

# Interior Architecture and Design Internship Manual

UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE AT CHATTANOOGA

## Preface

The interior design internship is included in the Interior Design degree at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga to give the student the opportunity to apply design theory to a practical work experience. It provides an opportunity for one to confer with and to observe successful design firms. Professional designers are in a position to provide expertise that can be gained only through years of practical experience. A large part of a student's learning about the profession of interior design can be gained through constant observation and awareness of the built environment and by actual experience gained from working with persons in the professional interior design field. A positive attitude coupled with the knowledge one receives during the internship experience can start the student toward a rewarding career in interior design.

For the intern experience, students are encouraged to seek the areas of application that they would hope to pursue as a future career. It is the hope and intention of the UTC Interior Design Department that the student will participate in a wide variety of activities of the particular design firm and that they, in turn, will be of some service and assistance to the professional host employer.

The student receives three (3) semester hours of university academic credit for participation in the internship program. The student is required to work in person for a minimum **320 hours** with the firm. A grade is earned on the basis of the student's involvement in the work of the firm, on the written reports, the research paper and the final presentation. All correspondence between the student and the coordinator is treated in a strictly confidential manner.

It is a general understanding when participating in the interior design internship program that the student will be allowed to work with the host employer in the capacity of a guest of the firm to see and learn about the business of interior design. The student is aware that in many placements a minimum salary is paid. Any arrangements as such are completely optional. In addition, the student **must** secure liability insurance through the UTC Bursar Office.

It is important for the student to remember that once in the internship position one is seldom considered a student. He/she has become a professional business person and though three (3) semester hours of academic credit is being earned, the host design firm expects professionalism when dealing with their clientele and/or business associates. **Confidentiality** to the host design firm must be honored. It is considered inappropriate to discuss business dealings or design projects outside the host firm unless authorized to do so. It is considered just cause for termination of the internship if detected. The intern is in the professional world of design and must conduct himself/herself as an ethical business person.

Always remember that you are not only representing the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga and the Interior Design Department, but you are also a part of the firm that you are interning for. You need to check with your host firm to determine if they have policies regarding dress codes, smoking, piercings/tattoos, confidentiality, work schedules and

procedures to follow in working with clients.

## Purpose

The purpose of the internship manual is to guide and assist students, site supervisors and the UTC internship coordinator in Interior Design 4900, the internship course. The manual contains forms to be used during the internship time frame with detailed instructions. There is also information about the roles and responsibilities of the students, site supervisors, and the UTC internship coordinator. Student interns are expected to complete all assignments, forms, and requirements by the assigned due dates.

## Course Description

IARC 4900r Internship: Directed field experience providing a full-time work experience that gives students a better understanding of the real working environment. *Prerequisite: IARC 4210. Must be taken the last semester prior to graduation. A maximum of 12 hours may be applied to the degree.*

## Course Evaluation

The final grade for the course will be based on the following criteria. All of the following categories must be completed satisfactorily in order to pass the internship. Lateness of assignments will result in loss of one point for each calendar day to be deducted from the total points earned at the completion of internship.

Daily Logs and Journals  
Internship Documents  
Continuing Education Credits  
Portfolio Docs  
Meeting Attendance  
Final Meeting/Presentation  
Evaluations

## Grading Scale

270 - 300 points = A  
240 - 269 points = B  
210 - 239 points = C  
180 - 209 points = D  
Below 179 points = F

## Course Objectives:

- Understand the nature and value of integrated design practices.
- Demonstrate understanding of the components of business practice and professionalism.
- Effectively apply a variety of communication techniques and technologies appropriate to a range of purposes and audiences.
- Demonstrate understanding of the influence of furnishings, objects, materials, and finishes on human wellbeing.
- Demonstrate understanding of laws, codes, and standards that impact health, wellness, security, and fire and life safety.

