

INTERNSHIP LEARNING CONTRACT: WRITING GOALS

What is the purpose of the Learning Contract?

The Internship Learning Contract is your "syllabus" for your internship. It includes the required goals for all CSB/SJU internships, in order for you to earn the Experiential Learning (EL) Designation, as well as your own individual learning goals.

- Learning Goals--what you intend to learn through your internship.
- Tasks Required to Achieve the Goal/s--what you will do to reach your learning goals.
- Means of Evaluation--how you'll demonstrate to your faculty moderator that you achieved your goals.

The Learning Contract is an agreement between you, your faculty moderator/the academic department, and a site supervisor at your internship site. It is based on your goals, the needs of the organization hosting your internship, and the requirements of your faculty moderator. As you develop your learning goals, ***be sure to consult with your faculty moderator and site supervisor to ensure that everyone's expectations are clear and met.***

Writing Learning Goals

Types of Learning Goals

Your **reasons** for wanting to do the internship can usually be stated as **learning goals**.

A goal is a broad statement of what you want to accomplish during your internship. Students usually include different types of goals. Two of your goals are required by CSB/SJU and are auto filled on the online *Learning Contract* form. These required goals are cognitive (thinking) goals which will ask you:

- a. To expand your understanding and knowledge of how your academic learning applies in your company/organization, or by asking how the theories you've learned about in your classes apply in a real-world setting.*
- b. To develop new skills or to refine your existing skills (e.g. technical writing, using new kinds of software, techniques to use with at-risk youth, public speaking, writing or presentation skills).*

In addition, you will design 2-3 goals of your own. You will usually have at least one more cognitive goal related to your major discipline. Since you'll also use your internship to focus on professional development and personal growth, you may want to include a **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GOAL** or a **PERSONAL GROWTH GOAL** (see examples below).

- **Professional development goal:** to explore and test a possible career choice - a specific career, a type of organization, etc.
- **Personal growth goal:** to learn to be more organized, to better manage your time, to be more assertive, to develop more self-confidence, to identify your strengths, etc.).

NOTE: The two samples listed above are very vague and are designed to give you an idea of what might be included in these goals. When creating a professional development or personal growth goal, please remember to make the goal unique to your experience and to be specific.

Asking yourself these questions can help you clarify your goals:

1. Is one of my primary aims to gain, expand, apply, or test out a particular body of knowledge?
2. Do I want to acquire or improve upon a skill, such as counseling, training, interviewing, advocacy, public speaking, or administration?
3. Do I want to explore a major or a career interest?
4. Do I want to test my suitability for a particular field?

Sample goals

Note that goals begin with the word “to” (to apply, to develop, to explore, to become, etc.)

- To gain knowledge of the operations and services provided by a community credit union and to gain a sense of how this differs from a commercial bank.
- To better understand the needs of homeless individuals and families and determine whether I want to pursue a career working with the homeless on a full-time basis.
- To gain a clearer understanding of the specific skills and personal characteristics needed to be successful in management in a large hospital.
- To apply my knowledge and understanding of theology from my classes to a concrete setting of parish youth ministry.

Writing Tasks Required to Achieve the Goal/s

For each goal listed you will indicate the specific activities you will engage in to accomplish that goal. For each task you should strategize on how you will learn or make use of new information, skills, or behavior patterns.

To help come up with tasks required to achieve the goals, ask yourself the following questions:

- How can I best learn what I want to learn from this organization or position?
- In what activities would I like to observe or take part?
- With whom would I like to talk or work?
- Where can I best learn what I would like to learn?

You may want to read over the questions you’re asked to address in your final paper and include any research or reflections in your Learning Contract which will be necessary to complete your paper.

Work-related learning tasks and strategies usually fall into one of the following categories:

- **Information-gathering:** reading organizational and professional materials, conducting informational interviews
- **Observations:** observing and analyzing (in contrast to mastering) specific skills, personal characteristics, and work behaviors of individuals and groups within a work setting
- **Performing routine duties:** learning to perform specific actions or procedures which are within the day-to-day responsibilities of a particular position
- **Performing new assignments:** working on projects or skills which are new to you
- **Performing activities in a creative manner:** finding new ways to do something
- **Problem-solving:** working on a solution to a specific problem that exists within the workplace
- **Developing personal characteristics:** developing or refining specific personal habits or social skills which allow you to deal most effectively with work situations

Whenever possible include the time frame in which you expect to complete a specific learning task. Be careful not to use the phrase “by the end of the internship” too often and without any intermediate completion dates. You may find that your expectations of what you will be able to accomplish are unrealistic, or that you could actually accomplish more than you planned. The average number of learning tasks and strategies for each goal is two to three.

Examples of Goals with Tasks Required to Achieve Goal/s

Goal #1. To apply the skills that I have developed as an English major to the practical situations of an advertising firm.

Tasks Required to Achieve the Goal: (*List each activity with a brief statement about how you will show you accomplished it*).

- 1a. Assist designers and writers in the step-by-step procedures involved in at least one project from start to finish. Keep copies of all my work for portfolio.
- 1b. List five skills I possess as an English major that I want to apply during my internship. Review my list of skills every week and discuss in my journal how they are being used in the workplace.
- 1c. Discuss the projects I am working on with my supervisors at our weekly meetings and ask for feedback on ways I might improve my work. Reflect on these discussions in my journal.

Goal #2. To gain knowledge of the operations of a commercial bank.

Tasks Required to Achieve the Goal:

- 2a. Observe the functions of the various departments of the bank—loans, trust, accounting, marketing, operations—and write a brief description of each.
- 2b. Conduct informational interviews with officers of two other commercial banks; prepare a written analysis comparing and contrasting the services offered by the three banks.
- 2c. Perform the functions of a bank teller, bookkeeper, customer service representative, and marketing manager for a one week each; receive a verbal evaluation on my performance and my understanding of each banking procedure from my supervisor in each area. Content of evaluation sessions will be recorded in my journal.

Goal #3. To become familiar with the zoo's policies, procedures, and methods of operating.

Tasks Required to Achieve the Goal:

- 3a. Analyze interdepartmental relationships by reading zoo's written materials and readings assigned by my faculty moderator, studying organizational charts, talking with staff members from various departments, and observing interactions between departments. Write in my final paper how my observations correspond or contrast with what is on paper.
- 3b. Participate in all in-service workshops and note in my journal a summary of what I learn.
- 3c. Reflect on workplace problems that I and others encounter and analyze and reflect on the problem-solving processes used in my journal.

Goal #4. To learn to manage my time better.

Tasks Required to Achieve the Goal:

- 4a. Read a book or article on time management.
- 4b. Select five new time management techniques to use during my internship and reflect on my use of those techniques each week in my journal.
- 4c. Make time for leisure, physical activity, personal recollection and spiritual growth.

Means of Evaluation

You are receiving credits for what you learn through your internship experience, not for the experience itself. Your faculty moderator will evaluate your learning experience based on achievement of your goals, and give you a grade for the internship. You must, therefore, be able to demonstrate to your faculty moderator what you have learned. Your faculty moderator will assign the means of evaluation **which must include** either a weekly reflective journal or a final paper.

Faculty may assign both a journal and a final paper or other means of evaluation might include: Reports, Required Readings, Portfolio, Site Visit, Internship Reports, Site Supervisor Evaluations, Presentation, Annotated Bibliography.

There are additional requirements for interns who intend to receive academic credits for their internship experience. For more information regarding registering for internship credit, please visit the Internship Program website at <http://www.csbsju.edu/elce/internship-program/> or schedule an appointment by calling (320)-363-5256.

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