

# DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DESIGN

METROPOLITAN STATE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

## *Internship Supervisor Handbook*



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## Overview of the Industrial Design Internship

The Industrial Design Professional Internship is a practicum course designed to help students connect the knowledge and skills learned in the classroom with the demands of real-world design employers in a genuine work environment. ***The internship is a unique means for industrial design students to gain valuable work experience while receiving school credit toward their degree.*** The internship is required as part of the industrial design program's accreditation and fulfills the student's university requirement for Senior Experience coursework prior to graduation. The internship also helps fulfill part of the industrial design department's broader mission, which is stated as follows:

***The mission of the Industrial Design Department is...***

*to provide a high quality experiential learning environment to produce graduates who are critical thinkers and innovative problem solvers with a refined sense of aesthetics, technology, and culture. The department collaborates with the professional community to augment the development of skills, knowledge and dispositions that enable graduates to immediately function as entry-level professional industrial designers.*

By focusing their design efforts in a practical, professional setting, students are better able to develop their skills in a way that will prepare them for work in this competitive, creative, and rewarding field. ***Internships provide real-world experience that is very difficult to replicate in a classroom setting***, so students can gain capabilities that will better lead them toward success. Upon completion of the internship course and experience (based on the course's own university-approved Student Behavioral Learning Objects, or SLOs), each student should be able to:

1. Identify, organize, and apply job search and interview skills
2. Maintain professional performance and behavior
3. Recognize their strengths and limitations, and the conditions under which outside counsel or resources should be drawn upon
4. Relate to others on the basis of their unique qualities as human beings without regard to race, creed, color, socioeconomic status, age, sex, sexual preference, or handicap
5. Give precedence to professional responsibilities over personal responses
6. Behave at all times in an ethical and responsible fashion in the performance of duties
7. Evaluate and select materials to include in a professional portfolio
8. Assess the quality of a professional experience and relationship between education and professional practice

***The Industrial Design program gratefully recognizes the unique contribution industry makes toward orientation and training of future industrial design employees.*** Industry partners graciously provide students with valuable field experience as experienced industry professionals work collaboratively with the industrial design department's faculty internship advisor to support the student with real-world knowledge that cannot be adequately synthesized in the classroom. Ultimately, through the internship experience, industry gains an employee with an

attitude for learning, industry becomes part of the educational process, and the transition from student to productive employee is effectively reduced.

***The Industrial Design department also makes significant improvements in its coursework based on the feedback it receives directly from the participating industry through these internships.*** This feedback is thoughtfully analyzed and appropriately incorporated back into course work taught in the department to the benefit of future students—and upcoming industrial design student interns—with the intent of improving student outcomes and their corresponding industry readiness among the department’s own graduates.

## **General Benefits of the Internship**

Several beneficial results are generated through the internship and the relationships it creates between the student intern, the industrial design department, and the industry partners who provide the internship opportunities. Some of these benefits are listed below.

### **Benefits to the Internship Provider:**

The industrial design internship program provides industry with the following:

1. A source of trained workers
2. A connection to academic resources and gives industry an opportunity to establish or improve new employee training
3. In-service training for student/workers who may already be employed in a regular job with the company.
4. Training that may be used as a basis for promotion/advancement in the workplace.
5. An opportunity to participate in the educational process.
6. A vehicle for communication between industry and education.

### **Benefits to Student Interns:**

Industry partners provide benefits to students by providing them with the following:

1. Connections between classroom learning to the world of work so their education becomes more relevant
2. A means of developing proper attitudes necessary for successful career performance.

3. Tools to develop proper attitudes toward worker-industry relationships.
4. An opportunity to exhibit interest in the job performed whether as in-service training or used as a vehicle for promotion.
5. Exposure to professionals within the chosen career field.

### **Who Assists Students During the Internship Course?:**

Within the Industrial Design Department at MSU Denver, ***the student's primary resource is the faculty internship advisor.*** The internship advisor is a full-time faculty member who oversees the professional internships and will meet with the student for advising and placement support prior to the start of the internship class. The internship advisor is the student intern's main point of contact at school, but the student may contact the department chair for appeals to any of the processes defined in this handbook. Although the internship advisor will help answer questions and offer resources in your search for an internship, ***the primary responsibility for finding a suitable internship opportunity lies on the student intern.***

In addition to the University support provided by the internship advisor, ***student interns should have an assigned internship supervisor at the placement company*** who will provide them with scheduled, weekly supervision, as well as any training and direction necessary to guide their learning. Additionally, the internship advisor will perform a site visit and meet with the internship supervisor to make sure the student interns gets the most from their internship experience.

