MEET YOUR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING TEAM

Lauren Loeffler  
Director

Lindsey Walk  
Associate Director

Katie Hudon  
Assistant Director, Experiential Learning

Mikia Carter  
Coordinator, Experiential Learning

EVENTS
Check JasonQuest frequently as more events will be added throughout the semester.

OUR MISSION
The role of Career Services is to advance UWF’s mission, vision, and priorities by educating and empowering UWF students/alumni in the career development process and by providing opportunities for experiential learning, civic engagement, service, and employment.

CONNECT WITH US
Career Services  
11000 University Pkwy.  
Bldg. 19  
Pensacola, FL 32514  
(850) 474-2254  
career@uwf.edu

TABLE OF CONTENTS
Faculty Toolkit
Your Handbook for Experiential Learning at UWF

4 .................................................................... Career Liaison
5 .................................................................... Services
6 .................................................................... Events
7 .................................................................... Internship
8 .................................................................... Cooperative Education
9 .................................................................... Service Learning
10 ......................................................... Career Decision Making
11 ......................................................... JasonQuest
13 ......................................................... Special Populations
15 ......................................................... Employer Agreement
17 ......................................................... CoOp Evaluation
18 ......................................................... CoOp Syllabus
19 ......................................................... Service Learning Experience
20 ......................................................... Reflect and Discuss
21 ......................................................... Fair Labor Standards Act
As the Director of Career Services at the University of West Florida, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your work in providing a strong academic environment for our students. We encourage our students to work hard both inside and outside the classroom to prepare them for their futures. Now more than ever, our employers expect relevant work experience from our graduates, making these experiences so invaluable. We look forward to partnering with you to help provide great experiences for our students.

Career Services provides comprehensive career development services to our entire student population and our alumni. We work with students at every stage of their career development process. We are focused on helping students Explore, Discover, Prepare, and Implement to turn their passion into a career. Throughout this process, students are encouraged to participate in experiential learning opportunities. Whether informal through service learning or formal through an internship or cooperative education, our students are graduating with relevant experience and skills needed to hit the ground running in their career.

We assist our partners in academics in finding ways to incorporate experiential learning components into classes and departments. Our staff are happy to conduct consulting appointments with you to assist in developing the most appropriate experiences for your department and individual student goals. The information and guidelines contained in this toolkit are designed to help with that process and provide information on the variety of options available to compliment the academic work of our institution.

We look forward to partnering with you!

Lauren Loeffler

Director, Career Services
Career Liaison

Career Services has designated a professional staff member to serve as a liaison to each of UWF’s colleges. The purpose of the liaison model is to continue building relationships with faculty and staff in a manner that allows us to better serve our students. Our liaisons are happy to assist you with questions, resources, programs, and partnerships.

What we can offer for your experiential learning needs:

- Offer verification of internship hours
- Offer portal for position posting
- Send special postings to internship contact
- Offer E-Learning modules
- Offer/Co-teach Internship Orientations
- Showcase work at Reverse Career Fair
- Present on career-related topics
- Offer examples for Internship Program Curriculum and Forms

Mikia Carter
College of Education and Professional Studies

Sarah Fox
University College

Jennifer Hill
College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

Lindsey Walk
College of Business

Katie Hudon
Hal Marcus College of Science and Engineering

Tim Moore
College of Health

Jimmy Orum
Online Campus
Appointments Overview

There are two ways students and alumni can meet one-on-one with our career coaches: scheduled, hour-long appointments and Drop In Hours. Consider requiring your students to come visit us as a part of an assignment or project for your course, or encourage them to come in if they have questions or concerns related to their future careers. To schedule an appointment or set up an assignment, contact our office at 850-474-2254 to request an appointment.

Hour-Long Appointment types include
Career and Major Exploration, Resume/Cover Letter Review, Job Search Strategies, Mock Interviews, Career Planning, Job Shadowing, Internship, CoOp, Professional Social Media, Grad School Search/Strategies

Don’t Cancel Class Presentations

If you need to be away from class, Don’t Cancel Class; Career Services can cover for you!

We can do a presentation on the following topics:
Career Services 101, JasonQuest Overview, Resumes, Cover Letters, Job Search Strategies, Interviewing Skills, Social Media/Online Branding, Experiential Learning, MyCareerShines Interest Assessment, Major and Career Exploration, and more!
Request a presentation at uwf.edu/dontcancelclass
(In order to ensure availability, please submit your request at least two weeks in advance of presentation date.)

