

ENVS 404 Environmental Internship

Syllabus, 2026-27

Contact Information: GE Internship Coordinator

The GE Internship Coordinator position is filled by a Graduate Employee (GE) who serves as the Instructor of Record for your credits. Email is the best way to communicate with the coordinator, envsinternships@uoregon.edu.

You may also contact the Environmental Studies Program's Internship Faculty Advisor, Dr. Katie Lynch, klynch@uoregon.edu.

Course Purpose and Philosophy

The ENVS Internship Program is designed to help you connect your academic studies to practical applications by offering academic credit for environmentally-focused work experience. A well-designed internship will allow you to develop your professional skills, gain hands-on experience, evaluate career opportunities and begin building a professional network. This course emphasizes that earning academic credit for work experience requires more than just showing up for your internship and doing a good job. You will be required to complete a series of assignments designed to encourage thoughtful reflection on your internship. Examining your experiences while you complete your applied work will allow you to gain deeper understanding of your contributions and challenges so you can better apply your new skills and insights to future endeavors. You are expected to be self-motivated and able to complete course assignments without reminders.

Learning Outcomes

Through active engagement and reflection, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the sponsoring organization's mission and contribute to the achievement of the mission by successfully completing internship work goals.
2. Professionally apply relevant Environmental Studies concepts, resources and methods to accomplish required tasks.
3. Demonstrate at least 3 technical (e.g., habitat restoration techniques, product marketing, data analysis, etc.) and/or transferrable (e.g., communication, time management, organization, leadership, etc.) professional skills.
4. Discuss how their practical learning experience illustrates academic content learned through their coursework by:
 - a. placing their internship purpose and responsibilities within the interdisciplinary framework of Environmental Studies, and
 - b. describing how the work experience has enhanced understanding of Environmental Studies theories and concepts.

Getting Started: How To Register

To register for ENVS 404 credit, you must complete the following steps. You may **not** count hours that you have worked at your internship before you have registered. If there are *extraordinary* circumstances that prevented you from registering on time, you may petition for an exemption to retroactively count a portion of your hours worked for a current internship. You **cannot** retroactively gain credit for past internships that you have completed.

- 1) **Identify your internship and site supervisor.** It is your responsibility to identify and secure an

internship opportunity. You should choose an internship that is related to your career (and/or graduate school) interests and that will allow you to apply knowledge and skills gained in your coursework. Your internship needs to involve professional-level skills and experiences in one of the environmental fields. Look for internships that offer you a diverse set of practical experiences. For example, your responsibilities should include more than plant maintenance (weeding and watering) for regenerative agriculture and plant nursery internships, and more than filing or data entry for sustainable business internships.

If you need internship ideas, we include examples of [past student internships](#) on our website and list internship announcements in *Econews*, the ENVS weekly electronic newsletter. You can also meet with a [Tykeson Academic and Career Advisor](#) or the GE Internship Coordinator (envsinternships@uoregon.edu) to discuss your interests. Lastly, you can visit the [UO Career Center](#) for advice. Check out [HandShake](#), which lists some opportunities.

- 2) **Complete Assignment #1, Internship Description.** You must do this **before** the GE Internship Coordinator will pre-authorize you to register for internship credit. Ideally, you should submit your description during the term prior to the start of your internship. During the academic year, descriptions are accepted through Wednesday of the first week of the term in which you are doing your internship. During the summer, internship descriptions are accepted until July 15th. Submit your description to the GE Internship Coordinator via email (envsinternships@uoregon.edu).
- 3) **Complete the Participatory Learning Experience Agreement Form**, which can be downloaded from the [Internships page](#) on the ENVS website. This form should be signed by you and your internship site supervisor. Please let your supervisor know that they will need to sign your timesheets and complete an evaluation form at the end of your internship.
- 4) **Use your UO email address to email your Internship Description and Participatory Learning Experience Agreement Form to the GE Internship Coordinator (envsinternships@uoregon.edu).** In your email, include your 95# and number of credits you wish to earn. You can earn 1 credit for every 30 hours of internship service. The assignments will vary by number of credits (see below). *If you are an ENVS or ESCI major wanting to complete your Area 5 Practical Learning Experience requirement or an ENVS minor wanting to apply ENVS 404 to your minor requirements, your total internship credits must be equal to 4 credits/120 hours.*

The GE Internship Coordinator will review the internship description to ensure it meets the intent of ENVS 404 and provide feedback with the goal of helping you create a quality experience.

