**Academic Engagement Guidelines**

This guide is designed for community organizations and businesses interested in engaging students and faculty in water-related projects. This brief guide presents types of approaches for engaging faculty and students.

If you are interested in pursuing a water-related project, contact [Center for Environmental Inquiry](mailto:lukec@sonoma.edu) which assists community members, faculty and students to engage in partnerships.

**Student Internships**

**What are Student Internships?**

* ***Internships*** are community or field-based learning experiences where students are placed in a job setting to learn skills that integrate their future career goals with coursework. Internships can be with for- or non-profit organizations.  At SSU, all academic departments support interns. At SSU, some departments require internships and have specific internship coordinators. Internships can be paid or unpaid.
* ***Paid or Unpaid***? You can use this[US Department of Labor fact sheet](http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.htm) to help you figure out if an internship legally must be paid.
* ***Community Involvement Program*** is slightly different from an internship. It provides a means for students to earn academic credit for volunteer experience but must be with a nonprofit and governmental organizations (for profit organizations not allowed). CIP must be unpaid. Not all departments offer CIP to their students. See CCE's blog post "[What’s the Difference Between Internships and the Community Involvement Program (CIP)](http://ssucce.wordpress.com/2011/09/23/whats-the-difference-between-internships-and-the-community-involvement-program-cip/)"

**How Does it Work?**

* Community members are responsible for recruiting, training and supervising the student. Student interns find a faculty advisor on campus to oversee the academic requirements of their internships.
* SSU does not have a central internship department. Internships are handled at the department level. Some departments require internships and have internship coordinators. Here is a [list of Department phone numbers](http://www.sonoma.edu/pdf/ssu_by_division.pdf) and [web links to Schools](http://www.sonoma.edu/academics/) on campus.
* If the internship is unpaid, service time can become a part of the [Sonoma County Time Exchange](http://www.sonomacountytimeexchange.org/) and [compensating with Time Dollars](http://ssucce.wordpress.com/2011/01/05/sharing-time-skills-and-experience-how-time-banking-benefits-organizations/).

**What to Anticipate**

* The internship may be the students' first professional experience. Students will need specific instruction on work expectations, including number of hours, work hours, and other administrative requirements.
* Students will be learning on the job. Internships are based on the premise that students will be learning new skills.
* Students vary in writing and critical thinking skills. If certain skills are required for the internship, community members should interview students to determine whether they have these skills.
* Students top priorities often are their school work. Midterms and finals can create heavy workloads for the students and variability in student availability should be addressed at the beginning of the internship.

**How Do I Find a Student Intern?**

* If you are a non-profit offering unpaid internships, support for finding students is available from the[Center for Community Engagement.](http://ssucce.wordpress.com/2011/02/01/how-to-recruit-ssu-students-as-interns-for-cip/) See CCE's blog post, "[How to Recruit SSU Students as Interns & for CIP](http://ssucce.wordpress.com/2012/08/06/updated-how-to-recruit-ssu-students-as-interns-for-cip/)."
* Draft a position description (with mission, expectations, title, and activities) and:
  + send to [Center for Community Engagement](mailto:cce@sonoma.edu),
  + send to faculty in the [WATERS Expertise Guide](http://web.sonoma.edu/waters/people/index.html) with interests in your area,
  + post to on [Career Services Seawolf Jobs site](http://www.sonoma.edu/career).
* Connect directly to students:
  + attend the 2012 Service & Internship Fair (usually in August and January; see CCE for dates each year) or at a [Community Partner Thursday](http://ssucce.wordpress.com/2012/12/04/new-way-to-recruit-ssu-students/)
  + If you have interns now, ask them to help you with your recruitment.
  + Post positions to your website, post the link on [Facebook](http://www.facebook.com/), etc. Ask current and past students to link to it and share it, etc.

**When Is the Best Time to Recruit Students?**

* The beginning of Spring (January) and Fall (August) semesters is the best time to recruit students looking for internships. If students are receiving credit, they generally need to have their forms submitted by the second week of the semester.

**Working with Classes: Service-Learning**

**What is Service-Learning?**

Service-learning is a teaching method in which students enrolled in an academic course investigate a topic with a community partner. ([More information about service-learning](http://www.sonoma.edu/cce/faculty/what_is_service_learning.html).) Service-learning responds to community needs and supports academic learning and generally includes:

* **Reciprocity:** The community service supports the students' academic and civic learning and addresses an expressed community interest
* **Reflection:**The instructor provides students with opportunities for structured "reflection" that helps students to connect the service with academic and personal learning.

**How Does it Work?**

A nonprofit or agency partners with a course instructor to create a project. The project must:

* be connected to and supports the academic learning objectives of the course
* address a need identified or developed in partnership with the community partner
* be a core component of the course and is described in the course syllabus or independent study contract
* be the basis for the end-of-course critical reflection linking the service and academic study

**What to Anticipate**

* Partners will attend the course at least twice and interact with students. See CCE's "[Providing Students With An Orientation](http://www.sonoma.edu/cce/agencies/agency_orientation_checklist.html)"
* Student products will be variable in quality but that the instructor will be able to provide information about reliability and quality of the results
* Timing of course work will be defined by the academic schedule and other course requirements
* Course supplies may need to be provided by the community partner

**How Do I Find a Class?**

All academic disciplines support service-learning. However, whether or not a particular course will engage in service-learning is the prerogative of the instructor. The [Water-Related Course List](http://web.sonoma.edu/waters/logistics/courses.html) provides a list of courses that may have water-related interests. Also, see CCE's list of [service-learning courses](http://ssucce.wikispaces.com/Service-Learning+Course+List).

* Contact us: Center Director Claudia Luke: lukec@sonoma.edu.
* To find out who teaches the course, you can contact departments involved or contact the [Center for Community Engagement.](http://ssucce.wordpress.com/2011/02/01/how-to-recruit-ssu-students-as-interns-for-cip/)

**When Is the Best Time to Find a Class?**

* Service-learning takes some up front planning. It is best to plan a project with a course instructor in the semester prior to the one in which the course is taught. If the project is relatively short, it may be possible to incorporate some aspect of the project into the current semester.

**Contracts**

**What are Contracts?**

SSU faculty and staff can engage in contract work with organizations or individuals interested in undertaking specific projects. Students are often employed as part of the project work.

**How Does it Work?**

Contracts are developed by the community organization, faculty or staff and SSU Contracts and Procurement. These are legally binding agreements that specify scope of work, budget and deadlines for deliverables.

Faculty and staff can engage with organizations directly or as part of SSU institutes. Examples of campus institutes with regular contract activity include:

* Institute for Community Planning Assistance (ICPA)
* [Anthropological Studies Center](http://www.sonoma.edu/asc/)
* [Center for Environmental Inquiry](http://www.sonoma.edu/cei/)
* [The Center for Interdisciplinary Geospatial Analysis (CIGA)](http://www.sonoma.edu/geoglobal/ciga/)

**What to Anticipate**

Faculty or staff member is responsible for the delivery and quality of the final project. Student work is carefully reviewed to ensure that it meets high quality standards.

**How Do I Find Faculty or Staff Interested in My Project?**

Many faculty across campus engage in contract work. The best way to identify faculty is by reviewing faculty websites to find descriptions of their expertise and whether they have engaged in contract work in the past. The [WATERS Expertise Guide](http://web.sonoma.edu/waters/people/index.html) provides an introductions to faculty interested in water-related issues and provides links to their website with additional information about their recent contract work.

**When Is the Best Time to Develop a Contract?**

Anytime. Contracts can take 4-6 weeks for development with SSU Contracts and Procurement.