

**2019-2020**

# **INTERNSHIP PROGRAM GUIDELINES OF THE INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE**

The Institute for Public Service  
University of Tennessee

# Internship Guidelines

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## Welcome and Introduction

Several years ago the Institute for Public Service (IPS) at the University of Tennessee accepted the responsibility of developing a statewide public service internship program for graduate students interested in working with local governments. Since this time we have placed more than 150 students in internships, and have introduced these students to the importance of and excitement with local governments in Tennessee. We have added a limited number of internships for undergraduate students approaching or in their senior year and, as demand permits, have added internships in manufacturing and in economic development when hosting industries are available.

IPS is committed to introducing students from groups that have traditionally been underrepresented to public service in Tennessee. Women and people of color are encouraged to apply for these internships.

Our expectation is that the intern experience will provide these students with meaningful and often inspiring experiences that will help to develop the next generation of local government and industry leaders. The intern program and the projects undertaken by these students also link employers and stakeholders in Tennessee with the resources of the university.

We truly have been impressed with the outstanding students that have been interested in serving as interns in this state. Our focus at IPS is provide services that support our customers, students, and the University, and we require the completion of learning objectives for the student interns. These objectives include requirements for early opportunities to discuss the work and experiences of each student and a formal presentation at the end on the work and accomplishments of the intern.

In today's economic environment it is often difficult for the university or for anyone to maintain programs and initiatives, and a statewide internship program carries the same challenges of any program. At the same time, we cannot miss this opportunity to influence, guide and support these future leaders and the local governments of Tennessee. When I consider the difficulties facing similar important programs, I am reminded to thank the donors, the staff, the local government hosts, the industries and the exceptional students that make this such a successful effort for IPS.

I am pleased to provide this update of the IPS Internship Programs, and welcome your thoughts, suggestions, and comments.

Sincerely,



Dr. Herb Byrd III, Vice President  
Institute for Public Service

## Program Summary

While each program has different expectations and serves different students and stakeholders, the Internship Program of the Institute for Public Service provides opportunities for students to gain valuable experience and contacts with employers and connects local governments and industries with outstanding young professionals emerging from colleges and universities. Both students and the employers benefit from participation in this internship.

The internships are located in Tennessee but application is not limited to universities or students in Tennessee.

This manual provides a brief summary of the process and logistics of the internship program, starting with Public Service Internships and followed by Manufacturing and Economic Development Internships. For further information please refer to the semester announcement for the specific internship.

## Choosing the Right Type of Internship

Opportunities are available with local governments and industries in Tennessee. Each is briefly summarized below.

### Public Service Internships

Public service internships are structured for students interested in careers and research in local government services and policy support, and students selected work with cities and counties in Tennessee through the two IPS agencies that directly serve local governments – the County Technical Assistance Service and the Municipal Technical Advisory Service. Opportunities with state agencies will be considered as these become available. We emphasize competitive placement through panel interviews and structured learning objectives.

IPS is committed to introducing students from groups that have traditionally been underrepresented to public service in Tennessee. Women and people of color are encouraged to apply for these internships.

Interns are assigned to and supervised by MTAS or CTAS offices near their home or campus for research, special projects, preparatory work for field consultants, or cities and counties for specific research issues. Depending on a student's particular area of interest, he or she may also participate as a key person on research projects and qualify for class credit with an independent study with their respective college or university.

Internships are located in Tennessee but students may be selected from both Tennessee and out-of-state universities. Responsibility for the program is shared by IPS, faculty and campus, the host and the student.

### About the Internships:

1. This is a statewide program and, to the extent possible, internships will be located convenient to students and hosts.
2. The Institute requests resumes and letters of interest through members of the faculty

based on the criteria and timelines outlined in the position advertisements for that semester.

