INTERNSHIP HANDBOOK

University of Illinois ATLAS Internship Program

Applied Technologies for Learning in the Arts and Sciences

Last Updated May 2024

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences University of
Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Literatures, Cultures, and Linguistics Building,
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Purpose of the Handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to clarify the requirements of the interns, and the responsibilities of the parties involved. This handbook will detail the intern's responsibilities over the course of their internship, outline the expectations of the program, and discuss intern accountability. The Internship Program is a three-way partnership with the Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS) undergraduate student who is interning, the client who is providing the internship and ATLAS (Applied Technology for Learning in the Arts and Sciences) within the College of LAS. The information below outlines the requirements of the ATLAS Internship Program.

Background on the Internship Program

Since the first semester in January 2016, over 900 LAS undergraduate students have participated in the Internship Program, while working on over 200 unique projects and serving over 65 different clients. ATLAS accepts all LAS undergraduate majors with no GPA requirement. Internships typically last one semester and are based on the intern class schedule. ATLAS provides valuable work experience and transferable skills to a professional work setting after graduation.

ATLAS partners with university and community agencies to develop practical, transferable technical skills for students in the College of LAS. Internship coordinators match interns with client projects based on the qualifications of the intern. ATLAS offers specialized workshops, job coaching, and mentoring opportunities.

Requirements to be an ATLAS Intern

To be eligible for the program, an applicant must be a registered student with the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign seeking an undergraduate major or minor within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. First semester ATLAS interns are required to enroll for 1-3 credit hours.

Program Requirements

- ATLAS Program Canvas Submissions
- ATLAS Showcase Presentation
- Client Deliverables

Contact Info and Staff:

Email: Atlas-internships@illinois.edu

Social Media:

- LinkedIn: ATLAS Employees and Alumni
- Facebook: ATLAS Internship Program
- XTwitter: @ATLAS_Illinois
- Reddit: ATLAS_Internship_Program

Staff:

- Michelle Rome, Program Director

- Megan Fry, ATLAS Coordinator

- Priscilla Geerdes, Assistant Coordinator

- Lisa Perry, Assistant Coordinator

Work Locations:

English 15: Internship Office
LCLB G8c: Internship Office

Portrait of a Successful Internship

What Does a Successful Internship Look Like to an Intern?

- The experiences you have now can become the foundation of your professional development and can help you discover your future career. With that in mind:
- Learn as much as you can from your internship experience
- Focus on ways you can expand your professional skills and contacts.
- Attending workshops on professional development to help become a more well-rounded intern and future employee.
- Demonstrate or learn effective oral and written communication skills with clients and ATLAS internship staff.
- Turn in weekly status reports to document work and keep client and internship staff updated on progress.
- Gain skills that add to and complement your studies.

What does a Successful Internship Look Like to the Client?

- Interns leave them with tangible deliverables at the completion of their internship.
- The client takes an active role in mentoring and guiding the intern to help meet personalized goals and objectives.
- Be available for meetings and conversations with both the intern and their ATLAS coordinator.

What Does a Successful Internship Look Like to the ATLAS Internship Program?

- The ATLAS Internship Program coordinates collaboration between the client and intern for placement success.
- Consistently meet with the intern to evaluate progress and give feedback.
- Provide networking and learning opportunities, such as workshops and presentations, to further enhance the internship experience.
- Review and evaluate intern growth throughout the semester by individual meetings and Canvas submission feedback.

Benefits of an ATLAS Internship

- Gain professional experience and transferable skills in a workplace setting.
- Explore a prospective career path.

- Network with professionals for references and future job opportunities.
- Gain a competitive edge in the job market or post-baccalaureate studies.
- Grow in your knowledge and execution of technology skills.
- Earn academic credit for work done through the program.

Intern Responsibilities

Responsibilities In General:

- Respond to Canvas notifications, emails, surveys, and meeting requests within a timely manner—**24-48 hours at most**.
  - » Use your @illinois.edu email to send emails to clients, as clients may overlook a message if it originates from a different email provider.
  - » Canvas messages are the expected method for communication between ATLAS coordinators and interns with status reports and documentation.

- Remember to always confirm meetings with staff and clients.

  - » Check your schedule to avoid double-booking.
  - » Use pen and paper or a document on your computer that you use each time so you know where your notes are located.
  - » Just highlight the key points. Plot the outline of your notes even before the meeting starts using an agenda or weekly task breakdown

- Keep up to date on all your tasks and have weekly check-ins with internship staff or client to discuss your project.
- Strive to meet the Goals and Objectives that you created at the beginning of your internship. Look over them during weekly status reports to see if you have stayed focused on your goals
- Complete a self-evaluation on your job performance at the midterm.

