

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
THE INFORMATION SCHOOL

MSIM Internship Information for Supervisors

Supervisors in our MSIM internship program are highly valued by the University of Washington Information School, and we thank you for considering participation with our students! We recognize that internship supervisors provide an extremely valuable service for our students, and we expect our students to reciprocate by providing high quality services at their internship placements.

We are providing the following information for your consideration as you contemplate participation as an MSIM internship supervisor.

1. What exactly is an MSIM internship?

Students pursue MSIM internships in the form of an academic “course” (IMT 590). Students in our Day MSIM program option are required to complete a minimum of two quarters of IMT 590, normally pursued during the Autumn and Winter quarters of their second year in the program. Students may also elect to start the internship experience in Summer quarter, while still continuing the internship during the subsequent Autumn and Winter quarters. A minimum of 2 credits of IMT 590 (spread over at least 2 quarters) must be completed in order for Day MSIM students to meet graduation requirements.

IMT 590 may be taken for 2-4 credits (per quarter), depending on the number of hours the student plans to devote to the internship for the given quarter. Two (2) credits of IMT 590 requires 200 hours of internship over a given quarter; three (3) credits require 300 hours; and four (4) credits require 400 hours. Grades for IMT 590 are either “Credit” or “No Credit.”

Internship placements are facilitated with the MSIM Academic Advisor, a minimum of one quarter before the actual internship experience begins.

2. Who can be an internship Supervisor?

Supervisors should have a depth of experience and a strong professional identity as an information professional. We recognize that supervisors for MSIM internships will have varied backgrounds.

3. How does the internship actually work?

The student and supervisor collaboratively complete the “MSIM Internship Learning Objectives Agreement” (LOA) during the first week of the internship in order to clearly define (a) what the student wants to learn (the learning objectives), (b) what tasks or projects the student will be performing in order to meet those objectives, and (c) what the student will have to show as “evidence” of having completed the learning objectives. The LOA guides the entire internship experience much like a syllabus outlines and guides a college course.

4. How much supervision do internship students need?

Although the amount of supervision will vary from situation to situation, the student and supervisor should meet a minimum of once per week to discuss activities, monitor progress, and discuss any challenges or problems. Many supervisors and students meet several times per week.

5. What are my responsibilities as a supervisor? Is there any paperwork involved?

As noted above, supervisors should meet with students on a regular basis and at least once per week (unless there are unusual circumstances). We try to keep the supervisor’s paperwork to a minimum. After the supervisor and student agree to work together on the internship, there are three main pieces of

paperwork to be aware of: (1) the Learning Objectives Agreement, that the supervisor and student draft together; (2) the Mid-Internship Report that is also completed in conjunction with the student (at the end of the first quarter) to assess whether the internship is “on track,” and if any revisions need to be made to the LOA for the second quarter; and (3) the Supervisor’s Final Evaluation.

6. *What types of activities/tasks/ projects are appropriate for internship students?*

MSIM students must pursue tasks and projects during their internship that constitute professional-level (beginning professional level) work. In addition, since the internship is meant to be a learning opportunity for students, tasks usually involve skills and knowledge that the student has already begun to develop through coursework but for which the student has not yet developed a high level of expertise. In addition, the supervisor should be more knowledgeable than the student for most of the internship tasks. (Sometimes information professionals do have projects that require skills they do not have and for which they would like assistance from students who do have these skills. For this type of situation, students might be able to arrange an “Independent Study” rather than pursuing formal internship credits.)

Some internship experiences involve actual project work, while other experiences are characterized by the daily activities of an information professional. Either of these (or a combination) works well. The internship site/experience must be approved by the MSIM Academic Advisor (or IMT 590 Faculty Coordinator) as meeting minimum standards for the scope of an MSIM internship experience.

7. *What is the typical time frame for MSIM internships?*

Day MSIM students are required to complete a minimum of two quarters of IMT 590, normally pursued during the Autumn and Winter quarters of their second year in the program. Students may also elect to start the internship experience in Summer quarter, while still continuing the internship during the subsequent Autumn and Winter quarters. Each quarter is approximately 10 weeks.

8. *What if I would like to find a student to work on a project that doesn’t qualify for a formal MSIM internship?*

There are a couple of ways to work with students in the Information School. In addition to formal internships, individuals or organizations wanting student assistance may offer part-time employment, send us a request for volunteer work, or try to set up an arrangement in which the student would receive credit for doing an Independent Study option.

9. *How are MSIM internship placements set up?*

The MSIM Academic Advisor (from the School’s Office of Student and Academic Services) works closely with host sites and students to set up MSIM internship placements. If you would like to initiate the process, please see the contact information below.

10. *How do I find out more about participating in the MSIM internship program?*

For further information, please refer to the MSIM internship website at:

<https://ischool.uw.edu/current/msim/fieldwork-internships>

or contact the MSIM Academic Advisor:

Jason Boyd, jboyd18@uw.edu, 206-221-3467