The professional internship program provides an opportunity for students to develop professional competencies that cannot be acquired in the classroom. An internship is a supervised, on-the-job, learning experience based on each student’s individually-designed learning plan. It is an opportunity for students to learn about career opportunities in Environmental Economics and Policy and obtain professional experience that will enhance their career opportunities after graduation.

Interns benefit by applying their classroom knowledge to practical problems in the workplace, transforming an ordinary job experience into an opportunity for professional learning and growth. Faculty, staff, and employers work with the student to enhance the relationship between the student’s academic program and the professional experience gained through the internship.

The professional internship program is designed to help students:

- Integrate classroom learning with professional experience.
- Examine the role of economics in environmental policy analysis and in public or private decisions impacting natural resources and the environment.
- Gain practical experience and develop professional skills that enhance job opportunities after graduation.
- Discover professional strengths and weaknesses, evaluate career opportunities, and develop a greater sense of professional responsibility.
- Develop interpersonal skills by working with others in a professional capacity.
- Develop an internship portfolio representative of the student’s accomplishments during the internship.

An internship is an opportunity for experiential learning and is based on three components:

- **Knowledge** -- Concepts, facts, information, and experience gained before and during the internship.
- **Action** -- Knowledge applied to current, ongoing situations or tasks encountered during the internship.
- **Reflection** -- Thoughtful analysis and assessment of one’s actions and the results of those actions during the internship.

Your achievement will be measured by your demonstration of the experiential learning acquired during the internship, a self-assessment of your internship performance, and the assessment of your performance by your employer and by your MSU instructor.
RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE PROFESSIONAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

A professional internship must involve the student, an internship supervisor representing the employer, and a MSU instructor representing Michigan State University. The student, the internship supervisor, and the MSU instructor will collaborate in defining the learning objectives of the internship and assessing the student’s performance in accomplishing those objectives. The responsibilities of each are critical for developing a quality academic and professional experience for the student intern.

Responsibilities of the student in the internship program

As a self-directed learning experience, the internship program requires each student to design a learning experience that advances his/her academic and professional objectives. All students participating in the professional internship program are responsible for completion of the internship in a manner that satisfies both the employment standards of the employer and the academic standards of Michigan State University. To satisfy these standards, each student is required to:

- Receive an internship employment offer with responsibilities that advance the student’s professional skills.
- Develop an internship agreement that reflects the employment objectives of the employer and the academic standards of the professional internship program.
- Complete the learning objectives established in this internship agreement document.
- Fulfill the employment objectives established by the internship supervisor.
- Fulfill the academic requirements of the professional internship program.
- *If the student is graduating in August, internship credit cannot be earned that summer semester in which the student is to graduate.*

Responsibilities of the internship supervisor in the internship program

The internship supervisor should be the person in the employing organization/agency who is most directly responsible for supervising the work of the student during the internship. The internship supervisor will:

- Approve the internship agreement, including the learning objectives to be accomplished during the internship, consistent with the employer’s expectations for the work to be accomplished during the internship.
- Submit a final evaluation of the student’s work performance during the internship to the MSU instructor.
Responsibilities of the MSU instructor in the internship program

The MSU instructor is responsible for working with the student to define the academic component of the internship. The MSU instructor will:

- Approve the internship agreement, including the learning objectives to be accomplished during the internship, consistent with the academic standards of the professional internship program.
- Supervise the academic component of the internship, evaluate the academic performance of the student, and assign a grade for the academic credits granted for the internship.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERNSHIP CREDIT

Students may earn 3 hours of academic credit in EEP 493 by completing the academic requirements of the professional internship program. University academic standards require that students complete an academic component of an internship to receive academic credit and do not permit credit to be granted solely for the completion of the employment component of the internship. To receive academic credit for an internship, a student must complete all academic assignments required in the professional internship program. Academic credits earned through an internship may be used to fulfill a general or professional elective requirement and cannot substitute for a required course or any EEP course. The student should meet with his or her Academic Advisor to determine where the internship course may be used.

All students enrolled for academic credit in the professional internship program must:

- Develop the internship responsibilities and learning objectives to be achieved during the internship in conjunction with the internship supervisor.
- Submit an internship enrollment form to your Academic Advisor indicating a decision to receive academic credit for the professional internship.
- Maintain a weekly journal or log of the student’s work accomplishments.
- Submit two reports on the internship experience.
- Complete an internship portfolio.
- Present the internship portfolio to the MSU instructor within 30 days of completion of the internship. If the portfolio is not submitted until the semester after the internship is completed, an incomplete grade will be given for the semester during which the intern is completed.

