The internship program in the Information Systems area in the College of Business Administration at the University of Nevada, Reno is designed to further the education of qualified students by providing an opportunity for them to integrate formal classroom education with on-the-job experience in a professional environment. This program can have lasting benefits for participating students by allowing them to broaden their skills and relate theories and principles learned in the classroom to actual operations and practices.

The majority of students who participate in the internship program do so to gain practical experience that becomes an integral part of their training in business and information systems. Others are curious about career opportunities and want to see the actual activities of an information systems professional in the workplace, and still others are trying to obtain an advantage in obtaining permanent employment.

Companies participate in the internship program for a variety of reasons. Some organizations view the internship program as a substitute for a formal, in-house training program. Others are simply anxious to get a 'preview' of our better students. Still others may find the program provides a good source of talent that can be used in filling temporary slots caused by vacations and/or sick leaves. Regardless of the reasons for participation, companies are afforded the opportunity to participate with the College in the development of an outstanding educational program for good students.

Since the internship is part of the student's education, there is no obligation on the part of the company to offer the intern a permanent position upon graduation. Also, in the event an offer is extended to the intern, there is no obligation on the part of the student to accept. The term of employment is decided between the company and the intern and implies no obligations beyond that time period.

Many different types of information systems-related jobs are appropriate for internship credit. The list below is not exhaustive, but will give an idea of the types of work that could be used for IS480 information systems elective credit:

1. **Technical:** Network administration, email server administration, PC support (installation, maintenance, troubleshooting, etc.), custom programming, database design, database programming, report generation, web server administration, and web site development and maintenance. System testing, and testing documentation are also appropriate internship activities.

2. **Systems Analysis:** Modeling existing processes, identifying weaknesses/opportunities for improvements in current processes, performing data/statistical analysis, researching potential software products to improve business processes, doing presentations, writing reports, and performing cost/benefit analysis.

3. **Documentation and Support:** Helping users through formal help desk or informal help procedures, documenting existing processes and/or systems, creating procedures such as ETL processes, evaluating help desk process improvement methods, creating on line training, and performing training seminars.
Employer Obligations

In consenting to serve as a participant in the internship program, the employer should recognize the obligation to make the program an educational experience for the intern. An internship is not simply a part-time job, it is an employment opportunity designed to help the student learn more about the processes and activities of a professional in the area of information systems. The student will receive university credit for the internship so the internship must expand and enhance the knowledge of the student. The employer must agree to provide employment experience commensurate with the talents and aspirations of the intern, within the context of also providing value for the employer. The student is required to document the position with a complete job description and it is important that the employer read and sign this description to show agreement with the activities listed. The employer must agree in advance to the type of work that will be performed by the intern.

The kinds of tasks performed by the intern depend upon the needs of the employer. In the past, students have administered networks, done custom programming, designed and maintained web sites, created new social networking sites for customers and employees, designed databases, documented requirements, modeled processes, tested software, installed software, helped users with problems, served on help desks, and troubleshooting problems. Our students have performed a wide variety of information systems-related tasks for employers and it is up to the employer to decide what sorts of activities are most beneficial for the organization and will be most appropriate for the internship experience. The employer must agree to assign tasks that directly related to the development of skills and knowledge in information systems. The employer must also agree to assign tasks that will expand and enhance the information skills and knowledge of the intern.

It is recommended that the employer agree to pay the intern a reasonable wage. This is to help assure that the intern's talents are used by the employer, and also to provide financial support and encouragement to the intern. Other benefits, such as health insurance, tuition reimbursement etc., are not required forms of compensation, and may be provided for an intern at the discretion of the employer. The employer is responsible for providing all accident insurance coverage for the student while the student is employed.

The employer is obligated to assign a direct supervisor for the intern. It is important that the employer agree to assign a direct supervisor since part of the internship experience is based on what the intern will learn from that supervisor. While an intern is usually very self-motivated and able to work autonomously, an intern must have a supervisor to consult when there are questions about the job. An intern cannot replace a professional consultant for an employer. Interns are students who have relatively little direct experience, so they cannot complete their activities without any supervision. The university does not serve as the supervisor for the student — the employer must agree to serve as the supervisor for the student.