### **Student Academic Preparation for the Internship:**

Prior to applying for the internship, students are required to complete certain upper-level courses to ensure they will have enough academic understanding to adequately prepare them for the internship. ***Students complete their internship experience(s) toward the end of their degree—typically in the final semester of your studies.*** In doing so, they are more able to apply the knowledge gained in their previous classes to the real-life situations encountered during their internship placement. Students must complete the following prior to registering for the Professional Internship:

- **IND 4450 – Advanced ID Studio** (this course is a pre-requisite or co-requisite)
- **IND 4540 – Concept and Portfolio** (this course is a pre-requisite)
- **Satisfactory completion of all General Studies course requirements**

### **Helping a Student Start an Internship:**

Prior to actually registering for the Professional Internship, ***a student must first complete the following:***

1. Secure an internship by entering into an agreement with an appropriate company
2. Review the Internship Supervisor Handbook with the internship provider
3. Sign the Internship Contract
4. Meet with the faculty internship advisor to remove the internship registration hold

Once a student has researched an internship that appears to fit their educational needs, **they must come to an agreement with the potential internship provider about entering into an internship.** This may include discussions about the particular needs the company may have for an intern, the benefits the student may provide them through the internship, and the timeframe of availability for the internship—both from the student’s perspective, as well as that of the company and its readiness to provide the internship. **The student should ensure that they are in agreement with company about the terms of the internship before making final plans** about the internship.

**The student should then review the Internship Supervisor Handbook with the internship provider,** and discuss the handbook contents with the intended supervisor who will be working with them. The information presented in the handbook applies directly to the student and their activities in the internship, and includes many of the criteria by which they will be evaluated as they perform their work and design duties with the internship provider. The internship supervisor should thoroughly review these materials with the intern and **be open and honest with them about any concerns or questions you may have so they will be able to appropriately assist you in your efforts** throughout the internship.

Next, **the student and internship provider must complete and sign the Internship Contract (see Appendix A).** The student will need to sign the contract, along with the internship provider and internship supervisor who will be working with them. **The student and internship supervisor should make sure that all information on the contract is correct, and that all the required signatures are included** before the student presents it to the faculty internship advisor for final review.

After completing the previous steps, the student will then schedule an internship registration meeting (either in-person or virtually) with the faculty internship advisor before the department will allow the student to register for the professional internship.

### **Internship Placement at a Student’s Current Design Workplace:**

It is permissible for a student to use their existing design job for internship hours but **their position responsibilities and tasks must go beyond their current job duties.** If the student opts to use your employment (part-time or full-time) for professional internship credit, Metropolitan State University of Denver and the Industrial Design Department are not responsible or liable for situations that occur as a result of that employment. If a student is having difficulties as an employee, we strongly encourage the student to discuss, handle, or resolve those issues through processes and structures available to them as a company employee.

## Effective Use of Supervision:

***A student intern's relationship with their internship supervisor is central to the learning experience.*** To make effective use of supervision time and experience, the student should endeavor to be an active participant in the supervision process. They should prepare for meetings with the supervisor and should be open to share their questions and concerns with the internship supervisor.

Supervisor meetings offer the student intern an opportunity to clarify policies and procedures, seek feedback on their performance, and ask for guidance related to specific situations. It also offers them a time to plan for activities and projects. ***Students should learn that being available for feedback is a crucial element of professional and personal development.*** Supervisors should strive to provide appropriate levels of supervision to interns, within the bounds of their other work responsibilities and time limitations.

## Internship Site Visit(s):

***The internship advisor will meet with the student intern and supervisor (in-person or virtually) at least once over the semester.*** This meeting is meant to provide an opportunity for the student, the internship advisor, and the internship supervisor to discuss the student's performance as well as provide any feedback on the overall internship experience. The student may request an additional site visit if they need assistance resolving an issue at the placement company. Additionally, if the internship supervisor contacts the internship advisor to discuss concerns, the internship advisor and internship supervisor may decide an additional visit is appropriate.