- Be Professional.
  - » Dress professionally.
- » Be a responsible and reliable intern.
- Be a self-starter.
  - » Figure out what needs to be done and do it.
  - » Take initiative when you can; ask for guidance if you are uncertain.

- Have a set schedule with your client and report to work when scheduled.

  - » Make sure you know what to do when you arrive at work and how to log your hours. Your client might require something different or might have you check-in each time you come in for a shift.
  - » Develop a schedule that contains the hours you plan to work on your internship each week. This schedule should work with your class schedule, as well as any other obligations. At least 10 hours weekly is required to be in good standing in the program. These hours may be a combination of client and ATLAS assigned requirements. This schedule should be the same from week to week.
  - » **Give advance notice** if you cannot make your hours due to sickness, an exam, or for any other reason. Email both your client and the atlas-internships mailbox to let us know that you will not accomplish your scheduled hours that day.
  - » When requesting days off, give notification at least 3 business days in advance.

Meeting etiquette

- ♦ When joining a virtual meeting, be in a work environment that supports limited interruptions including noise.
- ♦ Do not have phones out unless specifically stating why you have it out (paying meter;
- ♦ taking notes on it)
- ♦ Only take notes during the meeting, do not work on the project while your client is there
- ♦ Do not send emails during meetings
- ♦ Be prompt in arriving to a meeting
- ♦ Present yourself and your work in a positive manner
- ♦ Listen, take notes and ask clarifying questions. Do not waste time by coming to a meeting unprepared.

- Fill out and turn in the weekly status reports in Canvas by 9:00am on Monday.
- Prepare a presentation for the project showcase submitted to ATLAS Internship Staff. The presentation should be 5-10 minutes and contain a summary of what you worked on, what you learned, how you achieved Goals and Objectives, and any other relevant information.
- Canvas submission: "Note to Future Intern" This should be 1-2 pages that include anything that an intern coming into your position should know. This can include material such as resources, where the project should go next, tips, things you wish you had known ahead of time, etc.
- Inform your coordinator of any concerns or questions. <u>Do not leave this to the last minute!</u> The sooner staff know there is an issue, the sooner staff can help. ATLAS staff provide feedback through Canvas submissions.

Student Leaders

Student Leaders Cohort will be selected to participate in LAS 399. From that group, applicants will be selected to serve in specific roles for future semesters.

Leadership opportunities often present themselves in different ways. In the ATLAS Internship Program Student Leaders may:

- be serving as a Team Lead for one or more teams in the ATLAS Internship Program
- be serving as a technical resource for students in specific roles
- be assisting full time coordinators in different capacities

Student Leader Eligibility

- Intern successfully completes 1 or more semesters in the ATLAS Internship Program
- Intern applies and are accepted to take LAS 399 (a Spring Second 8 Week course)
- Intern successfully completes LAS 399

Through an application process, interns will be selected to participate in LAS 399, an 8-week course held in the Spring.

Goals and Objectives

Goals and objectives should provide the framework for an internship. Having a focus and specific goals will help you get the most of your internship. Creating your own goals will help you with status reports, the end of semester presentation, and will allow you to communicate to your next employer specific skills and experiences you acquired.

- You will have a 3-5 Goals and Objectives.
- One goal should involve technology, and one should involve communication. If you get stuck, use your position description for inspiration.
- These goals should follow the "**SMART**" goal format. A **SMART** goal is defined as one that is specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bound.

  » **Specific:** Goals should be simplistically written and clearly define what you are going to do. The What, Why and How of your goals.

  » **Measurable:** Goals should be measurable so that you have tangible evidence that you accomplished the goal. Usually, the entire goal statement is a measure of the project you will be working on, but there are usually several short term or smaller measurements built into the goal.

  » **Achievable:** Goals should be achievable within the time frame of your internship. They should stretch you slightly out of your comfort zone but be defined well enough that you can achieve them. When you plan steps wisely and establish a timeframe you can meet almost any goal.

  » **Relevant:** Goals should measure outcomes, not activities. They also should follow along with your job description or the work you will be doing for that semester.