Since the intern will assume the position of a temporary employee, it is expected that the intern will be subject to the same disciplinary action as company policy dictates for other temporary employees. If performance is determined to be unsatisfactory, the employer may, upon notification of the academic internship coordinator, discharge the intern. The employer must agree to not discharge the intern without notification of the internship coordinator. If there are conflicts between the employer and the intern, please contact the internship coordinator as soon as
possible. The coordinator will arrange a meeting with the intern and the employer to clarify any problems that might be occurring with the internship.

At the end of the prescribed internship hours, the employer will fill out an evaluation of the intern’s performance. The evaluation report is provided in the internship packet and must be completed by the intern’s supervisor.

**Student Responsibilities and Obligations**

A student must have a job related to information systems before attempting to register for an internship. An internship class does not meet in a classroom – it is a way to earn credits while getting on-the-job training. There will be no class sessions for an internship.

The internship program is open to all students in good standing who meet certain minimum qualifications. To qualify for an internship, candidates generally must have junior standing, a 3.00 GPA or higher, and have successfully completed at least three upper-division information systems courses. At a minimum, students must have completed IS201, IS301, IS350 and IS365 earning a “B-” or better grade in each class before signing up for an internship.

In general, an intern will be expected to work up to (but no more than) twenty hours per week in blocks of four hours at a time. As a rule, the maximum academic credit granted for IS480 would be three semester credits for twenty hours per week during the normal semester.

To establish and complete an internship the student should do the following:

1) **Create an Internship Job Description:** make a *tentative* agreement with your potential employer and get a written job description from your employer, or create a description of duties with the employer. A sample job description is available on the College of Business Information Systems website. The description should include the following:

   - A list of job responsibilities. What will you do as part of this job?
   - An objective for the job over the period of time that it will be evaluated as an internship. If you have been working at this job already, what do you plan to learn/accomplish over the time of the internship? Is it different than what you have already been doing on the job?
   - Level of supervision. Do you have a direct supervisor? How much oversight does the supervisor provide? Will you be working with the supervisor over the period of time of the internship?
   - Amount of effort. How many hours do you plan to work each week over the period of the internship? For a fifteen week period of time, 150 hours = 1 semester credit; 225 hours = 2 semester credits; and 300 hours = 3 semester credits.
   - Pay rate. How much will you be paid for the internship?
   - Approvals. Include lines on the bottom of the internship outline for signatures of yourself, your employment supervisor and the faculty internship coordinator. Your employment supervisor must agree to the internship to gain credit so there must be a place on the internship outline for the employment supervisor to sign.
2) **Obtain approval of the internship coordinator and employment supervisor.** This is done by having both the faculty internship coordinator and employment supervisor sign the internship job description or send email agreeing to the internship job description. The internship coordinator will let you enroll for UNR registration after the internship job description is approved.

3) **Submit three Progress Reports.** During the course of the internship, the student will be expected to submit three brief reports to the faculty internship coordinator in accordance with a predetermined schedule. Normally, these reports will comprise an ongoing evaluation of the work experience and a written summary of activities. The report should be emailed to the faculty coordinator. Receipt of the report will be acknowledged by email. The report is due by 5 PM on the scheduled due date. A Student Progress Report form will be provided to the student from the faculty internship coordinator.

Failure to complete the progress reports as required (all portions completed and delivered on time) will result in a grade of Unsatisfactory for the internship.

4) **Submit a Final Report.** After the internship time period is over, prepare a report describing your internship experience. Acceptable papers are no shorter than five typed double-spaced pages and meet the usual college standards for spelling, punctuation, grammar, and the use of appropriate headings and sub-headings. Be sure to keep a copy of the report yourself. Failure to complete the Final Report as required (all portions completed and delivered on time) will result in a grade of Unsatisfactory for the internship. The final report should be emailed to the faculty internship coordinator.