Career Development Guide

Topics covered include
Career Development Model, Career Exploration, Goal Setting, Experiential Learning, JasonQuest, Transferable Skills, Resume Basics and Examples, Cover Letters, References, Graduate School, Job Searching, Interviewing, Dining Etiquette, Thank You Letters, Job Offers & Salaries, and more!

Find a copy of the guide in Career Services (Building 19) or online at www.uwf.edu/career.
MEET & GREETS
Meet and Greets offer numerous employers the chance to come to campus and meet students where they are. Employers set up tables for anywhere from 2 to 4 hours to discuss options for employment within their particular companies.

ON CAMPUS INTERVIEWS
Employers from local as well as regional locations have the chance to come to campus to host interviews for UWF students. This gives students the ease of not having to travel of campus to interview for potential employment opportunities.

CAREER ROAD TRIPS
Career Road Trips allow us to take students off campus to visit local companies. While on a Career Road Trip, students tour the facility, meet the staff, and view a day in the life of the company as it promotes its brand.

CAREERS IN... PANELS
Career Services hosts program-specific panel discussions where employers provide recommendations to students regarding what they can do now to be better prepared for their future careers.

ETIQUETTE DINNER
UWF students have the chance to develop relationships with employers that are working in the field. This event is designed as a workshop for students on proper business dining etiquette and best practices for professional networking.

New Contacts
Do you have any contacts that you would like to share with us? Send us an email or give us a call. We can schedule an employer consult and let them know all of the great services we provide.
**Definition:**
An internship is most often a one-semester experience that may or may not be for course credit. It may also be paid or non-paid; however, nonpaid internships must comply with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Paid internships must comply with the minimum wage and overtime pay requirements under FLSA.

**Management Tips:**
Maintain approved internship agreements
- Ensure this has language that addresses expectations of the student, employer, and university and is appropriately signed and tracked.
- Consult with UWF General Counsel when creating and authorizing agreements

Obtain clear internship job descriptions
- Make sure the expectations, scope of work, and potential projects are outlined.

Look for “real” work
- Check in with the student to ensure he or she is doing meaningful work and learning about how the industry actually operates rather than simply getting coffee or filing. Also ensure variety in student’s experiences check on this with assignments and evaluations.

Get feedback from the student and employer.
Feedback can come through a variety of assignments such as journals, discussion questions, site visits, and evaluations.

**How to help students succeed:**
Help students prepare for experiences
- Encourage them to participate in other experiences such as job shadowing, service learning, or research.
- Share information about the resources provided by Career Services with them. We can assist with writing resumes, practicing interviews, honing job search strategies, and offering resources.

Share opportunities with students and encourage participation
- Create and use a faculty account for JasonQuest, the online job database maintained by Career Services. To create an account visit: https://www.myinterface.com/uwf/faculty/
- Share information about career-related events such as career fairs and workshops with students and, if possible, offer incentives for attendance.

“"I am a Community and Media Relations Intern for Escambia County Board of County Commissioners. I learned about this position by serving the Florida Public Relations Association Pensacola Chapter as the Student Liaison. I recommend talking to your professors to find internships. Make sure you get to them early on and then get involved in your community. See what professional and social organizations are out there - and make sure to do as much networking as possible."

**Public Relations, Grace Tennyson**
**COOPERATIVE EDUCATION (CoOp)**

**Definition:**
CoOp is a multi-semester (3 semester requirement) experiential learning opportunity for students that is always paid and for credit. CoOps allow students to gain relevant work experience that compliments their academic studies. They are managed through the Career Services office.

It is a structured method of combining classroom-based education with practical work experience. A cooperative education experience provides academic credit for structured job experience. CoOp experiences are either full-time (40 hours per week) alternating periods (semester, quarter) of work and school or part-time (20 hours per week) combining work and school during the same time period. CoOp experiences are paid and supervised by professionals who have followed the same career path of the student. Students complete reflective coursework during their CoOp sessions.

**Development**
CoOps have a focus on development and growth as professionals before students even begin working. Students must meet with Career Services staff to learn the specifics of participating in a CoOp and the process for becoming eligible. Students then seek approval from their department and submit their resume for review by Career Services. Participation in a mock or practice interview is highly encouraged. Once a student has secured a position, he or she again meets with Career Services to discuss how to prepare, professionalism in the workplace, desired learning and development outcomes, and expectations.

