

## MES INTERNSHIP INFORMATION FOR INTERNSHIP HOSTS

### The Evergreen State College, Graduate Program on the Environment

#### MES Degree Basics

- Two-year full time, or three-year part-time program
- Thesis required – finished in final year
- Courses in the evening – made up of required courses and elective courses
- Electives can be met through internships

#### Types of Internships

- Paid or unpaid
  - Can be paid directly by host organization or through Evergreen (with 11% overhead) through an inter-agency agreement (State Agencies only)
- Credit or non-credit
  - 20+ hours/week/quarter = 4 credits; 10 hours/week/quarter = 2 credits
  - One quarter is 10 weeks and usually run late Sept – mid Dec, early Jan – mid-March, and early Apr – mid June
  - Usually, host organization lets student choose if they want credits or not unless student is paid through Evergreen – in which case, we require the students to take credits.
- Sample Projects
  - Design a greenhouse gas inventory for a specific municipality
  - Create an outreach plan or teach public about an environmental issue
  - Use GIS data to map species distribution
  - Plan an environmental event or design a system to improve efficiency
  - Analyze data that has been “sitting on the backburner”

#### Internship Guidelines

- Internships must be an educationally meaningful and productive experience in which both the student and supervisor agree beforehand on a set of learning outcomes. If the student decides to earn credit, then an MES faculty and the Director must also sign off on these outcomes. Internships must be at the graduate level, meaning that the student gains academic learning above and beyond work experience.
- Students can earn a maximum of 8 credits during their time in MES; only 4 credits/quarter
- Intern supervisors are encouraged to include a thesis project with the internship that would occur after the internship is over or is part of or in addition to the internship. Students work on their thesis in their second year.
- If student chooses to earn credit for the internship, they will need to fill out paperwork with Evergreen that will require a supervisor signature before the start of the quarter. At the end of the quarter, the supervisor will be required to write an evaluation that will be sent to the faculty of record to use in granting credit.

### Advertising Internships to MES students and choosing interns

- Supervisors should write up a position description, along with application deadline and send to the Assistant Director by the middle of the previous quarter in which the internship should take place.
  - Summer and Fall quarters – send description by late April/early May
  - Winter quarter – send description by late October
  - Spring quarter – send description by early February
- Supervisors will determine the interview and selection process of interns, as well as internship schedule

## MES INTERNSHIP INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

### General Information

An internship is a learning experience designed to aid students in achieving specific academic and professional objectives. Students are strongly encouraged to complete an internship after their first year in core classes in conjunction with their thesis, especially if they do not have prior professional-level experience in environmental work.

Two internship options are available to MES students:

1. **A credit-generating internship** is one in which the student, faculty sponsor, and field supervisor formally agree upon a student's academic objectives for the quarter and a plan for achieving those objectives. It must include new academic learning and not be developed only to obtain work experience or entry-level employment. Occasionally, a student may be allowed to undertake a credit-generating internship with the organization with whom she/he is employed. Evergreen has strict policies for these internships: a student who wishes to do an employment related internship must work with the Assistant Director early in the planning process to ensure that the credit being sought is for a project that is not a part of his/her regular work.
2. **A non-credit-generating internship** is often a compensated internship that does not include formal academic components or earn academic credit. Students who have reached their internship credit limit or do not want to pay for internship credits may consider this option. While it is important to discuss such internship opportunities with an advisor, taking an internship that does not include academic credit is ultimately an individual arrangement between the student and the internship organization and does not require the formal procedures described below.

Internships may be with government agencies, nonprofit or private sector organizations. If you are considering an internship, you should initiate discussions with a faculty member, the Director, or the Assistant Director. In doing so, you will assess the type of internship in which you are interested (credit-generating or non-credit-generating, paid or voluntary, type of agency or organization, etc.), the extent to which you will benefit from an internship, and how it fits into your overall educational plan.

Internship ideas are found online at [www.evergreen.edu/mes/internships](http://www.evergreen.edu/mes/internships). Students may also find internships through their own research or thesis interests.

### Internship Learning Contract Registration

A credit-generating internship is planned, arranged and conducted to meet the needs of the host organization and the academic and professional objectives of the student. These objectives, needs and all other internship related matters are agreed upon before the internship begins, and are formalized in the Graduate Internship Learning Contract. Graduate Internship Learning Contracts require a faculty sponsor (MES core faculty only), who will guide and review the academic components of the internship, and an internship field supervisor, who will work more directly with the student.

### *Signing up for internship credits*

To enroll in a credit-generating internship, login to [my.evergreen.edu](http://my.evergreen.edu) and go to the "Individual Study Contracts" section under "Students." At the top of that page, select "Create New Contract," then select the internship form, the graduate level of study, and create a name for the contract. You will then be prompted to select the number of credits. The system guides you through drafting the contract by asking you for learning objectives and activities, which should be determined in consultation with your faculty sponsor and field supervisor. In order to register for credits, the contract is a formal document that must be approved by all parties: student (electronic), faculty sponsor (electronic), and field supervisor (hard copy) before finally being approved by the Director. Before the Director electronically approves, the field supervisor must sign a hard copy and the hard copy must be given to the Assistant Director. Once all signatures are obtained, the student is registered. The hard copy and all approvals must be submitted by the fifth day of the quarter to avoid late registration fees.

### *Evaluations*

At the completion of a credit-generating internship, it is the responsibility of the student to write a narrative self-evaluation. It is also the field supervisor's responsibility to write an evaluation that assesses the intern's job performance. The field supervisor and student intern should meet to discuss the evaluation at the end of the internship. The student's and field supervisor's evaluations are then sent to the faculty sponsor, who will meet with the student for an internship evaluation conference. The faculty sponsor is responsible for drafting the final internship evaluation, which will include all or significant portions of the field supervisor's evaluation. The faculty evaluation becomes part of the student's official transcript. Whether or not the student's self-evaluation becomes part of the transcript is optional but strongly encouraged.

### *Compensation*

While the host organization is encouraged to provide a stipend or salary to the intern, volunteer internships of equivalent learning and professional value are often more readily available. The intern will need to make a decision regarding compensation based on her/his learning objectives and financial condition. The availability of compensation should in no way impinge on the academic validity and quality of the internship experience.

### Academic Credit for Internships

In general, two credits per quarter will be awarded for successful completion of a part-time internship (10 hours per week). Four credits will be awarded for completion of an internship of 20 hours or more per week. A second internship will be approved only if it is significantly different from the first, and a student will be approved to register for more than a total of four credits of internship in any given quarter only under exceptional circumstances. No more than eight hours of elective credit can be accumulated through internship and/or individual learning contracts. Only the Director can approve contracts beyond this limit. The evaluations from the field supervisor and student are due at the end of the quarter in which the student registered for internship credits.