

**SFBS 498**  
**INTERNSHIP AGREEMENT**  
**PACKET**

**Fall 2014**



## **SFBS Program Overview of 498 Internship**

Internships in a food or bioenergy operation play a critical role in meeting the experiential learning objectives of the Sustainable Food and Bioenergy Systems (SFBS) Program at MSU. The SFBS 498 Internship provides students the opportunity to work on a project addressing a sustainability challenge at a food or bioenergy operation under the supervision of a knowledgeable mentor. Throughout the course of the internship, students will be guided through the process of reflecting on their experience while critically thinking about sustainability issues in the food system as applies to their projects. Ultimately, students will share their experiences and knowledge from the internship in an outreach effort. The objectives of this experience are to add new depth and perspective to coursework through hands-on and research experience in a food or bioenergy system. Internships can be life-changing learning experiences that influence your career goals and have the potential to lead to full-time jobs upon graduation. This document will help guide your experience for the SFBS 498 Internship.

### **PURPOSE OF THE SFBS 498 INTERNSHIP**

Students earn course credit through the SFBS 498 Internship while engaging in valuable experiential on-site learning to deepen their understanding of food or bioenergy systems. While individual experiences during the SFBS 498 Internship will differ, there are five key components of this experience:

1. Students will undertake work in a food or bioenergy operation related to their field of study and interests that will develop professional and critical-thinking skills.
2. Students will work under the supervision of a knowledgeable mentor who provides training.
3. Internship work grows out of a project on a sustainability issue in the food system that is mutually interesting and beneficial for both the student and mentor.
4. The internship work should lead to outreach materials for either the campus or local community and/or is more broadly disseminated to the general public. Outreach materials may include a video, article for the popular press, presentation in the SFBS 499 Senior Capstone Course (offered in Fall), among a number of other options as approved by the SFBS 498 Instructor.
5. Students will document their internship hours and activities on a weekly basis as well as submit three written reflections on their internship experience including skills and knowledge gained and a critical examination of sustainability aspects of the project you worked on.

### **ELIGIBILITY TO EARN CREDIT FOR THE SFBS 498 INTERNSHIP**

1. Students must be in good academic standing and have at least junior standing in the SFBS Program at MSU.
2. Students must be registered for the internship in the same semester that they are doing the internship to earn academic credit, except for extraordinary personal circumstances approved by both the academic advisor and the SFBS 498 Instructor (or faculty administering the SFBS 498 internship).
3. Students may not earn internship credit for continuing employment in a job they already hold unless the duties of the internship are substantially different from current or previous job duties as approved by the SFBS 498 Instructor or faculty administering the SFBS 498 internship.

### **NUMBER OF CREDITS FOR INTERNSHIP**

The SFBS Program requirement for the 498 Internship is the equivalent of 3 credits, or 135 hours including internship time, weekly logs, midterm and final reflection or alternative final outreach activity. The internship hours must include a minimum of 96 hours of the total 135 hours and the remaining hours are dedicated to weekly logs, midterm and final reflection, and final outreach activity. If the students and internship mentor determines that the position requires more than a total of 135 hours, students may request to register for

additional course credit. This must be determined prior to the start of the internship and approved by the SFBS 498 Instructor or the faculty administering the SFBS 498 internship.

## **CRITERIA TO EARN CREDIT FOR THE SFBS 498 INTERNSHIP**

### **A. Professional conduct for students**

In order to earn MSU credit for your internship, you will:

- Abide by the expectations, outlined below.
- Record your internship hours and activities via D2L weekly. The purpose of this communication is to ensure you are meeting all expectations while facilitating your reflection on your experience and to provide opportunities to discuss any concerns.
- Be accountable with minimal MSU supervision for meeting all requirements of your internship.

### **B. Project**

Each student/mentor pair will identify and develop an independent project that addresses a sustainability question or problem in the host's operation. The project must further the learning experience of the student and cannot be a continuation of existing work unless it includes a new focus from your prior work. Examples of projects include: expanding the work of a farm operation with a winter CSA system, adding chickens to a market garden, creating a business plan for a new food product, determining the effects of soil amendments on nutrient cycling, and developing a marketing program. Students must provide a description of the project to their faculty advisor and the SFBS 498 Instructor by the end of the first week of the internship period for approval. Keep in mind that you are receiving course credit for your internship and that you are expected to demonstrate as much learning from your internship as you do in other upper-level courses at Montana State University.

