Externship Policy and Procedures
University of Massachusetts Amherst

The Campus recognizes that enriching and beneficial learning and training opportunities can be found in working environments external to the campus. These off-campus internships, referred to as externships, are designed to significantly enhance the academic and professional goals of the student and are defined as training and learning experiences that are substantially relevant to the student's academic goals and directly augment their programmatic studies.

The campus and the Department of Higher Education (DHE) acknowledge the importance of externships by granting tuition credit to graduate students who are in approved externship positions. As specified below, employment verification and academic approval procedures are required in order for externship tuition credit to be granted.

Definitions and Limits:

- Externships are training and learning experiences that are substantially relevant to the student's academic goals and directly augment their programmatic studies.
- Externships must be specifically designed for students and are **not** regular staff positions. Externships are not meant to be a continuation of employment for students who were previously employed in a regular staff position. Only in rare and compelling circumstances will exceptions be made. A letter addressing such circumstances must be submitted to the Dean of the Graduate School for review and decision.
- Externships must be worked and paid during the semester in which the tuition credit is granted. The only exception is during the summer – see below for further explanation.
- The stipend paid for externships must meet the campus minimum threshold for tuition credit in any given semester.
- Externship positions are not in the GEO bargaining unit and do **not** qualify for any bargaining unit benefits such as health fee exemptions, dental, and parking benefits.
- Graduate students employed by Amherst College, Hampshire College, Mount Holyoke College, or Smith College in professional, academically related positions must be in assistantship positions through the Five-College Appointment process and are not externships.
- Master's degree students may have a maximum of four (4) semesters of externship tuition credit.
- Doctoral students may have a maximum of six (6) semesters of externship tuition credit. The number of semesters of externship tuition credit received while a master's student will count towards the maximum of six (6) semesters except when the doctoral degree is in a different department or program than that of the master's degree.
- Summer externships must be pre-approved prior to the summer, are only allowed when seasonal issues require summer work, and will be included in the maximum number of semesters allowed for a graduate degree.

- Only in rare and compelling circumstances will additional semesters of externship tuition credit be granted. A letter addressing such circumstances and requesting an additional semester must be submitted to the Dean of the Graduate School for review and decision.
- Tuition credit is not applied to Continuing and Professional Education course fees. Such fees cannot be credited under DHE policy.
- Circumstances exist in which externships will be denied on the basis of conflict of interest. The following are some examples of circumstances where conflicts of interest arise: the student's department head, graduate program director, academic advisor, or committee member is also an employee of the external agency hiring the graduate student; at the work site, the student is directly supervised by an individual who is also an employee of the University; a member of the student's immediate family (parents, children, siblings, spouse, and spouse's parents, children, and siblings) is an employee of the external agency hiring the graduate student.
- The Dean of the Graduate School has final authority for granting externships and externship tuition credit.

Procedures and Timelines:

- The request for tuition credit and verification of employment shall be processed as follows:
    a. **Employer**:
        i. Complete Employment Verification Form (Appendix A)
        ii. Submit a detailed job description including description of supervision the student receives. This needs to be on official employer / external agency letterhead and signed by the supervisor and the student.
        iii. Submit EVF and Job Description to the student's academic department as soon as completed but no later than September 1 for Fall semester externships and January 4 for Spring semester externships.
    b. ! **Academic Department**:
        i. Complete Request for Tuition credit / Academic Approval form (Appendix B) and have signed by the Academic Advisor, Graduate Program Director and Department Head.
        ii. Submit all employer documentation as described above along with signed Request for Tuition Credit / Academic Approval form to the Assistantship Office (517 Goodell Building) by September 15th for Fall semester externships and February 1 for Spring semester externships.
        iii. Note: For Summer externships which require preapproval (see Summer Externship policy above), all documentation - employer's and department's - must be received in the Assistantship Office by June 1.
- All documentation submitted to the Assistantship Office must be originals and must be submitted each semester for which tuition credits are requested.

- Externship tuition credit will not be granted for more than one semester at a time and must be **verified each semester**.
- The Dean of the Graduate School or his/her designee has final approval of externship tuition credit.

