



Undergraduate Internship Handbook 2018 - 2019

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Part I: Overview of the SOS Internship Program

This handbook serves as a guide for School of Sustainability (SOS) undergraduate students who are participating in the School of Sustainability Internship Program. The handbook outlines the requirements, processes, and expectations of the Internship Program. This handbook should be an initial resource for questions about the program, but students are also encouraged to consult with the internship coordinator on a regular basis. In person and phone appointments are available.

School of Sustainability Internship Definition and Objectives

An internship is more than a part-time job or volunteer position, but rather a short-term, hands-on, supervised work experience with a professional organization that is designed to increase a student's knowledge of a professional career field through significant learning objectives.

At the School of Sustainability, the internship is combined with academic coursework that encourages critical reflection on the internship experience. The School of Sustainability screens each internship carefully to monitor for a rich experience that directly focuses on an area of sustainability.

Learning Objectives for the School of Sustainability Internship Program:

- Apply the knowledge and skills learned in the academic program to a professional environment.
- Acquire industry knowledge and network with industry professionals.
- Build communication, teamwork, problem-solving, leadership, and other transferrable skills & career competencies necessary for a successful career in sustainability.
- Gain information to assist in determining a post-graduation career path.
- Help facilitate the transition from the role of student to the role of professional.

Does the School of Sustainability Require an Internship?

Yes. Students in catalog year 2012 and after are required to complete an internship as part of their Capstone requirements. To meet this requirement, the student must obtain an internship and enroll in SOS 484 Capstone Internship credit.

Do students find and secure their own internships?

Yes. The process is similar to finding a job. Students need to identify opportunities that align with their interests, skill level, academic schedule, and location. Part of the learning process includes identifying suitable opportunities, and applying and interviewing for them. The School of Sustainability offers support and advisement in this process.

Getting Started

Many students want to know exactly how to begin. Although more detail follows in this handbook, below is a quick step-by-step instruction for how to obtain an internship and register for credit.

1. Think about what kinds of internships you are most interested in (at least 3 months prior to start of semester). Review internships on [SustainabilityConnect](#) and [other resources](#).
2. Update your resume and cover letter. Make sure these documents are in a professional format and content is both current and relevant for each internship you are applying for. For resume review, send materials to the SOS Internship Coordinator and/or utilize ASU Career Services [Resume Dropbox](#) resource.

Tip: title your documents in a consistent & professional manner including your name. For example: “Smith_Resume” instead of the generic “New Resume” or “Toms Updated Resume”

3. Start applying for internships. Plan/expect to apply for multiple opportunities. If an internship is not already approved via SustainabilityConnect, send the job description to the Internship Coordinator for review and approval. You may refer to Internship Criteria in this handbook to know what you are looking for.
4. Correspond directly with internship provider on application and interview process. Make sure to adequately prepare for interview (thoroughly research organization, be prepared to talk about your experience and why you are a good fit for the position). Expect a formal interview. [ASU Interviewing Resources](#).
5. Repeat steps 1-4 as needed until desirable internship is offered. Send the job description to Internship Coordinator for review if you have not done so already. If approved, accept internship.
6. For SOS 484 registration: Submit [Undergraduate Internship Agreement form](#) to the SOS Internship Coordinator (at least 2 weeks prior to start of semester).
7. Register for SOS 484 course upon clearance from Internship Coordinator.
8. Begin your internship and start SOS 484 coursework (first week of ASU semester).

Internship Criteria

The School of Sustainability uses specific criteria when evaluating internships. Students can refer to the following guidelines to assess whether an opportunity may be suitable, although the SOS Internship Coordinator must ultimately approve all internships before a student will be cleared to register for SOS 484 credit.

