation during HORT 4720V *The Internship Assessment*

HORTICULTURE INTERNSHIP CONTACTS

MAILING ADDRESS: Department of Horticulture
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Phone: (479) 575-2603
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DEPARTMENT HEAD: Dr. Mary Savin msavin@uark.edu

INTERNSHIP COORDINATOR:
Dr. Garry McDonald gmcdonal@uark.edu

INTERNSHIP ASSESSMENT INSTRUCTOR:
Dr. Curt Rom crom@uark.edu