

# PRACTICUM IN AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND NATURAL RESOURCES:

## FLORICULTURE PRACTICUM

### HANDBOOK FOR STUDENTS

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*Plano ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, or disabilities in providing educational services, activities, and programs, including vocational programs, in accordance with Title VI of Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title XI of the Educational Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities.*

## WHAT IS THE FLORICULTURE PRACTICUM?

This course is a paid or unpaid capstone experience for students participating in a coherent sequence of career and technical education courses in the Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources cluster. Practicum experiences can occur in a variety of locations appropriate to the nature and level of experiences such as employment, internships, assistantships or mentorships. The practicum is designed to give students supervised practical application of knowledge and skills related to the veterinary medicine industry. Students taking in this course will be able to fully participate in the FFA.

### General Course Requirements

- Student must have successfully completed the Principles & Elements of Floral Design course before beginning the practicum.
- Must have teacher approval prior to enrolling.
- Student must obtain placement at an approved work site throughout the school year.
- Work site must be within a 15-mile radius of campus.
- Attend your work site according to the calendar provided by your instructor.
- Classroom instruction will average one class period each day for every school week. If there are any instances where a student is not able to attend the work site during the prescribed class time, the student must report to the teacher for classroom instruction.
- Satisfactorily complete course work.
- Must be 16 years old.
- Provide reliable transportation.

## What is an Internship?

An internship is a well-defined short-term work/learning experience to help you, the student, prepare for a chosen career field. You will be applying the skills you learned in your classroom to a career experience. Typically, you will be working on projects while working alongside practicing professionals. In order to receive credit for an internship, all student internship experiences must have the prior approval of the CTE teacher.

## Internships benefit students, teachers, school and employers

**Students** benefit from working and learning in a high-skill environment. They observe all aspects of the company's operations and discover how the knowledge they gain in high school is applied in the workplace.

**Teachers** benefit from a better understanding of what business and industry expect. By observing student interns, teachers can adjust curricula and instruction to the needs of the work site. Educators and employers work together in preparing students for success in the workplace.

**Schools** benefit because they can assure students and parents that graduates will be well prepared for post-secondary education and promising career opportunities. Close ties with the local employers enable schools to connect youths with career opportunities in numerous fields.

**Employers** benefit from the strong, long-term relationships with local schools, which will produce, following post-secondary education, qualified job candidates for the companies.

Other employer benefits:

- Obtain assistance with project needs
- Meet staffing needs
- Base permanent hiring decisions on knowledge and observation of candidate's work
- Increase awareness of your organization on campus to attract additional qualified full-time and internship candidates

## WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT AS AN INTERN?

**1. Real work!**

Some amount of clerical work comes with any internship, but you will find good learning experiences.

**2. The supervisor will give directions.**

Your supervisor will discuss expectations in the beginning in order to avoid miscommunication.

**3. Expect feedback.**

Your supervisor will help you, the intern, by communicating with you.

**4. Company events**

You may be included in the daily life of the organization.

**5. What if I don't understand the task assigned to me?**

Your supervisor will work with you. Don't be afraid to ask questions.

**6. Who will assist me?**

Your internship site will assign a staff member to mentor and guide you.

**7. Will I get paid?**

Maybe. This course is designed to assist you in determining your career path by giving you real world experience. It is a great networking activity and should be included on your resume.

**8. Will I get a grade on my report card based on this intern opportunity?**

Yes, grading policies for the specific type of internship to which you have been assigned are outlined in the "evaluation" section of this document.

## STRATEGIES FOR A SUCCESSFUL INTERN EXPERIENCE

Show your internship supervisor you are a good intern:

- Be on time! Make sure you have arranged for reliable transportation.
- Use your time efficiently:
  - Limit socializing with other co-workers.
  - Do not abuse your break time.
  - Do not gossip!
- Always be neat and clean.
- Learn as much as you can about the partnering organization. Look at the partner's website.
- Ask questions about the organization. When you are unsure of something be sure to ask the supervisor assigned to you.
- Immediately alert your instructor of any potential problems you are experiencing.

Go Above and Beyond:

- You will receive favorable reviews if you are willing to exceed your employer's expectations.