## Course Requirements:

1. Interior design majors are required to complete the internship course in one semester for a total credit of three (3) semester hours.
2. The intern is responsible for obtaining his/her own internship position. Only one (1) UTC student can intern with a host firm at a time.
3. The academic advisor for the student and the UTC internship coordinator must approve each student's course load. Variables such as the student's grade point average and the number of hours the student works daily should be taken into consideration. The student's course load must also be discussed with the site manager when applying for the internship.
4. Students are discouraged from seeking employment additional to the internship. If, however, it is essential to his/her survival that additional employment is obtained, it must not interfere with the internship responsibilities. The additional employment can in no way be interpreted as conflict of interest with the host design firm. Information about the additional employment is to be discussed prior to the beginning of the internship with the UTC internship coordinator.
5. Application forms for internship (See Appendix A) must be completed and returned to the internship coordinator prior to final exam week of the semester prior to the one in which the student plans to intern.
6. Interior design internships are expected to start the week that classes begin. If, however, a student must start prior to the first week of UTC classes, the student will need to provide the UTC internship coordinator's contact information to the site supervisor. The site supervisor will then confirm in writing that the early starting date is imperative.
7. The host design firm must meet the approval of the intern's academic advisor and the UTC internship coordinator. The student is required to obtain an internship under a professional who is **certified, licensed** or **registered** in the interior design field (NCIDQ).
8. The student is required to complete and submit all forms on time to the UTC Internship Coordinator. Lateness will result in loss of one point for each calendar day to be deducted from the total points earned at the completion of internship.

9. The student is required to attend all internship meetings. A final presentation will be given at the final meeting.

### **INTERNSHIP ASSIGNMENTS:**

1. Interns are required to attend an orientation meeting (Time and place TBA). No student will go into an internship unless he/she attends the first meeting and has access to the internship manual.
2. Interns should schedule a mid-semester conference with the UTC internship coordinator. Those students interning with an establishment over 200 miles from Chattanooga must arrange a telephone conference with the UTC internship coordinator.
3. Interns are required to attend a final meeting (Time and place TBA) where the intern will give a formal presentation of the internship experience with visual materials such as a board, notebook, video, slides, PowerPoint, etc. All interns will prepare a one-page internship summary handout for the class.
4. The following two forms must be filled out and submitted to the UTC Internship Coordinator by the end of the first internship work week:
  - Internship Site Information Form: to be filled out by the student
  - Internship Agreement Statement: Intern work objectives are determined by both the site supervisor and the intern. They should parallel the intern's job responsibilities. Objectives should be worded in such a way that they are measurable. Part of the final assessment will be to determine how well these objectives were met.
5. Weekly Daily Work Reports and the Weekly Journal should be submitted to the UTC internship coordinator at the end of every two weeks of work.
  - Weekly Logs and Activities: Weekly logs should be used each week to record the intern's work experiences. An explanation of weekly activities should include dates of weekly work experiences, hours of work (Be sure to TOTAL each week!) and responsibilities. The site manager should sign on the line on page one of the logs to verify the hours worked during the week.
  - Reflective Journal: Reflections on the past week: You should write a reflective paragraph for each day in your internship work; do not wait until the end of the week. Site Supervisors do not see or sign this. For instance: What new job or procedures did you learn this week? Did you have any problems or challenges? How did you use coursework to help you in a situation? What are some things that you did not learn in school that you needed as a resource?

It is important that bi-weekly reports are not late. Reports must be received by the UTC internship coordinator by 12:00 noon (EST) on the assigned date. Remember that five points will be deducted from the final total number of points earned for every day late assignments are received. If an intern is delivering assignments in person, it is wise to give the assignments directly to the UTC internship coordinator or to have the work date-stamped by the Interior Design Administrative Assistant.

6. By the end of the second week of work the intern should send to the UTC internship coordinator the names, titles, and business addresses of three senior designers who are familiar with the intern's performance at the host design firm. The Evaluation of Student Internship Experience survey must be returned to the UTC internship coordinator by the evaluators at least one week prior to the intern's final meeting with the UTC internship coordinator. The intern, therefore, should provide a copy of the evaluation form along with a stamped envelope addressed to the UTC internship coordinator to each of the host design firm evaluators. It is the responsibility of the intern to be sure that the evaluator returns the form to the UTC internship coordinator on time. The intern, likewise, is wise to share with these persons a copy of the checklist early in the internship experience so that the evaluator can determine what qualities he/she needs to be observing about the UTC intern.
7. At the end of the internship, the intern will conduct a self-evaluation summarizing experiences in terms of stated objectives and perceived level of performance. This evaluation should include self-improvement ideas and should comment on how the objectives were met or not met and the reasons why. This will not be shared with the site supervisor but will help the university supervisor in the future placement of interns.

### **Site Supervisor's Evaluation**

An internship can be a true learning experience if the site supervisor provides constructive feedback. The evaluation should focus on the learning objectives that were set at the beginning of the internship. Supervisors should take the time to evaluate the intern's positive achievements and weaknesses. Also, the site supervisor should make suggestions for improvement.