CoOps have a continued focus on development and growth through reflective assignments, research of the field, evaluation of work performance, and professional development topics. Each semester, students attend a meeting at the end of the term with Career Services to discuss additional developmental topics including networking, creating portfolios, and additional review of their resume. For details on the assignments please see the CoOp syllabus.

**Search:**
Initiating the Cooperative (CoOp) Education process in Confluence on MyUWF for more information.

“I did a an Electrical Engineering CoOp at Gulf Power for two-and-a-half years. If you are in a highly technical degree, you need experience to put on your resume. I would recommend contacting Career Services to get a CoOp. I loved my CoOp experience and am now making in the top 2 percentile of 2016 graduates. You have to take steps to get experience; you can’t graduate and expect a job to be given to you - you have to earn it.”

**Electrical Engineering, Brandon Sellers**
Service Learning

Service learning combines community service with classroom instruction, focusing on critical, reflective thinking as well as personal civic responsibility. Service learning programs involve students in activities that address local needs while developing their academic skills and commitment to their community.

Field-based “experiential learning” with community partners is an instructional strategy and often a required part of the course. The idea is to give students direct experience with issues they are studying in the curriculum and with ongoing efforts to analyze and solve problems in the community. A key element in these programs is the opportunity students have to both apply what they are learning in real-world settings and to reflect in a classroom setting on their service experiences. These programs model the idea that giving something back to the community is an important college outcome and that working with community partners is good preparation for citizenship, work, and life. (from Part 1 of High-Impact Educational Practices document).

Field Study

Field study varies from department to department, but it is typically a stand-alone experience that a student completes in conjunction with his or her academic department. Assignments might include journals or other reflections and/or a final paper. Requirements for participation are typically defined by the academic department, and the position must be approved by the department.

“I volunteered for Deaf and Hard Hearing Services in Pensacola during my senior year. I was the receptionist and IT specialist. My major is Information Technology, so the position is very fitting for me. I have met some great individuals, and the staff treats me like their own. This position has led me to great career connections as well.”

Information Technology, Monique Stafford
Job Shadow

Students can gain valuable exposure to a career by following a professional in a job shadowing experience. Shadowing can be a great opportunity for students wishing to decide on a major or a good preliminary experience before entering an internship or CoOp. They can spend a half day, full day, or several days participating in observations and discussions with professionals at work. In a job shadow, students learn what qualifications are needed for the job, the daily responsibilities, and how the position fits into the overall functioning of the organization. This realistic preview of a job allows the student to reflect on the experience and create career goals.

Informational Interviews

Informational Interviews allow a student to meet with a professional to ask questions and gain more in-depth knowledge about a career from a professional working in that field. This is a great way to ask the very specific things that may matter to a particular individual but also allows him or her a chance to get a better overall picture of a position while building a connection in the field.

Networking

Networking is valuable for individuals to use in connecting with professionals working in the field and can be a great way to connect with possible job opportunities. In fact, it is often one of the most valuable ways a person can find potential job opportunities. While shadowing, a student will be able to add more professionals to his or her network than just the person they are following; they will likely have an opportunity to meet colleagues and other professionals in the industry and may learn of other ways to network within their field, such as through professional associations.

“I am currently majoring in History with a minor in Child Welfare. When I first came to college, I thought I wanted to go to law school and become an adoption attorney. After job shadowing with Guardian Ad Litem’s Program Case Manager, I realized that I love social work and will continue my education by receiving my Masters in Social Work.”

History/Child Welfare, Allee Millsap
To assist your students with exploring careers, the JasonQuest Faculty Portal gives you access to view all types of position openings for internship and Cooperative Education opportunities as well as part-time and full-time jobs.

To create a JasonQuest account, contact career@uwf.edu. Once you have your credentials, use the following link to enter the portal: https://www.myinterface.com/uwf/faculty/.

Be sure to add the link to your favorites by clicking the star icon!

JasonQuest is home to...
• Hundreds of part-time and full-time jobs
• Experiential learning opportunities
• Career events
• 3,000+ employer contacts who can make their contact information available to you
A Through the My Profile tab, you can access your profile to make updates to your account.

B Through the Jobs section on JasonQuest, you can search for volunteer and service opportunities, internships, CoOps, and part-time and full-time positions.

C All of the Career Services events are housed under the Career Events tab. In this section, you can learn about all upcoming events including employer meet & greets, career panels, career road trips, etiquette dinners, and career fairs.

