

# Agricultural Communications Program

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

## **AGCM 293 Professional Internship Student Guide**

The Agricultural Communications internship is an opportunity for you to see how the theory and skills you've learned in your academic program plays in the real world. It is a chance to practice your professional skills in the workplace. An internship is a major investment of your time—at least 400 hours are required—but will pay returns many times over as you gain experience and confidence to face the job market.

A good internship will give you frontline experience in industries that have strong ag communication functions. You may stay in Illinois or journey any place to gain such an experience.

This packet outlines information about the following:

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## Summary of Procedures for Earning Internship Credit

To earn credit for AGCM 293 and to begin counting hours toward the internship credit, your faculty adviser should first approve your internship proposal. To obtain approval for the internship, follow these guidelines:

### ***Step One – The Search Process***

Start thinking about your internship and meet with your faculty adviser as early as possible in your academic career. You should plan to start seriously looking for your internship *no later than* six months before you plan to begin the internship.

Many students complete the internship during the summer of their sophomore, junior and senior years. However, other options are possible and may be preferable, depending on your circumstances and the opportunities available.

### ***Step Two – Review the AGCM 293 Professional Internship Packet***

The AGCM 293 Professional Internship Packet is available from the Program website ([agcomm.illinois.edu](http://agcomm.illinois.edu)). Please review it to help you prepare for the internship process. The packet includes copies of the forms you need to complete throughout the process, such as the form to request approval of the internship of your choice. It also includes samples of the evaluation forms you will complete.

After you have reviewed these materials, discuss your internship interests and review your resume and cover letter with your faculty adviser.

### ***Step Three – Apply for Internships***

Internship opportunities are posted on I-Link and the Ag Comm website. Some excellent internships are best found through your own initiative. If you do not see the internships you most want in the above sources, you are encouraged to broaden your internship search by using online directories, personal contacts, or simply applying to organizations for which you are interested in working.

Any position(s) you propose to use to meet the internship requirement must meet the following criteria:

1. The internship must have duties directly related to or allied with the tasks of agricultural communications.
2. You should be under the supervision of a supervisor who must have education and/or significant professional experience in ag communications or related field. The supervisor must work on site with you and must be an employee of the organization where you are completing the internship.
3. The internship organization must provide you with the resources necessary to complete the internship duties and responsibilities (e.g., workspace, computer, design programs,

video equipment).

4. You cannot work from home or for a student organization.
5. The internship must entail 400 hours of work for a student to earn 3 credit hours (about 133 hours of work= 1 credit hour).
6. The student must be able to build a significant portfolio of products from the experience.
7. You cannot use your internship to obtain academic credit from any other department at UIUC.

#### ***Step Four – Meet with Your Adviser and Submit Your AGCM 293 Proposal***

As soon as you learn you are the primary candidate for an internship, you should meet with your faculty adviser. At this meeting, you will be expected to discuss internship specifics, such as what your manager's qualifications are and your expectations for the internship, the work you will be doing, what you would like to learn through the internship, etc.

You will not be allowed to begin counting your hours for AGCM 293 credit until your internship has been approved.

#### ***Step Five – Register for AGCM 293 Credits***

Once your internship has been approved, you are responsible for asking your faculty adviser's signature to add AGCM 293 to your schedule.

#### ***Step Six – On the Job***

At your internship, work hard and work well. Your performance may result in the most important job reference you will receive in your university career.

It is strongly recommended that you keep a journal reflecting on your experiences at the internship. This will also assist you in writing your report at the end of the experience. You should also start a file of materials that might go into your portfolio that you will present to your faculty adviser at the end of the internship.

#### ***Step Seven – Submit the Final Evaluation***

Complete your final evaluation and ask your internship supervisor to do the same.

Let your supervisor know that you will not receive credit for the internship until the Program receives all of the paperwork, including the internship evaluation.

***Step Eight – Complete your final report and internship portfolio***

You will need to write a report describing your work in detail, including internship responsibilities and accomplishments, and your assessment of the professional worth of your experience. The report should document the nature, extent and quality of your work. Your report should represent your best writing effort. (Your adviser may require you to rewrite a poorly written report.)

You should also submit communication materials you may have produced during the internship. This can include articles, photos, videos, scripts, tapes, ads, press releases, project reports, etc.

***Step Nine – If needed, prepare for a final review with your faculty adviser***

If you think there is a need for it, you can meet with your adviser to discuss topics or issues you do not wish to mention in the final report.

# Agricultural Communications Program

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

## AGCM 293: PROFESSIONAL INTERNSHIP PROPOSAL FORM

Submit the following with this form:

1. An updated resume.
2. If you are NOT a U.S. citizen, an authorization to work off-campus.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

UIN: \_\_\_\_\_

Campus Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Permanent Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Adviser: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

### Proposed Internship

Employing company: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address while on internship: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor email address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Internship Title/Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated Total Hours: \_\_\_\_\_

Unpaid

Paid

(133 hours = 1 credit)

**Duties and responsibilities.** Please list your duties and responsibilities as an intern:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**Career Goals:** Please identify the type(s) of career(s) you wish to pursue and indicate how this internship experience will enhance your career development.

