

# GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION INTERNSHIPS

University of North Texas  
Department of Public Administration

1. Range of Experience  
The internship should involve work with different departments or organizational sub-units. This could be accomplished by rotation between departments or assignment to projects requiring interaction with different sub-units or task functions. It is especially important that students get exposure to the budgetary process, personnel processes, and activities requiring negotiation and policy deliberations.
2. Intensity of Experience  
Over time, the student should be assigned a major administrative responsibility, which takes a substantial amount of time to complete (development through implementation and evaluation).
3. Opportunities for Developing Interpersonal Skills  
The student should get assignments to develop interpersonal and leadership skills. These skills will become essential as the intern moves on into a professional career. Every development opportunity in this area is helpful. Examples: staff work on committees (especially those committees with citizens or board members), preparing and presenting reports to boards and committees, or handling citizen/client complaints.
4. Supervisor and Mentor Responsibilities  
Students need to be assigned both a supervisor to oversee projects and a mentor. The mentor should take an interest in the student and give professional advice, encourage professional development, and be available for informal conversations about what is going on in the work environment. The same person may perform the supervisor and mentor roles. However, in situations where the supervisor is either too busy or may be uncomfortable with a mentoring role, another person within the organization should be assigned to the mentoring role.
5. Compensation  
The MPA program requires that all internships be compensated. The typical salary range is \$12 - \$16 per hour.
6. Opportunities for Professional Development  
The MPA program is committed to developing professional administrators for the public sector. Thus, it is important that our students value and be given professional growth opportunities. If possible, internships should provide students the chance to attend professional meetings. The department gives priority to internships which provide these opportunities for students.
7. Evaluation and Feedback  
The department will provide interim and final evaluations to assess the student's performance. The interim evaluation should be completed approximately 220 hours into the internship and the final evaluation should be completed toward the end of the 440-hour internship. Please evaluate the intern honestly and discuss the evaluations with the intern. Supervisor feedback is one of the most important components of the internship experience. At the host's request, the internship coordinator may counsel the student on job performance. It is at the host's discretion to reassign, continue or terminate the intern at any point for unsatisfactory job performance. The Internship Coordinator may conduct site visits to the host site.
8. Academic Requirements  
All students from the MPA program are pursuing rigorous academic study. During regular fall and spring semesters, intern work hours should be kept to 20 – 24 hours per week. In some cases, second year students may be able to schedule their time to work more hours, and that is acceptable as long as it does not jeopardize academic performance. Interns may work full-time during summer or any breaks.

**For more information, please contact Janay Tieken, Internship Coordinator  
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