D The Resource Library is your source for additional career information. Located in the Resource Library are links for Optimal Resume, Interview Stream and Candid Career; more sample employer agreements, assignment prompts and syllabus examples can be found here.
CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF DIVERSE POPULATIONS

UWF welcomes students from a variety of backgrounds and experiences. Many of these students seek to gain experience in the workplace, either by working as interns during their college enrollment or by seeking full-time employment upon graduation. Because of the special abilities and cultural experiences they possess, international students, disabled students, and other student populations can be ideally suited for employment within the U.S. workforce. Career Services, International Student Services (ISS), and the Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC) thus encourage faculty and staff to partner with them on providing career development information to these populations.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Working with international students on career planning may entail assisting them in recognizing the skill sets they possess. Some unique attributes of this population might include initiative, flexibility, and experience in successfully adapting to new situations and environments; fresh perspectives and novel approaches to challenges; and foreign language skills. Exploring specific experiences (e.g., course projects, capstone experiences, field study, etc.) where students have built upon and demonstrated these skills and others offers international students the opportunity to become more comfortable in discussing their backgrounds, an ability that will serve them well in future job search efforts. Providing opportunities to practice language, constructing networking lists, and sharing resources might also be practices to consider to further the career goals of international students. Remember to invite students to utilize Career Services and the ISS, which both provide services and resources to assist international students in achieving success throughout their career development process.

For more information on working with international students and graduates, please contact the ISS office at (850) 474-2479 or Career Services.

DISABLED STUDENTS

Assisting disabled students with their career development might entail an exploration of skillsets developed through specific experiences such as service learning, team projects, and research paper construction. Working with these students to brainstorm on a network of mentors and employers could also greatly benefit them. Of course, resource sharing is also encouraged. Remember to invite students to utilize Career Services and the SDRC, which both provide services and resources to assist job seekers with disabilities achieve success throughout their career development process.

For more information on working with disabled students and graduates, please contact the SDRC at (850) 474-2387 or Career Services.

Assisting students and alumni from diverse backgrounds in career development can benefit the individuals, the University, and the global community. Explore possibilities for engaging these students in the career development process, whether it is through referrals to campus resources or engagement in individualized or group interactions covering material, such as that discussed above.
What Skills and Qualities are Important to Employers?
According to the 2015 National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) Job Outlook Survey, the top 10 qualities/skills employers seek are TRANSFERABLE skills. In which of these skills do you excel? How have you demonstrated these? How can you help your students develop their skills further?

1. Verbal communication
2. Teamwork
3. Critical thinking/problem-solving skills
4. Ability to plan and prioritize work
5. Ability to process information
6. Analytical skills
7. Technical knowledge
8. Computer skills
9. Written communication skills
10. Ability to sell or influence others

Through several forms of experiential learning, students can...
- Obtain career-related experience
- Explore career interests and clarify future career goals
- Network with professionals in their fields and identify potential mentors
- Improve their post-graduation job prospects
- Incorporate classroom theories with applied learning experiences
- Improve their essential job search skills such as professional resume writing and interviewing techniques
- Earn recognition for their experience through transcript notation or course credit
- Develop professional references for their future careers
Cooperative Education Employer Participation Agreement

According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers 2013 Internship and CoOp survey, “the conversion rate for co-op students was 36.9 percent.”

Online Resources

- InterviewStream
- OptimalResume.com
- CandidCareer.com
- MyCareerShines
• “Respondents who hired interns/CoOp students from their own programs retained 88.9 percent of these hires after one year.”

Look for this logo throughout the Faculty Toolkit. It indicates that additional information is available for you in the Resource Library on JasonQuest.
CoOp Evaluations

Cooperative Education Final Evaluation

Student's Name: ___________________________ Date: ____________

1. Unsatisfactory (Novice demonstrates this ability does not meet expectations)
2. Uncomplimentary (Seldom demonstrates this ability/silently meets expectations)
3. Fair (Sometimes demonstrates this ability/needs improvement)
4. Commendable (Usually demonstrates this ability/sometimes exceeds expectations)
5. Exceptional (Always demonstrates this ability/consistently exceeds expectations)

If any criteria are not applicable or if the student has not had the opportunity to demonstrate this experience, please leave the response blank.