3. Internships start and end with the academic semester and generally last 10-12 weeks. Interns typically work about 20 hours per week, but hours during the summer semester may increase depending on the needs of the academic internship, the student, the host stakeholder and on funds available. Students enrolled in classes during the internship semester are limited to a maximum of 20 hours per week.
4. Host agencies and communities work with IPS consultants to develop projects of interest to the local government and of benefit to the students.
5. We do emphasize competitive placement through panel interviews and structured learning objectives. Students that are not placed are welcome to reapply.
6. Interns complete a series of required learning objectives. IPS emphasizes professional development and, when available, interns attend city, county and professional association meetings.
7. Interested students must participate no later than the semester following graduation.
8. Compensation is \$12 per hour, and the only extra benefits are the challenges and opportunities of working with local governments or industries.
9. Consultants serve as mentors and supervisors, and provide technical advice, coordinate training opportunities and travel, and approve compensation and reimbursement.
10. Students are limited to a single IPS Internship with IPS.

IPS maintains a website with announcements, brochures and a summary of the program:

<http://www.ips.tennessee.edu/public-service-internships>

### Post-Graduate Fellowships

IPS, through MTAS and CTAS, also offers the Post Graduate Fellowship. The Fellowship is an outstanding two-year position competitively filled by graduate students ready to enter local government service, and is available only when local governments sponsor the position. Participants serve in one of Tennessee's grand divisions (East, Middle, or West) and work directly in one or more sponsoring cities or counties. Local governments that choose to take part in the program generally host the position as a member of the management team of the city or county and often rotate the Fellow through various departments and duties to provide extensive experience in all aspects of city or county management.

Unlike other IPS internships, the Fellowship is a full-time, 2-year position, offering both a salary and benefits.

Supervision of the program is provided by the sponsoring cities or counties and by an assigned CTAS or MTAS field consultant. The purpose of the program is to fully prepare the individual to enter the workforce as a manager or assistant manager within a city or county.

## **Internships in Manufacturing and Economic Development**

The University of Tennessee Center for Industrial Services (UTCIS) is an agency of the University of Tennessee Institute for Public Service, with a mission to serve business and government to improve the lives of Tennesseans. Each year, UTCIS provides consulting assistance to 650 companies, trains over 5,000 participants, and facilitates over \$1 billion in business investment, cost reduction, new sales and other economic impacts. Our consulting and training services assist firms and communities throughout Tennessee in economic development, manufacturing excellence, health and safety, growth and innovation, energy and environmental management, and government procurement.

While these internships are not available every semester, internships with UTCIS focus on two specific internships for highly qualified undergraduate and graduate students:

### ***Economic Development***

1. Economic development internships help students prepare for a career focused on strengthening communities and improving the lives of Tennesseans. As technology advances and global competition increases, Tennessee communities need informed and engaged leadership to attract and retain high quality jobs and needed investment. Interns will learn about possible economic development careers, meet professionals in the field, and gain relevant experience.

### ***Manufacturing***

2. Manufacturing Internships provide experience in a growing sector for students from a range of educational backgrounds. As technology advances and global competition increases, U.S. manufacturers will need informed and engaged leadership to meet customer needs and develop strong, growing companies. Manufacturing internships help you learn more about manufacturing careers while gaining valuable experience.

### ***About CIS Internships***

Interns must have a junior, senior or graduate student classification from a Tennessee college or university. UTCIS will use a competitive process to select interns. Those selected will work with UTCIS consultants in visiting plants, discussing manufacturing challenges, and researching and presenting solutions. Each intern will have a specific 8-10-week workplan tailored to their background, customer needs, and structured learning objectives. By seeing multiple plants and taking a variety of UTCIS training courses, interns will learn about a range of manufacturing careers, meet manufacturing professionals, and gain experience.

To learn more about UTCIS, go to [www.cis.tennessee.edu](http://www.cis.tennessee.edu).

## Process Review

The selection and process for internships follows a specific path each semester.

## Selection Process

The process starts with the call for resumes for students interested in internships for the upcoming semester:

1. Participating faculty and consultants are provided with the deadlines and program details for the upcoming semester. Faculty members and graduate offices are also provided with copies of the program brochure and posters to advertise the availability of internships.
2. Interested students should submit a resume and a letter of interest, outlining where the internship is preferred and specific professional interests of the student, directly through a faculty member. Resumes may be submitted directly to IPS but the faculty members will be contacted for comments and references.
3. As the resumes are received IPS contacts each student about the process and timetable.
4. Internships should be based on specific projects or experiences for the student and host. Interns are available to assist with receptionist or clerical duties, as with any other member of the professional staff, but the focus is that interns should not be generally assigned primarily to these tasks. The internship is an opportunity for professional growth for the student and for expertise available to the host.