- A minimum length of at least a semester (15 weeks) long so students are exposed to more than just a single project and become more embedded in the organization. During the summer, internships must be at least 8 weeks in length; the recommended summer length is 10 weeks.
- Interns need to complete a minimum of 135 hours. This is about 9 hours a week for a 15-week internship, 17 hours a week for an 8-week summer internship.
- The internship must have a direct connection to sustainability issues.
- The organization must provide a written position description including a detailed explanation of duties or projects, required skills or qualifications, minimum number of hours per week, whether or not it is paid, and what are the primary learning outcomes.
- Internship organization needs to be a legally established/incorporated and insured business or non-profit (not an uninsured sole proprietorship).
- Intern is provided with an appropriate work space and resources required to complete assignments.
- Regular access to a supervisor who can give the intern feedback, provide orientation and onboarding training, and who can dedicate time and resources to the intern. Supervisor must possess expertise directly related to the intern's responsibilities.
- The experience will provide exposure to multiple aspects of a professional career field, internship organization, or industry. Interns should have a chance to get to know other professionals in related fields, either in the organization or through other structured opportunities.
- A balanced, structured experience allowing students to engage in substantive long and short-term projects that require skills such as research, analysis, summarizing data, writing, presenting information visually and orally, bench-marking, brainstorming, investigating, planning, organizing, implementing programs and services, problem solving, thinking critically, influencing and persuading, and decision making.
- Minimal –less than 5% – of overall internship responsibilities related to sales, cold-calling, or generating business for the internship organization. Minimal routine administrative or clerical work (20% max).
- Exposure to opportunities that build on academic learning, enhance communication and interpersonal skills, and meet key people (sitting in on meetings, site visits, conferences, etc).
- The opportunity to learn skills that can be applied in a variety of work environments (transferrable skills).

What We Cannot Not Approve

In addition to the criteria above, we cannot approve experiences as internships if they are:

- Sales-focused experiences. The School does not permit positions which involve door to door solicitation. This policy is intended to promote safety and security.
- The purpose of the work cannot be primarily to advance the operations of the employer and cannot be the work that a regular employee would routinely perform. An internship must be primarily a learning experience for the student.
- We cannot approve unpaid internships at for-profit companies.
- Experiences with organizations that have existed for fewer than five years, and/or with fewer than 3 full-time employees.
- We cannot approve internships at organizations with no physical location or meeting space. Interns are prohibited from working or meeting in an employer's private residence.
- Students may not intern for themselves, a family member or relative, a friend, a significant other, a current ASU student, or any person that they have a relationship with that may be deemed as a conflict of interest (such as a coach, future in-law, or any person who reports directly or indirectly to any of the above).
- Experiences focused exclusively on manual labor (for example: working on a farm doing the work of weeding, planting, etc.). There must be additional projects and learning opportunities.
- Internships with individual consultants, contractors, or faculty members. The internship needs to be with an organization, not an individual.
- 100% virtual internships will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and may require additional documentation.

SOS Internship Compensation Policy

For-profit or private companies need to provide financial compensation for an intern. Please note that most competitive internships pay between \$12 – 15 an hour, but the amount is at the employer's discretion. School of Sustainability does not have a minimum pay scale, aside from following federal minimum wage standards.

Government and non-profit agencies are not required to pay interns, but are still expected to provide a learning experience that benefits the intern. Care must be taken to ensure that if an internship is unpaid, it falls clearly within the legal guidelines that make it a learning experience and not a job.

In summary:

- Unpaid opportunities at for-profit companies will not be approved for credit

Internship Program Participant Roles:

Student

The School of Sustainability student is responsible for locating and securing the internship opportunity with or without university resources, ensuring that all necessary forms are completed and turned in to the internship coordinator and/or site supervisor prior to the internship's start date, representing ASU and SOS in a professional manner, and completing the academic coursework.

School of Sustainability Internship Coordinator

The School of Sustainability internship coordinator develops partnerships with organizations and reviews proposals for rightness of fit in the internship program. The internship coordinator advises students on internship opportunities, capstone options, other real-world experiences and works with students to ensure that they are working the appropriate option into their academic plan of study. The internship coordinator serves as a liaison between the employer, student, the School of Sustainability and Arizona State University. The internship coordinator teaches/facilitates the academic/course components of internship and awards grades for the internship classes.

Internship Site Supervisor

The site supervisor serves as the point of contact for the internship host organization, and provides supervision, mentorship, and feedback on the intern's performance. The site supervisor plans projects and learning outcomes in conjunction with the internship coordinator and intern. The supervisor verifies hours worked and completes mid-term and final evaluations of the intern's performance for the SOS internship course.

