



2016-2017
Computer Game Design Program
Internship Guide

Computer Game Design Program
College of Visual and Performing Arts
George Mason University
4400 University Drive MSN IC3
Fairfax, Virginia 22030 U.S.A
Phone: (703) 993-5734

Internship Goal

The internship affords students the chance to learn far beyond the classroom. Students will become key team members working on projects that utilize their specific skill sets. Working side-by-side with others experienced in the field will help students hone their professional skills. The internship will also allow students to work on the other skills needed to succeed in the fast-paced gaming industry, working on leadership skills and networking.

Taking the lessons learned at Mason into the gaming industry will give students the valuable experience needed to find a position and excel in the field. Our interns not only represent themselves, but George Mason University and our program. We feel confident that our interns will make the university proud, and help enhance the brand of Computer Game Design at MASON.

Steps to secure internship

- **Step one: Students should enroll in GAME 489, Pre-Internship Seminar.**
- **Step two: After the student has reviewed all prerequisites and policies for the internship, as well as research about possible internship sites, he or she should schedule a meeting with Jeremy Tuohy (wtuohy@gmu.edu) for site approval before applying. This would also be a good time for the student to review his or her resume before sending out applications.**
- **Step Three: Once the internship has been obtained, the student should fill out all required paperwork, including the Internship Contract, Consent and Release Agreement, and any other documents required by the university or employer and send them to Jeremy.**
- **Step Four: Upon completion of initial paperwork, student will then be granted permission to register for GAME 491.**
 - **Note: The internship credits must be paid for in the semester during which it occurs. Failure to register for GAME 491 by the university deadline will result in a late fee. Student MUST register for the class before the end of the internship. For example, if you intern in the spring you must register for GAME 491 and pay for your internship that same spring. The only exceptions to this rule are internships that overlap more than**

one semester. For example, an internship that starts in the summer but ends in the fall may be registered and paid for during fall semester with prior faculty approval.

Other Tips for Choosing an Internship

Start by analyzing your skills and goals. Discuss them with your classmates and instructors for a different view. Show your resume to as many people as possible for feedback, and take it to Career Services (3400 SUB I) for additional help.

Think about the kind of organization you want to work for and the kind of experience you want to have. Do you have time or geographical constraints? When can you begin and end? What kind of projects do you want to work on?

Research. Find out everything you can about the organization and its employees.

Cut down your search to a manageable number. Make sure you will be a good fit for the culture and goals of the company/project. Find out whether or not they have an internship program in place (don't let the absence of one stop you from applying).

Develop a plan for each site. Customize your resume so it fits the site's wants and needs while highlighting the skills that appear most appealing for this particular position. Be prepared to create a cover letter, produce references, and provide your transcript.

NOTE: Keep in mind that acquiring recommendation letters and transcripts can take time.

During the Internship

- **Students must be vigilant in filling out the necessary log of working hours. Logs must be signed by the site supervisor and kept up to date.**
- **Journal entries compiled throughout the internship are strongly encouraged. See "Journal Entry Guidelines" for an explanation of what belongs in your journals.**
- **Any problems that arise during the internship should be reported to the Internship Coordinator immediately. These include but are not limited to: (not challenging work, unsafe environment, hostile environment, discrimination, sexual harassment, problems resulting in missed work or poor performance)**
- **Student should expect email contact from the Internship Coordinator for updates on student's experience.**

Upon Completion of Internship:

Students must compile the following in the internship portfolio:

- **Work Log sheets**
- **Supervisor evaluation**
- **Student Evaluation**
- **Final Paper**

When is my portfolio due?

Your portfolio will be due on the last day of classes (not finals) for the semester. Graduating seniors will need to submit before this deadline. If there are extenuating circumstances, please contact the Internship Coordinator as soon as possible.

How will I be graded?

You will be assessed on the progress you have made towards your learning goals. This means that your job performance is not the only factor in your grade, although your supervisor evaluation will play a part. The materials in your portfolio need to show your learning process, focusing on what you *learned* as much as what you *did*.

Getting the most out of your internship

This internship is one of the most important components of a BFA in Computer Game Design at Mason. Take the initiative to maximize the quality of your experience. Learn from those around you and ask questions. Contribute your thoughts and opinions on projects. Consider this internship your first job in the field and treat it as such. Great internships open doors. Stay positive and focus on personal growth and professional development.

Work Log Guidelines

Complete your work log each week and make sure it is signed and dated by your supervisor.

Journal Entry Guidelines

You are strongly encouraged to keep a journal during the internship. Your compiled journals will be an important part of your internship portfolio upon completing of your internship, but the Internship Coordinator may ask for up-to-date journal entries throughout the internship. Journal entries help you reflect on your experience and adapt to your new position.

Format:

Journal entries should be approximately 200 words and double-spaced.