Display Energy and Enthusiasm

- Smile!
- Show enthusiasm, the most successful interns are those that display an upbeat attitude and a genuine interest in performing their role.

Network

- This is your opportunity to meet people who can assist you in your career choice.
- This is your opportunity to learn what skills and education are necessary for this field.
- This is your opportunity to learn more about this industry.

## PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Absence from school

- Contact your instructor on every occasion of an absence.
- No school... no work, unless permission from your instructor is given.
- Going to the internship site after missing school may result in disciplinary action.
- Partial day absences will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Notify the internship supervisor and my teacher immediately if tardy or absent. The school policy on tardiness will apply. If you are going to be absent from the internship site:
  - Email your instructor
  - Contact your internship site and tell them you are going to be absent
  - You must contact both
- SKIPPING - You will be removed from your site and may be placed in ISS for the remainder of the current rotation.
- If there are any instances where a student is not able to attend the worksite during the prescribed time, the student must report to the teacher.

### Fired or Quitting

The first and most important thing to do is to contact your instructor immediately.

- It is expected that students maintain their work site placement; however, if a justifiable change is necessary, the student must follow the correct procedures for leaving the placement:
  1. Obtain prior approval from teacher.
  2. Provide a two-week written notice to the work site.
  3. Provide proof of placement at another work site.
- If a student is not placed at a work site after leaving the previous work site, they will have two weeks to secure another placement. During that time, the student must contact at least three potential worksites each day, after school hours, and report, in writing, the following to the teacher:
  1. Place of work site.
  2. Contact information of work site and the person with whom they spoke with.
  3. Work site response (interested or not).
- The student will report to instructor until a new site is found.
- School may take disciplinary action pending reasons for job dismissal.

- If a student is fired or discharged from a placement due to unacceptable conduct or poor performance, they may be dismissed from the program with loss of credit.
- Being discharged for misconduct, drug and/or alcohol abuse, theft or dishonesty will result in the student being withdrawn from the program.

### **Lay-off**

- Contact your instructor immediately.
- Instructor may assist student in finding another work site.
- Student must report to teacher daily until a new site is found.
- Students without an approved worksite will be removed from the program.

### **Changing or quitting jobs**

- Students are not permitted to change sites during the year without prior instructor approval.

### **Discipline**

- Students referred to In School Suspension (ISS) must remain in ISS for the entire school day.
- Suspension - Students suspended from school lose the privilege of going to their job site for the days suspended.
- Special Programs - Students enrolled in Special Programs are dropped from the program.

### **Worksite Placement Guidelines**

- Students are required to submit a signed training plan agreement form for a qualified work site by the end of the second week of the beginning of the school year. Those students that have not secured a work site by this time will be immediately removed from the course.
- A student may only be placed at an approved work site. A clear relationship should be evident between the work site responsibilities and the previously completed Principles & Elements of Floral Design course and the Floriculture Practicum objectives.
- Work sites must be within a 15 mile radius of the school.
- All placements must be with an established company and offer adult supervision at all times. A student may not be self-employed, contract labor, or work alone. A student will not be allowed placement at a business owned or operated by a parent or relative or under direct supervision of a parent or relative.
- A student is not allowed to drive (e.g. make deliveries) as part of the job/placement even with parent permission.
- If there are any instances where a student is not able to attend the worksite during the prescribed time, the student must report to the teacher for classroom instruction.

## **Teacher Responsibilities**

The teacher will play an important role in this practicum to ensure that students have a successful experience. The teacher's responsibility includes:

- Assist and advise students in the placement of a quality work site.
- Visit the student at the work site a minimum of six times throughout the year - at least one time per grading period. Additional contact with the work site may be needed dependent on student performance and work site circumstances.
- Assist and advise the student with maintaining a good working relationship with the work site.
- Evaluate the student's progress.
- Maintain student's records in conjunction with the work site.
- Provide classroom instruction an average of one class period each day for every school week.
- Provide classroom instruction to students during the prescribed time for students not able to attend their work site.

