Student interns are encouraged to take responsibility for their education, and the Professional Agricultural Internship is one of the Agricultural Education and Studies Department’s primary non-classroom experiences that allow them to do so. It promotes personal discovery and self discipline. The internship is a dynamic application of education, where students enhance their abilities to set goals and outline plans to achieve them, communicate, think critically, and reflect on their observations and experiences in an environment where they can develop these skills professionally.

This document is designed as a guide for the student intern and the intern’s site supervisor in the Professional Agricultural Internship Program. It describes the procedures to follow and the course expectations. It includes forms the student is responsible for completing or sending to the Department Internship Supervisor, and those to give to the site supervisor. The student is responsible for ensuring that all relevant forms are completed by the site supervisor and returned to the Dept Internship Supervisor.

While gaining proficiency in specific competencies is the core of the internship, instructions and procedures provided by the manual also are part of the learning experience that can enhance the intern’s experience with business practices. For example, forgetting to turn in the BEFORE self-assessment at the appropriate time is equivalent to not putting in the time to plan a project in a work setting. Not going over the evaluations with your site supervisor is the same as not satisfying a business client. Ensuring that the site supervisor returns intern evaluations to the Department Internship Supervisor is as important as completing a job task during the internship. Keeping track of details and instructions as outlined in the Manual that are required for the course is comparable to keeping track of your job responsibilities in a business or organization.

Kathleen Hunt, Ph.D., Department Internship Supervisor, Professional Agricultural Internship Programs, Department of Agricultural Education and Studies

Sorrel Brown, Ph.D., former Department Internship Supervisor, Professional Agricultural Internship Programs, Department of Agricultural Education and Studies

Revised January 2016.
AgEdS 412 Professional Agricultural Internship

General Requirements

The core of your internship experience is to gain experience in and strengthen the following 10 competencies while interning at an agriculturally related business:

- Decision Making
- Problem Solving
- Initiative Taking
- Active Listening
- Leadership
- Teamwork
- Written/Visual Communication
- Verbal Communication
- Critical Thinking
- Creativity

To understand what these competencies mean in terms of active learning, look over the student intern self-assessment you will take before and after your internship. It can be found in the FORMS section of the manual.

The purpose of your professional internship is to give you an opportunity to develop each of the competencies in a professional agricultural environment so that valid learning is taking place on the job. When you first visit with your site supervisor, both of you determine the specific work responsibilities you will have during your internship. Ensure that your site supervisor has returned the signed site approval form to the Dept. Internship Supervisor before you start your internship.

- Your first assignment is to turn in a Plan of Work for your internship that reflects how you will improve your skills in the 10 competencies listed above. Send your Plan of Work to the Department Internship Supervisor within the first two (2) weeks of starting your internship. Examples of a Plan of Work can be found in the Appendix.

- Your portfolio should describe how you developed each competency and how you perceive its value to you in your future. Explain how you embedded the competencies within your internship responsibilities.

- A presentation or poster, in addition to the portfolio, are required to complete your work for the course and are described in the Portfolio Guidelines found later in this document.

- You are responsible for completing a special project that your site supervisor assigns to you or that you propose and get agreement. This should be a major learning component that you are primarily responsible for; the results you produce should be of value to the organization. Before you accept an internship, be sure to ask the site supervisor if there will be opportunities to work on all ten competencies.

- You are expected to develop an oral presentation or a poster about your internship within 6 weeks of the ending date of your internship. The department supervisor will let you know which format you will be responsible for, presentation or poster. The poster is due at the same time as your portfolio and can be included in your portfolio. Your presentation should be scheduled in the academic semester after your internship.
• Use good presentation skills in creating and delivering your internship presentation. Tips on how to create and deliver an effective PowerPoint presentation can be found at http://www.ageds.iastate.edu/undergrad/internship/Ppt%20Tips.pdf.

• Give an oral presentation explaining your internship as through the competencies you practiced.
  o AgEdS 110 Orientation class
  o AgEdS 215 Career Seminar
  o AgEdS 311 Presentation and Sales Strategies
  o AgEdS 315 Personal and Professional Leadership

• With permission from the Department Internship Supervisor, you may present at other venues, such as faculty seminars, club meetings or other student organizations. There must be a Department faculty in attendance for grading purposes.

• Use this PowerPoint template to prepare your poster as a slide. You do not need to actually print a full-sized poster. Include a printed copy in your portfolio or email it to the Department Internship Supervisor. You can modify the template, such as with a company logo or photos.

Template.pptx
AgEdS 412
Professional Agricultural Internship

Objectives

1. Develop and practice the ten competencies that are critical to become a successful professional in an agricultural professional setting.

2. Develop professional attitudes and appropriate behaviors for an agricultural profession.

3. Practice and adopt organizational procedures appropriate for the profession.

4. Self-monitor, reflect on and evaluate your performance and achievement of your professional goals.

5. Seek career development input and guidance from mentors/supervisors; establish networks within the profession.

6. Enhance technical agricultural skills and knowledge in an applied agricultural setting.

Scheduling

The Professional Agriculture Internship Program (AgEdS 412) is open to all Agricultural Education and Agricultural Studies students. It is a required course for the Ag Communications Option. Ag Communication students must have completed AgEdS 211C, Early Field-Based Experience, at a site other than the proposed site for the internship prior to being eligible for taking AgEdS 412.

Permission of the Department Internship Supervisor is a prerequisite for AgEdS 412. Students interested in an internship should consult with their advisors, and then schedule a meeting with the Department Internship Supervisor several months prior to the beginning of their internship to allow time for negotiations or corrections. Students must meet with the Department Internship Supervisor for approval prior to registration and get a reference number in order to register for the course. Students register for the internship course just as they would for any other course.

Length of Time and Credit

The maximum number of credits allowed for AgEdS 412 is six (6). Though the focus of the internship is not specific time, interns are generally expected to complete the equivalent of approximately 2 weeks for each academic credit. The Ag Communications Option requires 6 credits. For other majors, students may negotiate the number of credits they wish to take with the Department Internship Supervisor and their advisor.

Correct use of English grammar, terminology, sentence structure, punctuation, spelling, possessives and contractions, and verb tense will be considered in the grading of your portfolio. Remember, you want your writing to carry a reader from idea to idea without them getting lost along the way. Written communication is one of the competencies that the internship emphasizes, thus your portfolio should reflect this skill.
AgEdS 412
Professional Agricultural Internship

Procedures

Step 1: Consider what kind of internship would best fit your educational and career needs. Visit the Agricultural Career Planning and Placement Office and agricultural representatives at the various Career Days held during the fall and spring of the academic year. Make sure the internship you choose will provide the opportunity to practice the competencies so be sure to talk to your site supervisor about the course requirements.

Step 2: Read the entire AgEdS 412 Manual, then make some preliminary contacts with a possible site. Your internship must be at a site you have not worked in previously. Initial contact with your proposed site is your responsibility. The department will not make employer contacts for you. Be sure to ask your prospective employer if you are covered by insurance during your internship.

