Important information for Applied Study Term Employer Partners

- The Applied Study Term (AST) is a program at the University of Illinois Springfield (UIS) in which undergraduate juniors and seniors participate in an internship, with a concurrent class, to earn academic credit required for graduation. The three primary participants in an AST are the student’s Field Supervisor, the student and the student’s UIS Supervisor. The Field Supervisor is the student’s supervisor at the internship. The UIS Supervisor is a faculty member who will provide the student with expertise and guidance. The student is also assisted by the instructor of his or her class.

- UIS applied study students bring to their internship placements what they have learned in their academic course-work, as well as their enthusiasm, new ideas and creativity. The academic majors from which the students are drawn include:
  - accounting, biology, business administration, chemistry, communication, computer science, criminal justice, economics, English, history, legal studies, liberal studies, management, management information systems, math, philosophy, political science, psychology, sociology/anthropology and visual arts.

- Students must work 50 clock hours for each credit hour they seek to earn and most students need either 3 or 6 credit hours (150-300 hours of work).

- All ASTs must be at least 8 weeks long. Sixteen weeks is average for fall and spring semesters, 8-12 weeks is average for summer semesters. This means that most students will be working 10 or 20 hours a week at their internship. It is possible for a student to ask for new work assignments at the student’s place of current employment in order to complete an AST.

- AST interns must be engaged in college level learning while on their internship. Interns must be gaining professional experience.

- Only 20% of an intern’s time can be spent on activities such as filing, copying, sign drops, etc.

- To be considered a legitimate internship by the National Association of Colleges and Employers definition, all the following criteria must be met:
  - The experience must be an extension of the classroom: a learning experience that provides for applying the knowledge gained in the classroom. It must not be simply to advance the operations of the employer or be the work that a regular employee would routinely perform.
  - The skills or knowledge learned must be transferable to other employment settings.
o The experience has a defined beginning and end, and a job description with desired qualifications.

o There are clearly defined learning objectives/goals related to the professional goals of the student’s academic coursework. [The AST class fulfills this requirement.]

o There is supervision by a professional with expertise and educational and/or professional background in the field of the experience. [The UIS Supervisor fulfills this requirement.]

o There is routine feedback by the experienced supervisor. [Provided by the Field Supervisor at the placement.]

o There are resources, equipment, and facilities provided by the host employer that support learning objectives/goals.

• Someone at the placement must be assigned to serve as the student’s Field Supervisor. This is usually the person who will have the most direct supervisor of the student during the internship.

• It is especially important that the student intern and the Field Supervisor discuss the duties, assignments, or projects involved in the learning experience and that they regularly discuss expectations, progress, and other aspects of performance.

• Students differ in experience and skills; many can profit from a more experienced person’s insights about competence, attitudes and relationships. A field supervisor who is willing to act as a mentor and take a personal interest in the student’s education and career can be of invaluable assistance to the student.

• We ask the Field Supervisor to sign off on the student’s AST Project Outline Form once the student has been given an internship. This form sets out what the student hopes to learn on the internship, the dates the internship will begin and end, how many hours are to be worked and the job description.

• We also ask the Field Supervisor to assist the student in identifying learning objectives that can be successfully accomplished at the placement.

• Halfway through the semester the Field Supervisor will meet with the student and his or her UIS Supervisor, a UIS professor, at a site visit. Site visits can be held at the placement, or as a three-way telephone conference call. At the site visit the three parties discuss the student’s learning objectives and the progress the student is making toward reaching them.

• The Field Supervisor completes a brief Final Evaluation and discusses it with the student before submitting it directly to the AST Office.