## **Evaluation**

- Students will be evaluated on how well they master the competencies and essential knowledge and skills, and will be expected to master each competency before moving on to the next level. Students will be assessed in oral and written formats concerning their knowledge of the floral industry.
- Any concerns regarding the evaluation process should be discussed with your instructor.
- Students will be assessed on work site evaluations, classroom activities and projects and teacher observations.



- I understand that I will be evaluated during the internship by the internship staff. I will be open to the constructive evaluation process so that I may grow and develop positive professional traits and behaviors. **This report must be completed by the job site supervisor and returned to the student's teacher in a sealed and signed envelope every six weeks on the scheduled date.** Failure to comply with these policies and procedures as outlined in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills section §130.25 (C) (1) (A) will result in a 20 point deduction.

Plano Independent School District  
Floriculture Practicum  
Student Report

Student John Doe Date 1-3-2012

Work Site Name Greenleaf Inc. Supervisor Mr. Bill Smith

This report is an estimate of this student's work during the past grading period. Mark only one response in each category. Your additional comments will greatly assist in the evaluation of the student's work (use back of page).

	Unacceptable 60%	Below Avg. 70%	Average 80%	Good 90%	Very Good 100%	N/A
<b>Personality Traits</b>						
Cooperation and Teamwork	1	2	3	4	5	
Attendance	1	2	3	4	5	
Promptness	1	2	3	4	5	
Grooming and Appearance	1	2	3	4	5	
Trustworthiness and Dependability	1	2	3	4	5	
Alertness	1	2	3	4	5	
Courtesy and Tact	1	2	3	4	5	
Attitude Toward Work	1	2	3	4	5	
Persistence	1	2	3	4	5	
Self-control	1	2	3	4	5	
<b>Ability to Learn</b>						
Follows Instructions	1	2	3	4	5	
Shows Willingness to Learn	1	2	3	4	5	
Shows Initiative	1	2	3	4	5	
Organizes Work	1	2	3	4	5	
<b>Quality and Quantity of Work</b>						
Accurate	1	2	3	4	5	
Neat	1	2	3	4	5	
Thorough	1	2	3	4	5	
Productive	1	2	3	4	5	
Time on Task (keeps busy)	1	2	3	4	5	
Pride in Work	1	2	3	4	5	

Bill Smith

Signature of Supervisor

## Dress Code

I agree to the following dress code:

- I will wear the required uniform specified by the work site and/or teacher. Clothes are to be clean, neatly pressed, and appropriately worn during all internship activities.
- The ONLY JEWELRY that may be worn by both males and females is a watch.
- I will practice good personal hygiene (deodorants, no perfumes/cologne, and moderate cosmetics).
- I will not eat, drink, chew gum, or smoke while at the internship site or smoke while traveling to/from the internship site. No backpacks, purses, books, homework, cell phones, etc... in the internship area. Bring in only your car keys, a black pen, and piece of paper to make notes for internship summaries. Homework should not be completed during internship time.
- I will keep my nails clean, short and neatly trimmed.

## Code of Ethics

- I will keep all customer information confidential. I will not discuss customer information with others at home, in school, or anywhere outside of the internship site.
- I will respect the rights of my peers. I will conduct myself in a professional manner that reflects loyalty to the facility.
- I will perform only those tasks for which I have been trained and am legally permitted to do.
- I will treat all customers equally regardless of race, religion, social or economic status, sex and nationality. I will provide service for all individuals to the best of my ability.
- I will be honest and trustworthy with my equipment, money and time. I will report all errors immediately to my supervisor or instructor, and never hide or fail to report any mistakes.
- I will maintain a professional attitude at all times. I realize that my behavior and my appearance reflect not only on me and my parents, but on PISD and the internship program.

- I will be punctual for all classes and internship experiences.

### **Code of Conduct**

- I will not use my cell phone at the work site.
- I will conform to directions from the internship supervisor while in the internship setting.
- I will respect and properly care for all equipment and internship supplies.
- I will not make personal telephone calls, nor answer the telephone in internship areas unless I am instructed.
- Park in the designated parking areas per the individual internship sites.
- I will follow all facility safety rules.
- I will make it my responsibility to know, understand, and adhere to the guidelines and procedures of each internship site. I will be courteous, efficient, and accurate in all of the areas to which I am assigned.
- I understand that if my conduct, performance, and attitude are not satisfactory, my participation in this program may be terminated.