Step 3: Once you have been offered an internship position, schedule a meeting with the Department Internship Supervisor. Approval is needed from both the site supervisor and the Department Internship Supervisor. Confer with the Department Internship Supervisor for university approval of the site, number of credits, and course expectations. Complete the AgEds 412 Contract and turn it in to the Department Internship Supervisor with the completed BEFORE part of the self-assessment. Make a copy of the self-assessment so you can include the completed AFTER part with your portfolio.

Step 4: Register using the course number in the catalog. You will need a reference number to register. Contact the Department Internship Supervisor for the course reference number.

Step 5: Send or take the site approval form to your site supervisor. Explain that he/she must be willing to provide you with opportunities to practice transferable career skills (10 competencies). The internship is not a work experience.

Step 6: Within the first two weeks of the internship, put together a detailed Plan of Work that describes how your internship will help you with the 10 competencies (see Appendix for examples) and send it to the Department Internship Supervisor.

Step 7: Make arrangements for an on-site visit from the Department Internship Supervisor about midway through your internship. If your site is outside Iowa, a video connection and/or telephone contact may be arranged with the Department Internship Supervisor. It is your responsibility to keep the Department Internship Supervisor apprised of your progress during your internship.

Step 8: Your site supervisor should complete two evaluations, an assessment of your competencies and your professional business behavior. Part of your grade depends on those evaluations so at the end of your internship, make sure your supervisor sends them to the Department Internship Supervisor.

Step 9: Send a written thank-you note to your site supervisor and include a copy in your portfolio.

Step 10: Complete all portfolio requirements. Turn in your completed portfolio within 4 weeks of the ending date of your internship as specified in your Contract. Your final portfolio may include the following:

- Introduction
- Plan of Work (required at the beginning of your internship)
- Weekly journal (required) reflecting on your experiences
- Written narrative detailing 10 competencies with specific examples (required)
• Completed “After” self-assessment (required; the “Before” assessment should be turned in with your Contract before the start of your internship)
• Collection of materials or resources you developed or used
• Photos, video, or slides to demonstrate your accomplishments (get a photo release form signed so that your photos can be used by the college)
• Special project narrative and supporting materials
• Printed copy of your poster if you are assigned to create one
• Thank you letter to supervisor (copy required)

**Step 10:** Arrange to make an oral presentation (15-20 minutes) of your internship to a class of your peers if you are assigned a presentation rather than a poster. Both the poster and presentation should include the following:

• Introduction (location, type of business) and how you found the internship
• Highlights of the internship and what you got out of it
• Brief review of your special project and some specific/unique accomplishments you made
• Pros and cons of the internship
• How you improved in some of the competencies (pick whichever competencies you want to feature)
• How the internship reinforced/redirected your career goals (Some students have found that they do not want to continue in the work they did as an intern, and this is a perfectly legitimate conclusion.)

**Step 11:** Receive your grade. The rubric for grading is included in the Appendix. Grades are based on the quality and completeness of portfolio assignments, site supervisor evaluations, and your oral presentation. The Department Internship Supervisor will email you to pick up your portfolio and grade, with comments. You will need to sign a release form to indicate you have picked up your portfolio. **NOTE:** For every 4 weeks your portfolio is late, your starting grade drops one letter grade.
Intern Responsibilities during Internship

1. Make contact with your site supervisor for internship approval as soon as approval is given by the Department Internship Supervisor.
   a. Request assistance to obtain housing, if desired.
   b. Find out procedures for reporting: when, where, and start time.
   c. Find out if you are covered by their insurance during the internship.
   d. Make sure your supervisor returns signed Site Approval to Department Internship Supervisor.

2. Personal appearance is important. You are beginning to assume the role of a professional and should dress accordingly. Dress neatly, appropriately, and according to the organization’s dress code.

3. Arrive at your intern site on time and ready to work. Be prepared to work past normal business hours. You are not a wage earner; you are there to get the job done, however long it takes.

4. Use proper channels of communication and always go through your site supervisor before contacting someone in a different position. In case of difficulties, contact the Department Internship Supervisor.

5. You are expected to be one of the staff/office employees. You must be willing to accept certain obligations expected of all staff members/employees. If assigned to do “odd jobs” that are not required or expected of other staff members/employees, politely and tactfully remind your supervisor of your intern role.

6. Immediately after your arrival at your intern site, you should make an effort to become acquainted.
   a. Meet all other professional staff members.
   b. Meet office assistants and other individuals with whom you will be in close contact.
   c. Familiarize yourself with the policies and regulations of the site, and abide by them.

7. Always be alert for ways to assist your site supervisor in carrying out his/her work. Look ahead to tasks. Don’t always wait for your supervisor to tell you what to do. Be prepared to carry out any responsibilities given you, even if you think they are menial tasks. Remember, these responsibilities are an opportunity for you to gain experience.

8. You will be expected to complete a detailed Plan of Work within the first two weeks with the assistance of your site supervisor. Also send potential site visit dates. They should be sent to the Department Internship Supervisor.

9. Be prompt for appointments. It is much better to arrive slightly ahead of schedule than to arrive even a few minutes late. A first impression is lasting and only occurs once.

10. Maintain a professional attitude, regardless of whether you like or dislike anything about your internship. HOWEVER, do not tolerate inappropriate behavior from your site supervisor or anyone else during your internship. If you find yourself subjected to any kind of harassment, contact the Department Internship Supervisor or any faculty or staff in the department immediately. Interns will not be penalized if their internship has to be interrupted due to inappropriate behavior on the part of someone else. Refer to http://www.dso.iastate.edu/sexualmisconduct/ for specific actions.

11. Inform your site supervisor of your whereabouts if you plan to leave the area for the weekend. If foreseeable absences during the work week must occur, they should be discussed with and approved by your site supervisor.

12. Treat discussions in staff meetings as confidential. Never criticize your employer, the organization, or staff members.

13. At the beginning of your internship, ask your site supervisor to set aside regular times for conferences with you. Invite constructive criticism and suggestions with an open mind. Suggestions are offered for your professional improvement.

