

Guidelines and Procedures for SPSS 3990 Internship

(Modified 2-20-23)

1. **Overview.** The field internship course is offered to students to enhance the experiential component of a student's education. For each credit of the internship, a student must work a minimum of 42 hours at the job site over a semester. The internship taken for credit could include payment to the student from the company at which the internship is undertaken. The for-credit aspect of the internship, and payment for work at the job site are independent; the student's pay is something to be worked out between the student and the company hosting the internship. The focus of the work should be on 'learning by doing'; nonetheless the internship must have a scholarship component and the learning activity that makes up the scholarship component of the work needs to be documented. One example of such documentation could be a logbook allowing a student to make a brief record of what educational activity is done each day of the work experience.

2. **Eligibility.** SPSS 3990 is open for students majoring in Sustainable Plant and Soil Systems (SPSS), with a concentration in either Turfgrass Science, Environmental Horticulture, or Sustainable Agriculture. Students in other majors can register for SPSS 3990 with consent of the instructor. Students outside the SPSS major can also register for this course with consent of instructor. Students in the School of Agriculture Plant Science (SAPL) major in the two-year Ratcliffe Hicks program can also enroll for an internship (SAPL 991). These two internships have similar goals and requirements. However, at present, SPSS 3990 must be taken as an S/U graded course, while the SAPL 661 must be taken as a letter graded (A-F) course for administrative reasons. For the rest of these guidelines (as per below), information about SPSS 3990 refers also to SAPL 991.

SPSS students doing a summer internship will need to take the zero credit SPSS 3081 during a summer session and then take SPSS 3990 (variable credit) in the fall semester following the internship to receive credit. Students doing internships during the regular fall or spring semester will use the SPSS 3990 internship.

3. **A Learning Contract** will be required which clearly states the basic responsibilities of the student, Faculty Instructor, and Field Supervisor for the internship period. This Contract will lay out the duration and terms of the internship (including the point that a minimum of 42 hours of work related to learning will be done per credit hour over the course of the internship), credits (for SPSS 3990), the requirement of a detailed report documenting and reflecting on the internship experience (for SPSS 3990), and must be completed and submitted to the Faculty Instructor at the beginning of the internship. The learning contract must be approved and signed by the student, Field Supervisor, Faculty Instructor and Academic Advisor, before signature by the Department Head. The same person cannot serve as both Faculty Instructor and Field Supervisor. For students doing the paired SPSS 3081/SPSS 3990 sequence, the Learning Contract must be in place for the beginning of the summer internship experience. Students should develop the Learning Contract and Plan of Work (see below) initially after discussing the proposed plan with a Field Supervisor (i.e., the person who will supervise the work at the job site). It is recommended that after consulting with the Field Supervisor, the student should then develop draft versions of the Learning Contract and Plan of Work with the Faculty Instructor. After the Plan of Work and Learning Contract is finalized, the student can get signatures (as above) either electronically or on a hard copy of the document. These documents should be submitted to the Faculty Instructor at the beginning of the internship. Students should solicit appropriate members of the Dept. of Plant Science and Landscape Architecture to be the Faculty Instructor for the internship. When registering for SPSS 3990 (and SPSS 3081 if the internship work will be done during the summer), the student should choose the appropriate section of the course corresponding to the Faculty Instructor who will be the teacher-of-record.

4. **Plan of Work:** The student along with the Faculty Instructor, and in cooperation with the Field Supervisor, will develop an outline of the learning objectives and expected duties and activities of the internship. This will be the basis for the generation of a Plan of Work. In addition, the Plan of Work should include text that conveys that the student is required to submit documentation that will serve as a report of what was learned during the internship. The report and reflection could, for example, be met by generating the logbook (as above) along with a short summary (for example, one written page in length) of the total experience that reflects the scholarship, i.e., what was learned from the work experience. The Plan of Work will accompany the Learning Contract and should be done prior to the start of the internship or finalized within the first two weeks of the semester. The Plan of Work and Learning Contract will be used as a basis for monitoring and evaluating the student's experience and performance in the internship. It is the Faculty Instructor's responsibility to ensure that the learning objectives are appropriate, and the student is adequately prepared to perform the internship activity. In general, a student may work more hours at a job site than might necessarily be part of a 'learning experience' for academic credit. Only the time devoted to learning should be considered a component of the 42 hours of internship activity per credit.

5. **Evaluation:** SPSS 3990 will be offered only on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory basis. The student will be subjectively evaluated at the end of the internship by the Faculty Instructor; this evaluation may include input (solicited by the Faculty Instructor) from the Field Supervisor about the student's performance in a report to be sent to the Faculty Instructor at the end of the internship period. This evaluation will be based upon the intern's work performance of assigned tasks during the internship period, as specified in the Plan of Work. The Faculty Instructor will review this evaluation along with the documentation report submitted by the student and assign a final grade.

6. **Credits Allowed:** Students registering for SPSS 3990 need to work at the internship site a total of 42 hours per credit over the course of the (14-week) semester. If the student works every week during a 14-week semester, this will require an average of 9 hours per week for a three-credit internship. Students can register for up to six credits of SPSS 3990 during a semester. Students can have a total of six credits of S/U-graded courses applied to their plan of study.

7. **Faculty Documentation:** A file covering the completed internship, including the Logbook (if that is what is generated) and the reflective piece (the brief summary) should be submitted (hard copy or electronic) to the instructor acting as the teacher of record for the internship at the end of the semester (last week of the term).