

416-889 Graduate Internship in Geography

Course description

The departmental graduate internship is designed as a learning experience in which students work in a business, educational, professional, or other appropriate setting performing tasks related to Geography. In addition, the internship provides an opportunity for students to apply what they have learned in prior course work to an actual work setting. The internship experience is performed under the supervision of an employee of the sponsoring agency or organization, and its academic component is monitored by a department faculty member. Please note that the 889 does not count as one of the three 700-and-above grad course electives. This course can also fulfill the internship and paper requirements for the non-thesis track students seeking the internship path.

Eligibility:

To undertake an internship as Geog 889, students must:

1. Have already completed Geography 810.
2. **Secure an internship** related to the student's academic area of interest, with a strong academic component, which will be the principal basis for the student's grade. The student should conduct at least 45 hours of internship for each course credit hour.
3. **Submit a signed letter** with details of the internship from a sponsoring agency or organization for approval by the faculty member who will supervise the academic component of the internship.
4. **Submit a completed signed internship contract form**, including signature from the sponsoring agency or organization, for approval by the faculty member who will supervise the academic component of the internship.
5. Register for Geog 889. Please note that this is a three credit course, and all its requirements should be met within the semester of enrollment.

Course procedures and grading policy

Before beginning the internship, the student must complete 1-5 above.

The student's grade will be based on three submissions. The weighting of these for the grade is at the discretion of the supervising instructor /faculty member.

1. **An informative one-page memo on the workplace and working conditions** that will be put on file to provide information for future students searching for an internship (Put yourself in the position of a student looking for an internship. What would they want to know about a particular place?).
2. **A scholarly paper of 25-50 pages in length that connects the internship to the appropriate academic and public policy literatures.** The student is to take one academic aspect of the internship and to relate the personal experience to the theoretical discussion in academic literature and/or other courses taken at UWM. Style and format should follow the guidelines of an established journal in geography or a related discipline. The instructor at UWM shall advise the student throughout the writing process. This research article will serve as the final internship paper.
3. **A report of the intern supervisor describing the intern's performance.** Upon request of the supervisor, this report may be kept confidential from the student.

Due dates for these assignments are to be determined by the faculty supervisor/instructor, as are any penalties for late submission of work.

Attendance requirements

The intern is expected to work 45 hours for each credit taken. If the internship lasts for more than one calendar month, the student shall provide the instructor at UWM with a progress report; this report can be oral.

Institutional choice and kind of work

Given the wide range of geographical applications, any employer who would potentially hire geography graduates is a viable choice. Examples include (but are not limited to) municipal, county, state, or federal government, utility companies, non-profit organizations, market research and advertising, transportation, publishers, tourism, and the media. UWM and other tertiary education institutions are the only kind of employer that is not permissible.

The intern is expected to conduct the same type of work as a fully paid geographer employed in the institution, where the internship takes place. This may include (but ought not to be restricted to) routine work.

Special out-of-class requirements

It is the student's responsibility to find a potential internship institution and to identify an instructor in the geography department, who acts as liaison and academic supervisor. Before the actual start date of the internship, the internship institution's representative, the instructor and the student meet to discuss the specific content of the internship. They draw up a contract outlining the content, and each other's rights and responsibilities. All three parties, as well as the Chair of Department, receive a copy of this contract.

Special skills required of students beyond the formal prerequisites

Some institutions require special skills such as a driver's license, physical fitness, or specialized IT experience such as GIS proficiency. It is the student's responsibility to inquire about such requirements before the beginning of the internship. All special requirements should be mentioned explicitly in the contract).

Safety policies

Some internships have a higher than average occupational hazard. The student is expected to follow all safety procedures customary in the industry or business, where the internship takes place. Safety policies should be part of the three-party discussion referred to in F).

Recommended reading

The student should conduct independent reading sufficient to inform a review of literature, to be included in the research article. Such reading may be identified with reference to the student's prior coursework, especially if the student has completed GEOG 810, and should be discussed with the instructor.