Part II: Finding an Internship

It's highly recommended to start researching and applying for internships at least one semester in advance of when you plan on completing the internship/registering for credit.

You may find an internship really quickly, or it might take a while. You will save yourself stress if you start early and apply for numerous opportunities.

Also, some internships have early application deadlines and you don't want to miss them (example: February application deadline for summer internship, or September deadline for spring internship).

There are a number of ways to find internships. Most students will use a combination of these methods:

Posted Internships: Many internships are advertised, either on job boards and/or on an organizations website. Use [SustainabilityConnect](#), [Handshake](#), search engines, and go directly to company websites to find posted opportunities and follow the instructions to apply.

Make sure to vary your search terms. "Sustainability" alone may not bring up as many hits as incorporating different combinations of words including your areas of interest: Environment, Conservation, Water, Energy, Climate, Education, Community Development, Corporate Social Responsibility, Logistics, Research, Affordable Housing, Policy, etc.

You can also consider opportunities that may not be explicitly focused on sustainability, but will allow you to incorporate a significant sustainability aspect or project. Many students with dual interests in business, urban planning, construction management, aerospace engineering, art & design, have combined their interests in this way.

Direct Outreach: There are also numerous opportunities that are not posted. Many students secure internships by contacting employers in their field of interest and describing their qualifications, interests and how they can contribute to the organization. Descriptions of existing internships are helpful to frame your discussion with a possible internship host. Focus on the advantages to the organization in hiring an intern, such as having an extra person to assist with projects, offer new perspectives on organizational issues and provide new ideas.

If they do not have internship opportunities, they may be able to suggest another contact or organization for you to reach out to.

This is a useful approach if you have specific or niche interests within sustainability. As an example, [review the internship poster](#) of a SOS student with a passion for sustainability and the wine industry.

Networking and Job Fairs: Use your personal network. Tell anyone and everyone that you are looking for an internship. Talk to the SOS Internship Coordinator, SOS faculty with whom you have a relationship and/or who specialize in your area of interest, family and friends, and of course your fellow SOS students. Since every SOS student has to complete an internship, you may know students who have been through this process and can share their recommendations.

Attend on-campus career and internship events. ASU Career Services hosts a number of events per year. Many SOS students miss these opportunities because they don't think the organizations will apply to them, but a number of students have found internships this way. This is a great way to meet employers and find out what they are looking for in terms of internships and full time employment.

Create Your Own Internship: Also called "work variance". You cannot get internship credit for a job that you currently hold but there may be opportunities to create an internship within the same company. The experience must be a NEW one for you, in addition to your regular responsibilities, and directly related to sustainability. Your current employer would need to be in support of this proposal. This is generally only recommended in special situations for full-time working students. Discuss this option further with the SOS Internship Coordinator.

Internship Resources for Tempe and greater Phoenix area:

- [SustainabilityConnect.asu.edu](https://sustainabilityconnect.asu.edu): Recommended to start here for local (Phoenix area) internships. This is where we post ongoing opportunities with established partners in the Valley. All internships listed on SustainabilityConnect have been reviewed and approved for credit by the SOS internship coordinator.

You may wish to consult the following sites for leads, but understand that internships resulting from these resources still need to be approved by the SOS Internships Coordinator. The following list is a resource only, and not all opportunities listed on these sites will be eligible for SOS credit.

- [Handshake](#): Handshake is the ASU-wide platform for posting internships and full time employment opportunities. Employers from all over post opportunities specifically to recruit Sun Devils. Opportunities range from local to global.
- [ASU Career Services Internship Resources](#) (so many good resources!)
- [Internship for Science-Practice Integration \(spring only, sponsored by DCDC\)](#): The Decision Center for a Desert City (DCDC) undergraduate internship program bridges the world of scientific research and water management by placing students within agencies to carry out their own unique projects (paid internship opportunities). These opportunities will be posted to SustainabilityConnect in October/November each year.
- [School of Geographical Sciences and Urban Planning](#) has an internships board, and lots of resources for those interested in geography and planning.
- [Maricopa County Leadership and Education Advancing Public Service \(MCLEAPS\) Program](#): Full-time compensated internships (full tuition waiver *and* stipend provided) for fall or spring semester. Opportunities with Air Quality Department, Environmental Services Department, Flood Control District of Maricopa County, and others.
- [Arizona Legislative Internship](#) (spring only, full time, stipend & tuition waiver)
- [City of Tempe temporary job postings](#) Includes internships, such as “sustainability communications intern”. Most towns and cities have job posting sites like this, conduct a similar search for other Valley cities near you.
- [Arizona Game and Fish summer internship program](#)

