Poverty, Inequality, & Social Justice Minor

The Department of History
& the Blum Center on Poverty,
Inequality, & Democracy



STUDENT INTERNSHIP GUIDE

1. *Fill out the Internship Preparation Form*: If you haven't already, complete the online *Internship Preparation form* to indicate that you're ready to start looking for an internship related to the Minor in Poverty, Inequality and Social Justice, or would like assistance in finalizing an internship you've already started to look into. Students must fill out this form at least six weeks prior to the prospective start date of an internship. However, we encourage you to submit this form at the beginning of the quarter before you'd like to start (so if you would like to start an internship in summer quarter, fill this out at the start of spring quarter). The Minor Internship Coordinator will meet with you one-on-one after you submit the form, and guide you through the steps for securing your internship.

2. Figure out what you want: The first step to finding a great internship is to stop and think about what you want to learn. Have you come across a topic in one of your classes that fascinates you, and you want to see how it affects your local community? Are you interested in learning how to work on a particular issue, or with a particular population? Is there a particular skill set that you want to develop, or a career trajectory you want to explore? The Minor Internship Coordinator can help you think through these questions - and the online *Internship Preparation* form mentioned above will get you started.

3. Do your research: Once you have a sense of what you want, it's time to start looking! Begin by researching online to see what's available locally, and/or contact the Minor Internship Coordinator to obtain the Blum Center's list of potential internship sites. For those pursuing UC travel abroad/learning programs that are eligible to fulfill this Minor's internship requirement, such as UCDC or UCEAP, please consult with staff members from those Programs for resources on how to find local internship providers (note - you will still need to have this internship site/partner approved by the Minor Internship Coordinator and History Department at least 2 weeks prior to your departure for this Program, so contact the Minor Internship Coordinator well in advance to begin this discussion). If you find a potential internship site that interests you, spend some time getting to know it. Look at their mission, read about them in local papers, and try to get a sense for what they do and how they do it.

4. Prepare your resume: Now that you have a sense of what this internship site might be looking for, you want to show how you can help further their mission. Of course, your main job as an intern is to learn, so they won't expect you to know everything on the first day. That said, you want to demonstrate you have some skills or abilities to offer. Have you worked a retail or restaurant job? You probably have experience working with a team to meet the needs of clients/customers! Have you run an event for a student organization? You have experience creating, managing, and completing complex projects! Give your prospective internship site a sense of what you bring to the table by outlining in your resume specific skills relevant to their work.

5. Reach out: Once you have your resume ready, and you know the organization, it's go time! Look for contact information for: a volunteer or intern coordinator, the person who manages the project you're

interested in, or (especially if it's a small organization) the director. If you are drawing on the Blum Center internship list, a contact name will be provided for each organization. Some sites have formal internship applications for you to fill out, but if they don't, write the contact person a formal email. In the email you should:

a. Introduce yourself, and ask whether they would consider allowing you to intern with them. Mention you're pursuing the Minor in Poverty, Inequality, and Social Justice at UC Santa Barbara, and looking for an internship placement as part of the Minor.
b. Explain why you're interested in the organization, and how your skills set would help the organization fulfill its mission. Why are you the right fit for this organization at this time? (Note - you can include this information in the email itself or in a cover letter attached at the bottom of the email)
c. Attach your resume at the bottom of the email.

6. Give it time, then follow up: Once you send the email, give them a few days to respond. Some organizations get a lot of emails, so don't worry if you don't hear back within a couple days. That said, if it's been over a week, give them a call. Things fall through the cracks sometimes, and reaching out over the phone shows that you're serious.

7. Get ready for the meeting: Ideally, now you've heard back. They're delighted you reached out, and they might have a good internship for you, if you're the right fit. You've scheduled a time to meet in person or talk on the phone, and you're getting ready for the meeting. Before you meet, review what you've learned about the organization, and brainstorm a list of questions you want to ask about them, as well as what you would do as an intern. This preparation shows that you're here to learn, and that you're going to be great to work with. Next, pick your outfit. For a first impression it's better to be formal than too underdressed, i.e. dress pants/skirts and dress shirt. Last, make sure you bring your resume. They may not need to see it, but it's good to have it ready if they ask.

8. Let's Meet!: Make sure you arrive on time, and get ready for a fantastic conversation! You've done your best to prepare, and now you get to relax and be curious. Ask questions, share who you are and what you're passionate about, and feel out if you want to intern there. Remember, you're getting to know them just as much as they're getting to know you. If you're getting along well and you think you'd be excited to intern there, ask them if you can do it! Note – different organizations will have different ways of assessing best fit (e.g. through an interview or another type of meeting). Be flexible, do your research on the organization, and good luck!

