

**Florida State University**  
**Program in Geography and Environmental Studies**

**GEO 4941 Internship in Geography**

(Version 1 January 2008)

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**Office Hours:** TBA (Check the Department of Geography Front Office for details)

The Department of Geography internship is available for qualified students to receive academic credits toward the Geography and Environmental Studies degrees through applied and practical experience with a variety of national, state, and local governmental and non-governmental organizations, such as, state environmental protection agencies, GIS sections of local planning agencies, consulting firms, and so on.

### **Prerequisites**

To be eligible for the internship, students must (1) be juniors or seniors and (2) have completed TWO of the core course requirements for a Geography major or THREE of the four core course requirements for an Environmental Studies major. For questions about degree requirements, please review the Geography and Environmental Studies online listings (<http://www.coss.fsu.edu/geography/> of undergraduate programs).

***It is important that we only allow our majors (either geography or environmental studies) to receive credits by doing an internship and that we do not give credits to any past-day internship (anything you have done before).***

### **Applying The Credit**

Students could register for three or six credit hours per semester. Hours could potentially count toward four different categories of requirements: 1) elective hours for the Geography major, 2) natural science elective hours for the Environmental Studies major, 3) social science elective hours for the Environmental Studies major, and 4) elective hours for a degree, beyond those required for a major. The specific nature of tasks performed in the internship will determine where the hours can be applied.

***Note that you may NOT register GEO4941 for more than 6 hours during your entire study at the Florida State University, and there is nothing guaranteed from the internship instructor that the credit hours you earn from GEO4941 could be used toward your degree program. You are urged to discuss the most appropriate category of applying the credit from an internship with the undergraduate advisor before registering GEO4941.***

## Course Requirements

Please follow the procedures specified below:

1. Locate an internship, apply and interview

Obtain your placement. You must work 10 (3 hours of credit) or 20 hours per week (6 hours of credit) for the organization. The duration of the internship must be NO less than 14 weeks. You may not count more than 10 or 20 hours per week toward your class credit. In other words, you may not work 40+ hours and finish your internship in less than 14 weeks. The Department of Geography may provide leads for obtaining an internship, but **students are responsible for locating their own internship and making arrangements for their work**. An important part of the internship experience is for students to locate their own work opportunity. **The Department of Geography is not responsible for locating internships for students**. Students are to be prepared to begin working on the first day of classes of the internship semester.

2. Give your introductory letter form (MS Word format) to your supervisor so they know how the internship works

Immediately upon obtaining your internship placement, give your supervisor a copy of the introductory letter posted at my teaching site (<http://mailer.fsu.edu/~xyang/undergraduateinternship.html>). Keep the second copy for yourself. This letter summarizes the requirements and expectations for the internship.

3. Obtain a statement of duties and work schedule from your supervisor and submit to your instructor (Dr. Xiaojun Yang)

Before you can register for the internship, obtain from your supervisor a written statement of your duties and your assigned work hours with the organization. This must be written on agency or organization stationery and be signed by your supervisor. This document is important for specifying the nature of your work. This letter must also contain your start date, ending date, and the days and hours you are working. It's fine for your supervisor to prepare this letter, but we suggest that you prepare it and ask your supervisor to sign it. FSU requires that we fully document your work schedule.

Example of a statement of duties and work schedule can be found from my teaching site (<http://mailer.fsu.edu/~xyang/undergraduateinternship.html>).

4. Return the internship information form

Example of completed internship information form can be found from my teaching site (<http://mailer.fsu.edu/~xyang/undergraduateinternship.html>).

5. Register for GEO-4941 Internship in Geography

Contact the internship director, Dr. Xiaojun Yang, for the course registration number.

You will not be able to register without this number. Late registration fees can apply if you register past drop/add deadlines.

To obtain this registration number, an internship must be secured and formal documentation of your position has to be received. While it is not always possible to get confirmation of an internship acceptance prior to the registration window, students are required to return the statement of duties and work schedule and the internship information form as soon as possible. Failure to submit your work schedule and information form may result in withdrawal from the course.

6. Write and submit an internship paper

The paper must be double-spaced with one inch margins. ***Your report must have at least 10 pages for a 3-hour or 20 pages for a 6-hour internship. Papers are due by the Friday of the last week of a semester before grades are due.*** Late papers will be penalized one letter grade per day, except for documented medical or family emergencies.

In your paper please provide a description of your specific work tasks. For example, note the name (s) of your project, their history, the type of software or equipment you used in your work, or where you worked in the field. I am looking for detail that convinces me that you were engaged in productive employment suitable for college credit. Discuss how this work relates (or does not relate) to the information you have learned in formal university course work. Would you recommend this internship to another person? Why or why not? Avoid unnecessary figures, tables, and photos. Papers do not need to include a reference list, but instead should be approached as more of an essay writing assignment versus a research paper.

Example of an internship report can be found from my teaching site (<http://mailer.fsu.edu/~xyang/undergraduateinternship.html>).

7. Ask your supervisor to write and mail a letter of evaluation (hardcopy or fax--no emails) to Dr. Xiaojun Yang

During the last week of classes, your supervisor needs to mail a letter of evaluation (A, B, C, D, F) of your job performance to the instructor. This is an important part of your grade, so be sure to remind your supervisor that he/she needs to send a letter of evaluation directly to the instructor. The letter should contain a LETTER GRADE and WRITTEN COMMENTS. It should also be signed by your supervisor and be printed on stationary with your employer's letterhead. Evaluation letters that do not arrive before the instructor submits grades will result in an Incomplete. Keep in mind that it is a good idea to ask your supervisor to write a letter of recommendation that you can use in the future when you apply for jobs, schools, etc. Remember to do this before your internship ends since supervisors change jobs and may be hard to find in the future.

Example of letter of evaluation can be found from my teaching site

(<http://mailer.fsu.edu/~xyang/undergraduateinternship.html>).

The letter of evaluation should be sent to:

Dr. Xiaojun Yang  
Department of Geography  
Florida State University  
Room 321 Bellamy Building  
Tallahassee, FL 32306  
Fax: 850-644-5913

### **Grade**

Your grade will be assigned on the basis of the evaluation letter from your supervisor (50%) and the course paper (50%).

### **Contacting the Instructor**

Before you contact the instructor, make sure you have read all of the information in this syllabus. Students may contact Dr. Xiaojun Yang in several ways. The instructor will be available to students during regularly scheduled office hours or by appointment. Students may return forms, deliver papers, and leave messages to the instructor by placing them in the instructor's mailbox in the Geography Department main office. Be sure your name and phone number are on any item you place in the mailbox so the instructor can contact you if necessary. The instructor can be reached by phone at 644-8379 and email [xyang@fsu.edu](mailto:xyang@fsu.edu). Any of the documents described under the "Course Requirements" section may be submitted via email except the evaluation letter from your supervisor.