Communication Skills: The student:
1. Is able to read, comprehend and follow written materials.
2. Is able to communicate ideas and concepts clearly in writing.
3. Listens to others in an active and attentive manner.
4. Effectively participates in meetings or group settings.
5. Demonstrates effective verbal communication skills.
6. Asks pertinent and purposeful questions.

Please provide the best/most relevant example of how the student demonstrates this skill.

Do you have any recommendations for improvement in this skill?

Vocational/Career Preparation: The student:
7. Is able to break down complex tasks/problems into manageable pieces.
8. Brainstorms/develops options and ideas.
9. Demonstrates ability to problem solve.
10. Exhibits self-motivated approach to work.
11. Demonstrates an ability to set appropriate priorities/ goals.
12. Exhibits a professional behavior and attitude.
13. Reports to work as scheduled and arrives on time.
14. The student’s dress and appearance are appropriate for this organization.

Please provide the best/most relevant example of how the student demonstrates this skill.

Do you have any recommendations for improvement in this skill?

Leadership: The student:
15. Manages and resolves conflicts in an effective manner.
16. Supports and contributes to a team atmosphere.
17. Demonstrates assertive, but appropriate behavior.
18. Seeks to understand and support the organization’s mission/goals.
19. Fits in with the norms and expectations of the organization.
20. Seeks out and utilizes appropriate resources.
21. Works within appropriate authority and decision making channels.

Please provide the best/most relevant example of how the student demonstrates this skill.

Do you have any recommendations for improvement in this skill?

Integrity/Values: The student:
22. Exhibits a positive and constructive attitude.
23. Brings a sense of values and integrity to the job.
25. Behaves in an ethical manner.
26. Respects the diversity (religious/cultural/ethnic) of co-workers.

Please provide the best/most relevant example of how the student demonstrates this skill.

Do you have any recommendations for improvement in this skill?

Employer’s Signature ___________________________ Date: ____________

UWF CoOp Employers

Current Products Corporation
Escambia River Electric Cooperative
General Electric
Gulf Power
Micro Systems
Sam’s Fun City
Santa Rosa County Property Appraiser
State Farm
Stuart Contracting Company
Studer Group
Verizon
Cooperative Education Syllabus/SLOs – Spring 2017

Cooperative Education (CoOp) allows students to gain relevant and professional work experiences that complement their academic studies. It is a partnership between employers, students, and the University, focused on professional practice and vocational exploration. Combining paid work experience with their studies, CoOp students have an opportunity to explore their professions and apply principles acquired in the classroom.

✓ All assignments must be submitted to eLearning.

✓ **No Points will be given for late assignments without prior approval** of the UWF Career Services. Please call 850.474.2254 as soon as possible if you have special circumstances.

✓ Students must complete all assignments and have no fewer than **70 points** to receive a passing grade for Cooperative Education credit hours.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Points Awarded</th>
<th>Deadline Due no later than 11:59PM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Semester Work Plan</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>01/20/2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resume Update</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>02/03/2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network Assignment</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>02/17/2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Term Evaluations (Self and Employer Evaluations)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>03/03/2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview Assignment</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>03/24/2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Report*</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>04/14/2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Evaluations (Self and Employer Evaluations)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>04/21/2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End-of-Term Reflection</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>04/28/2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Schedule an appointment by calling Career Services in Building 19 at 850.474.2254.**

*Failure to submit a Final Report Assignment will result in an unsatisfactory grade for the entire term.

**Forms are also located in JasonQuest in the Resource Library.**

The Student Code of Conduct sets forth the rules, regulations and expected behavior of students enrolled at the University of West Florida. Violations of any rules, regulations, or behavioral expectations may result in a charge of violating the Student Code of Conduct. It is the students' responsibility to read the Student Code of Conduct and act in accordance to the Code. You may access the current Student Code of Conduct at http://www.uwf.edu/judicialaffairs.

Students with a documented disability who require specific examination or course-related academic accommodations should contact the Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC) by e-mail at sdrcc@uwf.edu or by phone at 850.474.2387.
Designing Service Learning as a High-Impact Practice for Community Engagement
Office of Community Engagement - Division of University Advancement

Service Learning courses can now be identified with a Banner Classification code, which will help students identify service learning courses and help the Office of Community Engagement track courses and assess learning outcomes to maintain the UWF Community Engagement Classification with the Carnegie Foundation. Contact us now to learn more about best practices in the design and implementation of Service Learning, including hallmark SLOs and high-impact pedagogical practices that contribute to Service Learning as a transformative experience.

