

The University of Vermont
Communities of Practice
Partner Site Responsibilities 2026-2027

Program Roles:

<i>Site Supervisor</i>	<i>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.</i>
<i>COP Faculty</i>	<i>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.</i>
<i>Program Director</i> <i>Sophia Trigg</i> <i>(strigg@uvm.edu)</i>	<i>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.</i>
<i>Student</i>	<i>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.</i>

Types of Placements:

Partner sites may choose between project-based or traditional internship-style placements or may work with their faculty member to create a custom arrangement. 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.

1. Project-based	The more hands-off approach. Site provides details about a project they need completed and the COP faculty will support student interns to complete the project over the course of the semester. Regular check-ins between the student and site throughout the semester are required to ensure the project is on track, provide feedback, and answer student questions. <i>Minimum time commitment: at least 2 in-person interactions/site visits throughout the semester + at least weekly availability over video call/email/phone or on-site in case of questions and to check in as the project progresses. Flexible schedule, but students must log 100 hours on task.</i> <i>Supervisory model: 50% Faculty, 50% Partner Site Contact</i>
2. 1:1 Internship	Traditional internship model focused around a certain set of tasks. The intern will become part of the organization's team, attend meetings, and learn directly from staff day-to-day or as-needed. Tasks and work will be focused around a singular area (i.e. Communication work), but the intern will be available during set working hours and can respond to other needs as they come up (within reason). <i>Minimum time commitment: Regular 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 for a total of 100 hours.</i> <i>Supervisory model: 25% Faculty, 75% Partner Site Contact</i>

Responsibilities & Requirements:

Prior to program: <i>MOU & Intern matching</i>	Review and sign UVM's Internship Memorandum of Understanding: http://go.uvm.edu/uvminternmou Work with the Faculty member to complete tasks related to intern / partner site matching.
During program: <i>Intern Orientation and Supervision</i>	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. - Work with student to identify learning goals from the experience. - Check in regularly and be available for questions regarding the project. Set a schedule or expectations for check-ins and clarify appropriate communication methods for getting in touch with the Site Supervisor. - 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/student and End-point student evaluation. 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 work schedule and connect them with additional team members for shadowing, trainings, and to go to for help. It is recommended that the student and site supervisor meet at least 1x per week to keep tasks, projects, and expectations on-track. - 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.
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For more information, please visit: <https://go.uvm.edu/cas-partners>