14. Express appreciation to your site supervisor and others for the internship through a letter and/or card. Include a copy in your portfolio.
Forms

AgEdS 412

Professional Agricultural Internship

A. Student Internship Contract
B. Site Approval by Site Supervisor
C. Department Supervisory Visit Schedule
D. Site Supervisor Assessment of Intern Competencies
E. Professional Business Behavior Evaluation
F. Student Intern Self-Assessment
G. Grade Rubric
H. Presentation / Poster Grade Rubrics
Student Contract for AgEdS 412  
*Professional Agricultural Internship*  
Department of Agricultural Education and Studies  
Iowa State University  

**PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY or USE COMPUTER TO COMPLETE**

Intern ____________________________ University ID ____________________________

Last, First, MI

ISU Address ____________________________ Major ____________________________

____________________________________ Phone ____________________________

Number of Credits ____________________________ Email ____________________________

ISU Advisor ____________________________

**I would like to do my internship for AgEdS 412 at the following location.**

Name of Business/ Organization

______________________________________________________________

Mailing address

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Street or P.O. Box</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Zip</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Site Supervisor ____________________________ Phone ____________________________

Email ____________________________

**Exact dates of my AgEdS 412 experience:**

Beginning Date ____________________________ Semester I am officially registered:

Ending Date ____________________________

**I have visited with the Department Internship Supervisor and:**

- I understand that it is my responsibility to return this completed application 2 weeks (minimum) before reporting to the site for my internship.
- I understand and agree that within 4 weeks of the end date given above that I will turn in all completed assignments as outlined in the AgEdS 412 Manual.
- I understand that extended time or incomplete assignments will result in a lower grade.
- I understand that my work is expected to reflect a professional level and that poor grammar and spelling will lower my grade.

_________________________________________  ____________________________

Student signature  Date signed
AgEdS 412 Site Approval by Site Supervisor

Professional Agricultural Internship

Department of Agricultural Education and Studies

Iowa State University

Internship Business/Organization: __________________________________________________________

Address: ____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

Phone: ___________________________ Email: _____________________________

On-site Supervisor: ________________________________________________________________

Phone: ___________________________ Email: _____________________________

Intern: ____________________________________________________________________________

Site Phone: ___________________________ Email: _____________________________

_____ We will participate in the experience program and will supervise the above-named student during the time and days requested. We are willing to provide a variety of learning experiences for the student.

_____ We will not participate at this time. Please do not assign the above-named student to this location.

Comments or questions:

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________ _____________________________

Site Supervisor Signature Date

____________________________________________________________________________________

Name (please print)

Please return signed form to:

Dr. Kathleen Hunt
206D Curtiss Hall
Iowa State University
Ames, IA 50011-1050
kphunt@iastate.edu
515 294-8943
**AgEdS 412 Department Supervisory Visit Schedule**  
*Professional Agricultural Internship*  
Department of Agricultural Education and Studies  
Iowa State University

A supervisory visit will be made by the Department Internship Supervisor some time around the middle or second half of your internship. After you have had an opportunity to develop your internship program with your site supervisor and complete your detailed Plan of Work, select a time when you will be involved in an activity where the Department Supervisor can observe you in action. Your site supervisor should be available for a short time to meet with you and the Department Supervisor during this visit.

Intern: ____________________________________________________________

Please indicate two days and times suitable for a supervising visit:

Date: ___________________________  Time: ___________________________

Date: ___________________________  Time: ___________________________

Directions to Site Location (include map if needed):

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

Comments or questions:

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

Please return this form with your Plan of Work by the second week to:

Dr. Kathleen Hunt  
206D Curtiss Hall  
Iowa State University  
Ames, IA  50011-1050  
kphunt@iastate.edu  
515 294-8943
The purpose of this assessment is to:
- Provide interns a way to evaluate their awareness of expected competencies.
- Allow interns to become more reflective of their learning resulting from the internship.
- Create an opportunity for site supervisors, advisors, and the Department Internship Supervisor to determine whether the internship is providing beneficial exposure to competencies.

Please check the box that best represents your assessment of the intern’s level of proficiency for each competency statement after completing the internship.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>I observed that the intern ...</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Regularly</th>
<th>Almost ALWAYS</th>
<th>Not applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making</td>
<td>• Considered how different perspectives affected decisions that were made.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Used logic to sort through alternative options.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Problem Solving</td>
<td>• Dealt with obstacles to finding solutions in a logical manner.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Interpreted and integrated information from multiple sources.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initiative Taking</td>
<td>• Studied opportunities, and then took action if warranted without requiring close supervision.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Recognized times when it was appropriate to be proactive rather than reactive.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Active Listening</td>
<td>• Gave total attention when listening to a speaker.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Ignored distractions such as other conversations.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Listened to an entire message without interrupting.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>• Set goals, implemented plans, established a clear direction.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Sought and was responsive to other ideas.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Questioned the way things were done and had ideas on how they could be better.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>• Saw the benefits of building consensus.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Followed group rules for working together.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Valued ideas and contributions of others.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Written &amp; Visual</td>
<td>• Felt comfortable conveying ideas in writing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>• Was able to organize, analyze, and display information in a compelling fashion.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Communication</td>
<td>• Did not let distractions interrupt thoughts or statements.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Was able to articulate beliefs or ideas.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Spoke so others could understand.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td>• Was able to justify actions, explain assumptions and reasons.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Separated factual information from inferences and opinion.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Integrated multiple sources of information to solve problems.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Appeared to consider alternative points of view.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>• Persisted in completing tasks even when encountering barriers.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Did not let criticism impede pursuing a solution.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Comments:

Supervisor Signature _______________________________ Date __________________________

Please return completed assessment to: Dr. Kathleen Hunt, 206D Curtiss Hall, ISU, kphunt@iastate.edu
**AgEdS 412 Professional Business Behavior**  
**Student Evaluation by Site Supervisor**

Intern’s Name ____________________________ Site ____________________________

Please rate the intern by placing an “X” in the box that best represents your evaluation of how the student displayed these characteristics during the internship.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appearance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tidy, neat &amp; clean, well-groomed, dressed suitably for job requirements &amp; work setting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skill as presenter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Effective speaking voice, good use of English, projected well in front of groups, few distracting mannerisms, used effective methods &amp; materials</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Manner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showed interest, positive approach to tasks, alert, eager to learn, energetic, used appropriate conduct in different situations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Took initiative, self-reliant, solved problems, accepted blame if appropriate</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cooperative, helpful, approachable, sociable within business setting, tactful, willing to help out</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flexibility</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adapted to new ideas or changes in plans, looked for alternatives, worked well under pressure</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Administrative duties</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exceeded minimum requirements, accurate reports &amp; records w/ few errors, aware of employee hierarchy</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Few if any absences, called when unable to come in, punctual in completing tasks, little prompting needed to do assignments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Job Knowledge</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informed about duties, asked questions if unsure, grasped instructions quickly, sought to master all phases of job</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Neatness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orderly work area, took care of property</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning &amp; Preparation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Assembled materials on time, used time efficiently, asked for help if needed, met deadlines</td>
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<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Showed consideration for &amp; interest in others, sensitive to others’ feelings</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Response to Supervision</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Positively accepted &amp; acted on suggestions to improve, presented alternative point of view logically &amp; unemotionally, did not insist on getting own way</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COMMENTS and/or RECOMMENDATIONS** for additional coursework, experience, skills, etc, to help this student grow.