Each of these requirements is defined below.

NOTE: Students can enroll in the internship course up to two semesters after the internship is completed provided they have completed the internship enrollment form prior to beginning the internship and they are capable of fulfilling all the academic requirements associated with the internship course (e.g., weekly journal/log).
The dates that the following materials are due will be determined by the MSU instructor and the student – it is the student’s responsibility to turn all materials in on time.

The internship enrollment form

The internship enrollment form must be signed by the student, internship supervisor, MSU instructor and the Faculty Program Director. The student must submit the enrollment form to his/her Academic Advisor before the first day of employment in the internship.

The internship enrollment form defines the learning objectives to be accomplished by the student during the internship. The agreement is established through the collaboration of the student, internship supervisor, and MSU instructor. The learning objectives must contribute to the organization/agency employing the intern, must contribute to the student’s professional development, and must be consistent with the student’s program of study at Michigan State University.

The MSU instructor will review the enrollment form and indicate any revisions that are needed to receive academic credit. If revisions are required, the student must submit a revised form within one week after receiving the MSU instructor’s comments and include the revised form in the internship portfolio.

The weekly journal

Each student must maintain a weekly journal or log summarizing his/her accomplishments during the internship. The journal is an important document that will assist the student in completing the two reports. A thorough reflection of the internship experience will allow the student to better track and understand the overall learning process and ensure important accomplishments are not forgotten. The journal should include the following:

- The major professional activities and the contribution of these activities to the student’s learning objectives.
- Various situations or tasks encountered during the internship, the student’s action in response to these situations or tasks, and the results achieved by the student’s action.
- The student’s reflective self-assessment of his/her action and its results and the knowledge gained from that experience.
- Examples of the ways in which knowledge gained in the student’s academic program at MSU was used.
- Aspects of work that created a favorable or unfavorable impression of the job.
- Any problems in which the MSU instructor can be of assistance (note: if problems arise during the internship, the student should contact the MSU instructor immediately for advice and assistance).
The first internship report

Students must complete two internship reports. The first report is an overview of the internship, must not be longer than 5 double spaced pages, and must include the following:

- A description of the organization or agency by which the student is employed.
- A description of the internship responsibilities.
- The learning objectives of the internship.
- A description of the activities used to accomplish each of the learning objectives and the professional skills developed during the internship. This description should be based on specific situations or tasks encountered during the internship, the actions taken by the student, and the results of those actions. This description should also provide evidence of the student’s success at applying the knowledge gained in his/her academic program at MSU.
- A reflective self-assessment of the student’s performance during the internship including all aspects of the student’s performance during the internship.
- A reflective self-assessment of the student’s academic program at MSU. This should include an assessment of the most important contributions of the academic program to the student’s success in the internship and aspects of the academic program that could be changed to better prepare students for such an internship.
- A reflective self-assessment of how the internship experience has influenced the student’s views of job opportunities in the environmental economics and policy arena, of how environmental economics affects public or private decisions, and of his/her future educational and career goals.

The second internship report

Students who wish to receive internship credit must work with the internship supervisor to develop a project or research report that relates to the internship duties. This project may be to evaluate the economic impacts of an existing or proposed environmental policy or to examine environmental impacts of economic activity. Another example may be to conduct research on a current issue (e.g., an important environmental policy issue in the state or region of employment). The second internship report will summarize the project and highlight recommendations. The report must not be longer than 10 double spaced pages and the topic must be pre-approved by the MSU instructor.