## Weekly Reports and Evaluations:

Grading for the professional internship is based on the reasonable completion of the student's duties during the internship, their successful completion of all weekly reporting and final assessments, and the internship supervisor's evaluation of the student's performance. ***The Industrial Design Weekly Report (see Appendix B) is one means of providing the industrial design department's internship advisor with periodic insight into the ongoing successes or concerns of the student intern.*** The supervisor should review these reports from the student each week and sign them prior to the student's submission of the report to the internship advisor. Conscientious review of these reports may help alert the internship supervisor to any unmet student needs or problems during the internship.

***Students in an internship must also complete an end-of-semester review of their learning as part of the course evaluation process and final course grade.*** At the end of the placement, the student and the internship supervisor will each complete an internship evaluation. The internship supervisor will rate the student's success in the *End-of-Term Internship Supervisor's Report* (See Appendix C). ***The internship supervisor should also schedule a time to meet with the student intern to review and discuss their feedback on the final evaluation.***

## Department Policies and Student Responsibilities

The following policies, responsibilities, and procedures are used by the MSU Denver Department of Industrial Design to prepare and support students' success in the internship placement experience.

### Criteria for Internship Supervisors:

Prior to starting the internship, ***the internship supervisor should meet with the faculty internship advisor either by phone, online meeting, or in person to discuss their particular capabilities to assist the student during their internship experience.*** The internship supervisor must have direct supervision of the student throughout the entirety of the internship experience. They must communicate with the student frequently enough to give meaningful feedback on the student's performance, and should be open to providing the student with worthwhile tasks to help them build adequate design experience during the internship. The internship supervisor should work with the student intern to identify specific activities that support their particular learning goals.

### Company/Supervisor and Student Responsibilities:

To provide the best internship experience possible, the internship-providing company, the internship supervisor, and the student should all agree to fulfill several important internship responsibilities. These responsibilities include the following:

#### The Internship Supervisor Agrees to:

- Collaborate with the student in the development of learning goals
- Ensure the student is provided with opportunities for at least 150 hours of relevant design work
- Provide the student with job tasks that are commensurate with the student's abilities/training
- Provide a variety of appropriate design/development experiences for the student
- Participate in a site visit with the internship advisor
- Review and uphold the policies and procedures outlined in the Internship Supervisor Handbook
- Provide an orientation to the company and training for the student to be successful
- Provide ongoing feedback, review of weekly reports, and completion of a final evaluation
- Demonstrate policies and procedures that meet professional and ethical standards
- Contact the internship advisor as quickly as possible with concerns about the student

#### The Student Agrees to:

- Help coordinate a site visit with the internship advisor and internship supervisor
- Uphold the policies and procedures outlined in the Student Internship Handbook
- Conduct themselves in a professional manner throughout the internship experience



- Provide weekly reports and complete a final evaluation
- Discuss concerns with the internship supervisor and/or internship advisor as quickly as possible
- Discuss concerns with the internship supervisor and/or internship advisor as quickly as possible

### **Professional Standards and Ethical Issues:**

**Student interns are expected to follow the policies and procedures defined by the placement company as well as the MSU Denver Student Code of Conduct.** Internship supervisors should provide the intern with information on company policies and procedures during their first week on the job. They should also review these company policies and procedures with the student intern and help them resolve any questions they may have. Remind the student intern to avoid all relationships with supervisors and co-workers that could violate a professional code of conduct or have a negative impact on their internship experience.

### **Conflict(s) of Interest:**

The internship supervisor should help the student intern understand and avoid any situations that may create a conflict of interest, and minimize situations where someone may gain personal benefit by using their services while working in an official capacity over them. This would include using regular work hours from an employer to fulfill internship hours rather than having the student intern perform duties outside their normal work requirements to fulfill the internship requirements. If you have questions about what may constitute a conflict of interest, please consult with the faculty internship advisor.

### **Worker's Compensation:**

Students in an *unpaid* internship are covered by the MSU Denver Professional Liability and Worker's Compensation Insurance plan. Students in a *paid* internship are covered by the company's plan. Where applicable, please review the details of the company's plan with the intern.