**As a student enrolled in the practicum program, I understand that:**

1. In order to participate, I must agree to abide by the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook.
2. I am making a commitment to complete the courses outlined in the curriculum sequence and I am committed to complete my entire internship assignment.
3. Any history or current drug use or criminal conviction will jeopardize my placement in an internship.
4. By signing this agreement, my legal guardian gives me permission to take trips with my class, report for job interviews and travel unaccompanied to work for my internship. I understand that I am required to provide my own transportation and that work sites must be within a 15 mile radius of the campus.
5. Once placed in my internship, I am responsible for tasks I am assigned by my supervisor. If I have a question about the appropriateness of a particular assignment, I will first contact my instructor.
6. This internship is a result of the partnership between Plano ISD and the employment entity; therefore, I agree to follow all Plano ISD rules and all policies outlined by the employer including those policies relating to confidentiality. I understand that failure to follow any rules or policies will result in termination from employment (at employer's discretion), dismissal from the program (at teacher's discretion) and disciplinary action listed in the Plano ISD Student Handbook. I understand termination will also impact my academic grade in the course.
7. I agree to adhere to PISD computer acceptable use policy at school and on the internship site.
8. I understand that during my internship, I will still be responsible for completing course work and will maintain contact with my teacher. If there are any instances where I am not able to attend the worksite during the prescribed time, I must report to my teacher for classroom instruction.
9. Any questions or concerns I have about the intern program will be directed to the instructor.
10. I will adhere to the attendance guidelines established by the instructor.
11. The district does not carry insurance on students in the Floriculture practicum.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Plano Independent School District  
Transportation Agreement

I, \_\_\_\_\_, request permission to drive a vehicle to Floriculture Practicum internship work sites.

I understand Plano Independent School District and participating agencies are released from any liability associated with driving the vehicle to/from work sites/experiences. I also understand any damage, which may occur to this vehicle during this travel, is not the responsibility of the school, district, or work site.

I understand I must obey all traffic regulations.

I understand I must obey the rules and regulations of the school regarding the driving of vehicles.

I understand students may park only in the specified designated areas.

I understand that PISD does not allow students to carpool to and from work sites. It is the responsibility of each student/parent to provide reliable transportation to and from work sites.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Year, Make/Model, Color of Vehicle      License Plate #

.....

My son/daughter and I fully understand participation in and transportation to and from the internship work sites may result in serious injury, illness, or death. Although I fully appreciate these risks, I desire my child to be allowed to participate in the Floriculture Practicum internship program. I hereby release and waive all claims my son/daughter may have against the Plano Independent School District, its Board of trustees, employees, agents, and representatives and all the participating agencies resulting in whole or part, for my child participating in the Floriculture Practicum internship program. The release and waiver shall be binding on my heirs, legatees, administrators and assigns.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

### §130.25. Practicum in Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources (Two Credits).

(a) General requirements. This course is recommended for students in Grades 11-12. The practicum course is a paid or unpaid capstone experience for students participating in a coherent sequence of career and technical education courses in the Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources cluster. Recommended prerequisite: a minimum of one credit from the courses in the Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources cluster.

(b) Introduction. The practicum is designed to give students supervised practical application of knowledge and skills. Practicum experiences can occur in a variety of locations appropriate to the nature and level of experiences such as employment, independent study, internships, assistantships, mentorships, or laboratories.

(c) Knowledge and skills.

(1) The student demonstrates professional standards as required by business and industry.

The student is expected to:

- (A) adhere to policies and procedures;
- (B) demonstrate positive work behaviors and attitudes, including, punctuality, time management, initiative, and cooperation;
- (C) value and use constructive criticism and critical feedback from supervisor and peers;
- (D) apply ethical reasoning to a variety of situations in order to make ethical decisions;
- (E) complete tasks with the highest standards to ensure quality products and services;
- (F) model professional appearance, including dress, grooming, and personal protective equipment as appropriate; and
- (G) comply with practicum setting safety rules and regulations to maintain safe and healthful working conditions and environments.