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

Site Supervisor Signature ____________________________ Date __________

Please share your ratings with the intern and return the completed evaluation to:

Dr. Kathleen Hunt ● 206D Curtiss Hall, Iowa State University ● kphunt@iastate.edu ● 515 294-8943
AgEdS 412 Student Intern Self-Assessment (you need 2 copies)

Intern’s Name _________________________  Site _________________________________

The purpose of this self-assessment is:
- To provide feedback to students on assessing their improvement of the competencies
- To allow students to become more reflective of their learning and to express the skills they have gained
- To document competencies so that students can convey them to prospective employers
- To create an opportunity for advisors and the Department internship supervisor to determine whether the internship experience is delivering anticipated skills
- To provide a diagnostic report to advisors and the department internship supervisor regarding the competencies students are gaining through an early field-based experience

For each competency, circle the number in the BEFORE column that comes close to describing your level of proficiency before you start your internship and turn in to the Dept. Internship Supervisor. At the end of your internship, circle the number in the AFTER column that best represents your assessment of your proficiency for that competency after completing your internship and turn in with your portfolio.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEFORE</th>
<th>AFTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making</td>
<td>Decision Making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use logic or reason to sift through available or alternative options then make a choice.</td>
<td>I use logic or reason to sift through available or alternative options then make a choice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I look to credible sources of relevant information.</td>
<td>I look to credible sources of relevant information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I strive to find inclusive solutions.</td>
<td>I strive to find inclusive solutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem Solving</td>
<td>Problem Solving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I view problems as opportunities.</td>
<td>I view problems as opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I deal with obstacles to solutions in an orderly manner.</td>
<td>I deal with obstacles to solutions in an orderly manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I interpret, integrate, and prioritize information from multiple sources.</td>
<td>I interpret, integrate, and prioritize information from multiple sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiative Taking</td>
<td>Initiative Taking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I analyze opportunities, then take action if warranted without requiring close supervision.</td>
<td>I analyze opportunities, then take action if warranted without requiring close supervision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I recognize when it is appropriate to be proactive rather than reactive.</td>
<td>I recognize when it is appropriate to be proactive rather than reactive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Listening</td>
<td>Active Listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I give my total attention to speaker.</td>
<td>I give my total attention to speaker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I notice the speaker’s non-verbal cues such as facial expressions and body language;</td>
<td>I notice the speaker’s non-verbal cues such as facial expressions and body language;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I listen from a positive point of view without assumptions.</td>
<td>I listen from a positive point of view without assumptions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I ignore distractions such as other conversations.</td>
<td>I ignore distractions such as other conversations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I listen to the entire message without interrupting whether I agree or not.</td>
<td>I listen to the entire message without interrupting whether I agree or not.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I realize what is not said may be just as important as what is spoken.</td>
<td>I realize what is not said may be just as important as what is spoken.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I set goals, implement ideas, establish a clear direction.</td>
<td>I set goals, implement ideas, establish a clear direction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I seek and am responsive to other ideas.</td>
<td>I seek and am responsive to other ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am sincere in encouraging, recognizing and complimenting others.</td>
<td>I am sincere in encouraging, recognizing and complimenting others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I build credibility and trust by my actions.</td>
<td>I build credibility and trust by my actions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I realize disagreement and dissension may be helpful to clarify issues.</td>
<td>I realize disagreement and dissension may be helpful to clarify issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I challenge the status quo.</td>
<td>I challenge the status quo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>Teamwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I see the benefits of building consensus.</td>
<td>I see the benefits of building consensus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What competency(ies) do you believe you have mastered after completing your internship?

______________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Were there any competencies you did not feel you were able to gain adequate experience in?

______________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Intern Signature ________________________________ Date ________________________________

Please return completed “BEFORE” with Plan of Work to:
Dr. Kathleen Hunt  
AgEdS Professional Internship Program  
206D Curtiss Hall  
Iowa State University  
Ames, IA 50011-1050  
515 294-8943 ● kphunt@iastate.edu
Name: 
Site: 
Date portfolio turned in:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A ✓ in your narrative means you presented a good line of reasoning or insightful observation.</th>
<th>Maximum Points</th>
<th>Your Points</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plan of Work (2 weeks after start date)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Journal Reflection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duties &amp; Responsibilities</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competencies narrative/examples</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior Experiences/courses/materials used</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Project</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation / Poster</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; language</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Contract</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site Approval</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site Supervisor Assessment of Intern Competencies</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Business Behavior Evaluation by Site Supervisor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-assessment “Before” and “After”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thank you letter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Timeliness – For every 4 weeks the portfolio is late, your starting grade drops one whole letter grade.

| TOTAL | 100 |

93 to 100 A  
90 to 92.9 A-  
87 to 89.9 B+  
84 to 86.9 B  
81 to 83.9 B-  
78 to 80.9 C+  
75 to 77.9 C  
72 to 74.9 C-  
69 to 73.99 D+  
66 to 68.9 D+  
60 to 65.9 D-  
Below 60 F
# Presentation Evaluation  
**AgEdS 412**  
*Professional Agricultural Internship*  
Kathleen Hunt, Ph.D.  
Supervisor, AgEdS Professional Internship Program

## Name ____________________________

## Date ____________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Maximum Points</th>
<th>Your Points</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction of location, type</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of business, personnel, how</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you got internship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highlights of the internship;</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what you learned from it</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brief review of special project</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pros and cons of the internship</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some specific/unique</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accomplishment you made</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How you improved in 1 or 2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>competencies (pick whichever</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>competencies you want to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feature)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How the internship</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reinforced/redirected your</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>career goals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL** 10
Poster Evaluation  
*AgEdS 412*  
*Professional Agricultural Internship*  
Kathleen Hunt, Ph.D.  
Supervisor, AgEdS Professional Internship Program

Name ______________________________

Date ___________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maximum Points</th>
<th>Your Points</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How you got the internship</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One example of what you learned from the internship</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brief review of special project</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pros and cons of the internship</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How you improved in the competencies (pick 1 or 2 competencies &amp; give specific examples)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How the internship reinforced/redirected your career goals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Portfolio Guidelines

AgEdS 412

Professional Agricultural Internship
Your AgEdS 412 internship portfolio should be a comprehensive reflection of how you improved in the ten competencies during your internship. Your grade is based on **quality, not quantity** in your narratives. You do not need to write about your activities in detail. The important aspect is reflecting on how you learned from your experiences. **Review the example narratives that are included to read excellent examples of reflective writing.**

Correct use of English grammar, terminology, sentence structure, punctuation, spelling, possessives and contractions, and verb tense will be considered in the grading of your portfolio. **Proofread your narratives.** Make use of the ISU Writing & Media Center to ensure that you have followed good language rules ([http://www.dso.iastate.edu/wmc](http://www.dso.iastate.edu/wmc), 300 Carver Hall; 515 294-5411).