Information about MSU Denver Worker's Compensation policies and procedures, including a list of providers/ locations/ hours, will be provided to the student by the internship advisor. Students must use a MSU Denver approved provider for any medical treatment in cases of on-the-job injury at an unpaid placement. Student interns must tell their internship supervisor, internship advisor, and the Metropolitan State University of Denver Office of Human Resources about an injury within 24 hours.

### **Internship Education Strategies for Remote/Virtual Learning:**

When remote/virtual work is required to accrue internship hours, student interns should make sure to participate in remote meetings and any relevant online trainings. ***Student interns should***

***maintain consistent, meaningful communication with their internship supervisor*** using the appropriate tools, such as phone, text, email, or virtual meetings. Students working remotely should avoid allowing physical distancing to obstruct their design effectiveness and internship experience wherever possible. If a student finds that their internship experience is being compromised due to remote work, they should contact the internship supervisor and internship advisor as soon as possible to find a resolution.

### **Removal from an Internship Placement Setting:**

***Any student whose performance is evaluated as unsafe, substandard, or professionally inappropriate by the internship advisor or the internship supervisor, in consultation with the chair, may be removed from the placement setting and the internship class.*** In such a situation the student may also fail the internship class, although they can appeal this grade via the departmental review process. Additional sanctions may be sought against the student through the MSU Denver Student Conduct Process for any violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Switching Internship Placement Sites:**

***Switching placement sites during the semester is strongly discouraged.*** There are times, however, when a change of sites may be the best option. ***Before a student makes a decision to leave a placement site, they must have a conversation with their industrial design department internship advisor and receive permission to make the change.*** If the internship advisor approves the change, it is the student's responsibility to speak to their internship supervisor and give notice to the company. Typically, two weeks' notice is considered appropriate. The student must have their internship supervisor complete the supervisor evaluation even if they were at the site only briefly. A site visit/termination meeting with the internship supervisor and internship advisor will be the final step in the process of a student transitioning out of an internship placement company.

### **Resolving Concerns and Grievances:**

The internship advisor is available to assist with any concerns that may arise during the preparation or fulfillment of the student's internship. However, circumstances may arise that require additional direction from the internship supervisor or industrial design department chair. ***Please reach out to the industrial design department chair for assistance if you feel there has been a violation of an ethical or professional standard, or violation of a law.*** The industrial design department chair can advise you on appropriate steps to resolve serious concerns and grievances, which may include escalating certain issues to senior university administration for action or resolution.

## Other Elements of a Successful Internship Experience

This section discusses additional areas that the student intern should strive to develop to make their internship as fulfilling as possible.

### Attitude:

Students should make an effort to show enthusiasm toward their work and perform to the best of their abilities. They should show a positive attitude and outlook toward the work they provide and have an eagerness to learn and to make the most of every learning opportunity they are given. In doing so, the student intern may ask many questions of those around them to find out why others do the things they do, and design the way they design. ***Internship supervisors can help foster a student's earnest endeavors to learn by recognizing and commending them on their level of existing skills, while also encouraging them to continually improve upon their design competencies.*** An optimistic outlook toward the student will likely have a positive influence on them and help them in their professional growth.

### Professional Behavior and Dress:

Student interns should arrive at their internship consistently and on time and behave in a respectful and professional manner. ***The internship supervisor should inform the student about the protocol for missing work due to illness or emergency at the beginning of the internship.*** The student should dress appropriately and professionally while in the internship, so ***the internship supervisor should also provide any appropriate information about the company dress code.*** If there is no specific dress code, the student may discuss guidelines on appropriate dress with the internship supervisor. If the student intern is working directly with clients or the public, they should be made aware of the impact of what they wear, as extremely flashy colors or jewelry, provocative clothing, or clothing with political statements could impede their service relationships and/or create a negative impression for the public.

## Appendix A: Internship Contract

The following guidelines must be agreed upon by the internship provider and returned to the faculty internship advisor prior to registration, and at least four (4) weeks before the start of the internship semester.