Finding an internship in a specific city or state:

Many students complete internships outside of Arizona. Following are approaches to finding an internship in any location. Remember to also consult [Handshake](#), which may have posted opportunities in the area you are looking.

Determine your regional options:

Get started by creating a Big List. If you are looking at a specific city or region, research what organizations are doing sustainability work in that area. Make a list of all the organizations you come across, visit their website to see if they have internships posted. If not, consider reaching out to them directly to offer your services as an intern (see “direct outreach” above). If they don’t have opportunities, perhaps they can recommend another person or organization to reach out to. Make sure to explore non-profits, companies, and government organizations. Chamber of Commerce and city websites can be good places to start. Consider whether there are volunteer opportunities that you can formalize into an internship.

Network is everything:

Utilize your local network:

You may have friends or family in the location you are considering. If so, spread the word that you are looking for an internship. You never know who they may know, or what organizations they may suggest considering. This can be especially helpful if you are not familiar with the location yourself. Have some research done ahead of time so you can let them know what kind of opportunities you are interested in.

LinkedIn Alumni Finder:

You can search for both School of Sustainability and ASU alumni in a particular city. Review their profiles. Where are they working? You may be able to add organizations to your Big List. Connect with them on LinkedIn. Make sure to introduce yourself and that you are planning to come to their city for an internship. See if they would chat with you for a few minutes about what sustainability related work is happening in that area. Remember, the goal is to try to establish a relationship & grow your network--not only to ask for opportunities.

ASU Mentor Network:

The goal here is to connect with a mentor who may be working in the location you are interested in. You are NOT meant to ask directly for opportunities, but to connect with people and learn from their experience and advice. Through that, you may learn about organizations and activities you may want to connect with. Your mentor may have useful advisement in finding and being successful at internships.

National Summer Internship Programs:

There are numerous national level internships that students can apply for, below are just some examples that may be of interest to sustainability majors.

[NASA DEVELOP program](#): Part of NASA’s Applied Sciences Program, addresses environmental and public policy issues through interdisciplinary research projects. Applicants with a strong interest in Earth sciences, remote sensing, environmental science, computer science, GIS, technology, and environmental policy are strongly encouraged to apply. Apply in Jan/Feb for summer internship.

[The Nature Conservancy GLOBE Program](#). 10-week paid summer internship. Positions available throughout the U.S. Apply by January for following summer.

[ASU Capital Scholars Program](#): Apply September/October for public policy summer internship in Washington D. C. Fees are associated with this program, including ASU credit. See site for details.

Sustainability Internships in Hawaii. The Julie Ann Wrigley Global Institute of Sustainability is partnered with Kamehameha Schools in Oahu, Hawaii. Part of the partnership includes summer internship opportunities in Hawaii. Contact the SOS Internship Coordinator to be added to the interest list for this program.

International Internships:

Many students express interest in completing an internship abroad, or completing an internship as part of a study abroad experience. Following are some recommended resources.

[ASU Study Abroad Office](#) offers numerous study abroad programs offering internships. Highly recommend going abroad through an ASU sponsored program.

[The Intern Group](#), not associated with ASU, but School of Sustainability majors have participated on these programs.

[AIESEC](#), not associated with ASU, but School of Sustainability majors have participated on these programs.

Part III: School of Sustainability Internship Credit

Even though an internship is a real world learning experience, it is also an academic course.

Students cannot receive credit for an internship without enrolling in SOS 484. Students must be enrolled in the class at the same time the internship is taking place (the School of Sustainability does not award retroactive internship credit). Additionally, the internship must last the entire duration of the course (8 weeks in summer 15 weeks in fall or spring).