Semester Audit and Evaluation:

- Each semester an Externship Evaluation Form (Appendix C) must be completed by the employer and student's academic advisor.
- This evaluation form shall be processed as follows;
    - **Employer**:
        - Complete, sign, and send to student's academic department by January 4 for the Fall semester in which the externship took place and May 15 for the Spring semester in which the externship took place.
    - **Academic department**
        - Academic advisor completes, signs, and sends to the Assistantship Office by January 15 for the Fall semester in which the externship took place and June 1 for the Spring semester in which the externship took place.

Employment Verification Form (Appendix A)
University of Massachusetts Amherst

Date: ____/____/____

Student Name: _____ Student ID #: __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __

The University regards this Employment Verification Form as an employment contract between the student and the employer.

This form along with the student's job description and description of supervision, written on official employer/external agency letterhead, must be submitted each semester to the student's academic department at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

For students to qualify for tuition credit, externships must be positions in which the student's training and learning experiences are substantially relevant to the student's academic goals and directly augment their programmatic studies. **Externship positions must be specifically designed for students and cannot be regular staff positions or substitute for consulting services.**

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To be completed by Employer/External Agency
And signed by student

Employer Name: _____ Telephone: _____-____-_____

Address: _____

Employer Identification Number (EIN): _____

HR Address: _____

Dates of Employment: Begin ____/____/____ End ____/____/____

Hourly Rate $_____ Number of hours per week _____

Total Earnings (for dates listed above) $_____

Has this individual previously been employed by your organization? Yes ____ No ____

If yes, in what capacity? _____ When? _____

Supervisor: _____ Title: _____
Name

_____ Date: ____/_____/_____
Signature

Supervisor: Are you associated with the University?_____ If so, in what capacity? _____ Please explain any academic relationship with the student.

Human Resource Contact: _____Telephone: _____-_____-_____

_____ E-mail: _____
Signature

Student Signature: _____

Request for Tuition Credit for Externships (Appendix B)
University of Massachusetts Amherst
Academic Approval Form

Student Name: _____ Student ID# _____

Graduate Program _____ Masters ___ Doctoral ___ Certificate___

Department _____ School or College_____

Tuition Credit is requested for semester: **Fall** **Spring** ____

To be completed by student's Academic Advisor, Graduate Program Director, Department Head/Chair, and Dean.

For students to qualify for tuition credit, externships must be positions in which the student's training and learning experiences are substantially relevant to the student's academic goals and directly augment their programmatic studies. Externship positions must be specifically designed for students and cannot be regular staff positions or substitute for consulting services.

Please describe below how and to what extent this externship position is relevant to the student's academic program:

My signature below certifies my agreement that the Externship described here is an appropriately related academic experience for the above named student. A tuition credit is hereby requested. (Tuition credits are not applicable to Continuing and Professional Education course fees.)

Academic Advisor: _____Date: __/__/__
Signature

Approved by:
Graduate Program Director: _____ Date: ___/___/___
Signature

Department Head/Chair: _____ Date: ___/___/___
Signature

Dean of School or College:_____ Date: ___/___/___
Signature

Externship Evaluation Form (Appendix C)

This form must be received by the Graduate Assistantship Office *no later than* **January 15th** for an externship that takes place during Fall semester; and by **June 1st** for an externship that takes place during Spring semester.

Students Name: _____Student ID# __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __

I. To be completed by the Employer (by January 4th for Fall semester or May 15th for Spring semester):

What were the expectations of work for the stated period of time?

Did the student successfully complete the work? Please provide details.

How satisfied were you with the student's job performance?

Employer/Supervisor Signature: _____ Date: ___/___/___

Please print name: _____

II. To be completed by the student's academic advisor and submitted to the Graduate Assistantship Office by January 15 for the Fall semester or by June 1 for the Spring semester:

Have you seen a copy of the student's accomplishments?

Are you satisfied that there is a direct connection between this externship position and the student's academic program? Why?

Academic advisor's Signature: _____Date: ___/___/___

Please print name: _____

Date Received in the Assistantship Office: ___/___/___