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What specific skills do you think you can learn or improve upon through your internship (e.g., editing, publication design, broadcasting, public relations).

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**AGCM Program Approval**

Approved for AGCM 293 credits:

Section	CRN	Credit hours	Term/Year
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_____	_____	_____	_____
Adviser's signature			Date

## INTERNSHIP FINAL REPORT Instructions

The following is a description of the final paper required of your internship.

**Purpose:** The final paper provides you with an opportunity to assess your internship experience.

**Format:** Your final paper should represent your best writing effort. It will be evaluated (pass or fail) based upon informative content, grammar, spelling, punctuation, and professional quality. All papers must be typed and double-spaced. This outline is intended to help you organize your report. Feel free to be creative and to format the final paper to your own style. A copy of your final evaluation form should be attached to your final report.

1. Introduction (optional)
2. Introduce the internship organization
  - a. Name and type of organization
  - b. Intern's department and position
3. Analysis of internship goals and objectives
  - a. Describe in detail the work you did throughout your internship
  - b. Summarize how you did or did not accomplish your initial objectives
  - c. Describe any extraordinary situations that occurred during your internship
4. Personal evaluation
  - a. Explain how your view of the working world has changed or been reinforced as a result of this internship
  - b. Describe how the internship experience has affected your educational plans and career goals
  - c. Give a personal evaluation of your specific internship, stating whether you would recommend it to other prospective students
5. Please evaluate the AGCM internship program and offer suggestions on how you would improve the program and process as a whole
6. Concluding paragraph (optional)

## STUDENT FINAL INTERNSHIP EVALUATION

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Internship Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Adviser: \_\_\_\_\_

Please rate yourself in each of the following categories according to your performance during the internship using the following scale:

5 = Strongly agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly disagree, NA = Not applicable.

<b>My assessment of my ability to meet the learning objectives of this internship</b>	5	4	3	2*	1*	NA
1. I was adequately prepared to make good decisions affecting the free flow of information and legal judgments when preparing information for dissemination in this work environment.						
2. I understood the role of this organization and its staff in developing materials for communication purposes.						
3. I was able to apply concepts and theories of communication as I prepare images and texts for audience use.						
4. I was able to find, collect and evaluate the research needed for internship assignments.						
5. I was able to use knowledge of diverse peoples, cultures and values in preparing visual and text materials.						
6. I understood and knew how to either apply or seek assistance in applying strong communication ethical values in diverse situations.						
7. I am able to evaluate the quality of my work and the work of colleagues for accuracy, fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.						
8. I was able to write correctly and clearly in the forms and styles needed in this work environment.						
9. I was able to use basic numerical and statistical concepts accurately for the needs of this work environment.						
10. I was able to use tools and technologies that are appropriate to the work I was assigned in this internship.						
11. I was able to conceptualize, select and prepare appropriate visual methods for conveying information.						

<b>Job-related Skills</b>	5	4	3	2*	1*	0
1. My academic preparation for this internship was adequate.						
2. I had the knowledge I need to do the work I was assigned.						
3. I was able to process information adequately for my assignments.						
4. I was eager to learn new skills.						
5. I showed good organizational and work habits.						
6. I was able to work well under pressure.						
7. I made a positive contribution to the organization.						
8. I did high quality work.						
9. My problem-solving skills were adequate for my assignments.						
10. I met deadlines.						
11. I produced a lot of communication materials during this internship.						

<b>Interpersonal Skills</b>	5	4	3	2*	1*	0
1. I worked well with others.						
2. I communicated effectively with others.						
3. I was able to diffuse conflict situations when I encountered them.						
4. I was able to take direction from supervisors and co-workers.						
5. I accepted constructive criticism.						

<b>Professional Conduct</b>	5	4	3	2*	1*	0
1. I was confident in my ability to perform my assignments						
2. I demonstrated a positive attitude.						
3. I arrived on time.						
4. I dressed appropriately for the job environment.						

<b>Initiative</b>	5	4	3	2*	1*	0
1. I was willing to accept responsibility.						
2. I was able to appropriately seek help or work independently.						
3. My demonstrated a positive work attitude (i.e., I showed initiative and enthusiasm.)						
4. I asked questions when in doubt about anything.						

<b>Other</b>	5	4	3	2*	1*	0
1. I received adequate direction from my supervisor.						
2. I understood what was expected of me.						
3. I learned the skills I want to learn while at this internship.						
4. Overall, I am happy with this internship experience.						

