



Dear MES Internship Host:

Thank you for your interest in participating in the MES Internship Program at The Evergreen State College. MES students may be awarded credit for an educationally meaningful and productive internship experience. We welcome participation in the program from any employing agency or organization that is willing and able to provide qualified students with such learning opportunities.

I have attached information that explains how we publicize your internship, the process for referring students to you, and the role of each of the parties involved in an internship contract.

We look forward to working with your organization in planning internships that will fill your needs and benefit our students. Should you have any questions, please call me at 360-867-6225 or email me at [mayh@evergreen.edu](mailto:mayh@evergreen.edu).

Sincerely,

Gail Wootan  
Assistant Director

# M.E.S.

Master of Environmental Studies

[www.evergreen.edu/mes](http://www.evergreen.edu/mes)

Graduate Program on the Environment • 2700 Evergreen Parkway NW • Olympia, WA 98505 • 360.867.6225

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). If interested in paying through Evergreen, please contact Gail Wootan at [mayh@evergreen.edu](mailto:mayh@evergreen.edu).
- Credit or non-credit
  - 20+ hours/week/quarter = 4 credits; 10 hours/week/quarter = 2 credits
  - One quarter is 10 weeks; quarters 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 typically 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 a specific 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 educationally meaningful and productive experiences 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 (or academic sponsor) and the MES 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
- Internship supervisors are encouraged to include a thesis project with the internship that would occur after the internship is over or as part of or in addition to the internship. Students work on their thesis in their second year.
- If the student chooses to earn credit for the internship, they will need to fill out an internship learning contract with Evergreen that will require a supervisor signature (can be done electronically) before the quarter starts. It may also require filling out a “site agreement form.”
- Credit-bearing internships require that the supervisor writes an evaluation of the student at the end of the quarter. The evaluation, based on work performed in the internship under the supervision of the internship host, is sent to the academic internship sponsor on campus. The sponsor files the final evaluation based on the narrative written by the internship supervisor. Once submitted, the student earns credit for the internship.

### Stipend Guidelines

- We encourage internship hosts to provide some kind of stipend to MES interns. At least \$3,000 per quarter for a 20-hour/week internship is recommended.
- We understand that some internship hosts do not have funding for stipends; however, any support you can give to students is appreciated. This may include mileage reimbursement, purchasing equipment or supplies, or financially supporting students for field experiences and professional meetings.

### Advertising Internships to MES students and choosing interns

- Supervisors should write up a position description, along with application deadline and application instructions, 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 (may want to send earlier if it is for a Summer internship)
  - 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 they are 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 their 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, nonprofits 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) and on MES Weekly ([blogs.evergreen.edu/mesweekly](http://blogs.evergreen.edu/mesweekly)). Students may also find internships through their own networking and research.

### 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.” Select a term and create a new contract. The system guides you through the process of drafting the contract. The contract is a formal document that must be electronically approved by all parties: student, field supervisor, faculty sponsor, and Director prior to registration. The student does not enter a CRN to register. Instead, once all signatures are obtained, the student is registered. All approvals must be completed by the fifth day of the quarter to avoid late registration fees.

### *Field Supervisor Signature*

The new system allows the Field Supervisor to view, give feedback, and approve the contract and agree to their role in it online, without the need for a formal signature. In addition to the internship content, the field supervisor also agrees to inform the student of risks, maintain a safe work environment, and follow anti-discrimination and sexual harassment laws. If the field supervisor is not able to give their approval online, the student can make a printed copy for the field supervisor to sign and deliver the signed copy to the MES Office.

### *Student Waiver*

The student is required to complete a waiver indicating that they are voluntarily participating in the internship and they release the college from liability. They need to deliver a signed copy of this waiver to the MES Office before their contract can be approved.

### *Internship Site Agreement*

For internships where the sponsoring sites/organizations are not official government agencies of the State of Washington, students will need to make sure that an internship site agreement exists between the site and the college before a student can do an internship. The field supervisor, or a designated authority at the organization, signs this agreement and makes sure it is returned to the Graduate Office.

### *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 in a future quarter 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 may 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.