- 5) **Register for the internship credits using DuckWeb.** You will receive an email to your UO email address when you are cleared to register. You will be registered for 1 credit, and you must use the drop-down menu to select the number of credits you wish to receive. Internship credit is offered on a Pass/No Pass basis only.

Course Requirements – Summary:

ENVS 404 is repeatable (up to 12 total credits) with different internships. Each credit is equivalent to 30 hours of time doing your internship. You may earn 1-8 credits for an internship with a single internship sponsor. If you want to earn more than 4 credits for one internship, you will need to demonstrate that your experiences are broad enough to learn the equivalent of 2 courses worth of content. We recommend that students wanting more than 4 credits of ENVS 404 complete different internship(s) to broaden skills, experiences and professional network. If you want to earn more than 8 ENVS 404 credits, you must find a different internship for the extra credits.

A. Summary for 1-2 Credits

Assignment	Expected Length	Week Due
#1: Internship Description	3 pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Year: 5 pm, Wednesday of 1st week of term in which you are doing internship • Summer: 5 pm, July 15th
#2: Canvas Community	See below	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Year: Introduction by 5 pm Wednesday of Week 2, Midterm Update: 5 pm, Friday of Week 5 • Summer: Introduction by 5 pm Wednesday of Week 4, Midterm Update: 5 pm, Wednesday of Week 7
#3: Final Report	3-4 pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Year: 5 pm, Wednesday of Finals Week • Summer: 5 pm, Wednesday of Week 11
#4: Signed Timesheet and Supervisor's Evaluation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Year: 5 pm, Wednesday of Finals Week • Summer: 5 pm, Wednesday of Week 11

B. Summary for 3-4 credits

Assignment	Expected Length	Week Due
#1: Internship Description	3 pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Year: 5 pm, Wednesday of 1st week of term in which you are doing internship • Summer: 5 pm, July 15th
#2: Canvas Community	See below	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Year: Introduction by 5 pm Wednesday of Week 2, Midterm Update: 5 pm, Friday of Week 5 • Summer: Introduction by 5 pm Wednesday of Week 4, Midterm Update: 5 pm, Wednesday of Week 7
#3: Midterm Update	3 pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Year: 5 pm, Friday of Week 5 • Summer: When you have completed half of your hours (regardless of date)
#4: Updated Resume OR Cover Letter (your choice)	1 page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Year: 5 pm, Wednesday of Finals Week • Summer: 5 pm, Wednesday of Week 11
#5: Final Report	3-4 pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Year: 5 pm, Wednesday of Finals Week • Summer: 5 pm, Wednesday of Week 11
#6: Signed Timesheet and Supervisor's Evaluation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Year: 5 pm, Wednesday of Finals Week • Summer: 5 pm, Wednesday of Week 11

C. Petitioning for 5-8 credits

To petition to earn 5-8 credits, send a short proposal to the GE Internship Coordinator. Your proposal should 1) describe how you will have additional and different responsibilities to justify more credits, and 2) propose one additional assignment (e.g., a supplemental research report or other product) that reflects your diverse responsibilities.

Course Requirements – Full Descriptions:

In order to receive a passing grade, you must complete all assignments by the due date. If assignments are not received on time you will receive a No Pass for the course. Email your Internship Description and Participatory Learning Experience Agreement Form to GE Internship Coordinator, envsinternships@uoregon.edu. Upload all other assignments to the ENVS 404 Canvas site. **All reports must be in narrative form (not bullets), double-spaced, have 1-inch margins and 12 pt. font, and be both spell-checked and proofread.**

A) Internship Description

This 3-page description of your internship serves as a professional agreement between you and organization where you are doing your internship. You should develop this in consultation with your supervisor. It is also a professional agreement between you and the Environmental Studies Program. You need to complete this assignment prior to being cleared for registration.