You should do the following in your report:

1. Outline your activities during the period of the internship.
2. Describe what on-the-job training was available to help you with your tasks.
3. Describe the amount of supervision that was available to you during the internship.
4. Discuss any problems you encountered while performing your tasks.
5. Describe the benefits/drawbacks of the UNR IS curriculum in relation to the work you did on the job. Describe the classes that helped and did not help you with knowledge relevant to your internship.
6. Discuss any additional courses you believe UNR should offer that would have helped you on the job.
7. Discuss whether the internship helped you understand the tasks of an information systems professional. Are you still interested in working in this field?

Additionally, make sure you incorporate the answers to the following questions in your report:

1. In considering your total internship, what activity or responsibility was most rewarding? Which was least rewarding?
2. Would you recommend your employer to another student considering an internship? Why or why not?
3. Do you feel that the internship provided you with experience beneficial to your overall education program?
4. Did your education at UNR help you with your internship? Why or why not?

5) **Submit an employee evaluation form from your employer.** After the internship time period is over, ask your employer supervisor to complete an evaluation form (available from the internship coordinator). Submit this form to the faculty internship coordinator.

**Registration, Grading and Withdrawal**

Interns will sign up for college credit with the course number IS480. Permission to enroll in the class will be logged with MyNevada once the internship coordinator has approved the internship. **Undergraduate students majoring in information systems are eligible to apply up to a maximum of 3 credits of internship (IS480) credit to their degree program. Students will not be able to apply more than 3 credits of IS480 as “IS Elective” to the degree.** The number of credits earned is based on the number of hours worked. The table below gives a general idea of hours and credits:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Number of Hours Worked</th>
<th>Number of Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>300</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>225</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>150</td>
<td>1</td>
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Students will receive a grade of S (Satisfactory) or U (Unsatisfactory) at the end of the semester. The faculty internship coordinator will have sole responsibility for determining whether a student has successfully completed the internship, based upon the reports provided by the intern and the employer's final evaluation.

As a representative of the student body of UNR to the business community, the student is expected to act in an exemplary fashion while serving as an intern. Moreover, because the intern may be entrusted with positions of responsibility within the cooperating employer's firm, it is expected that all interns will complete the full term of their agreed internship. **Except for unusual circumstances, withdrawal from the internship program at any time prior to the completion of the contract period will result in automatic grade of unsatisfactory for the number of credits initially requested.**
**Student Transition to the Workplace**

**Introduction:** Your work assignment may be your first introduction to the professional work environment. It is the beginning of your career, which could span four to five decades, and it is important for you to maximize your internship experience. This portion of the internship package will assist you in making the transition from college student to professional.

**Role of the Student:**
- Meet all academic requirements of the internship program.
- Represent UNR in a professional manner.
- Gain professional skills and knowledge not available in the classroom or in textbooks.
- Apply classroom knowledge in an actual work environment.
- Make professional contacts.
- Develop and demonstrate the best work skills possible.

**Make your assignment work for you:**
- **Keep a calendar, journal or daily planner** of activities, projects, and/or assignments for your use.
- **Follow through to completion any project or portions of projects assigned to you.** If you determine that your assigned project is going to be delayed for reasons beyond your control, notify your supervisor immediately. Be cautious not to make excuses – state only facts – the result could be a possible extended due date or additional assistance to meet the time frame deadline. It is always better to inform your supervisor of delays than to have the supervisor find out “through the grapevine.” Good expectations management is critical for information systems professionals.
- **Ask questions.** If you do not understand an assignment, ask questions of your supervisor. Most folks are very busy in the workplace and won’t stop to make sure you understand exactly what you have been asked to accomplish. Your supervisor is probably depending on you to figure out your work by yourself, but if you can’t, then ask questions. It is better to ask questions than to sit quietly and accomplish little.
- **Don’t assume.** A reported problem with information systems people is that they tend to “assume” rather than ask for input and/or confirmation. For example, don’t assume that you know exactly what your user wants in a report. Don’t assume that what you think the user needs is actually what the user wants. Instead, draw up a few samples of reports that you could produce for a user, then make an appointment with that user to discuss those samples. Same thing with a database design. In the classroom, we (professors) let you “assume” much more often than you should in a business environment. Make sure you work as closely with your users/clients as possible so that you can generate information systems that meet their wants/needs.
- **Support company policies.** Make sure you consistently carry out company policy, including safety rules. If you disagree or find fault with policy, it is strongly advised you first consult with your supervisor to make sure you understand the policy but then keep your opinions to yourself. If you find the policy goes against your values or morals, you have a difficult decision to make, and you should consult with the faculty internship coordinator about how to handle the situation. It is possible to quit an internship, but you must work with the faculty internship coordinator in that situation.
• **Demonstrate loyalty and belief in the company, product, and/or services.** All employers expect loyalty. It is advised not to talk about or discuss competitors in comparative terms. Do not point out what you perceive to be a weakness or fault of your employer or products unless you are directly requested to discuss such matters by your supervisor.

