



*Good internships are good business.*

Employer Guide to Structuring a Successful  
TEXTILE & APPAREL  
INTERNSHIP PROGRAM



## Table of Contents

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Page</b>
Internship Criteria / Requirements	3-4
Intern Payment	5
How do I mentor an intern?	6
Intern Learning Objectives	6
How do I evaluate an intern?	7
Employer Ethics and Responsibilities	7
Internship Issues	7

## TXA 356 Internship Criteria and Guidelines

In the Textiles and Apparel program, internships are professional learning experiences for which students may receive credit. Internships are a vital part of student career development and an essential component of the TXA curriculum. The internship allows the student to apply coursework while gaining practical experience and skills. The internship experience facilitates learning through connecting theories learned in courses to real-world practice.

This is a required 3 credit hour course towards your degree for ALL Textiles and Apparel majors.

### Criteria:

- The student must have upper-division standing or 60 hours of credit.
- Pre-requisites:
  - TXA 151 Pre-Internship Seminar
  - TXA 350 Adv. Design Portfolio (Design majors only)
- The Internship Director must approve all internships in advance of the internship.
- If the internship site is new to TXA, it must be vetted/approved first by the Internship Director.
- Internship Application form must be completed and approved before the internship can begin.
- Academic coursework must be completed as part of the internship course, including maintaining a daily employment journal, writing a paper, and creating a portfolio project demonstrating the knowledge gained from the internship experience. Lastly, your site supervisor will be asked to submit an evaluation of your work performance.

### Guidelines:

- No organization may have more than TWO unpaid interns receiving academic credit for our program during a given semester.
- You must take the internship class (TXA 356) the same semester or summer session to complete the internship. Retroactive credit for internships will not be granted.
- Internship hours for **Spring & Fall semesters**  
*140 hours TOTAL – 10 hours per week – 14 weeks*
- Internship hours for **Summer LONG semester**  
*150 hours TOTAL – 20 hours per week – 8-10 weeks*
- The internship must be highly relevant to the student's major education (design, merchandising, textiles) and future career development.
- Clerical/administrative work should not consist of more than 20% of the internship duties.
- The internship can be either virtual, in-person, or a combination of both. This MUST be agreed upon by the internship site.
- If the internship is not remote, it should take place in an office setting where the student has direct and in-person contact with their supervisor. It may not take place in a personal residence.
- All in the course of work-related expenses incurred by the intern in the course of their internship need to be paid for or refunded by the organization unless other financial agreements are made
- Please contact the Internship Director for scholarship information.

# Course Assignments

The TXA 356 Internship Course applies retail merchandising, design, and textile techniques in principles and procedures in a professional environment. Through field placement, students encounter real-world projects in textiles and apparel studies. To solve problems and complete assignments, they must synthesize knowledge of current practices, techniques, and theories acquired through prior coursework.

All assignments should be submitted in Canvas under Assignments.

## Forms & Check-In

All forms must be completed and signed in the first week of your internship. Submit a photo of yourself at your internship location and a brief description of where and what you will be doing at your internship. *Note: No forms are needed from International Internship Interns – Texas Global Forms will be required for this set of students.*

## Reflection Learning Journal

Students identify and describe problems and situations through assignments in the form of a one-page written journal entry. The journal includes observations, critically evaluates issues, and articulates the skills and techniques they have learned and applied.

Students will be required to submit the journal (four submissions), recording the number of hours, type of work performed, photos of work, as well as observations, thoughts, and progress of their research project (each week should build on information/data gathered).

## Internship Reflective Essay

An internship experience essay is a form of reflective writing that allows the student to document how their internship experience helped them develop new skills, learn new concepts, and apply their knowledge in a professional setting.

In this **300- 700-word** essay, students will reflect on the meaning of the internship experience for their intellectual development and career planning.

## Independent Inquiry Research Project & Presentation

To foster the students' independent inquiry curiosity, each student (and internship site) will have their intern work on a research or project assignment that will in some way benefit the company. The intern with the support of the on-site supervisor determines the research or project to be conducted during the internship. The student is responsible for researching the questions and collecting the data for the research or project. The student must analyze the data collected, organize the results, and discuss the results through various assignments throughout the semester.

## Internship Learning Experience Poster

For this assignment, the student will create ONE PPT page (a page the student could share on their social media platforms, i.e., LinkedIn) explaining what they did and learned in their internship. This assignment presents internship sites and experiences to prospective students and their parents, current students, and future interns.

**Internship Site Evaluation** students will have their site supervisor complete an end-term evaluation form. The faculty supervisor will assess your performance based on thoroughness, accuracy, and analysis of reports, along with an assessment of your communication.