### The Internship Supervisor Agrees to:

- Collaborate with the student in the development of learning goals
- Ensure the student is provided with opportunities for at least 150 hours of relevant design work
- Provide the student with job tasks that are commensurate with the student's abilities/training
- Provide a variety of appropriate design/development experiences for the student
- Participate in a site visit with the internship advisor
- Review and uphold the policies and procedures outlined in the Internship Supervisor Handbook
- Provide an orientation to the company and training for the student to be successful
- Provide ongoing feedback, review of weekly reports, and completion of a final evaluation
- Demonstrate policies and procedures that meet professional and ethical standards
- Contact the internship advisor as quickly as possible with concerns about the student

### The Student Agrees to:

- Help coordinate a site visit with the internship advisor and internship supervisor
- Uphold the policies and procedures outlined in the Student Internship Handbook
- Conduct themselves in a professional manner throughout the internship experience
- Provide weekly reports and complete a final evaluation
- Discuss concerns with the internship supervisor and/or internship advisor as quickly as possible

### Anticipated Timeframe for the Internship:

The internship will run from (Date): \_\_\_\_\_ until (Date): \_\_\_\_\_

### Student Information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Company Information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor's Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B: Industrial Design Internship Weekly Report

**\* Email directly to your IND Internship Advisor**

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Internship Provider's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Day / Date	Site On-site/Virtual (Circle One)	Hours worked	Work/Design Assignment	
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				
Sunday				
<b>Total hours this week:</b>			<b>Internship Supervisor initials</b>	
<b>Cumulative semester total hours:</b>				

**What specific projects or activities were you involved with this week (please include any meetings attended)?**

**Professional Development: (What did you learn? Can this new knowledge be linked to any of the learning outcomes or classroom experiences? If yes, please list.):**

## Appendix C: End-of-Term Internship Supervisor's Report

The following form should be returned to MSU Denver's Department of Industrial Design at, [ind@msudenver.edu](mailto:ind@msudenver.edu), upon completion of the student's term of internship.

Supervisor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

We appreciate the time and effort contributed to the educational growth of the above-named student. The Industrial Design Department at the Metropolitan State University of Denver seeks a constructively critical evaluation of your impressions of its product and program.

1. Would you be willing, provided the opportunity is available, to employ another student under the same type of program?

Would you please relate why you feel you would or would not?

2. Do you feel the student-worker was sufficiently trained at Metropolitan State University of Denver to meet the requirements of your company? Why or why not?

3. Please list as many items as you can that would help us to improve our students' performance outcomes.

4. What was the single most important trait that impressed you about the student?

5. In what area(s) do you feel this student could improve as a designer and employee?

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Semester & Year: \_\_\_\_\_

### Internship Supervisor Evaluation of Student

The purpose of this student performance evaluation is to provide a means of measuring student achievement in *IND 4960: Professional Internship* placements. The following survey helps provide data for ongoing assessment of MSU Denver’s Industrial Design program. The data will be used for annual reports and instructional modification based on strengths and weaknesses identified in the survey.

Please rate how the program prepared you in the categories below, using the following scale:

**1 – Poorly Prepared 2 – Not Well Prepared 3 – Adequately Prepared 4 – Well Prepared NR – Not Relevant**

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Learning outcome 1:

- 1. Ability to perform, organize and report research 1 2 3 4 NR
- 2. Ability to define design problems 1 2 3 4 NR

Learning outcome 2:

- 3. Ability to formulate multiple design concepts 1 2 3 4 NR
- 4. Ability to assess, debate, refine concepts, and select a final design solution 1 2 3 4 NR

Learning outcome 3:

- 5. Quality of ideation sketching 1 2 3 4 NR
- 6. Quality of renderings and selection of appropriate media 1 2 3 4 NR
- 7. Quality of technical drawing 1 2 3 4 NR
- 8. Quality of physical modeling/prototyping 1 2 3 4 NR
- 9. Quality of 3D computer modeling 1 2 3 4 NR

Learning outcome 4:

- 10. Knowledge of manufacturing material/processes 1 2 3 4 NR
- 11. Inclusion of consumer safety and marketability considerations in design solutions 1 2 3 4 NR

Learning outcome 5:

- 12. Verbal presentation skill level 1 2 3 4 NR
- 13. Visual organization/graphic communication quality 1 2 3 4 NR
- 14. Written communication quality 1 2 3 4 NR
- 15. Professional behavior 1 2 3 4 NR

Learning outcome 6:

- 16. Knowledge of human factors and ergonomics 1 2 3 4 NR
  - 17. Demonstrates an understanding of cultural considerations 1 2 3 4 NR
- 

\_\_\_\_\_  
Evaluating Supervisor’s Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Evaluating Supervisor Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