### **Dress Code**

Professional dress is expected at all interviews as well as on the job – refer to the UTC student handbook for guidance or the firm's policy. Ask your firm what the dress code is just to make sure you are appropriately attired for everyday work. Students are expected to dress professionally at all internship meetings.

## Ethics

All interns should adhere to the ethics statement by the American Society of Interior Designers (See Appendix A). Any work done by the firm for clients should not be discussed outside the firm without permission. Firms may ask the intern to sign a confidentiality agreement.

## Insurance

It is a university policy that UTC students participating in internships shall purchase and provide evidence of \$1 million worth of professional liability coverage. **The intern must secure liability insurance through the University Bursar Office.** The cost is approximately \$20.00 and must be purchased twice if you are beginning your internship in May for a total of \$40.00. If you begin your internship in June, then you only need to purchase this insurance once. **Proof of insurance must be turned in to the Interior Design Office before beginning the internship.** Internship hours can not be counted until proof of insurance is provided.

## Frequently Asked Questions

- Q.** When should I start planning for my internship?
- A.** You should begin thinking about your internship when you declare your major. You should attend professional meetings, network and research companies that you are interested in.
- Q.** Will I be paid?
- A.** Some internships are paid but many are not. The internship is a college course and site supervisors must spend time training and working with interns.
- Q.** May I take another job while interning?
- A.** You are discouraged from seeking employment outside the internship. If it is essential that the student work in addition to the internship, then that work must not interfere with the internship responsibilities or be interpreted as conflict of interest. **Work for the internship must come first.** Information about the additional employment is to be discussed prior to the beginning of the internship with the UTC internship coordinator.
- Q.** Is there a schedule for how many hours must be completed each week in the internship?
- A.** No, the weekly schedule of hours is up to the site supervisor and you. It may vary from week to week.

- Q.** What if I am not completely satisfied with my internship experience? May I change internships?
- A.** This is not feasible. That is why you must do your research on the internship site carefully and if there are problems, then you need to work with the site supervisor to correct them.
- Q.** Can I take other courses while interning?
- A.** Interior design courses should be taken prior to the internship. To take additional courses, the intern must secure approval of the UTC Internship Coordinator, the academic advisor and the internship site manager. Fewer courses taken during the internship allow the student more time to apply toward a beneficial internship/work experience.
- Q.** May I participate in more than one internship simultaneously?
- A.** If you can work out two internships without conflicts, then go ahead but work out details with all concerned. This can be done but it will require much planning.
- Q.** Does everyone pass the internship with a satisfactory grade?
- A.** No, failure to complete the 320 hours, failure to attend the three required meetings, failure to send in forms weekly on time, failure to do the assignments, failure to make a final presentation, or an unsatisfactory evaluation from a site supervisor or university supervisor would be grounds for an unsatisfactory grade.
- Q.** Does an internship lead to a job with the site firm?
- A.** Some do end up with jobs at their site firm. There has been a good track record at UTC with interns securing jobs at their site firms or securing jobs with other firms.
- Q.** What if I want to do my internship out of state?
- A.** Students are encouraged to look for internships out of state.
- Q.** What about vacations or scheduled trips during the internship?
- A.** Your first priority is to complete your internship; if you can work out your already scheduled vacation, trip or whatever, that is fine but it must be okay with the site supervisor and the UTC Internship Coordinator.

## **INTERNSHIP ROLES/RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Student**

1. Submit application to the UTC internship coordinator one semester prior to the proposed internship date.
2. Identify potential sites and secure UTC internship coordinator's approval of sites.
3. Schedule individual conferences with UTC internship coordinator as needed for securing internship
4. Secure site interview with cooperating design firm.
5. Write thank you letters written within 24 hours to all businesses that you interview with.
6. Report results of interviews to UTC internship coordinator.
7. Begin internship on approved date and fulfill on-the-job requirements.
8. Submit job logs/weekly journals to the UTC internship coordinator.
9. Complete all assignments on time.
10. Make a visual and oral final presentation.
11. Complete Student Evaluation Internship Form.
12. Complete all tasks during the internship in a professional manner including writing a thank you **letter** to the site supervisor at the close of your internship.