As a professional agreement, this document should be concise, articulate, and proofread. Your report must be in your own words. Do not cut and paste information from the organization's website or an internship position description. The format should be:

1. **Title:** "Internship Description," title of Internship, organization, location, your name and term.
2. **Position Description.** Provide a detailed description of your internship, including:
 - a. **Goals.** What are the mission and goals of the organization? How does your internship fit within those goals (in other words, why would they like an intern)? Finally, what are your general goals in pursuing this internship?
 - b. **Your Learning Objectives.** These should be stated in the format: "By the end of this internship I will be able to: X, Y, Z."
 - c. **Work Plan.** This should describe in detail the tentative responsibilities you will be undertaking as part of your internship. Ideally, include a general week-by-week schedule for your tasks.
3. **Academic Reflection.** Describe how the internship experience will relate to and enhance your program of academic study here at the U of O.
4. **Internship Site Roles and Responsibilities.** In this section, you should articulate the responsibilities of the supervisor at your internship site. For example, how often will he or she be meeting with you to provide oversight and assistance? Will he or she review your work and comment at certain stages of your project? Will you be asking him or her for a letter of recommendation at the end of the term? To facilitate good communication with your host organization and create a rewarding internship, be sure to talk about and clearly articulate everyone's roles and expectations.

As described above in "How to Register", you will also need to complete the Participatory Learning Experience Agreement Form before being cleared to register.

B) Canvas Community

The purpose of this assignment is to help you build a cohort of peers, learn about other types of internships, and have a community if you would like to ask questions, brainstorm ideas or share advice..

You will post a short message to the Canvas Discussion twice during the term:

1. **Introduction.** In one paragraph, introduce yourself, your internship sponsor and a description of your goals for your internship. In one paragraph, respond to 2 other students' Introductions.
2. **Midterm Update.** In one paragraph, share one accomplishment you have achieved and one important lesson about working in a professional setting. In one paragraph, respond to 2 other students' Midterm Updates.

C) Midterm Update

This 3-page midterm update should provide a thoughtful overview of your internship to date. The format should be as follows:

1. **Title:** "Midterm Update," title of Internship, organization, location, your name and term.
2. **Work Description:** A description of the duties or tasks you have performed to date and any changes from the work plan outlined in the original professional agreement. Have you met your learning objectives for the first half of your internship? Do you have any key accomplishments so far?
3. **Strengths/Weaknesses of the Internship** (so far): Comment on the goals, tasks, training, supervision, work environment, etc. What has been particularly effective or beneficial so far? Are there any specific actions that you or your supervisor could take to improve your learning experience during the rest of the internship?
4. **Timesheet:** Submit a timesheet signed by you and your site supervisor, documenting how many hours you have completed to date. You can use the template on page 8, or you can use a timesheet form your internship sponsor provides.

D) Final Report

This 3-4 page final report should provide a thoughtful reflection of your internship experience. The format should be as follows:

- a. **Title:** "Final Report," title of Internship, organization, location, your name and term.
- b. **Outcomes, including:**
 - i. A summary of your major accomplishments. How did your work further the mission of the organization?
 - ii. Reflections on the goals and learning objectives you set for the term in your project/work description. Did you meet your goals? If so, how? If not, why not?
 - iii. What you have learned about yourself personally and professionally. Please include a discussion of what you gained in *technical skills and knowledge* (=knowledge of specific subjects, procedures and information necessary to perform tasks; examples include computer applications, technical writing, use of specific equipment, and industry-specific knowledge) and *transferable skills and knowledge* (=actions taken to perform a task and which can be applied to a variety of jobs; examples include project management, time management, collaboration, teamwork, communication, public speaking, writing). In particular, link at least 2 of your new skills to one of the [8 National Association of Colleges + Employers' \(NACE\) Career Readiness Competencies](#) (Career & Self-Development, Communication, Critical Thinking, Equity & Inclusion, Leadership, Professionalism, Teamwork and Technology). These competencies are intended to give undergraduate students a framework for communicating your abilities and experience to potential employers.
 - iv. Your advice for future interns. What should future interns know to be successful at this site?
- c. **Career Reflection:** What else have you learned about the profession and/or career paths related to your field?

- d. **Academic Reflection:** Describe and analyze how your experience relates to specific principles, concepts and knowledge you have gained in your academic career. *Use detailed examples to illustrate your ideas and to explicitly link your experience to specific courses you have taken.* How has your work experience enhanced your understanding of Environmental Studies theories and concepts?

Please note: We consider internships to be an evolving learning process, so you will not be graded on whether you met all your initial goals. We want you to gain valuable insight into your process, while making the link between academic study and work experience.

