

Environmental Studies Internship Goal Guidelines

CSB/SJU Environmental Studies Department

A key requirement of your internship is developing appropriate learning goals to guide the experience. The goals are listed on your learning contract (registration form) and must be approved not only by your site supervisors, but also by your Environmental Studies faculty moderator and the ES department chair. As you work through the registration process you'll find that crafting learning goals can be challenging, since you'll need to balance your own interests with the needs and capabilities of your host site while also meeting the expectations of the ES Department.

Please read this document carefully *before* you ask your faculty moderator for help—creating the goals is your responsibility and while they are happy to help it's your job to do the necessary work in understanding the process, considering your needs, and drafting goals first. The Internship Office has prepared a very helpful handout on writing learning goals, online at www.csbsju.edu/Documents/Internship/WritingLearningGoalsRevAug16,2010.doc, that may also prove helpful in drafting your goals.

Creating Learning Goals for Environmental Studies Internships

Types of Learning Goals

A goal is a broad statement of what you want to accomplish during your internship. Two of your goals are required by CSB/SJU and are already listed at the top of the *Registration for Internship – Learning Contract* form as goals 1 and 2. These required goals are cognitive (thinking) goals which will ask you:

- a. to apply your academic skills and knowledge from your course work to your placement
- b. to reflect back upon academic skills and knowledge from your course work critically, based on your experiences in the internship placement

You will also design 2-3 goals of your own. These will typically include at least one more cognitive goal related to your major discipline; the others may be professional development goals related to particular skills, such as to become more organized, to better manage your time, to be more assertive, to develop more self-confidence, to identify your strengths. It's also advisable to develop a goal that includes some type of job shadowing of your supervisor so you can learn more about their routine and responsibilities.

Ultimately these goals will form the contract between you and your site supervisor and will be the basis upon which your faculty moderator will evaluate your internship. It is up to you to make sure they reflect your priorities and that they are also compatible with your internship placement. Three parties—your supervisor, your faculty moderator, and your department chair—must all approve the final goals, so it's best to involve them in the drafting process from the start rather than striking out entirely on your own.

Writing Goals, Tasks, and Strategies

For each goal you will indicate the specific activities you will engage in to accomplish that goal. For each task you should strategize on how you will learn or make use of new information, skills, or behavior patterns.

To help come up with tasks and strategies, ask yourself the following questions:

- How can I best learn what I want to learn from this organization or position?
- In what activities would I like to observe or take part?
- With whom would I like to talk or work?
- Where can I best learn what I would like to learn?

Work-related learning tasks and strategies usually fall into one of the following categories:

- **Information-gathering:** reading organizational and professional materials, conducting informational interviews
- **Observations:** observing and analyzing (in contrast to mastering) specific skills, personal characteristics, and work behaviors of individuals and groups within a work setting
- **Performing routine duties:** learning to perform specific actions or procedures which are within the day-to-day responsibilities of a particular position
- **Performing new assignments:** working on projects or skills which are new to you
- **Performing activities in a creative manner:** finding new ways to do something
- **Problem-solving:** working on a solution to a specific problem that exists within the workplace
- **Developing personal characteristics:** developing or refining specific personal habits or social skills which allow you to deal most effectively with work situations

Your weekly journals should record your progress toward these goals and your final reflection paper should address them specifically, explaining how (and if) they were met. The best goals will be easily assessed, i.e. you should be able to state clearly whether and how they were accomplished in your journal, and to reflect on what you learned about possible careers or application of your education from your progress on each goal in your final paper.

Environmental Studies Examples of Internship Goals, Tasks and Strategies

Imagine you are interning with a sustainability director in a major corporate office. The following goals would be appropriate for a learning contract in such a position.

Goal #1. To apply the knowledge of climate systems from ENVR 175 to understanding the company greenhouse gas inventory protocol

Tasks, Strategies: (*List each activity with a brief statement about how you will show you accomplished it*).

- 1a. Become familiar with the greenhouse gas inventory protocol by reading documents and asking questions about their application.

- 1c. Participate in a greenhouse gas inventory and apply my knowledge of climate systems to the process. Reflect on the experience in my journal.

Goal #2. Learn about corporate sustainability operations and the application of concepts from ENVR 150.

Tasks, Strategies:

- 2a. Observe the sustainability functions of the various departments of the company and take notes on their goals and procedures.
- 2b. Reflect on their actions in my journal in relation to basic sustainability concepts from ENVR 150.

Goal #3. To become familiar with the companies' policies, procedures, and methods of operating.

Tasks, Strategies:

- 3a. Attend departmental meetings and prepare by reading department's written materials on sustainability.
- 3b. Ask appropriate questions of my supervisor and other employees as needed. Reflect on these meetings in journal.

Goal #4. Improve my networking skills.

Tasks, Strategies:

- 4a. Read a book or articles on networking.
- 4b. Meet with supervisor to discuss networking opportunities within the company.
- 4c. Make appointments with appropriate contacts inside/outside the company to practice networking skills.

Goal #5. Learn what a corporate sustainability director does on a daily basis.

Tasks, Strategies:

- 5a. Shadow my supervisor and take notes on my observations.
- 5b. Meet with my supervisor to discuss job descriptions, preparation, and responsibilities.

Resources for Completing Your Internship Learning Contract

Completing the internship learning contract is primarily your responsibility. You should consult with your site supervisor and faculty moderator early in the process though, to make sure the goals you are considering are appropriate and feasible for your placement. The chair's approval should ideally be a formality, rather than a stage in the revision process. By the time you are ready to submit your forms to the department chair you should have drafted and revised your goals multiple times and received the approval of both your supervisor and moderator. Additional assistance is always available from the Internship Office as well.