## The Application Process

The application process mirrors that in use for many professional positions. Students submit a letter of interest and resume through the faculty of their campus, and finalists are asked to interview with a panel for the program.

The application, interview process and the internship experience are structured to help the student with future interviews and opportunities. Internships also provide support to industries and local governments in Tennessee from the academic and research resources of the respective universities.

## Background Checks

The University of Tennessee does require background check of all employees, including interns, and a summary check will be completed prior to final placement for all interns.

## International Students

International students are welcome to apply but typically follow a few extra steps for admittance into the program. Students need to provide a copy of an unexpired passport and a completed I-94 form. After these forms are reviewed and before the internship is otherwise final, international students will then need to complete the same packet of information required of other students.

## Expectations of Interns

Interns are expected to bring enthusiasm and an interest to the internship and should in turn expect the internship to provide a comprehensive glimpse into the work of industry or local government professionals. There are specific assignments and tasks that interns will be asked to accomplish during the semester.

## Required Learning Objectives

Our focus at IPS is to provide services that support our customers, students, and the University, and the program includes required learning objectives for the student interns. This includes early requirements to discuss the work and experiences of each student and a formal presentation at the end on the work and accomplishments of the intern. Each semester will include the following:

1. IPS will schedule orientation for all interns early in the semester. This may require travel for both the intern and the consultant serving as the mentor for the student.
2. The student will prepare and submit an initial summary of the intern's hopes and expectations for the internship. This summary is due during the first 2 weeks of the internship.
3. The student will also prepare a written end-of-internship summary, with a brief review of the community or agency that they served, the people that they worked with, work accomplished and lessons learned.
4. This same information is to be developed into a presentation, with PowerPoint and other graphics, for a formal review near the end of the internship. This may require travel for both the intern and the consultant serving as the mentor for the student.

IPS will cover normal expenses for travel, and at the conclusion of the internship IPS will receive copies of the presentations and reports.

## Facebook

IPS has established a Facebook page for the Internship program, and all interns are asked to provide and maintain weekly posts to the page. Initially interns post an introduction, with a photo and a very brief bio paragraph. Over the semester posts can be brief summaries with photos of work and experiences that interns encounter and other comments that may be of interest to potential employers and future interns. The Facebook site is:

<https://www.facebook.com/IPSPublicServiceInterns>.

Interns can do so through their personal account or through the internship Facebook site at <https://www.facebook.com/IPSPublicServiceInterns>. The Facebook posts can be from either the intern's personal page or the IPS Internship page, but we ask that posts tag IPS from either site. A sample post, as an example, could be "Today I toured the offices of the Mayor of the City of Knoxville while working with @UTIPS and @UT IPS Internships." The post can include any other relevant info, with a photo. For frequent posts this should not be lengthy but more of a snapshot of what the intern is doing and where. Please always tag @UTIPS and @UT IPS

Internships in the posts. It is not necessary to tag @UT IPS Internships if the post is from the internship Facebook site.

We have considered setting up a system linking tweets to Facebook submittals. We are, however, hearing that this practice of connecting tweets with Facebook is no longer encouraged. We suggest instead that interns either post to your personal Facebook account or post to the Internship site, and tag us.

We also welcome tweets to Twitter users, and interns can tweet info to IPS followers by including the IPS handle @UT\_IPS in the tweet.

### Orientation

Internship orientations are scheduled early in the semester, and every intern is expected to participate. These meetings typically include a discussion about professional dress, interview resources and other resources available through the staff at IPS. This also includes an orientation to the University of Tennessee and the work of IPS. These are working meetings for interns and a program expectation, with travel expenses paid by IPS.

### Professional Development

Professional development opportunities are often available to interns within the state during the semester. Participation is not mandatory, but these are often great opportunities for students to meet industry or local government officials and professionals. IPS provides room, registration and travel expenses for approved meetings. IPS will be looking for and approving opportunities for you, and students attending meetings will be asked to help with conference logistics and other tasks to increase networking opportunities with the participants.