### **C. Required Weekly Activity Log**

You are required record your hours, activities and reflections on a weekly basis via the internship D2L website. This weekly documentation is intended to facilitate critical thinking about your experience including how your actual experience aligns with your expectations of your experience, what you are learning about yourself, and new research questions and interests that may emerge. The time of the weekly written communication will be determined by the SFBS 498 Instructor. For Fall 2014, the weekly log is due by **9am MST each Monday** starting September 1<sup>st</sup> in the respective Dropbox folders on the course D2L site. The directions for the weekly log are as follows:

**Directions for Weekly Activity Log:** Write a response to the following questions and submit in the respective internship D2L Dropbox folders. Make sure to include your name and course number. Your responses must be typed with 12-sized font and 1-1.5 inch margins. Each response should be 1-10 sentences in length. Please use complete sentences and spell check your work before submission.

1. Hours worked the previous week:
2. Total number of internship hours worked to date:
3. What were your internship activities and what did you learn? You may choose to reflect on how your understanding and learning is developing and/or what you find interesting and challenging. You may also include how your perceptions, attitude and feelings towards the activities are developing.
4. Use this space for any questions or concerns that I can help address. If you have an urgent question or concern, please email me (selena.ahmed@montana.edu) with the subject line "SFBS 498 QUESTION" or "SFBS 498 CONCERN."

#### **D. Midterm and Final Reports**

In addition to the required weekly communication, you are required to write one midterm reflective report and one final report. Both the midterm reflective report and final report are intended to gather your views and reactions to your internship experience and prompting you to critically think about opportunities and challenges in the food system aspect that you are working on for your project.

The **midterm report** must be at least three doubled-spaced pages in length and no longer than five doubled-spaced pages in length using a standard 12-point font with 1-inch margins. For Fall 2014, the midterm report is to be submitted to the SFBS 498 Instructor via the appropriate Dropbox folder on the course D2L website by **Friday October 10<sup>th</sup> 2014 5pm MST**. The **final report** must be at least five doubled-spaced pages in length and no longer than six doubled-spaced pages in length using a standard 12-point font with 1-inch margins. The final report or final outreach activity is due to the SFBS 498 Instructor via the appropriate Dropbox folder on the course D2L website by **Friday December 5<sup>th</sup> 2014 5pm MST**. Late reports will not be accepted except for special documented circumstances such as an illness with a doctor's note. \*\*\*Alternatively, you may propose to the SFBS Course Instructor via email to submit an alternative to the midterm and final report in the form of a final outreach activity that you find more appropriate for your project and learning goals. Your email proposal must be made at least 1 week prior to the deadline of reports\*\*\*.

**Directions for Midterm Report:** Write an essay that includes responses to the following questions and submit in the respective internship D2L Dropbox folder. Make sure to include your name and course number. Your responses must be typed with 12-sized font and 1-1.5 inch margins. As you reflect on your midterm progress, consider how it relates to your academic studies and your career interests. \*\*\*You may propose a creative alternative to the midterm report format including a photo diary, story, analysis of sustainability, video documentary etc. by writing an email proposal to the SFBS 498 Course Instructor at least one week prior to the deadline. \*\*\* The report is due Friday October 10th 2014 5pm MST. Please consider the following prompts in drafting your report:

- (1) Describe the system you are examining (farm, issue, research topic). You may draw from text from your previous reflections and polish this.
- (2) What specific skills, concepts, models, etc. have you learned from your internship?
- (3) What surprises you about what you have learned from your internship?
- (4) What have you learned about your own strengths, weaknesses, and interests?
- (5) What is your plan for improving upon your weaknesses?