All materials in your portfolio should be **typed, single-spaced, with 1” margins** and presented in a three-ring binder or similarly bound condition in the order shown below, with divider tabs for the different sections. **Your name, course number, and semester should be recorded on the outside cover.** **Do NOT put your narrative pages in plastic sleeves.** Supplementary materials may be inserted in plastic sleeves.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>Length (single-spaced)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brief history of the company, and its organization</td>
<td>1 page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background on yourself</td>
<td>1 page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your internship job description, including title and qualifications needed, and how you went about getting your internship</td>
<td>1 page</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Weekly Journal (organized by chronological order) describing your impressions of:**

- What you thought of your responsibilities
- How your internship and interactions with co-workers and customers enhanced your competencies
- What questions you asked and what the answers you received
- How you used the competencies in dealing with any challenges you encountered

**Responsibilities**

**Intern Training Sessions or Activities**

How valuable was internship orientation/training?

Was it enough or would you have appreciated more?

**Your job**

What did you learn from carrying out your responsibilities?

What skills in working with people did you learn?

What did you like about your job?

What did you dislike about it?
Reflection on Competencies (this is the focus of your learning experience)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Associated Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Problem-solving</td>
<td>Initiative-taking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active listening</td>
<td>Teamwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Creativity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking</td>
<td>Verbal communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision-making</td>
<td>Written/visual communication</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How was each competency displayed by you and others in the work setting?

Reflect on how you used each competency to actually do your job.

Reflect on your growth as you used each competency.

Discuss how you believe you can transfer each competency into any job you choose to make a career.

Within each of these competencies, you may have gained an associated set of skills. Give specific examples of situations that helped you gain those skills.

Helpful Courses and Prior Experiences

List all educational courses and prior experiences that were helpful during your internship.

1. Explain why the courses were important.
2. Which courses did you think would have had more meaning if you had taken them after doing your internship?
3. Suggest courses that you believe would be helpful that, to the best of your knowledge, are not a part of the curriculum in Agricultural Education and Studies.

Summary

Restate the title of your position.

What were the most important competencies you learned?

What changes would you have made in your internship?

Are you interested in this type of job or business as a career? Why or why not?

How did the internship help you decide on your career goals?

Examples of materials used during internship

- Pictures (include caption under picture; be sure to include signed use releases – contact Dept Internship Supervisor for this form)
- Forms (include notes on blank forms to explain how you used them and/or examples of completed forms)
- Correspondence you wrote; include a thank-you letter to your supervisor(s)
- Materials and resources you developed
- Materials and resources you used on a regular basis (include notes explaining when and how you used the materials)
Special project

Detailed account of a major project you were primarily responsible for and completed during your internship, above and beyond your normal work duties
Include supporting materials such as diagrams, computer printouts, pictures and videos that are a part of your special project.

How was what you did of value to the organization?

How was what you did of interest to you?

A few examples of special projects:

- A DVD/CD/video or computer software to train future interns
- A computer program to keep track of insect pests
- A weed identification book containing colored pictures and examples of weeds with suggested control treatments
- A comparison of costs to operate two different planters
- A comparison of costs and features of different products, strategies.
- A demonstration plot
- An advertisement campaign for a company product
- A communications scheme to support an organization strategy
- A promotional effort to advance an educational or product sales concept
Appendix

AgEdS 412

Professional Agricultural Internship

A. Reflection Cues
B. Writing & Media Center
C. Examples of Plan of Work
D. Example of Competencies Narrative
E. Examples of helpful course work
F. Example for Poster
Reflection Cues* to help in Writing about your Internship Experience

- After observing/participating in your EFE, what questions remain unclear?
- If you have a chance to speak to your friends about this EFE, what would you say?
- What suggestions would you give other students/employees about ways to get the most out this EFE?
- How do you feel about yourself as a communicator in your [major, discipline, profession]?
- What are your strengths as a communicator in your [major, discipline, profession]?
- What have you learned in this EFE that will help you continue to grow as a communicator?
- What was the one especially useful or meaningful thing you learned in this EFE?
- What specific improvements(s) did you make? How did the improvement(s) affect your feelings about yourself?
- Describe something critical/significant that you’ve learned about yourself in this EFE?
- What was your favorite part of this EFE? Why?
- What was your least favorite part of this EFE? Why?
- Complete the following sentences about your EFE:
  - I need ...
  - I wonder ...
  - I wish ...
  - I didn’t realize ...
- If you could do this EFE over, what would you do differently?
- What strategies did you use to learn the materials/tasks in this EFE? Why did you choose those particular strategies?
- What risks did you take in this EFE? Why did you take them?
- If you could change any one of the assignments/tasks you did for this EFE, which one would it be? What would you change about it? Why?
- What problems did you encounter in this EFE? How did you handle them?
- What about this EFE would you like to learn more about?
- After experiencing this EFE, in what area would you like to strengthen your skills? Why?

* Adapted from Rebecca E. Burnett, Ph.D., former member of ISU Department of English, Rhetoric & Professional Communication.
The Writing & Media Center at ISU offers a comfortable environment where ISU undergraduate students from any discipline can collaborate with peer tutors on all facets of written, oral, visual and electronic communication. The Center helps with ...

- Understanding your audience
- Brainstorming
- Organization and style
- Research methods and citations
- Document design
- Cover letters and résumés
- Personal statements
- Proposals
- Speeches and presentations

Take advantage of this valuable resource as you develop your portfolio and prepare your presentation.

Writing & Media Center
300 Carver Hall
515 294-5411
Email: writectr@iastate.edu
Website: www.dso.iastate.edu/wmc/
Example 1: Detailed Plan of Work

AgEdS 412 Professional Agricultural Internship
Dept. of Agricultural Education and Studies

Major: ________________________________________________

The first week that I was here I was given the duty of taking care of the guinea fowl and other game birds that were arriving every week. Because my employer lives about 2 hours away he is not able to be here every day and so I am on my own usually 2 days out of the week and the weekends. The second day that he was gone more of the guinea started hatching. I was not given directions on what to do because the issue of them hatching soon never arose. I was able to develop my initiative taking skills and my decision making and problem solving skills to figure out where the birds needed to go and make sure they had food and water and heat.

My employer is a level 3 archery instructor. He was teaching a level 1 class the second day that I arrived and invited me to take the class. He was able to have the camp cover my expenses and in return now he has a certified level 1 instructor on site so that he does not always have to be around the archery range. Taking the class helped me to develop my teamwork and leadership skills through working with others during the training and now being able to teach younger campers how to shoot archery properly.

One of my job titles here at the ranch is administrative assistant. My employer has me doing regular office work like answering emails and phone messages on a daily basis. I am in the office about 5 hours everyday. Being involved in the office helps me expand my written and verbal communication skills. I am learning to answer emails more professionally and how to properly write down the phone messages that my employer receives.

Another job of the administrative assistant here is to review and update the bylaws and articles of incorporation. I had to read a lot of documentation that I had never seen such before and update the material. This task was challenging because I am unaccustomed to doing such work. This task has helped me develop my written communication and problem solving skills because I had to do a lot of searching and asking questions to make sure the document was worded correctly.