  » **Time-bound:** Goals should be linked to a timeframe that creates a practical sense of urgency or results in tension between the current reality and the vision of the goal. The time doesn't always need to be a semester long. It could be a mid-semester goal or a first week of the internship goal. However, without a little tension the goal is unlikely to produce a positive outcome.

Example Goal resources and examples are provided in the ATLAS Canvas space.

Communication

Communication with your client and the ATLAS Internship Staff is crucial to a successful internship. Communication with ATLAS staff will be through university email, Canvas or Teams.

- Your email should include salutation, intro, purpose/details, closing, and signature.
- As stated above, make sure to use your @illinois.edu email, and respond promptly, within 24-48 hours.
- Due to the frequency of email communication, it is vital that you regularly check your email—including on breaks—and read each message carefully.

    Email communication resources provided in the ATLAS Canvas space.

What to Do When You Have Overcommitted Yourself

During the semester, if you realize you have overcommitted yourself, it is your responsibility to resign from your internship in a graceful manner.

Steps to resign:

- Schedule a meeting with a coordinator to discuss your situation, as there may be other options.

- Inform your client and ATLAS two weeks in advance of your final date.
- Write an email to your client that politely and professionally explains that you cannot continue with the program and includes your final date of work. Thank your client for the experience and their understanding. Copy atlas-internships@illinois.edu.
- Offer to put things in order and finish up any work possible before you leave so that your client and anyone else working on the project can continue with minimal disruption.

Accountability

Accountability starts with you. During the ATLAS Internship Program, you will have multiple responsibilities that will affect the outcome of your personal success and the project success. Listed below are steps that may be followed by an ATLAS coordinator seeking to implement progressive discipline.

This policy is designed to provide standard protocol to address problems related to intern performance or violation of ATLAS Internship Program policy. However, there may be situations where this policy does not apply. If an intern is identified as having performance problems or is suspected of policy violation, the assigned ATLAS coordinator and Program Director will be notified.

These individuals will meet to discuss the issue, conduct appropriate investigation of the situation and determine the appropriate follow-up that may include informal discussion with the intern, formal disciplinary action, a Performance Improvement Plan, and/or termination.

Interns may be disciplined for the following reasons:

- Unprofessional conduct regarding your project or towards client or Internship Staff including being rude or inappropriate.
- Repeated failure to respond to email.
- Repeated poor performance
- Repeated absenteeism or tardiness, including missing client meetings or scheduled work hours
- Repeated failure to meet 10-hour work requirement
- Failure to follow client or ATLAS directions including any required submissions, including status reports

ATLAS Intern Remediation and Discharge Policy

1. **Written Warning:** A written email warning may be issued to the intern by ATLAS staff. This warning will specify the problem area(s) and state the expectations for improvement within a designated time frame. The intern will confirm understanding by responding to the email within 48 hours. Failure to respond to the email will result in a one-on-one meeting. Please note: There may be instances when it is determined that a written warning and one on one meeting will be combined as the first disciplinary step.

2. **One on One Meeting with Coordinator/Director:** A meeting will be scheduled by email with the intern to have a one-on-one meeting with the ATLAS coordinator. The meeting will specify problem areas, state expectations for improvement within a designated time frame and explain the follow-up email procedure to confirm the intern's understanding of the expectations. The intern will have 48 hours to respond to the follow-up email. Failure to respond in the email will result in a Performance Improvement Plan. Please note: There may be instances when it is determined that a one-on-one meeting will be omitted from the process.

3. **Performance Improvement Plan:** A Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) occurs during a specific period when remediation is determined by the ATLAS Internship Program Director in consultation with ATLAS coordinators. Remediation may consist of actions such as [supervision time, assigned modules...] The intern will be closely monitored by the ATLAS coordinator during this time. If the intern has not adequately changed the behavior by the specified date, a PIP may be continued, or some other sanction may be implemented. The intern will be given a written statement of the PIP conditions.

4. **Discharge:** If, after a thorough investigation by ATLAS staff, it is recommended that the intern should be removed from the ATLAS Internship Program due to policy violation, poor performance, or insufficient progress, there will be a meeting scheduled to discuss the discharge procedures with the intern.

FAQ's

Here is a list of commonly asked questions we receive:

How do I get academic credit for my internship?

- Schedule an appointment with your academic advisor and discuss it with them. They will be able to help you choose a course that best fits your academic track.

How do I create a schedule?

- Use an hourly daily schedule to arrange class, personal, and work commitments. Add internship hours after your other commitments have been accounted for.
- Send your client a copy of the schedule when you have finalized it, so that they know when to expect you in the office. If you are confused or struggling, come by the internship office, and someone on the staff will help you.