### **Agency**

1. Conduct an initial interview with prospective intern.
2. Assign an employee as the intern's site supervisor.
3. Schedule student for the required amount of hours for the internship.
4. Make available work and/or learning experiences necessary to complete course requirements.
5. Acquaint student with organizational structure, mission, goals and policies of firm.
6. Periodically review and evaluate student's progress to share with student and UTC internship coordinator.
7. Conduct evaluation at mid-term and provide constructive criticism to the intern on a regular basis. If site supervisor has any problems with the intern, he/she should talk with the intern immediately and inform the UTC Internship Coordinator in order to address the problem(s).
8. Complete final evaluation/s of student intern and send to the UTC Internship Coordinator.
9. Contact the UTC Coordinator if there are problems with the intern.

### **UTC Internship Coordinator**

1. Evaluate Internship Application.
2. Supervise internship experience.
3. Approve design firm as an internship site.
4. Conduct meetings with student to give instructions and guidelines for internship.
5. Evaluate weekly journals, assignments and final presentation.
6. Maintain contact with host firm supervisor throughout the internship.
7. Keep student apprised of performance in internship.
8. Assign final grade.
9. Maintain all internship records in a file.

## **Tips for a Successful Internship**

Adopt the right attitudes  
Adjust your expectations  
Make a good first impression (you will only have one chance)  
Come into the work environment with an open mind and a positive attitude  
Be prepared to do whatever is asked of you even if it consists of menial tasks such as cleaning and organizing the resource room, filing, etc.  
Work on company business on company time  
Become a good follower  
Come into the work environment with an open mind  
Be polite; follow the basic rules of conduct: courtesy and appreciation  
Learn as much as possible early in the internship  
Arrive on time and be cautious about long lunches or leaving early  
Take advantage of any courses or workshops that might be offered through your internship  
Understand the organizational structure of your company/firm  
Know your expected job duties and perform them to the best of your ability  
Finish tasks to the end  
See things that need to be done and take some initiative  
Avoid inappropriate jokes and expressions  
Use appropriate communication language in all internship dealings whether in person, by mail, e-mail or phone  
Be open to constructive criticism; ask for feedback  
Keep office socialization to a minimum as well as outside phone calls

## **Grade Interpretation**

A = Excellence on the internship job; all assignments turned in on time and attention paid to detail; quality work in internship job and in all assignments; always on time and attention to dress code of internship site; makes oneself valuable to the firm or business; gets along with team members very effectively and goes far beyond the expected.

B = Good on the internship job; all assignments turned in on time; some detail may be missing; doing quality work in internship job and in all assignments; works well with team members; rarely late; attention to dress code on internship site; goes beyond the expected.

C = Reasonably effective on the internship job; some assignments not turned in on time; detail is not paid attention to in all assignments; rarely late and attention to dress code on internship site; does only what is expected.

D = Low effectiveness on the internship job; few assignments turned in on time; no attention to detail; just gets by on the job; often late and no attention to dress code

F = No effectiveness on the internship job; employer terminates internship job or asks university supervisor to reassign or terminate internship.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **ASID Code of Ethics**

## **AMERICAN SOCIETY OF INTERIOR DESIGNERS CODE OF ETHICS**

### **Preamble**

Members of the American Society of Interiors Designers are required to conduct their professional practice in a manner that will inspire the respect of clients, suppliers of goods and services to the profession, and fellow professional designers, as well as the general public. It is the individual responsibility of every member of the society to uphold this code and the by laws of the society.

### **Responsibility to the Public**

Members shall comply with all existing laws, regulations and codes governing business procedures and the practice of interior design as established by the state or other jurisdiction in which they practice.

Members shall not seal or sign drawings, specifications or other interior design documents except where the members firm has prepared, supervised, or professionally reviewed and approved such documents, as allowed by relevant state law.

Members shall at all times consider the health, safety, and welfare of the public in spaces they design.

Members agree whenever possible to notify property managers, landlords, and/or public officials of conditions within a built environment that endanger the health, safety, and/or welfare of occupants.

Members shall not engage in any form of false or misleading advertising or promotional activities and shall not through advertising or other means that staff members or employees of their firm are qualified interior designers unless such be the fact.

Members shall neither offer, nor make any payments or gifts to any public official, nor take any other action, with the intent of unduly influencing the officials' judgment in connection with an existing or prospective project in which the members are interested.

Members shall not assist or abet improper or illegal conduct of anyone in connection with a project.