• **Manage your time at work.** Set priorities. Make the extra effort. Be a self-starter.

• **Be positive.** Approach every task, person, and event with the attitude of acceptance, be open-minded and willing to see a task through to completion. Be “for” things as opposed to “against” them. Maintain a sense of humor. Volunteer to help others achieve their objectives. Cooperate and participate in new projects. Assist others. Contribute to discussions.

• **Show genuine interest.** Ask questions and make comments. Demonstrate to your supervisor that the activity or project you are doing is worthwhile and that you care about the process and outcome.

• **Find ways to measure your progress.** Nothing impresses a supervisor more than demonstrated success. Find ways to measure what you have accomplished (i.e. number of help desk calls completed successfully, number of systems upgraded, number of reports created) and keep track of those accomplishments.

• **Seek additional assignments.** An internship is not just a part-time job. Actively seek out opportunities to learn new things and enhance your skills in information systems. Your employer has agreed to the internship and should be willing to give you new assignments if you are qualified and have the time to complete those assignments.

• **Listen and follow instructions.** Look directly at the person giving you the assignment. Take notes. Wait until the instructions are finished and repeat back the instructions in brief form to make certain you understand. Ask for clarification if any points seem unclear to you.

• **Attempt to have perfect attendance, including being on time.** Promptness is noted and appreciated by management. Manage your time. Set your alarm early, allow for traffic, parking snags and other things that might cause delays. It is always preferable to arrive early than risk being late.

• **Handle email communication with co-workers professionally.** Email communication is fundamental in most organizations. Email is different than texting – you should communicate professionally with full sentences and avoid abbreviations. Use correct spelling and grammar in email. Remember that email is considered to be official documentation in most organizations and that it can be subpoenaed in case of a law suit or governmental inquiry. Do not write anything in email that you would be unwilling to see quoted on the news presented in another medium.

• **General tips:**
  o Be courteous. Treat all employees with respect. Use “thank you” and “please.”
  o Do not display insubordination. If you disagree with a request made by management, explain why you disagree and offer alternative solutions/approaches. Use good communication skills with your supervisor to present your points of difference. If you continue to disagree with your supervisor and don’t know how to handle the situation, consult with the internship coordinator for advice about the problem.
  o Do not gossip at work. Avoid the temptation of negatively discussing your fellow co-workers. NEVER gossip about your managers. You can never be sure who will be listening or who will repeat what you have said to others.
  o Do not gossip on Facebook or any other social media site. You would be surprised at how many people use the Web in their spare time and how many people will find out
about what you have said on your personal wall. **DO NOT** discuss the people at work, or the situations at work, on a social networking site. I guarantee that it will get back to your supervisor faster than you could possibly imagine.

- Do not disclose private company business.
- Do not leave the job during work hours without permission.
- Inquire about your working hours and BE ON TIME!!
- Dress appropriately and modestly in clean clothes. Look at what others wear in the workplace and use them as your guide.
- Do not use company resources (phone, computer, supplies, etc.) for personal use.
- Do not use company time for personal phone calls, web surfing, texting, social networking or any other type of personal activities.