Another aspect of my job includes developing a business plan for the educational services. My employer has had me reading through such books as The Art of the Start by Guy Kawasaki and Hurdle: The Book on Business Planning so that I may be more informed of how to write a business plan. This task of reading the books and being given the chance to develop a business plan is helping to develop my decision making skills and my critical thinking skills. It also is helping me with my active listening because I need to know my employers goals for the ranch.

My employer has also put me in charge of making sure that we have all the documentation to be able to be accredited. Every week I am assigned a different section of the material to look over and write up the document for. This has helped me develop my written communication and creativity in order to create these documents for the camp.

A task that I was assigned right away was formulating rules for the waterfront area. I was given the opportunity to make up the rules at my discretion. This has helped in developing my decision making and critical thinking. I was given the choice of what rules I wanted to enforce so that it would be a safe area.
Besides the normal day to day activities, I have also been involved with various other aspects. For example I help the owner with the large animals when the need arises and assist in various chores with the rabbits like cleaning out the nest boxes. *This helps me to develop my ability to work in a team or with others and also my active listening skills. I do not always know what I am doing so have to be sure to pay attention so that I get all the directions clearly. Also I am usually working with people that I have not had the opportunity to work with before so I get experience working with new people all the time.*

One day I was asked to help set up for a wine tasting event. This was a very interesting and different task then most that I had taken on. *I believe that this task helped me to develop my active listening skills because I was in a new situation taking directions in a different setting.*

The ranch feeds the campers products from the ranch itself. One of the items they feed the campers is goat meat. I was able to help slaughter and butcher 3 of the goats for the said purpose. It was definitely a learning experience. *I believe that I was able to develop my verbal communication and active listening skills because it was all very new to me. Also there were some parts that I decided not to take part in so I was able to effectively communicate that without coming across as if I did not want to help at all.*

My employer knows that I am interested in opening my own camp, so he is willing to let me in on everything we do. He is going to have me help with the staff training. I am going to be leading various leadership activities and instructing the junior staff. *This is helping me with my creativity for coming up with staff training for the junior staff. It is also helping me develop my teamwork abilities and leadership skills to be able to lead the group in the various challenge activities.*

One of my main duties is to be the waterfront supervisor. I am in charge of lifeguarding for the campers and also explaining and enforcing the rules at the waterfront. *This helps me to develop my leadership skills because I am in charge of the camper’s safety and also need to maintain order and keep the children happy and having fun. While at the waterfront it is my duty to make sure the rest of the staff is setting a good example and helping the younger campers while they are in the water.*

While I am in the office I also get to help register the campers for camp. It is my job to keep myself updated on which camps are open and which are not so that I may relay the information to the parents and enroll the youth in the right week. *This helps me to develop my critical thinking and problem solving skills. I believe this because I need to be able to decide if we can let the child into the camp without going over capacity or if they would be able to find another week that is more suitable.*

When the campers are here I am needed to assist the other staff in their areas of expertise. For example when the youth are doing crafts or riding horses I am needed to be there to take youth to the bathroom or to supervise so that they do not start to act up. *This helps me with my creativity and leadership skills because I need to be able to lead the child in the right direction without causing them to be upset or be uninterested in the activity any longer.*

Another one of my jobs during camp will be to help set up and tear down the tents that we use. The rest of the staff and I will be doing this job every week once campers show up because we are only renting the ground that we camp on during the week. *This will help me develop my teamwork abilities because I will be working with the other staff on a job that is not so favorable.*
### Example 2: Detailed Plan of Work

*AgEdS 412 Professional Agricultural Internship*
*Dept. of Agricultural Education and Studies*

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Example: Competencies Narrative

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Problem-solving

Big or small every workplace has its share of problems. The … office is no exception. I have to give the staff a lot of credit in this competency area, as I was able to learn so much about problem solving by simply observing the day-to-day processes and how each staff member confronted and overcame problems. One of the first things I noticed about …’s problem solving strategies is that some departments are more willing to help out other departments. The helpful departments were always great resources when you found yourself in a jam and could be counted on to pitch in and make things run smoothly. I found that I, too, utilized my problem solving skills regularly at the office. I realized that is was simple. Things come up and if you over plan for everything it will only stress you out. I soon learned to take a more flexible approach, especially when planning large events, to minimize my stress and optimize my success.

I regularly used my problem solving skills to successfully complete a variety of projects throughout my internship. From volunteers backing out at the last minute to charter bus services not showing up on time there were never a shortage of problems to solve. Some problems resulted due to fault of my own, but I found that most problems stemmed from unforeseeable sources. I used problem solving to help keep a level head and a positive attitude. I realized that if I was more flexible to change, others that I was directing would be too.

My problem solving skills were really strengthened this summer. Prior to this internship the slightest change in plans would tend to really stress me out. I soon learned that the more willingness I had to be flexible, the less stress I would incur. This however, does not mean that I flew by the seat of my pants and did not put in the proper amount of planning the outreach events I was in charge of. I worked hard to ensure I had all my bases covered and ducks in a row, but I was accepting of the fact that something may not go exactly to plan far before anything went wrong. I feel that I have come a long way this summer and although I am far from being any master problem solver, I am much more confident that I can handle these situations as they arise and do so with confidence and poise.

As I mentioned, problems occur at every workplace. Having solid problem solving skills is essential to success in not only an ag communications career, but any career one decides to pursue. I truly feel that my ability to be flexible and conquer problems as they arise is a skill that will save me a lot of stress and worry. I recognize that there will always be unforeseeable barriers to any given goal that will create some stress but I feel that this summer has properly equip me to effectively manage that stress and hurdle those barriers.

The problem solving competency has blessed me with a very large skill set. Some of these skills include: confidence, stress management, flexibility, time management, communication, leadership, and initiative-taking. I was amazed just how many skills tie into problem solving, but I soon realized that problem solving is just that. Problem solving is about aggregating your skill sets in order to come up with a viable solution to a problem. I am very happy about how far I have come in this competency area and I look forward to building upon it in the years to come.

Active Listening

Active Listening played a huge role in my internship. I worked with multiple people within …, numerous cooperatives, and a handful of growers during the summer. Verbal communication was the primary form of communication with these individuals. With that being said, I had a lot of conversations this summer with individuals and I had to be very tentative during these conversations. It wasn’t just them talking the whole time either. They would ask me questions and I would have to listen very closely in order to give them the appropriate answer. I needed to understand what they were asking.
It was very important for me to make them feel like I was passionate and knowledgeable about the topics we talked about, which primarily consisted of … and what it has to offer. I also wanted the individuals I had conversations with to think that I really cared about what they thought and concerns if they had any, because I truly did. I wanted them to feel like they could talk to me about anything. When I’m talking to someone and I feel like they aren’t engaged in the conversation or really care about what I’m saying, I will be less apt to talk to them again or tell them everything I had initially planned on. I wanted the exact opposite conversations with everyone I interacted with this summer. I knew I would be much more successful if I could have those types of conversations.