### **Responsibility to the Client**

Member's contracts with a client shall clearly set forth the scope and nature of the project involved, the services to be performed and the method of compensation for those services.

Members may offer professional services to a client for any form of legal compensation.

Members shall not undertake any professional responsibility unless they are, by training and experience, competent to adequately perform the work required.

Members shall fully disclose to a client all compensation, which the members shall receive in connection with the project and shall not accept any form of undisclosed compensation from any person or firm with whom the member deals in connection with the project.

Members shall not divulge any confidential information about the client or the client's project, or utilize photographs or specifications of the project, without the express permission of the client, with an exception for those specifications or drawings over which the designer retains proprietary rights.

Members shall be candid and truthful in all their professional communications.

Members shall act with fiscal responsibility in their best interest of their clients and shall maintain sound business relationships with suppliers, industry and trades to insure the best service possible to the public.

### **Responsibility to other Interior Designers and Colleagues**

Members shall not interfere with the performance of another interior designer's contractual or professional relationship with a client.

Members shall not initiate or participate in, any discussion or activity, which might result in an unjust injury to another interior designer's reputation or business relationships.

Members may, when requested and it does not present a conflict of interest, render a second opinion to a client, or serve as an expert witness in a judicial or arbitration proceeding.

Members shall not endorse the application for ASID membership and/or certification, registration or licensing of an individual known to be unqualified with respect to education training, experience or character, nor shall a member knowingly misrepresent the experience, professional expertise or moral character of that individual.

Members should respect the confidentiality of sensitive information obtained in the course of their Professional activities.

### **Responsibility to the Profession**

Members agree to maintain standards of professional and personal conduct that will reflect in a responsible manner of the society and the profession.

Members shall seek to continually upgrade their professional knowledge and competency with respect to the interior design profession.

Members agree, whenever possible, to encourage and contribute to the sharing of knowledge and information between interior designers and other allied professional disciplines, industry and the public.

### **Responsibility to the Employer**

Members leaving an employer's service shall not take drawings, designs, data, reports, notes, client's lists, or other materials relating to work performed in the employer's service except with permission of the employer.

A member shall not unreasonably withhold permission from departing employees to take copies of material relating to their work while an employee of the member's firm, which are not proprietary and confidential in nature.

Members shall not divulge any confidential information obtained during the course of their employment about the client or the client's project or utilize photographs or specifications of the project, without the express permission of both client and employer.

### **Enforcement**

The society shall follow standard procedures for the enforcement of this code as approved by the Society's Board of Directors.

Members having a reasonable belief, based upon substantial information that another member has acted in violation of this Code shall report such information in accordance with accepted procedures.

Any deviation from this Code, or any action taken by a member which is detrimental to the Society and the profession as a whole shall be deemed unprofessional conduct subject to discipline by the Society's Board of Directors.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Helpful Websites**

## Helpful Web Sites

[www.asid.org](http://www.asid.org)  
[www.internweb.com](http://www.internweb.com)  
[www.nkba.org](http://www.nkba.org)  
[www.csi.org](http://www.csi.org)  
[www.homeportfolio.com](http://www.homeportfolio.com)  
[www.iida.org](http://www.iida.org)  
[www.aia.org](http://www.aia.org)  
[www.nahb.org](http://www.nahb.org)  
[www.designonlineinc.com](http://www.designonlineinc.com)  
[www.dcota.com](http://www.dcota.com)  
[www.p-d-c.com](http://www.p-d-c.com)  
[www.merchandisemart.com](http://www.merchandisemart.com)  
[www.nydc.com](http://www.nydc.com)  
[www.todl.com](http://www.todl.com)  
[www.isdesignet.com](http://www.isdesignet.com)  
[www.accredit-id.org](http://www.accredit-id.org)  
[www.idec.org](http://www.idec.org)  
[www.ncidq.org](http://www.ncidq.org)  
[www.usgb.org](http://www.usgb.org)

American Society of Interior Designers  
Internship news  
National Kitchen Bath Association  
Construction Specifications Institute  
Designer/portfolio profiles  
International Interior Design Association  
American Institute of Architects  
National Association of Home Builders  
Resources for furnishings  
Design Center of the Americas  
Pacific Design Center  
Chicago Merchandise Mart  
New York Design Center  
Trade Only Design Library  
Interiors and Sources magazine site  
Council for Interior Design Accreditation  
Interior Design Educators Council  
National Council for Interior Design Qualification  
US Green Building Council