## A. Internship Employers Q&A

### Why hire a UT Textiles & Apparel intern?

There are several key reasons to hire a UT TXA intern. To begin, UT students are eager and bright, bringing fresh faces, initiative, and energy to a workplace. Project-based learning experiences inside and outside the classroom help students familiarize themselves with the pace, required skills and culture of workplaces, which means they can adapt quickly and immediately contribute in terms of skills and resources.

Our program allows employers to find new talent. Internships let you observe students' skill sets, work habits, and personalities to determine if they might be a good fit for your company in the future. Interns can also bring fresh perspectives, technological skills, and methods to projects and teams.

This is an opportunity to help the students develop professionally. By supporting students as interns, you help them learn to apply the skills acquired at The University of Texas at Austin to real-life work settings. The program is a chance to share resources – your wisdom, networks of contacts, and tools – with the next generation of merchandisers and retailers, thereby ensuring your industry's growth, innovation, and future.

The **TXA Internship Contract** is a document that includes the intern's duties, learning objectives, work hours, and start and end dates. It is completed first by the student, then by the employer, and finally by UT. The student is responsible for initiating the contract, filling out the student section, signing the contract, and then giving it to the employer.

Once you have received the contract from the student, please fill out the employer section and sign the document. I encourage you to work with the student when completing the Learning Objectives field so that both parties can take part in determining the pedagogical goals of the internship. It is the student's responsibility to forward the completed and signed contract to the Director.

### Internship Criteria / Requirements

All internships approved for the TXA Internship Program must

- Involve useful work related to the student intern's field of study and support their professional goals. (Please see our **Learning Objective** section to develop internship learning guidelines)
- Be performed under the direct supervision of a professional. Continuous mentorship throughout the semester is crucial to the internship program's success. A final intern evaluation is required before the end of the internship. The **MCS Intern Evaluation** form will be used for the final intern evaluation.
- Meet requirements stipulated in the **MCS Internship Contract**, such as those outlining work hours, dates, and credits.

### Intern Payment

Students must pay full tuition while completing their internships. Lack of intern pay sometimes deters highly qualified students from accepting internships. If you cannot pay an hourly wage for an intern, consider offering other forms of compensation, such as a stipend and travel reimbursement.

## How do I mentor an intern?

Mentoring interns enables you to guide students to use their growing skills on real-world projects and in actual work settings. The MCS Internship Program formalizes this process by outlining **Learning Objectives** and documenting your student's progress in an **MCS Intern Evaluation**.

### Intern Learning Objectives

We strongly recommend that you work with your student to set useful, reasonable internship learning objectives and goals. The intern program's overarching learning objectives are:

#### 1. Professional Skills

- A. Your internship is designed to enable you to understand the role of a professional, including the professional's responsibilities and ethical code of conduct.
- B. You will be able to enhance your professional growth and development by applying knowledge and skills developed in your academic program and acquiring skills in retail management, merchandising, and/or other industry-related areas.

#### 2. Communication Skills

- A. You will develop speaking skills that will afford you to be comfortable in front of clients, executive leaders, and colleagues when presenting and expressing ideas. This will also mean practicing accepting both criticism and feedback, and applying other principles and concepts learned in formal coursework, as well as in a career setting.

#### 3. Writing skills

- A. You will master professional writing skills for the workplace with exposure to proper email correspondence, combining critical thinking skills to formulate ideas expressed in writing coupled with the ability to write in the style of a particular discipline.

#### 4. Prepare You for a Career

- A. You will develop an understanding of the benefits and challenges of a career in retail, wholesale, or a related support industry.
- B. Your internship will enable you to become familiar with the overall structure, functions, and operation in retail, wholesale, or a related support industry.

## **How do I evaluate an intern?**

You are encouraged to evaluate your intern's performance in the middle and the end of the internship. The **MSC Intern Evaluation** is used for all evaluations. A midterm evaluation functions to provide feedback on intern performance and allow them to make improvements.

- The general level of preparedness
- Ability to achieve goals set out in the Learning Objectives
- Contribution to the work environment
- Relevant skillset
- Overall professionalism
- Attendance
- Areas that need development and specific suggestions for improvement

The **MCS Intern Evaluation** must be completed and submitted to the student intern and the university supervisor before the end of the internship so that the student can receive a grade for their participation in the program.

## **Employer Ethics and Responsibilities**

The University expects employers not to expose students to anything that would be reasonably considered sexually explicit, obscene, libelous, defamatory, threatening, harassing, abusive, or hateful. In other words, the University prohibits any behavior or material that is personally embarrassing or offensive to another person or group.

By offering a UT MCS student an internship opportunity, you agree to all outlined terms, conditions, and limitations.

## **Internship Issues**

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Deborah Szejnberg at [Deborah.Szejnberg@Austin.UTexas.edu](mailto:Deborah.Szejnberg@Austin.UTexas.edu) or 917-566-9880.