**Directions for Final Report:** Write an essay that includes responses to the following questions and submit in the respective internship D2L Dropbox folder. Make sure to include your name and course number. Your responses must be typed with 12-sized font and 1-1.5 inch margins. As you reflect on the totality of your experience, consider how it relates to your academic studies and your career interests. It will be helpful to review your midterm report and the progress you made on your project. . \*\*\*You may propose a creative alternative to the final report format including a photo diary, story, analysis of sustainability, video documentary etc. by writing an email proposal to the SFBS 498 Course Instructor at least one week prior to the deadline. \*\*\* The report is due Friday December 5th 2014 5pm MST. Please consider the following prompts in drafting your report:

- (1) What was your greatest accomplishment during your internship?
- (2) Did you achieve your learning goals? If not, what prevented you from doing so?
- (3) How is what you have learned at your internship consistent or inconsistent with what you have learned in the classroom?
- (4) How has your experience broadened your understanding of food and/or energy systems? How have your thoughts and opinions of these systems changed?

(5) How has this internship affected your future career plans?

### **EXPECTATIONS FOR THE 498 INTERNSHIP**

In order for both students and mentors to have a productive and meaningful experience, we expect the following:

#### **Mentors/supervisors**

- Have your intern's work clearly defined at the outset of the internship, establish clear communication of learning objectives from the outset, and set a professional tone for the rest of the internship.
- To the degree you are comfortable doing so, offer your expertise, opinions and insights about your work to enrich this valuable learning experience for the interns and opportunity to gain insight they would not otherwise receive in their academic training.
- Offer your interns a wide breadth of learning and diversity of experiences. We hope they are asked to do a variety of tasks, to better enrich their time with you and to expose them to as many aspects of your operation as possible. At the same time, it is equally important for a student to appreciate the repetition of some common tasks and to learn to do a good job even on tasks that many college graduates may deem mundane, boring or tedious.
- Hold the interns accountable for their work. These interns are learning a craft but also learning their ways in unfamiliar professional-work realms; they will benefit from clear instructions. We expect that interns will follow your instructions, to the best that they are able. If or when there are communication troubles, we ask that you speak to the student directly to resolve the troubles. If this does not help, please speak to the SFBS 498 Instructor for more direct assistance.
- We value respect of both the interns' time and your own. Many interns have other jobs or school work to attend to while they are working with you. We ask that they respect your time by arriving when they are expected, and staying as long as expected. In return, we ask that you respect their time including by having work ready for them when they arrive and by not keeping them past their scheduled times.
- It is essential to ensure that the workplace where the intern will be performing his/her internship complies with all applicable occupational health and safety laws and regulations.
- Honestly evaluate the intern's work and the way the internship program is administered. We will be in touch with you towards the end of the internship with evaluation forms. If there is anything you wish to discuss before that time, please contact the SFBS 498 Instructor at any time.
- You have the right to terminate the internship at any time if you feel that the intern is not abiding by the language of this contract, your expectations, or any agreement you made with the intern about the way the internship would proceed.

#### **Interns**

This is an experiential learning opportunity for you to develop your professional skills. Please keep in mind that the people you are working with are professionals with knowledge and expertise to share with you. It is essential you display professional conduct, respect and clear communication with your mentors and others you work with. Keep in mind that those you work with may have different worldviews and ways of doing things than you do; you are expected to be respectful of divergent worldviews and not undermine your mentor.

You are encouraged to respectfully ask your mentor to explain about their business. Keep in mind you are an intern and a visitor at the operation. While we encourage and expect critical thinking of the operations you are seeing, please show restraint in offering unsolicited advice to those you are working with about how they might improve their businesses. You may see all sorts of things that you would do differently, and that's valuable. One goal of the internship is that you experience one system and begin to think critically about it. You may be better served by imagining how you would run a business than by trying to fix the business where you are an intern. Your mentor may ask you to share your insight, in which case you are asked to do so in a respectful and professional manner.

We expect the following for your internship:

- Have your work clearly defined with your mentor at the outset of the internship, establish clear communication of objectives from the outset and set a professional tone for the rest of the internship.
- We've asked the mentors to give you a diverse range of opportunities; please take advantage of these as best you can.
- Your mentors/supervisors are working for their livelihoods. We have asked that they respect your time by keeping you busy and releasing you at an agreed upon time. In return, please respect their time by arriving and staying the duration that you are expected. Work diligently while you are there and be kind and respectful to those around you.
- We've asked the mentors to communicate the way they want things done. Please communicate with your mentor early into the internship and as often as necessary if anything is unclear.
- Your mentors may not be accustomed to having an intern. They may not interact with you in ways you consider ideal. When there are communication troubles, we ask that you clarify things with your mentor to resolve the troubles; if this does not help, please speak to the SFBS 498 Instructor for more direct guidance.
- Honestly evaluate your work experience and the progress you have made. The SFBS 498 Instructor will be in touch with you towards the end of the internship with evaluation forms; if there is anything you wish to discuss before that time, please contact the SFBS 498 Instructor at any time.