By getting to meet so many people, and them seeing what kind of person I was, I started building relationships with people. I found people just venting to me about things. Guys would talk to me about problems they would be having with farmers or even staff that they work with. Sometimes they would just flat out tell me that they didn’t like one of our products and they were going to quit using it. People felt like they could be honest and open with me. Some of that may have had to do with me being an intern and not a full-time employee. I enjoyed listening to what everyone I came in contact with had to say. However, at the same time I would give feedback in those conversations, but I know there is always that fine line of what you should and shouldn’t say. It’s always important to keep those conversations professional as well.

Being a wholesale representative this summer, active listening was so crucial. I was constantly communicating with people. … employees all did a good job with active listening and I loved that. I felt like if I ever had something I wanted to discuss they were engaged in the conversation and had great feedback. I never had been in a work setting before where active listening had to do with how much money you could potentially make. With being in a business where there are a lot of other companies that offer the same thing, you almost have to win people over. They need to like you, respect you, trust you and confide in you. That all starts with active listening. If you can accomplish all those things, you will most likely have a lot of fans which will result into a lot of sales.

I saw how all of this works at first hand this summer. I know what it takes to be an effective active listener and I know what kind of rewarding outcomes you can get if you are one. Whatever career path I choose to take, I know that because of all of the experiences I’ve had with … and seeing the outcome from active listening from my supervisor and his relationships, I will be more successful in my future career. I’ve gained knowledge and grown as I’ve used this competency.

Critical Thinking

Working in the corporate offices for a company whose majority of employees and customers work out “in the field” requires a great deal of critical thinking. One must continually be in the mindset of those who are benefiting from your service or product. How will what I am doing affect the customer? Is this what those outside of the corporate office are thinking? How will this look or sound to the guys in the field? These questions are just a sample of those that had to be asked to successfully accomplish most tasks.

Critical thinking was an extremely valuable tool in the __________ work setting. My supervisor was definitely a master at being able to think critically. Whenever I would present him with an idea, he would never shoot me down. Instead he would ask me questions such as “What will the energy sales people think about that?” He was always thinking about whom ________’s true customers are. As my internship progressed, I realized that most of the staff did the same. They had to. If they did not then the messages they were attempting to convey or the goals they were trying to meet would not happen. Just because a particular style of communiqué would work for the employees in the home office, did not mean that it would also work for those other employees in the system outside of __________. The majority of the time, it appeared to me that the intended audience was outside of the corporate offices and much critical thinking was done to ensure that they were targeted appropriately.

It did not take me long to realize just how important this critical thinking actually was. As I mentioned earlier, the way we would communicate with the home office employees was much different than how we would communicate with the FS employees. This had to be done for a number of reasons. First and foremost was the reason that the FS employees were truly ________’s customers. If we did not target our customers effectively than we should expect them to go elsewhere for their needs and so in turn ________ would lose money. So it
seems relatively easy to me to see just how important critical thinking can be, especially in the ____________ system.

I cannot read minds, but I would like to think I can do the next best thing, critical thinking. If I plan to get a career in Agriculture Communications, which I do, then I will always be forced to put myself in my intended audience’s shoes. I will also be required to “think outside the box.” This in depth thought process is necessary to determine and decide the best means of transmitting one’s message. Even interoffice memos require thought into how a fellow coworker will respond to the words you type. This falls back to the standard that quality communication can make you successful in any job. Regardless of what I do, I cannot consider myself an excellent communicator simply because I think I have a large vocabulary or that I speak well in front of an audience. Total communication includes thinking about how to best present your information according to the response you believe your audience will have. If I can do that then I think I will be successful no matter what my job title is.

**Initiative-taking**

Many employees would not wait to be told what to do but instead would do what they knew it would take to better the company. I never saw any employees step beyond their bounds. They were aware of what type of initiatives they could take and those they were not sure about they would ask their supervisors. I thought this was a great because it showed the supervisors that the subordinates were thinking outside the box and not simply following orders. On the same regards, many of the supervisors, my own included, would guide their subordinates towards taking the initiative. He would often discuss with me the various tasks that the Marketing Services staff needed to accomplished for a certain event. He would also then inform me of the various other projects he was working on and so I knew then that I needed to step up and get to work on those tasks without having to be told.

I must admit that early in my internship I was hesitant to initiate too much from fear of stepping beyond the bounds of my internship. But as the weeks progressed, my confidence rose and so did my initiative-taking. I realized that ________ was giving me all of the information I needed to begin work on my projects, so it seemed pointless for me to wait for him to tell me to begin. By taking the initiative on many of my projects, I hoped that I would have the opportunity to add more of my own flare and style into them. And, I hoped that I would either be able to finish them sooner and proceed onto another project, thus getting that much more experience, or have more time to ensure that they were completed on time and to the best of my abilities. This turned out to be quite true. At the beginning of my summer I found myself simply performing the tasks as assigned to me. By the time I began working on my special project, though, I knew what needed to be done and so started doing it. I believe the finished result showed a great deal of me in them because of it.

I am confident that I will obtain a job in the agricultural communications realm. Communicating is a timely process. If you communicate too late, the information or message you are sharing could be outdated or irrelevant. Most of the bosses or supervisors I will have will probably not want to tell me what to do all of the time. And quite honestly, I don’t want them to constantly be telling me what to do either. As I said, communications is timely, especially in the agriculture sector, if I cannot start my own work without being told then I will most definitely be unsuccessful. Fortunately, I feel I will not have a problem initiating projects that need to be done. With a little guidance from my superiors as to what goal our organization is striving for I believe, I will have no problem starting to work towards that goal, without being told to do so. Another reason I think this should not be a problem for is that by being able to take the initiative on tasks, I will enjoy my job all the more. I will take ownership in what I am doing and think of my work as a career as opposed to a means to earn a living. It is likely that I will also feel much more apart of the organization and strive all the more to ensure its success.

Like many of the other competencies I gained throughout my internship, initiative-taking helped me gain some additional skills. Those additional skills developed included my skills in working with people as well as my computer skills.

**Creativity**

This is one competency I have really tried to improve on this summer. I have never been a creative person to be completely honest. At the beginning of the summer I was nervous because I wasn’t sure how I was going to be able to improve on this particular competency. I can officially say my internship experience
definitely forced my creativeness to show! This summer I was in charge of monitoring several fields that had … product applied to them. My boss wanted me to go to these fields about every two to three days to see if I could see visual differences.

