The University of Vermont
Communities of Practice
Partner Site Responsibilities

Program Roles:

Site Supervisor	*Individual identified at the partner site who will act as a day-to-day mentor for student interns or provide project guidelines and feedback for students completing tasks. They will also be the liaison between their organization and Communities of Practice program faculty, providing evaluations or feedback as requested.*
COP Faculty	*Matches students with partner sites and/or projects, teaches the academic course associated with this program, helps students complete projects, and provides professional mentorship. The faculty member will be the Site Supervisor's first point of contact in the case of any questions or concerns throughout the experience.*
Program Director *Sophia Trigg* *(strigg@uvm.edu)*	*Sophia works with all Communities of Practice program cohorts and is a resource for students, Site Supervisors, and Faculty in case of higher-level concerns. Sophia also ensures compliance with UVM policies, procedures, and paperwork.*
Student	*Students earn 3 credits for this experience (equal to a typical academic course). They are responsible for completing 100 hours of work for the partner site on top of weekly in-person class meetings and academic assignments. Students can be any major. Sophomore year standing required except in special cases where the student has extensive previous experience.*

Tiers of Partner Site Involvement:

Partner sites may choose between several tiers of involvement in order to mitigate burden on staff. Our purpose is to be a value-add to the partner site—not create more work for existing staff members—while allowing students to get a taste of work within a specific field. Questions about these tiers and what they may mean for your organization? Get in touch with your COP faculty.

1. Project-based	The more hands-off approach. Provide details about a project you need completed and the COP faculty will work with student interns to complete the project over the course of a semester. Regular check-ins throughout the semester are required to ensure the project is on track and to answer student questions. However, additional contact with the student is always welcomed! *Time commitment: at least 2 in-person interactions/site visits throughout the semester + availability over email/phone in case of questions and to check in as the project progresses. Flexible schedule, but students must log 100 hours on task.*
2. Ongoing Task-based	This is the most flexible option and can be adjusted based on your organization's needs and workflow. For example: you need a student to keep your social media updated and write your newsletter, so you provide training on your organization's systems and schedules and check in with them regularly, providing content ideas, adjusted needs, feedback on work, and deadlines, etc. COP faculty may help students with questions or if they need overall guidance, but you will be their primary mentor for their specified work. *Time commitment: weekly meetings with the student + feedback on independent work. Typically, a hybrid modality with students on-site as needed and at least 4x throughout the semester. Flexible schedule will be the norm, but you may include scheduled meetings or larger team meetings related to the students' work.*

3. 1:1 Internship	Traditional internship. The intern you're matched with will be your intern—i.e. they will become part of your team, attend meetings, assist with multiple projects or needs, learn from staff and/or board meetings, and get an immersive experience. Tasks and work may be focused around a singular area, but the intern will be available during working hours for whatever you may need (within reason!). *Time commitment: Regular/daily in-person and/or remote interactions with the student, assigning tasks, redirecting focus, providing mentorship, etc. Scheduled on-site or "on task" time = at least 6 hours per week.*

Responsibilities:
To be arranged between the Site Supervisor and the COP faculty.

Prior to program: *Intern matching*	Work with COP faculty to further enumerate your organization's needs and internship format. Review and sign UVM's Internship Memorandum of Understanding: http://go.uvm.edu/uvminternmou
During program: *Intern Orientation and Supervision*	Tier 1 - Project-based: - Hold initial meeting(s) with the student and COP faculty to provide orientation and overview of your organization, outline project needs, wants, deliverables, timeline, and requirements. - Check in regularly and be available for questions regarding the project. - Invite the student to your location for at least 2 in-person meetings (if you don't have a physical location, a public coffee shop or other public location is fine!) unless logistically prohibitive. - Mid-point check in with faculty and End-point student evaluation. Tier 2 – Ongoing task-based: - Hold initial meeting(s) with the student and COP faculty to provide orientation and overview of your organization, outline your needs, wants, deliverables, timeline, and requirements. - Set student schedule. - Weekly check in meeting to talk progress, give feedback, refocus/redirect, and assign new tasks as needed. - At least 4 meetings should be in-person, whether at your location or in a public setting, unless logistically prohibitive. This allows the student to meet others at your organization informally (or formally) and gives them a stronger sense of belonging and allegiance to your work. - Mid-point check in with faculty and End-point student evaluation. Tier 3 - 1:1 Internship: - Work with student to get them "set up" within the experience (company policies, best practices, safety guidelines, chain of command, etc.) and onboard the intern as needed to organization (email account, payroll, HR, etc.) - Determine weekly schedule and hours and connect them with team members for shadowing, trainings, and to go to for help. - Work with student to identify learning goals from the experience. - Assign tasks and responsibilities. - Involve your student in staff meetings, professional development opportunities, etc. - Mid-point check in with faculty and End-point evaluation.

Bottom-line On-site/In-person Requirement	We require that students who are doing primarily remote experiences visit the organization in-person at least once during the semester (the faculty member may require more visits). If the organization is fully remote, then we recommend the student and supervisor meet in person at a neutral location (coffee shop or registered co-working space). This is to help foster deeper connections – both personally and professionally – between the student and the community.
Feedback	Both formal and informal check ins with your student intern are essential. These help the students stay on task, stay connected with you—the beneficiary of their work—and help alleviate any concerns or confusion that they may have while completing their work.

About halfway through the semester, site supervisors will meet with their students to talk about their progress so far. Faculty will either attend these meetings or check in with you separately. We encourage site supervisors to be open to listening to any concerns their intern may have and work with the COP faculty to balance intern and organization needs.

At the end of the semester, all site supervisors will complete an End-point Evaluation for the student(s) they worked with. |
| Student compensation | Paying your students is not required, but if you are able to, it is highly encouraged. This need not be an hourly wage—especially if you are asking students to focus on a project rather than on a 1:1 internship—but could take the form of a stipend, vouchers for lunch, tuition for specific skill trainings, gas money, etc. The highest barrier to participation in the Communities of Practice program is compensation. Studies have shown that paying student interns results in higher rates of satisfaction and dedication and allows a wider range of students to access work at your organization and future careers in your field.

Please note that if you require that students travel or use their personal vehicles as part of their duties for your organization, it is required that you cover their travel expenses (mileage, gas money, or bus fare). Note: this requirement does not include travel to/from the organization's location for agreed-upon in-person hours. |

Thank you for exploring the Communities of Practice program! We hope to see you become one of our community partners soon. For more information, please visit: https://go.uvm.edu/cas-partners