Howard J. Reddy, Associate Director
Office of Community Engagement
Division of University Advancement
hreddy@uwf.edu

Lauren Loeffler, CE Assessment Fellow
Director, Career Services
lloeffler@uwf.edu

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### Aligning service learning activities with SLO’s:

**Aligning Service Learning Activity with Hallmark Service Learning SLOs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Learning Activity</th>
<th>Product (Student Work)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communicate in a professionally appropriate manner.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articulate one’s place in the continuum of privilege and power in the context of diverse groups.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulate behavior when interacting with diverse groups to demonstrate self-awareness and cultural competence.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articulate the service needs in the partner community.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply disciplinary knowledge to solve real-world problems posed by the partner community. Articulate the value of disciplinary skill and content for real-world applications.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
REFLECT AND DISCUSS

OFFER CREDIT FOR EXPERIENCES
Credit-based courses can encourage participation and create opportunities to offer students feedback and allow for growth and development of professional skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Studies</th>
<th>Class Discussions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Presentations</td>
<td>Personal Journals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Portfolios</td>
<td>Reflection Questions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What should be included in the Final Reflection Paper?

**Agency:**
Describe and identify its mission, vision, values, and goals. Describe the culture of the organization (level of formality, structure and hierarchy of the organization, values, reward system, etc.). Describe the purpose of the organization. Discuss how your position contributed to the overall mission of the organization.

**Learning Objectives/Action Plan:**
What did you outline as your initial learning objectives and action plan? Did these change throughout the experience? If so, how? Describe the challenges, successes, and setbacks to accomplish your initial objectives. Identify the specific outcomes for each objective, including any changes that were necessary. Describe what you had hoped to gain from this experience and how you planned to accomplish it. Specify new skills and knowledge, specific project development, new responsibilities, as well as the connection the experience had with your academic coursework. What strategies were used to accomplish these goals?

**Personal Development:**
Describe any specific skills acquired or polished during this experience. Describe contributions made to the agency. Identify personal growth. Comment on how this experience relates to future goals. Were your expectations of what should be accomplished met? If not, why? Describe any specific overlap with academic programs, course experiences, etc. In what ways did you learn through this service experience—observation, hands on, research, etc.? Describe what was learned. How did you change from the experience? What did you learn about a specific community or societal issue? What is service? What is community?

**Experience Evaluation:**
Evaluate your Service Learning experience in a summary paragraph. Relate back to your initial expectations and perceptions. Were you able to accomplish what you had hoped to accomplish? Did you learn what you had hoped to learn? Were you able to observe, participate in, or research anything that was valuable to your experience?
Fact Sheet #71: Internship Programs Under The Fair Labor Standards Act

This fact sheet provides general information to help determine whether interns must be paid the minimum wage and overtime under the Fair Labor Standards Act for the services that they provide to “for-profit” private sector employers.

Background

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) defines the term “employ” very broadly as including to “suffer or permit to work.” Covered and non-exempt individuals who are “suffered or permitted” to work must be compensated under the law for the services they perform for an employer. Internships in the “for-profit” private sector will most often be viewed as employment unless the test described below relating to trainees is met. Interns in the “for-profit” private sector who qualify as employees rather than trainees typically must be paid at least the minimum wage and overtime compensation for hours worked over forty in a workweek.

The Test For Unpaid Interns

There are some circumstances under which individuals who participate in “for-profit” private sector internships or training programs may do so without compensation. The Supreme Court has held that “suffer or permit to work” cannot be interpreted so as to make a person whose work serves only his or her own interest an employee of another who provides aid or instruction. This may apply to interns who receive training for their own educational benefit if the training meets certain criteria. The determination of whether an internship or training program meets this exclusion depends upon all of the facts and circumstances of each such program.

The following six criteria must be applied when making this determination:

1. The internship, even though it includes actual operation of the facilities of the employer, is similar to training which would be given in an educational environment;
2. The internship experience is for the benefit of the intern; the intern does not displace regular employees but works under close supervision of existing staff;
3. The employer that provides the training derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the intern, and, on occasion, its operations may actually be impeded;
4. The intern is not necessarily entitled to a job at the conclusion of the internship; and
5. The employer and the intern understand that the intern is not entitled to wages for the time spent in the internship.

* Law guidelines and information from the US Department of Labor: Wage and Hour Division (WHD)  http://www.wagehour.dol.gov