E) Updated Resume OR Cover Letter (Choose 1)

The goal of this assignment is to translate your new experience and skills (as described in your final report) to a potential future employer. You may choose which assignment to do. See the UO Career Center's website for [advice for improving your resume or cover letter](#). Check out their examples and list of action verbs.

1. Updated Resume

Any time you gain new experience, you should update your resume. Submit an updated version of your resume that includes your internship as an entry. Depending on your internship and resume format, you can list it under "Work Experience," "Related Experience," or "Other Experience." Include at least 3 action-oriented bullet statements summarizing your Internship responsibilities and accomplishments. Be sure to describe your responsibilities using compelling action verbs and list any measureable accomplishments. See page 10 for some example entries.

2. Cover letter

Find an announcement for a job or other opportunity that interests you. Write a cover letter as if you were applying for that position. Include appropriate introduction and closing statements. Highlight why you are a strong candidate for the position by cross-walking your knowledge, experience and skills to the announcement. See page 11 for an example cover letter.

F) Internship Timesheet and Supervisor's Evaluation Form

Submit these 2 forms:

1. **Timesheet.** Submit a final timesheet signed by you and your site supervisor, documenting how many hours and general tasks you completed. You can use the template on page 8, or you can use the timesheets your internship sponsor provides.
2. **Supervisor's Evaluation Form.** Submit a completed and signed copy of your supervisor's evaluation form (page 9).

Course Policies

Incompletes

If unforeseen circumstances prevent you from finishing your hours on time, you may ask the GE Internship Coordinator if you can take an Incomplete until you finish your hours. Students are expected to be familiar with [university policy regarding grades of "Incomplete,"](#) the process for requesting an Incomplete through the Office of the Registrar, and the time line for completion. By UO Policy, all Incompletes must be finished within 1 year or the grade automatically converts to No Pass.

If ENVS 404 is your only course during the summer, an Incomplete may result in an academic warning because the degree tracking software can't calculate a GPA. Summer ENVS 404 students who are considering requesting an Incomplete should research potential impacts to scholarships, allowable credit

load, or other issues.

Accessible Education and Quality Experiences

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify the GE Internship Coordinator if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You are also encouraged to work proactively with your internship site supervisor. You may also contact the Accessible Education Center in 164 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or uoaec@uoregon.edu.

Please let the GE Internship Coordinator or Faculty Advisor know if you are having problems with your internship responsibilities or your supervisor. We are here to support you: we can help brainstorm solutions or otherwise assist you.

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI)

The use of GenAI undermines the primary goal of ENVS 404 assignments, which is to support your learning and integration of new skills through reflection. You may use GenAI tools for creating outlines or proofreading text that you have written yourself. However, you CANNOT use content such as text or graphics created by GenAI in your written work; rather, you must be the author/creator of your work submissions.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: Can I split my ENVS/ESCI Area 5 Practical Learning Experience requirement between multiple internships?

A: Yes. You can use more than one internship for your Area 5 requirement. Simply register for the appropriate number of credits (1 credit = 30 hours of service) per internship and complete the assignments accordingly.

Q: Can I continue same internship over 2 or more terms?

A: Yes. Register for the appropriate number of credits per term based upon the number of hours you expect to work (1 credit = 30 hours of service). You will only need to complete one set of assignments and you will work with the GE Internship Coordinator to determine how those assignments will be spread over the terms. Example: Register for 2 credits Fall term and submit your mid-term report/timesheet at the end of Fall term; then register for 2 credits Winter term and submit your final report/resume or cover letter/timesheet/supervisor evaluation at the end of Winter term. Be sure that your Participatory Learning Experience Agreement form is dated to include your entire internship time.

Q: Is there a maximum allowable number of ENVS 404 credits?

Yes. You are allowed to take up to 8 credits at one internship site. You may take up to 4 additional credits at a different internship site, for a total maximum of 12 credits of ENVS 404.

Q: Can I receive ENVS 404 credits for working in a professor's lab?

A: Generally, it is better if you earn ENVS 401 Research credits for work in a lab. Your faculty mentor would be your Instructor of Record, and you would work with them to determine what assignments would best meet the goals of the research experience. ENVS 401 credits count towards the Area 5 Practical Learning Experience requirement for ENVS/ESCI majors.

