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IDAHO

Guidelines and FAQs for BYU-Idaho Biology Internships (Updated April 2022)

This document contains FAQs specific to internships for some Biology majors, and may not apply to other majors or emphases within the biology major (i.e., Biomedical Science, Plant and Wildlife Ecology, Biology Education, and Biology Education Composite may have different internship requirements). Please note that the Biology Department has some internship requirements that differ from university-wide requirements, and Biology majors will be required to meet the Biology Department requirements, regardless of the university requirements.

Frequently Asked Questions

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- 1. To what emphases in the Biology Major do these specific guidelines apply?*

That depends on some degree to the type of internship you are planning on. Generally, internships that involve clinical experience or laboratory research would follow these guidelines. Those types of internships are most commonly done by students in the Biology, Microbiology, Neuroscience, Human Biology, and Biotechnology emphases. Plant and Wildlife internships may have other requirements (see below). The Biomedical Science major does not require an internship, but those majors can do internships (they are recommended), and the requirements would be the same as outlined below if you want to receive course credit.

2. *What if I am a Plant and Wildlife Ecology major, or will be doing an internship that relates to environment, ecology, or zoology?*

Please contact Rob Coleman (colemanr@byui.edu), Jericho Whiting (whitingj@byui.edu), or Eric Billman (billmane@byui.edu) for questions about internships in those areas.

3. *Who is the Biology Internship Coordinator for the clinical and research internships?*

Holden Higginbotham (higginbothamh@byui.edu), Benson Building 207, Rexburg, ID 83460.

4. *What are the internship requirements for Biology Majors?*

Biology majors are required to have at least 10 consecutive weeks of internship experience at a minimum of 10 hours per week. We strongly encourage you to intern at a single location for the entire 10 weeks. Students must register for the internship course (Bio 398 or Bio 498R) and receive a passing grade. A full-time (40 hours/week) internship for an entire semester is optimal.

5. *What are the specific objectives for my internship?*

- Learn important skills and gain professional level experience in the work place.
- Integrate and apply biology concepts and skills learned in the classroom to on-the-job practices and procedures.
- Cultivate future employment opportunities and professional connections.
- Gain a greater understanding and vision of career options and possibilities.
- Prepare for professional-level employment.

6. *Why do I have to do an internship?*

The benefits of doing an internship are well-documented. For example, a 2014 Gallup-Purdue University report found that college graduates are 2x more likely to be engaged in their careers if they did an internship in college, and 2.2x more likely to be engaged in their careers if they had a mentor who encouraged them to pursue their goals. Internships and mentors also increased the odds of thriving in **all** areas of well-being by 1.5x and 1.7x, respectively. This means that a **meaningful** internship with a caring mentor could have a significant impact on your future job satisfaction and overall happiness. BYU - Idaho interns consistently report that the internship has been a capstone experience in their college career, and very valuable to them. The hands-on experience and connection with your career field is impossible to get in a classroom. If you consider the internship simply another requirement for graduation, you risk short-changing yourself of a crucial experience.

7. *How do I find an internship?*

When searching for an internship, you should look for an opportunity that will facilitate your career. You should ask, "Will this experience prepare me for professional work or graduate school and/or will it open doors for me in the future?" You should also keep in mind that the internship is designed to be a "capstone experience" and, as such, it should utilize, enhance, and allow you to apply the skills you learned in your Biology major. For this reason, internships unrelated to your major will not (generally) be approved. Here are some more questions to ask yourself when selecting an internship:

1. Will this organization provide me with great networking opportunities? You may not have the opportunity to return and work for this organization, but the networking and exposure to world-class organizations is highly valuable. Think about the connections you might be able to make that will help you advance in your career.
2. Will this internship be challenging, and will I learn skills that push me well beyond the skills I gained in the classroom? Consider the variety and depth of experience you are

likely to gain. Will this particular organization allow me to learn many new things, or will I just be repeating a few simple tasks?

3. Am I likely to develop a close relationship with my mentor? At least as important as the experience, if not more so, are the connections you will build in your internship. Does the potential mentor have the time and motivation to closely mentor you?
4. Will I gain hands-on experience? Mere shadowing or observation will not provide you with the capstone experience you deserve because it won't enhance your skills.
5. What have other people with similar career goals done? The Academic Discovery Center keeps a database of internships that Biology Majors have done in the past, including the names of the organizations and mentors. Please consult that list to give you ideas. In many cases, your internship will be better if the mentor has a good track record and has mentored many students already.
6. There is a website where past interns have created videos to summarize their internship. You may find a lead there.
7. Here are some links to various organizations that have internship programs appropriate to biology majors:

National Institute of Health

www.training.nih.gov/student/index.asp

The Leadership Alliance

<http://www.theleadershipalliance.org/>

National Science Foundation (NSF)

<http://www.nsf.gov/>

Science Undergraduate Laboratory Internships through the Department of Energy

<http://science.energy.gov/wdts/suli/>

Idaho National Laboratory

www.inl.gov/education

Department of Homeland Security

<http://www.dhs.gov/homeland-security-careers/student-and-recent-grads>

While this list is by no means comprehensive, it will give you a start on some of the more common internships locations. In addition, many universities and each of the 11 DOE national laboratories offer internships separate from the funding available at the above Web sites.