### **GRADING OF INTERNSHIP**

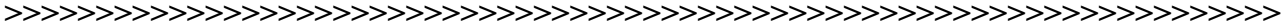
In assessing your performance in your internship, the SFBS 498 Instructor will consider the "Criteria for Earning Credit for an Internship" listed above. Please note that this is a Pass / Fail course. The SFBS Course Instructor, with any feedback from your faculty internship advisor and your mentor, will evaluate:

- The quality of your work (in general and as it relates to your project)—how well you met the expectations of the internship, how you conducted yourself, etc., as determined by your weekly communication and reports to the SFBS 498 Instructor as well as the feedback from your mentor and your self-evaluation.
- The performance evaluation from your work-site mentor. The SFBS 498 Instructor may contact your work-site mentor for more detailed information beyond what is noted on the evaluation.
- The quality and timeliness of your reports and final report, including demonstration of what you have learned from the internship. Just as you are expected to show up to your internship site on time, you are expected to submit these reports on time.



# LEARNING CONTRACT

## SFBS 498 Internship



TO BE COMPLETED BY THE STUDENT

\_\_\_\_\_  
INTERNSHIP: SFBS 498

SUMMER     FALL     SPRING    2014    CREDIT HRS \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ GID \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

INTERNSHIP HOST SITE \_\_\_\_\_ Type of Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor's email or Fax Number \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

### STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

***Student: Keep a copy of this completed form, give a copy to your mentor and your faculty advisor, file the original to the SFBS 498 Instructor within one week of the start of your internship.***

1. Student will observe all requirements and expectations for an internship described in the SFBS Program Internship Packet.
- 2.. Student intern will be assigned the following task(s) during the internship semester:
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Student will accomplish the following learning objectives during the internship semester:
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Student agrees to execute and abide by any confidentiality policies or agreements as required by the internship mentor. In addition to the above, I understand that my grade will be based, in part, on an evaluation by my internship mentor upon completion of the internship.

### SIGNATURES

### DATE

Student Intern \_\_\_\_\_

Internship Mentor \_\_\_\_\_

Internship Advisor \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## STUDENT'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF USE OF MENTOR'S EVALUATION

Student Name (Please Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Internship Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Internship Mentor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

SFBS 498 Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_

I understand and acknowledge that my on-site internship mentor will evaluate my performance during my internship. I also understand that my on-site mentor will complete an evaluation form at the end of my internship, and that my faculty internship advisor and SFBS 498 Instructor will consider my on-site supervisor's evaluation of my performance in determining my grade (P/F) for the internship.

Moreover, I hereby authorize my faculty internship advisor, the SFBS 498 Instructor and any other appropriate member of the SFBS Program faculty to discuss my performance in my internship with my on-site supervisor.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## UNIVERSITY LIABILITY STATEMENT

I, the undersigned student intern, understand that Montana State University herein identified as the "University", has worked with the Internship Mentor named in the attached Learning Contract to develop an internship program which meets the University's educational criteria. Therefore, I understand that if I, as a student intern, successfully complete the intern program as set forth in the Learning Contract, appropriate, previously agreed-upon credit will be granted by the University.

I understand that since the daily managerial control and working conditions of the internship program are handled by, and are under the sole direction of the Internship Mentor, the University does not have, nor can it assume, any control over the safety and health of the internship environment for the entire duration of the internship program; and that, I am aware of the risks attendant to the work environment of this internship and I assume the risk thereto.

I acknowledge that I have been advised to review with the Internship Mentor what employee benefits are available to me (i.e. health and accident insurance, workman's compensation and liability insurance). As stated above, the University has no control of nor responsibility for the internship environment. I further I represent that I have in place health insurance protection required of students by University policy.

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**(Signature of Student Intern)**

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**(Date)**