ENVS 404 SITE SUPERVISOR EVALUATION OF STUDENT INTERN

Note to Internship Site Supervisor: Please discuss your evaluation with the intern. Your constructive feedback is an important part of the internship learning process.

Student Name: _____

Site Supervisor Name and Title: _____

Term of Internship (circle one): **Fall** **Winter** **Spring** **Summer**

- 1. Preparation:** Please describe the extent to which the intern was prepared for this internship project or task in terms of academic background and appropriate skills. Note areas where the intern excelled as well as any areas where the intern would benefit from additional training or study.

- 2. Performance:** Comment on the quality and quantity of the intern's work. For example, was the project or task completed on time and according to agreed-upon standards? Please provide feedback about the student's professional conduct during the internship including dependability, ability to communicate effectively, willingness to work cooperatively, willingness to learn and follow organizational protocol, etc.

- 3. Any additional helpful feedback for the intern:**

Supervisor Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Final Assignment: Example Resume Entries

Environmental Educator, ABC Nature Organization, Location June – September [Year]

- Led 32 interpretive walks for groups of 12-16 elementary school children
- Utilized inquiry-based methods to teach children about plants, animals and geology
- Motivated children to engage in learning; encouraged cooperation
- Effectively communicated with ABC staff members, teachers and parent volunteers

Marine Research Assistant, DEF Marine Science Center, Location July – August [Year]

- Participated in large-scale National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration cod (*Gadus morhua*) research project
- Operated small beam trawl to capture fish; collected stomach content samples and recorded biometric data
- Entered and analyzed data using Excel and R programming language

Bike Program Coordinator, GHI Transportation Center, Location June – September [Year]

- Managed the logistics and maintenance of GHI's fleet of 100 Bike Loan Program bicycles
- Organized 8 community-wide events promoting bicycle use and maintenance
- Supervised a team of 5 volunteers and facilitated weekly meetings

Trail Crew Member, MNO Youth Corps, Location June – August [Year]

- Managed 20 acres of oak woodlands by thinning small trees and removing invasive species
- Constructed and improved 12 miles of recreation trails
- Maintained and safely operated hand tools and chainsaws
- Collaborated with 8 crew members and supervisors to accomplish tasks

Energy Auditor, JKL Energy Solutions, Location June – September [Year]

- Conducted energy use surveys using HVAC (Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning) specifications and comprehensive building characteristics
- Submitted 27 audits to the Oregon Department of Energy of schools in the JKL School District during the statewide project, *Cool Schools*
- Coordinated with JKL District staff, Oregon Department of Energy, and field auditors to fix issues with auditing software during quality control assessments

Final Assignment: Example Cover Letter

[Date]

Dear Hiring Manager,

I am writing to express my strong interest in the Habitat Restoration Field Technician position at [organization]. I believe that my coursework, internship and volunteer experience make me a strong candidate for this position. My passion for restoration and collaboration aligns with your organization's mission statement of conserving native species and habitats through management and community engagement.

As an Environmental Science major at the University of Oregon, I have taken Field Botany, Conservation Biology, Landscape Ecology and GIS. These courses have given me knowledge and skills in conservation methods, plant identification, understanding vegetation patterns, and communicating data visually through mapping. In addition, I have gained relevant skills through an internship with [organization]. As the Riparian Restoration Intern, I applied my botanical knowledge to identify native and non-native plant species. I planted over 200 native trees and shrubs and used methods such as mulching and mowing to control competing vegetation. I measured percent cover and species diversity to evaluate the success of past restoration projects at four sites. I demonstrated a strong work ethic and developed a precise attention to detail when identifying plants and collecting data.

In addition, my experience working as an Events Coordinator for the UO Student Sustainability Center would allow me successfully organize restoration work parties and tours, as outlined in the position description. For example, I organized, marketed and supervised a student volunteer event to remove invasive English Ivy at Hendricks Park in partnership with City of Eugene staff. I also worked in a team of three students to create and direct three recycling events in which I educated participants about what materials can be recycled. My experience with field work, teamwork, and outreach will allow me to increase public awareness and support for restoration projects.

I would like to pursue a career in land management and habitat restoration, so I would be excited put my skills and enthusiasm to work with the [organization]. Please let me know if I can provide any additional information about my qualifications, experience, and availability. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
[Name]