REACH Internships: the nitty gritty

Because trainees receive stipends from IGERT for only the first two years of graduate school, it is essential that you undertake your internship within the funded period. We recommend the summer quarters of either your first or second year, especially if you wish to pursue an international internship.

Plan on laying the groundwork for your internship at least a quarter before you want it to start (and plan on considerably longer lead time for an international internship). In developing plans for an internship, think about what you want to gain from the experience and what you have to offer the agency or organization with which you work. Your advisor, other trainers, graduate students who've completed internships, and (especially) the REACH academic coordinator may be able to offer ideas for potential internship topics or sponsors. When you have a sense of what you want to do, you can either contact the agency or organization yourself, or ask for assistance from the REACH Academic Coordinator. Staff of the UC Davis Internship and Career Center (ICC) also might be useful, particularly if you want to prepare for telephone interviews.

You have several options for your internship.

- **full or part-time** -- most organizations require a commitment of at least 12 h/week.
- **paid or volunteer** – in a good economy, graduate internships often are paid. However, many agencies and nonprofits are in dire financial straits, so all bets are off. Discuss this when you are setting up your internship.
- **academic credit** via a 292 or 299 -- find a faculty member who is willing to sponsor your internship. The faculty member decides the criteria for P/NP grading.
- **transcript notation** -- this option is open to you if you spend more than 40 hours within a quarter on your internship. A transcript notation puts the title and location of your internship on your transcript. To apply for this, you must fill out an application form available at the Internship and Career Center.

At some point early in this process, discuss your ideas for your internship with the REACH Academic Coordinator to make sure that it is likely to satisfy the IGERT internship requirement, and keep her in the loop as you refine your project with your sponsor.

After you have all the details finalized, write to the Academic Coordinator to request approval of the internship by the IGERT Curriculum Committee. Members of the Curriculum Committee consider proposal-writing an integral part of graduate training and so reviews internship requests as they would extramural funding procedures. The Curriculum Committee wants to see an internship proposal that...

1. has a non-academic host
2. is well-thought out and within the overall goals of REACH
3. is useful to the internship sponsor
4. clearly articulates how the internship stretches you as a scientist, e.g., by explicitly summarizing your dissertation interests and how this internship represents a disciplinary extension
5. articulates how your work in the internship will provide an integrated educational experience that serves REACH goals
6. includes the following specific points:
   a. the name of the non-academic organization or agency sponsoring your internship, and the name of the non-academic person who will supervise your internship;
   b. a description of your internship responsibilities and duties;
c. a description of your learning objectives for your internship: relate these to your academic and career goals, and explain how the internship serves REACH goals and learning objectives overall;
d. administrative details -- whether the internship is paid, will be taken for academic credit, and whether you will receive a transcript notation
e. if you request IGERT funds beyond your normal stipend (e.g., for travel, etc): a budget
f. a letter of support from your internship sponsor in which the sponsor describes your project, their role, and any additional support they will provide (e.g., for internships outside Davis, assistance with housing)

When you have completed your internship, please send a brief (no more than one-page) description of your internship and what you gained from it to Academic Coordinator Carole Hom for our records. Please report specifically on how the internship served REACH goals for your training and research experience (rather just the potentially broader or different goals of your disciplinary training)