### Final Report and Presentation

Interns are required to submit a written report at the end of the internship experience and to summarize this report with a formal presentation. PowerPoint presentations and the use of appropriate graphics are encouraged, and while presentations should be targeted to approximately 15 minutes in length, the length and quality of the presentation is yours to define. The deadline for the report and location of the presentation will be provided well in advance of the end of the semester.

The report should summarize the organization that hosted the internship and the accomplishments and lessons learned through the experience. Topics to be covered should include at least the following:

1. A summary of the internship host. Briefly describe the history, services and the background of the organization. Include current or recent controversies, and if or how these have been resolved.
2. A description of the work of the intern. Interns frequently work in many areas, of varying levels of complexity, so describe what you do and who you work with.

3. Evaluate the internship provided in this organization. Are there lessons that should be repeated for future interns, or changes that can make the internship better for future interns?

The presentation of the report, much like an interview, is an opportunity to highlight the intern as a professional and to showcase the intern's abilities to plan, organize and present comments on service topics important to that local government or agency.

Preparation of the report and presentation are within the working scope of the internship and the time required should be within the hours per week available for the intern. Early preparation for the report will provide benefits later in the writing of the report, and a work log may help with tracking important accomplishments and lessons.

For further information and assistance contact your consultant or contact Steve Thompson at IPS at [steve.thompson@tennessee.edu](mailto:steve.thompson@tennessee.edu).

## Expectations of Mentors

The role of the consultant/mentor is simple – to make the internship successful for the student and the host industry, agency or local government, and to provide guidance and assistance along the way. While placing and supervising inexperienced employees and interns can be difficult and often distracting, internships also allow the IPS staff to help build and connect with the leadership of the future in Tennessee.

## Placing Interns

IPS consultants and mentors are critical to finding and supervising the placement of interns, and have the personal knowledge and relationships necessary to grow a successful internship program with cities, counties and industries in Tennessee. The IPS administrative staff builds connections with the universities and advertises for interns through the campuses and faculty. The administrative staff is available to assist as necessary in finding, placing and resolving problems for the consultants, but the key to this successful internship program is the relationship of the consultant with the potential host industries and governments in the state.

The consultant works with potential hosts to create internship opportunities, brings the students through an interview with the potential host and coaches, supervises and assists the interns during the semester. This mentor experience allows the consultant to keep the internship productive for both the student and the host, and to encourage careers in Tennessee for outstanding professionals.

## Supervising and Evaluating Interns

In addition to guiding the student to success, the consultant/mentor also helps the student to effectively travel through specific check points:

1. The materials packet must be completed by the intern and submitted through the agency to the central contact in the administrative offices of IPS so that all completed paperwork is processed through the university system. All paperwork and the student's background review must be completed **before the intern starts work**.

2. The consultant/mentor should be available to advise the intern on reports and presentations and should accompany the intern to orientation and to the final presentation.
3. The mentor signs off on the intern's timesheets and is a resource for the intern, assisting with travel and paperwork for professional development.
4. At the conclusion of the internship the intern should participate in an exit interview with the mentor/consultant. Potential questions include the following:
  - a. Did the experience meet your initial expectations? Why or why not?
  - b. Did you find your placement interesting and beneficial to your interests?
  - c. What was your favorite task during the course of the internship?
  - d. Did the internship affect your future plans in anyway?
  - e. Would you recommend the program to others in the future?
  - f. What could IPS do to improve the program?
5. Each consultant should also meet with the city, county or industrial contact, and explore the following areas:
  - a. How was the experience from the perspective of the host?
  - b. Was the intern satisfactory, and was the internship worthwhile?
  - c. How can the program be improved?
  - d. Are you willing to consider hosting another intern?

These steps must be completed and turned in before the intern leaves the program.

## Internships Are Important to IPS

Internships benefit host local governments and industries through the hard work of students on projects and programs important to the community. Internships also provide experience and invaluable contacts to young professionals. Together these benefits help the agencies of the Institute for Public Service to support good business and government in the state and to bring the resources of the University of Tennessee to help address the needs of Tennessee communities.

## Appendix

### Faculty Contacts

Faculty members and universities supporting the Public Service Internship Program include the following:

#### **East Tennessee State University**

Dr. J. David Briley  
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#### **Middle Tennessee State University**

Dr. Lisa Langenbach

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**Tennessee State University**

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