  Scheduling training and resources are available in the ATLAS Canvas space.

Can I work remotely?

- Some clients will require you to work on site. Others do not have the space, and as such, you will work remotely. If this is the case, the Internship Staff encourages you to work in either of the ATLAS Internship Offices, located in the English building or the Literatures, Cultures, and Linguistics Building.

Can I work on weekends?

- Work schedules will be approved by the client. Client meetings are typically scheduled during traditional work hours Monday through Friday 9:00am-5:00pm.

What do I write in a status report?

- Detail what you worked on in the previous week, as well as what you plan to work on in the coming week. Consult your Goals and Objectives and keep staff informed of how you are achieving them.
- If you have any questions or concerns regarding your internship, you can mention them. These are kept confidential and will not be shared with your client.

What do I wear to work/Is there a dress code?

- Some clients will expect professional attire. When working in the ATLAS Internship Office, however, there is no dress code. You should always dress more professionally for client meetings. Aim for business casual.

Who do I report to?

- This will depend on your client and project. The kickoff client-intern meeting will answer this question. You are always welcome to ask internship staff any questions you may have. Please keep in mind, they may not know specific details regarding your project.

What do I do if I am sick or out of town?

- Email your client and the internship staff as soon as possible to let them know you cannot attend your scheduled work hours. If possible, give an approximation of when you will return.
- If you know you will be out of town in advance, request the time off from your client at least 3 business days prior.

I feel overwhelmed, and don't know what to do. Help??

- Schedule a time to meet with a coordinator or client to figure out your options.
- If you feel like you need to quit, please resign gracefully according to the section above entitled "What to Do When You Have Overcommitted Yourself."

How do I put this internship on my resume?

- The Career Center hosts resume consultations.

- Resume resources are found in the ATLAS Canvas space.

GLOSSARY

ATLAS: Applied Technologies for Learning in the Arts and Sciences

ATLAS Certification: Awarded at the completion of the semester for requirements: Exceeds, Meets, Participated, or Incomplete (More details in the ATLAS Canvas space)

ATLAS Internship Program Handbook: To clarify requirements and responsibilities of the intern, client and ATLAS staff

Canvas: Learning Management System used by ATLAS Internship Program to collect submissions and communicate learning opportunities for successful internships

Client: Individual or Agency that agrees to offer technology-centered internship opportunity for students to gain hands-on learning in real work experiences

Client Kick-Off Meeting: The first meeting of the semester including client, coordinator and team members to make introductions and discuss details of the project

Course Credit: Interns may qualify to earn up to 3 hours of academic credit upon academic advisor approval

Intern: Undergraduate student in the College of LAS accepted in the ATLAS Internship Program

Intern Spotlight: Photo and biography of interns to highlight success in the ATLAS Internship Program

Mid-term Self Performance Evaluation: An ATLAS Internship requirement using a basic performance evaluation to self-rate skills and performance used to reflect on areas of success and potential growth

Module: a set of instructional information to offer step-by-step procedures, training or required learning

MOU: Memorandum of Understanding is an agreement between the intern and ATLAS Internship Program indicating the intended expectations for the intern to be in "good standing" for placement purposes

Note to Future Intern: An ATLAS Internship requirement to share gathered knowledge gained during the internship to future interns

Professional Development: Workshops, training, networking events that support internship success

Program Director: Michelle Rome oversees ATLAS Internship Program and has final decisions of critical issues in supporting appropriate placement of interns

Quiz: a format of submitting required documentation for the ATLAS Internship Program that will be used to indicate completion and give feedback

Show case: An ATLAS Internship requirement to present the details of the internship

SMART Goals: The chosen method of ATLAS Internship Program to create goals using the acronym SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely

Status Report: An ATLAS Internship requirement submitted in Canvas to manage expectations of Intern, Client and ATLAS staff by tracking performance and progress during the placement

Talent/Photo Release Form: For intern to grant consent the use of their image, voice or both, in video, photograph or audio to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Work Hours: 10-15 hours a week dedicated to the internship project, professional or personal development. Hours may be at the client's office, an ATLAS Internship office or remote. To be in good standing, 10 hours minimum are required each week. These hours can be a combination of client and ATLAS requirements. The client may end the placement earlier than the program's final day. Interns are required to continue professional skill practice until the final day of the program.

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

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