*\*Please explain any disagree or strongly disagree ratings.*

Please feel free to add comments below:

## INTERNSHIP REPORT RELEASE FORM

*To be completed and submitted with final report*

The attached is my final report on my internship with \_\_\_\_\_ (company name). This internship took place from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ (dates).

- I give my permission to the Ag Communications Program to place my full report in the general internship files for future students to read.
- I give my permission to the Ag Communications Program to place my full report in the general internship files for future students to read, ***but with my name removed from the report.***
- I do not*** give my permission to place my full report in the general internship files for future students to read.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name (Please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## EMPLOYER FINAL INTERNSHIP EVALUATION

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Intern: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Please evaluate your intern using the following scale: 5 = Strongly agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly disagree, 0 = Not applicable. We encourage you to share your evaluation with your intern as part of the internship evaluation process.

<b>Your assessment of the intern's ability to meet the learning objectives of this internship. The intern</b>	5	4	3	2*	1*	0
1. made good decisions that enhanced the free flow of information and legal judgments when preparing information for dissemination in our work environment.						
2. understood the role of our organization and its staff in developing materials for our communication purposes.						
3. was able to apply concepts and theories of communication in preparing images and texts for our audiences.						
4. was able to find, collect and evaluate the background research needed for assignments.						
5. demonstrated a working knowledge of diverse people, cultures, values in preparing visual and textual materials in this work environment.						
6. understood and knew how to either decide or seek assistance in applying strong communication ethical values in a variety of situations.						
7. was able to evaluate the quality of his or her own work and the work of others for accuracy, fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.						
8. was able to write correctly and clearly in the forms and styles needed in this work environment.						
9. was able to use basic numerical and statistical concepts accurately as needed in this work environment.						
10. was able to use tools and technologies that were appropriate to the work being assigned in this work environment						
11. was being able to conceptualize, select and prepare visual ways of conveying information appropriate to this work environment						

<b>Job-related skills.</b>	5	4	3	2*	1*	0
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1. The intern's academic preparation was adequate for the tasks to which he/she was assigned.						
2. The intern's knowledge <b>was</b> sufficient to complete his/her assignments						
3. The intern was able to process information well.						
4. The intern was eager to learn new skills.						
5. The intern was well organized and had good work habits.						
6. The intern was able to work under pressure.						
7. The intern made strong contributions to our organization.						
8. The quality of this intern's work is high.						
9. The intern has good problem-solving skills.						
10. The intern met his/her deadlines.						
11. The intern completed a sufficient quantity of work.						

<b>Interpersonal skills</b>	5	4	3	2*	1*	0
1. The intern worked well with others.						
2. The intern communicated well with others.						
3. The intern was able to diffuse conflict when it arose.						
4. The intern was able to take directions well from supervisors and co-workers.						
5. The intern appreciated constructive criticism.						

<b>Professional conduct.</b>	5	4	3	2*	1*	0
1. The intern demonstrated an appropriate level of self-confidence.						
2. This intern showed a positive attitude.						
3. This intern was at work when needed and was punctual.						
4. This intern dressed appropriately for this work environment.						

<b>Initiative</b>	5	4	3	2*	1*	0
1. The intern willingly accepted responsibility.						
2. The intern was able to work independently and with others.						
3. The intern, overall, displayed a good work attitude (i.e., showed initiative and enthusiasm).						
4. The intern asked questions when in doubt.						

<b>Other</b>	5	4	3	2*	1*	0
1. This intern has a strong potential for permanent hire.						
2. Overall, I would rate this intern as . . .						

*\*Please add comments explaining any below average or poor ratings.*

Please describe areas in which the intern has improved since the internship began:

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What recommendations would you give the intern to work on before he or she graduates from UIUC?

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What recommendations would you give to the Agricultural Communications Program to improve the internship program? These suggestions may pertain to the student-intern or to you as employer-supervisor.

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If you have any further comments, please write them below.

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Overall, you will grade your student-intern's performance as

- Satisfactory       Fail

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form.

**Signature of Supervisor:** \_\_\_\_\_

## SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS

### For Office Use Only

Proposal submitted and letter of agreement received from supervisor received: \_\_\_\_\_

**Recommendation of Faculty Adviser**

- INTERNSHIP APPROVED**  
 **INTERNSHIP NOT APPROVED**

**Faculty Adviser's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Final Evaluation received from supervisor Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Final Evaluation received from student Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Final report from student-intern Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Portfolio materials from student-intern Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Internship Completed and Approved:

1. Adviser's evaluation of the quality of the organization's internship (Circle one):

Excellent                  Good                  Average                  Poor                  Not Acceptable

2. Adviser's evaluation of the student's performance in the internship (Circle one):

Excellent                  Good                  Average                  Poor                  Not Acceptable

Grade given for AGCM 293 (Circle One):

Satisfactory                  Fail

**Adviser's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_