One of the biggest ways to market chemical products and even corn or soybean hybrids, is for the grower to be able to see a visual difference showing why it is better than another product such as the competitor product. One of my responsibilities was to take pictures in a creative way while still being able to show a visual difference as to why our product was working better than our competitors. Sometimes this wasn’t the easiest thing to do especially considering there wasn’t always a visual difference, but hopefully there would be come harvest season (yield time). I would come up with a creative way to picture the corn or soybean plants. For example, I would have a field and half of it would have our product applied while the other half would have our competitor’s product applied. I needed to be creative and somehow take a picture to show why a grower should apply our product instead of the competitor’s. I would dig up six plants from each side. I would cut off the roots of the corn plant that had our foliar product applied on six plants and then cut the roots off of six corn plants that had our competitor foliar product applied and then lay the plants in the bed of my truck on their side. Then you could really tell which plants had the biggest stalk and which plant was bigger in overall size. I would then place a quarter in between each set of six plants so you could get an idea of what size the stalk was in comparison to a quarter. Then I put a marker board behind it with all the field and product information on it. After all this was completed, I took the photo!

Everyone I worked with at … thought this was such a great, creative idea. The photo was very intriguing because you could see a great visual difference that showed our product being much better than our competitor’s product. My special project this summer was to launch a new product called …. I created two brochures that were advertising pieces. This also was a great opportunity for me to be creative because there is a lot that goes into making a brochure and I wanted them to catch people’s attention. I also learned how to run a program that you can create brochures in that I had never had any prior experience using. I’m thankful I got to learn this skill because it will be beneficial for me in my future career to know how to do. I put a lot of time and thinking into these brochures and one main reason was because I wanted them to be different than most brochures that … had. I wanted to be really creative and make the brochures extremely eye appealing. I definitely accomplished that. The brochures turned out awesome and my boss was very proud of me.

At the beginning of the summer I knew I had a long way to go as far as improving my creativity competency. I feel that my internship gave me some of the greatest opportunities to be creative and I have grown so much in this area because of it. Being creative is a way to set yourself apart from other people and/or employees. I know this first hand now because this summer my creativity set myself apart from other interns. I feel like there is always more room to grow with being creative, but I can for sure carry this skill with me into my full-time career.
Examples: Helpful Course Work

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Example 1. Many classes which I have taken at Iowa State enabled me to be successful with my internship at ICI Seeds. I will briefly explain how my courses helped me and the benefits of each of them.

**Agronomy 114**
Through this course I gained the basic information that I needed for on the job. It helped me to identify weeds, pests, take soil samples, check soil moistures and basic cropping techniques.

**AST 42**
This course helped me understand the importance of water quality and the effects of chemical applications and cropping techniques on water quality and the importance of it.

**Agricultural Education 310**
This course dealt with teaching strategies. Your probably wondering how this helped me on the job. Well, everyday when you are working with different people you are always learning new ways of doing things and also teaching others how to do the things that you know.

**Agricultural Education 311**
Speaking effectively is a very essential skill needed in any job. I feel that this course helped me to express myself verbally by doing it in an effective and professional manner.

**Agricultural Education 31**
This course helped me to be a better team player. Skills are very beneficial in today’s working force since almost all jobs require one to work with other people. If I can learn to work better together with others then I can get more accomplished. This course also showed me how to be a more effective leader.

**English 302**
This class helped prepare me for the writing, which I was required to do. The writing I was required to do was in the form of quick notes and memos, much like the business writing that I learned in 302. These skills will be beneficial to me in any job that I take in the future.

Example 2. My work at … has allowed me to put several phases of my education to use. The most important classes being: Agronomy, English, Ag Ed, and Economics.

The classes I have taken in Agronomy exposed me to crops that I was previously unfamiliar with, such as cotton, peanuts, and rice. What I learned in those agronomy classes allowed me to talk intelligently with dealers who were looking for parts for some of the specialized equipment used in the production of those crops.

English 302 gave me the ability to write professional letters and inter-office memos that were understandable and made me look intelligent.

The speech writing skills I obtained in Ag Ed 312 gave me the ability and confidence to write and present a speech during Herschel’s recent national sales meeting. Also during the small departmental meetings held weekly my experience has given me the chance to be looked upon as a leader. I believe that my telephone speaking skills are improved as a result of Ag Ed 312.

Those economics courses that I absolutely hated and knew that I would never use in the real world actually paid off when I was put in charge of ordering all specialized engine parts and had to set gross margin levels that would be competitive in the market and also be acceptable to the upper management.
Example 3.
Agricultural Education 211
This course prepared me to keep daily records and observances of on the job. It also helped me to look at possible types of careers, which I might be interested in. Also, how to take on responsibility when given a challenge or some new task.

Speech 212
This course helped me to become a better speaker in front of people I didn’t know. Helped me to build and gain confidence in myself. A very valuable skill, which I will need in the future on any job, which I may take.

Accounting 284
Helped me to keep books and to look at the cost of things. Basically give me some kind of order in which certain transactions dealing with money should be followed.

Economics 330
This Farm Management class helped me to better understand the business end of farming or any business for that matter. Helped me see why and how certain decisions were made. Someday I will have to apply these types of skills to a job I can look back and I’m glad I took that class, it gave me a basis to start with.

Example 4.
I also have to mention the Ag Etiquette Dinner, even though it is not an actual class. A peer and I went just for the free food, but that ended up being one of the most useful things I have done at Iowa State. …for our second interviews we went out to lunch with all of the executive team. We ate lunch at a very fancy restaurant and I was seated right in between the President of the company and the Vice President of agricultural chemicals, talk about stressful! There were three others at our table, including one other interviewee. Throughout the entire meal I used the etiquette that I had learned the one night on campus. I could tell the other interviewee had not ever taken an etiquette class. She was the only one with her plate still in front of her after the meal was over because she did not position her silverware correctly on the plate. I saw the President of the company looking at her and her actions throughout the meal. Since that meal, I have had many other meals with the executive board and other members of the team. I am so glad I took advantage of that class. Opportunities on campus like the etiquette class may not seem useful at that given point and time, but be sure to take advantage of them, you never know when you will need to use your experiences.

Example 5.
The only suggestion I really have towards the Agricultural Education Studies curriculum would be to require at least some communication courses that involve writing, photography, presenting, or others relating to it, to be taken within the freshman or sophomore year.
The main purpose of the poster is to inform your peers (other students) of the value of an AgEdS internship. The content should reflect the grading rubric for the poster; these are questions students may have regarding an internship. What you did technically in the internship isn’t as important as informing viewers how the internship benefited your growth and value as a professional in the agricultural sector. Check the poster rubric in the manual to know what to include in your poster.

Your internship poster should be created in PowerPoint as one slide. You can find a poster template at http://www.print.iastate.edu/templates.aspx. Use the 48” x 36” poster template.

Below is an example of the layout for your poster. The colors are official ISU colors. You don’t need to stick with them, but be sure to use font and background colors that have good contrast. A dark background (for example, green or blue) with a dark font does not contrast well and is difficult to read. Font size for a poster should be 32 to 36 for good readability. Use photos if you have them (be sure to obtain a signed photo release from anyone in your photos; I can email you the form if needed).

You are not responsible for printing your poster. Email your poster to the Department Internship Supervisor. Be sure to save your poster as a PowerPoint slide, not a PDF file, and send me the PowerPoint format.