9. Make it official: Once you and the internship provider have agreed that you'll intern there, fill out the *Internship Learning Agreement (see Blum Center website)*. To receive academic credit--and have the internship fulfill the requirement for the Minor in Poverty, Inequality, and Social Justice--you'll need to have this *Internship Learning Agreement* signed by your internship supervisor, and your faculty supervisor for the associated internship course, at least two weeks prior to the internship start date. Then email the signed *Internship Learning Agreement* to Dr. Andrea Medina, instructor of HIST/GLOBL/CHST 196SJ, at andreamedina@ucsb.edu. Dr. Medina will send you an add code to enroll in the course, which you'll be taking at the same time as your internship.

10. Ready, Set, Go!: Have an amazing internship! Make sure you're keeping track of all requirements to have your minor count for credit (see Minor Checklist available on Blum Center website), and check in

with the Minor Internship Coordinator at anytime if you need any guidance.

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU START YOUR INTERNSHIP

As an intern, you represent - yourself; the Blum Center; the History Department; the Minor in Poverty, Inequality, and Social Justice; and UCSB. The likelihood that your internship site will take on additional UCSB interns in the future partly depends on your attitude and performance.

You play a major role in determining the success of your internship. You're there to learn--actively, not passively--and your attitude, engagement, and dedication make a big difference. No one expects you to know everything, but they will expect you to make an effort to learn. You should absolutely take initiative, try things out, and suggest tasks you can take on next, but remember: when in doubt, ASK! It's always better to ask a question or two than have to re-do a task or project.

Here are a few tips to help you prepare for this internship and workplaces more generally :

• **Set reasonable expectations for yourself and your internship site**. The main goal for this internship is first and foremost to *learn*. While we hope you'll contribute to work you care about, you should not feel pressured to do the work of a staff member (and let us know if you do). That's not only unethical; it's illegal. At the same time, you shouldn't be spending all your time doing clerical work. Many internship sites are busy, and everyone helps out with making copies or running errands. Work like this, or routine tasks like managing an excel spreadsheet, can be vital to the success of your organization, and you should be ready to help out. However, if at any point you feel like this is all you're doing and you don't have additional chances to learn, talk with your supervisor and/or the Minor Internship Coordinator.

• **Communicate with your supervisor.** *You should be meeting with your supervisor regularly to check in on your work, how you're feeling, upcoming projects/tasks, etc.* You should also feel comfortable telling your supervisor when you feel ready for additional responsibilities, or when you need more support and guidance. Remember, your supervisor is your first point of contact, and you should keep them updated about what you're doing and ask for what you need. Tell them what you need--they'll be grateful to know! Your supervisor should also be the main person at the organization assigning you tasks. Of course, you want to be as helpful as possible as an intern, and you'll probably want to say yes when any staff member asks you to help out with something. In general, however, it's a good idea to check in with your supervisor when someone else asks you to do something. They have a sense of how your time should be spent, and they can help you tell if this new task should be your priority.

• **Arrive on time and be fully present:** Everyone runs late occasionally, but making an effort to be there on time will help you make the impression you want. When you're there, make sure you're present, focused and engaged.

• **Dress to match the work you're doing:** Take your dress cues from the staff at your internship site. If they're wearing suits for important meetings, you'll probably want to dress up if you go to these with them. If they wear jeans to work at your internship's farm, you probably want to leave

the suit at home.

• **Be friendly, but avoid the office drama**: While there must be perfect organizations out there where everyone gets along, it's not unusual to overhear staff making petty comments about each other or trying to get you on their side. If this happens, politely say that you'd rather not take sides, and that you want to have a good relationship with everyone at the office. If interpersonal dynamics at your internship site are affecting you, or if you experience any kind of harassment, speak with your supervisor and/or the Minor Internship Coordinator as soon as possible.

• **Be careful how you represent the internship site:** If your site gives you an email to use during your internship, make sure you use it *only* for work related to your internship. Similarly, if you're helping with your internship site's social media, or if you're speaking on behalf of the site at an event, make sure you use the tone and message the organization wants (check with your supervisor if you need guidance on this).

HOW TO GET CREDIT FOR YOUR INTERNSHIP

In addition to completing and submitting the necessary paperwork by the respective deadlines (see *Minor Checklist*), as well as fulfilling all commitments outlined in your *Internship Learning Agreement* with your supervisor, you will need to register and complete the required internship course: *HIST/GLOBL/CHST 196SJ - Internship in Poverty, Inequality and Social Justice* (or eligible alternative course), in order to get credit for your internship. Note - you will be taking this course at the same time as your internship. Once you fill out the *Internship Learning Agreement*, email it to Dr. Andrea Medina, instructor of HIST/GLOBL/CHST 196SJ, at andreamedina@ucsb.edu. After she reviews it, Dr. Medina will send you the add code for HIST/GLOBL/CHST 196SJ. If you are taking an eligible alternative internship course, the History Department will notify the department overseeing that course that your internship site has been approved.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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