There are two internship course sections: SOS 484: Elective (not required, 3 credits) and SOS 484: Capstone (required, 4 credits). See below for further details on each section.

Undergraduate Capstone Internship (SOS 484, 4 credits)

SOS students are required to complete a capstone internship experience prior to graduation, ideally in their last or second-to-last semester. Students completing capstone internship are required to enroll in the SOS 484 Capstone Internship course.

Prerequisites

To be eligible for capstone internship, students must:

- Have at least junior or senior status (minimum 56 hours completed)
- Meet minimum GPA requirements, be in good academic standing with the University
- Have completed at least three (9 credit hours) of 300-level SOS Challenge Area/Track coursework (SOS courses number 320 – 328)
- Have completed SOS 231 Careers in Sustainability course

Students are eligible to complete their capstone internship as soon as they meet the minimum requirements above. However, SOS students have found that they have more fully benefitted from their capstone internships when the following criteria are also met:

- Are in their last two semesters of the undergraduate career (87 or more hours completed)
- Have completed most of their other SOS major coursework and related discipline
- Have completed or nearly completed their general studies requirements

About the SOS 484 Capstone Internship Course

SOS 484 Capstone Internship is a 4-credit course, available in fall, spring, and summer terms. This course focuses on both internship success and building on professional development skills from SOS 231 (resume, cover letter, STAR statements, mock interview, etc). There are significant assignments associated with this course.

To successfully fulfill the Capstone Internship requirement, students must:

1. Work at least 135 hours at the internship site. Internship hours must be completed within a regular, Session C semester (15 weeks in fall/spring, 8 weeks in summer).
2. Complete weekly academic course assignments via Blackboard.
3. Earn a “B” or better grade, using the A – E scale. Plus/minus grades are not given.

Undergraduate Elective Internship (SOS 484 Elective, 3 credits)

SOS 484 Elective credit is an excellent opportunity for sophomores and juniors to receive upper division credit.

Many students need an upper division SOS elective course, this credit can fulfill that requirement (review DARS or check with an advisor for specifics).

SOS 484 Elective credit *does not fulfill the capstone internship requirement*, a capstone internship is still required even if SOS 484 is taken for elective credit.

Prerequisites

SOS internship providers expect interns to possess a certain level of sustainability knowledge prior to their internship experience. Typically, internship providers are looking for junior or senior students, though this is not always the case. At minimum, students must have completed SOS 110, SOS 111 and at least 12 credit hours at ASU. Students must be in good academic standing and meet ASU and SOS gpa requirements.

About SOS 484 Elective (3 credit hours)

SOS 484 Elective is a 3-credit online/icourse. No in person meetings are required.

SOS 484 courses are graded on the A – E scale. Plus/minus grades are not given. SOS 484 grades are based entirely upon the student’s performance on the course assignments.

Assignments include (but are not limited to) discussion boards, learning objectives, mid-term presentation, final reflection, executive summary. Interns will also track hours, and participate in mid-term and final evaluations of their work.

Part IV: Contact Information and Schedule an Appointment

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Schedule an appointment through your MyASU page.

A screenshot of the MyASU Academic Support Team page. The page is titled "Academic Support Team" and has a light gray background. Underneath, there are two main sections: "Academic Advising" and "Sustainability (BS)". The "Academic Advising" section includes the text "Degree requirements, graduation progress, and course registration." and a blue upward-pointing arrow. The "Sustainability (BS)" section also has a blue upward-pointing arrow. Below these sections, there is a table with two columns. The first column lists "Your Advisors", "Contact", "Appointments", and "More information". The second column lists "Beth Volker", "Kevan Hayden", "(480) 727-6963", "sosadvising@asu.edu", "Schedule an appointment" (with a calendar icon), and "Advising website" (with an external link icon). The "Appointments" row is highlighted in yellow, and the "Schedule an appointment" button is also highlighted in yellow. At the bottom of the page, there is a paragraph of text: "School of Sustainability students should meet with an academic advisor at least once a semester to make certain they stay on track towards timely degree completion and attainment of career goals."

Click on “Schedule an appointment” then follow the prompts for “internships”

For any questions or problems with scheduling, please call the main office: 480-727-6963