8. *What are the steps for getting my internship approved?*

8. Find an internship opportunity on your own. See the above FAQ #7. Obtain a clear verbal or written agreement from the mentor that she/he agrees to mentor you.
9. Complete an internship request on iplan.byui.edu.
 1. Log in with your username and password at iplan.byui.edu.
 2. Click "Internship Approvals" at the top of the screen.
 3. Click "Create an Internship Request" and complete the form.
10. Upon submitting the internship request, I-Plan will send the request to the Faculty Internship Coordinator (Brother Higginbotham or Brother Coleman).
11. The Faculty Internship Coordinator will review the request and either approve or deny it. If denied, the revisions needed will be sent to the student's email.
 1. If you are concerned about whether your internship will be approved because it doesn't meet one of the guidelines outlined in this document, contact Bro. Higginbotham (higginbothamh@byui.edu) before you start the application process.
12. Once the internship is approved, I-Plan will send a request to the student's internship supervisor to sign a Master Internship Agreement. This Master Agreement

Request will be sent to the supervisor by email. The employer will follow the link to approve the agreement.

13. Once the Master Agreement has been approved, I-Plan will notify and authorize the student to register for the internship course.
 1. Non-standard internships may require additional processing.
14. When notified of authorization, register for the internship course (Bio 398 or Bio 498R) at my.byui.edu.
15. Start your internship and complete all related course requirements.

9. What course should I register for, and how many credits can I get?

There are two internship courses available, Bio 398, which is the occupational internship, and Bio 498R, which is the research internship. Bio 398 is appropriate for students working in a clinical or industry setting. For example, interning in a dental or medical setting would be an occupational internship (Bio 398). Bio 498R is for students performing scientific research in a lab or in the field, where there is hypothesis-driven research being performed. A minimum of 1 credit in either class is required to satisfy university and Biology internship requirements. You can register for 1 credit for every 10 hours per week of internship work, up to a maximum of 4 credits (40 hours/week). However, you are not required to register for more than one credit, even if you work more than 10 hours/week. You may choose this option if you don't want to pay tuition for more than one credit.

10. Can I get paid for my internship?

Yes, if your mentor offers to pay you, but most interns are volunteers.

11. When can I do my internship?

You can begin your internship any time after your first semester. However, it might be a good idea to consider what classes you could take that would help prepare you for your internship. For example, if you are going to work at a clinic, you might consider taking Anatomy or Introduction to Biology. Those who are entering a research lab should strongly consider completing Bio 377 before applying. These, however, are only suggestions, not prerequisites (except for internships through INBRE or UC Davis, which require completion of Bio 377).

You must intern for a minimum of 10 consecutive weeks, and the internship must encompass at least one block. So generally, your internship should be done in an off-track semester and begin at the beginning of the Fall, Winter or Spring semester. You can also start an internship after the start of the semester, but the 10 weeks must be completed by the end of the semester. You can do your internship during an on-track semester also, but keep in mind that your internship should be of highest priority, so you shouldn't expect your internship to work around your work or school schedule.

12. Can I retroactively apply work I have already done as my internship?

No. You can only count work done after your internship is approved.

13. Can I do an on-campus internship?

Yes, but these are strongly discouraged. The point of an internship is to become immersed in a professional office/lab in your desired career. This cannot usually be done on campus. The benefits to you for doing an internship on campus are very limited, and will not strengthen your resumé as much as an off-campus internship. Before applying for an on-campus internship, please consult with Brother Higginbotham (higginbothamh@byui.edu). This will usually require you to volunteer in the office/lab you plan to intern in for one semester without credit and then work again there the next semester to receive internship credit. Then you must apply for a course substitution to

substitute the Bio 499R (on-campus research) with the Bio 498R (internship).

14. I couldn't find an internship, and I need to graduate immediately. Is there an alternative for me?

It's best to find an internship off campus in an industry that you are considering for a career, but you may choose to take the Senior Seminar (Bio 497) in place of doing an internship. Please understand that although this fulfills university and department requirements for an internship, it does not provide any of the other advantages of an internship. Students wishing to take this course must consult with Brother Higginbotham (higginbothamh@byui.edu).

15. How far in advance do I need to get my internship approved?

The internship approval process takes about a week if everyone does their part immediately. To account for delays, we recommend beginning the process a month before you wish to begin your internship.

16. Can I do my internship during the 7-week Summer Session?

Not usually. Because an internship must last 10 weeks, the 7 week break is not enough time to complete an internship. However, if you can start early or finish late to meet the 10 week requirement, then you can intern during that time.

17. How is my internship graded?

There are two aspects to your final grade. 80% of the grade is based on an evaluation that your mentor at the internship will fill out that rates you on various aspects of your work. 20% of the grade is based on a video you will produce that summarizes your internship.

18. Is there a textbook required for my internship?

No, but your mentor may require readings that you will complete.

19. Can I do more than one internship?

Yes, but you can only take Bio 398 and Bio 498R one time each for credit. Additional internships would give you valuable experience but wouldn't be recognized by BYU – I.

20. Can I receive Financial Aid for my internship?

Yes. You can apply for many of the same kinds of financial aid you would have for your regular classes. BYU-Idaho also offers Internship Grants for students. For information and to apply, students should go to <https://www.byui.edu/financial-aid/aid-available/university-grants/internship-grant> or contact a Financial Aid Counselor at financialaid@byui.edu. Generally, university scholarships can be used to pay tuition for your internships. Please contact the Financial Aid Office (208) 496-1411 for all financial aid-related questions.