The internship portfolio

The internship portfolio must present a complete profile of the student’s internship, from the job search and the interview through the end of the student’s employment. The portfolio should be developed with the notion that it is a professional product that you would use to present yourself to a prospective employer in the future. The internship portfolio must be submitted in a 3-ring binder. All parts of the portfolio must be typed and organized in a professional manner. The internship portfolio must include the following:
• A copy of the student’s resume as presented to the employer at the time of the initial interview.
• Copies of any correspondence between the student and the employer during the job search process (e.g., cover letters or thank you letters sent by the student).
• Information about the organization or agency in which the student was employed.
• A copy of the internship enrollment form as approved by the MSU instructor and the internship supervisor.
• The weekly journal.
• Both internship reports.
• A completed Student Evaluation of Internship Experience form.
• A copy of the thank you letter sent to the employer at the end of the internship.
• Additional supporting materials that document the student’s accomplishments during the internship (e.g., letters/notes from employer).
GRADING GUIDELINES FOR INTERNSHIP ACADEMIC CREDIT

Grades will be based on the student’s academic and work performance during the internship. The MSU instructor will consider the internship supervisor’s evaluation of the student’s performance when assigning the final grade. The final grade for the internship will be based on the following criteria:

4.0 =  
**Internship enrollment form:** Well written, clear and with appropriate learning objectives. 
**Journal:** Completed as described, thorough, well written. 
**Student evaluation of internship experience:** Completed as described and submitted in a timely manner with thoughtful comments on the internship experience. 
**Both internship reports:** Completed as described, well written, with thoughtful reflection on the internship experience. 
**Employer evaluation of intern:** Excellent or very good rating by internship supervisor and with all learning objectives completed. 
**Internship portfolio:** Submitted in a timely manner, well written, presented in a professional manner.

3.0 =  
**Internship enrollment form:** Well written, clear and with appropriate learning objectives. 
**Journal:** At least 80 percent completed as described, thorough, well written. 
**Student evaluation of internship experience:** Completed as described and submitted in a timely manner with thoughtful comments on the internship experience. 
**Both internship reports:** Completed as described, well written, with thoughtful reflection on the internship experience. 
**Employer evaluation of intern:** Very Good or Average rating by internship supervisor and with 80 percent of learning objectives completed. 
**Internship portfolio:** Submitted on time, well written, presented in a professional manner.

2.0 =  
**Internship enrollment form:** Well written, clear and with appropriate learning objectives. 
**Journal:** Less than 80 percent completed as described, not thorough, not written in a professional manner. 
**Student evaluation of internship experience:** Completed as described and submitted in a timely manner with few comments on the internship experience. 
**Both internship reports:** Completed as described, not written in a professional manner, lacks thoughtful reflection on the internship experience. 
**Employer evaluation of intern:** Average or Below Average rating by internship supervisor and with limited progress toward objectives and with 60 to 80 percent of the learning objectives completed. 
**Internship portfolio:** Submitted late with grammar and spelling errors, presented in an unprofessional manner.

0.0 =  
Work does not meet standards of 2.0 performance or 
Student does not complete internship due to employer dismissal of student.
PROFESSIONAL INTERNERNSHIP PROGRAM CHECKLIST

The student is responsible for completing the academic requirements of the internship. Students should use this checklist to ensure that all academic requirements have been completed.

Before leaving campus/Beginning the internship

_____ Obtain a job offer with a public or private organization or agency involved in
environmental policy or management for a professional internship.
_____ Obtain a copy of the internship document and the internship forms on the web or from
your Academic Advisor.
_____ Complete an internship enrollment form, obtain the signatures of the internship
supervisor, MSU instructor and Faculty Program Director, and submit the form to your
Academic Advisor.
_____ Register for 3 credits in EEP 493 and pay tuition. If summer enrollment, be sure to have
all financial aid in place and all holds cleared before leaving campus.
_____ If summer enrollment, provide your mailing address during the internship to the
Registrar’s Office. This must be done to guarantee that you will receive your tuition bill
for the next semester. You will have two weeks to return your tuition bill to MSU or you
will lose your classes.

While on the job/taking internship credit

_____ Revise the internship enrollment form, if necessary, and send to the MSU instructor
within specified time limits.
_____ Maintain the weekly journal.
_____ Complete the second paper topic form within specific time limits and gain approval from
internship supervisor and MSU instructor.
_____ Complete internship project/research component.
_____ Compile information for internship portfolio.
_____ Provide Employer Evaluation of Intern form to internship supervisor and request that it
be completed and sent one week before the internship is completed.
_____ Complete Student Evaluation of Internship Experience form for inclusion in internship
portfolio.
_____ Complete preparation of internship portfolio.

After internship

_____ Send a thank you letter to employer.
_____ Complete preparation of remaining course materials and portfolio.
_____ Submit portfolio to MSU Instructor.