

TAMUK Wildlife Internship Agreement

The TAMUK wildlife curriculum contains 120 hours of coursework; some courses are mandated by the state of Texas and must be completed by every student regardless of their major, some courses are required by the coordinating board so TAMUK can remain an accredited university, and the remaining courses are deemed necessary by our wildlife faculty so our students can become certified associate wildlife biologists by the professional wildlife society, The Wildlife Society. Our curriculum contains a 3-hour slot called "Upper division RWSC" course. There are 3 options available to wildlife students to fulfill this slot.

Option 1: Take an extra 3000 or 4000 level RWSC course that is not part of the standard wildlife curriculum.

Option 2: Complete an internship (RWSC 3995) with a wildlife-related agency, ranch, or organization.

Option 3: Complete a research project (RWSC 4395) under the supervision of a faculty member.

Option #1 is available to students who believe that they cannot afford a break from traditional courses and must remain in school for various reasons (eg., medical insurance), or have families and cannot leave the local area.

Options 2 and 3 are available to students to gain practical, hands-on experience in the wildlife field. The desired goal of Options 2 and 3 is to assist students to become more marketable for employment upon graduation.

The remainder of this flyer focuses on Option #2: Internships with wildlife-related agencies, ranches, and organizations.

As stated above, the main **goal of the internship program** is to have students gain practical, hands-on wildlife experience to assist them in their marketability for employment upon graduation. Practical experience can be a variety of activities that enhance a student's wildlife skills, problem-solving skills, and communication skills. Actual duties of a student can vary between internships and within an internship. For example, one internship may require a student to conduct wildlife surveys (25% of time), fill wildlife feeders and build pens (25% of time), conduct hunts (25% of time), and complete and summarize hunting reports (25% of time); while another internship requires a student to meet with lobbyists (33% of time), give presentations (33% of time), and write letters and speeches (33% of time). Both types of internships can be valuable to students, especially when considering a student's individual career goals.

Types of Internships:

Internships can be with wildlife-related agencies such as Texas Parks and Wildlife, US Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, etc., consultancy organizations, non-profit organizations such as The Wildlife Society, Ducks Unlimited, etc., private Texas ranches in the wildlife business, etc. Basically any wildlife-related entity can be acceptable as an internship sponsor.

Contract between Student Intern and Internship Sponsor:

The Department of Rangeland and Wildlife Sciences at TAMUK has developed an internship agreement that must be completed prior to the start of the internship. The objective of the contract is not to pry into the personal business of students and sponsors, but to assist in open communication between interns and sponsors. For example, the RWSC department received calls from unhappy sponsors because interns were not consistently showing up for work. The problem was communication between the intern and sponsor. The sponsor expected the intern to be available day and night; however, never told the intern of this expectation. The sponsor just assumed that would be the case, given the type of business. To avoid such a situation with future interns, the agreement was developed. The agreement (attached) lists intern's name and contact information, sponsor's name and contact information, wildlife-related duties the intern will perform and an estimate of the percent time spent performing each duty, if the intern will receive stipend, salary, housing, vehicle, etc. from the sponsor for use while an intern, and expected days and hours of work. Again, it is not important to TAMUK if the intern receives any or all of the above listed items, our objective is to open channels of communication between the intern and sponsor so expectations by both parties can be met.

Documentation Requirements for TAMUK:

The Department of Rangeland and Wildlife Sciences at TAMUK requires documentation of activities concerning every intern for accreditation purposes. Basically, the university is not allowed to grant credit for an internship unless there is proof that an intern did indeed work and learned job-related skills. Therefore, interns are expected to produce documentation (i.e., written report) of what was learned through the internship. Such documentation would be due to the intern's faculty instructor of record by the end of the internship. Student interns will be required to 1) maintain a daily log of their work activity (i.e., hours worked, total time worked, work activity; eg., 8am - 1pm, 5 hours, filled deer feeders with corn throughout ranch), 2) maintain a monthly progress report of activity (total hours worked for each activity or duty, % time spent in each activity, wildlife experience gained), and 3) write a final progress report stating what the intern learned from each experience. Interns MUST submit all 3 aspects to their faculty Instructor of Record before credit can be received.

Grading Policy

Many students have the wrong impression that Internships are an easy “A”. This is not necessarily the case. Yes most internships can result in an “A” if the student performs at a level conducive of that grade. At the end of the internship the faculty Instructor of Record will contact the Intern Sponsor and discuss the intern’s performance. Job aspects such as punctuality, behavior, attitude, responsible, work quality, work quantity, and work completed on time will be discussed. Also the quality and timeliness of the intern’s product for documentation will be reviewed. An intern with good to excellent ratings for every aspect can expect an “A”; however, less than that rating for any aspect CAN result in a lesser grade, including an “F”. The ONLY way for an intern to remove such a grade from your academic transcript is to intern again. However, this would be most unlikely because if a sponsor was unhappy with your past performance rarely would that sponsor or another invite the intern back! As an intern this is your opportunity to prove yourself as a ‘quality’ employee so make the most of the opportunity!

TAMUK Internship Agreement

1. Name of Intern: _____
K#: K00 _____
Intern address: _____

Intern phone number: _____
Intern cell phone number: _____
Intern fax (if available): _____
Intern e-mail: _____
2. Name of Employer of Intern: _____
Employer address: _____

Employer phone number: _____
Employer fax (if available): _____
Employer e-mail: _____
3. Give the name and title or position of the person representing the employer who will be the direct supervisor of the intern.
Name: _____
Phone (if different from above): _____
Supervisor e-mail (if different from above): _____

4. Circle the major of the intern best suited for the internship.

Animal Science

Rangeland and Wildlife Management

5. Describe in as much detail as possible the nature of the duties of the intern and the approximate percent of time the intern will conduct that duty on a weekly basis.

Add as many pages as necessary here.

<u>Duty</u>	<u>% time</u>

6. Will the intern be compensated for work performed? Yes No

If so, will compensation be a stipend (lump sum) or salary? Stipend Salary

If stipend, how much? \$ _____

If salary, at what wage? \$ _____

7. How many hours per week will the intern be expected to work?

What will be the duration of the internship? _____ months

Beginning when? _____ Ending when? _____

Will the intern be expected to work during nights? Yes No

Will the intern be expected to work during weekends? Yes No

8. Will housing be provided to intern? Yes No

If so, please describe.

9. Will a vehicle be provided to intern during working hours? Yes No

10. Will intern be expected to produce written reports documenting intern's activities?

Yes No

If so, how often? Daily Weekly Monthly End of internship

Please describe: _____

11. Will intern be expected to give oral presentations? Yes No

If so, how often? _____

To what audience(s)? _____

12. Faculty Instructor of Record for Intern: _____

13. By signing below, I agree to the terms within this agreement.

Signatures:

_____ Employer's Representative	_____ Date
------------------------------------	---------------

Student (Print Name)

_____ Student Signature	_____ Date
----------------------------	---------------

_____ Faculty Instructor of Record	_____ Date Agreement Received
---------------------------------------	----------------------------------