(2) The student applies concepts of critical thinking and problem solving. The student is expected to:

- (A) analyze elements of a problem to develop creative and innovative solutions;
- (B) critically analyze information to determine value to the problem-solving task;
- (C) compare and contrast alternatives using a variety of problem-solving and critical-thinking skills; and
- (D) conduct technical research to gather information necessary for decision making.

(3) The student demonstrates leadership and teamwork skills to accomplish goals and objectives. The student is expected to:

- (A) analyze leadership in relation to trust, positive attitude, integrity, and willingness to accept key responsibilities in a work situation;

- (B) demonstrate teamwork skills through working cooperatively with others to achieve tasks;
- (C) demonstrate teamwork processes that promote team building, consensus, continuous improvement, respect for the opinions of others, cooperation, adaptability, and conflict resolution;
- (D) demonstrate responsibility for shared group and individual work tasks;
- (E) establish and maintain effective working relationships in order to accomplish objectives and tasks;
- (F) demonstrate effective working relationships using interpersonal skills in order to accomplish objectives and tasks;
- (G) use positive interpersonal skills to negotiate and work cooperatively with others; and
- (H) demonstrate respect for individuals, including those from different cultures, genders, and backgrounds, and value for diversity.

(4) The student demonstrates oral and written communication skills in creating, expressing, and interpreting information and ideas, including technical terminology and information. The student is expected to:

- (A) demonstrate the use of content, technical concepts, and vocabulary when analyzing information and following directions;
- (B) employ verbal skills when obtaining and conveying information;
- (C) use informational texts, Internet sites, or technical materials to review and apply information sources for occupational tasks;
- (D) evaluate the reliability of information from informational texts, Internet sites, or technical materials and resources;
- (E) interpret verbal and nonverbal cues and behaviors to enhance communication;
- (F) apply active listening skills to obtain and clarify information; and
- (G) use academic skills to facilitate effective written and oral communication.

(5) The student develops management skills for agricultural resources. The student is expected to:

- (A) discuss the importance of agricultural and natural resources to individuals and society;
- (B) develop long-range land, water, and air quality management plans;
- (C) practice equipment maintenance procedures;
- (D) analyze the cost and maintenance of tools, equipment, and structures used in agriculture;
- (E) describe and develop marketing strategies for agricultural and natural resources;
- (F) decide between replacement, maintenance, repair, and reconditioning of agricultural vehicles and machinery; and
- (G) describe and perform hazard analysis and follow safety laws.

(6) The student demonstrates technical knowledge and skills required to pursue a career in the Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources cluster. The student is expected to:

- (A) develop advanced technical knowledge and skills related to the personal occupational objective;
- (B) evaluate strengths and weaknesses in technical skill proficiency;

- (C) explain the principles of safe operation of tools and equipment related to the practicum; and
  - (D) pursue opportunities for licensure or certification relating to chosen career path.
- (7) The student develops an advanced supervised agriculture experience program as it relates to agriculture, food, and natural resources. The student is expected to:
- (A) plan, propose, conduct, and evaluate entrepreneurship; placement; exploratory; research, either experimental or analytical; improvement; supplementary; laboratory-based; or other identified, supervised agricultural experience as an experiential learning activity;
  - (B) apply proper record-keeping skills as they relate to a supervised experience;
  - (C) design and use a customized record-keeping system for the individual supervised experience;
  - (D) employ youth leadership opportunities to create a well-rounded experience program in agriculture; and
  - (E) produce a challenging approach for a local program of activities in agriculture.
- (8) The student documents technical knowledge and skills. The student is expected to:
- (A) update a professional portfolio to include:
    - (i) attainment of technical skill competencies;
    - (ii) licensures or certifications;
    - (iii) recognitions, awards, and scholarships;
    - (iv) extended learning experiences such as community service and active participation in career and technical student organizations and professional organizations;
    - (v) abstract of key points of the practicum;
    - (vi) resumé;
    - (vii) samples of work; and
    - (viii) evaluation from the practicum supervisor; and
  - (B) present the portfolio to all interested stakeholders such as in a poster presentation.