Content:

Entries should be more than just a diary of activities on the site. Instead, the journal should reflect your thoughts about the experience. Record questions, problems, ideas, or your reactions to situations on the site. The following suggestions may help:

- Define your role in your own words? How does your daily routine relate to your expectations for the position?
- Do your duties allow a chance to have creative input? How have your suggestions been met?
- Interview some co-workers. Find out about their professional experiences. See what it takes to get a position at this site.
- What have you discovered about yourself? Which of your skills are more apparent in the work you are doing? How can you improve?
- How does your work on the site connect with your classes in the program? What sort of things might your courses have covered to better prepare you for this position?
- How will this internship affect your coursework? What value does it have for your postgraduate plans?
- What are your greatest challenges/frustrations? What would be the best way to address them?
- What impact has the internship had on your future career goals?
- (More or less to be added via faculty suggestion)

Final Writing Assignment

Respond to the following prompt in 8-10 double-spaced pages. All rules of standard edited American English apply. This is a professional document and will be the cornerstone of your evaluation. The document is worth 50% of your final grade.

Possible points of discussion are as follows:

Discuss the goals and expectations you had for the internship experience before it began. Evaluate the extent the internship met these expectations

A brief description of your role in the organization, including the structure of your workdays and the nature of the tasks assigned to you.

Comment on your original learning objectives and in what ways they were met or not met. Failure to have met one of your learning objectives is not cause for a deduction in grade. Remember that our purpose in this project is that you learn from the experience.

Discuss some of the problems you encountered while working on site. How did you solve them?

What did you learn that you did not expect to learn?

What chances did you have to collaborate at the site? Describe the dynamic of the collaboration and discuss how you might change it. What worked? What did not?

Would you recommend this internship to others? Be specific about the skills needed to succeed and the opportunities afforded. What kind of student might succeed in the position?

Discuss the effects of the internship. Indicate how it has affected the way you view yourself as a member of the workforce as well as how this has impacted your career goals.

Of all the work you did, what are you proudest of?

Attachment A: Syllabus for GAME 49I

**GAME 49I
COMPUTER GAME DESIGN INTERNSHIP
Spring 2015
Dr. Scott Martin
Smartin4@gmu.edu**

Course Description:

GAME 49I: Internship (4:2:4) Prerequisite: Completion of 60 credits in major. Placement in an appropriate internship within a program approved Federal, State, or Commercial game design/publishing agency or firm. 45 work hours are required for each academic credit awarded.

This course enables students the opportunity to receive on-the-job training in computer game design studies through approved field work study programs. In addition to the work performed at the internship site, students are required to meet regularly with the faculty advisor to discuss experiences, knowledge gained, and problems encountered during the internship. Students are encouraged to keep a regular journal and must complete a paper at the end of the semester.

Course Objectives:

The internship in Computer Game Design is designed to accomplish the following:

1. Help students integrate theoretical and practical knowledge of computer game design
2. Provide experiences beyond the classroom setting
3. Facilitate student entry into the job market after graduation

Course Requirements:

1. Supervisor evaluation of the student's performance on the job. A copy of the evaluation form must be given to the supervisor with a request to mail the form to the faculty advisor at the end of the semester
2. Optional journal entries on a weekly basis with document the following:
 - a. activities performed on the job
 - b. problems that occurred on the job
 - c. knowledge gained
3. Final Paper that reflects the job-content gained by the student. Paper should be 8-10 typewritten pages. Greater detail is given in the Internship Guide, but your paper should include the following.

- a. Discuss the goals and expectations you had for the internship experience before it began. Evaluate the extent the internship met these expectations.
- b. Include the specific skills you gained
- c. Discuss the effects of the internship. Indicate how it has affected the way you view yourself as a member of the workforce as well as how this has impacted your career goals

Course Grading Breakdown

| | |
|------------------------------|---------------------|
| Final Paper | (50 points) |
| Supervisor Evaluation | (50 points) |
| Total | (100 points) |

Final Letter Grade Grade Point

| | |
|-----------|----------------|
| A+ | 97-100 |
| A | 93-96.9 |
| A- | 90-92.9 |
| B+ | 87-89.9 |
| B | 83-86.9 |
| B- | 80-82.9 |
| C+ | 77-79.9 |
| C | 73-76.9 |
| C- | 70-72.9 |
| D | 60-69.9 |
| F | 0-59.8 |

Written Material:

All written material must be typed, double-spaced, and free of typographical and grammatical errors. All references should be fully documented with consistent use of either MLA or APA style. If you do not know how or when to use documentation, it is incumbent upon you to educate yourself. Cite videotapes, news programs, websites and other media forms you use in the paper.

Honor Code:

George Mason University has an Honor Code, which requires all members of this community to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing are all prohibited. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee.

Attachment B: Internship contract

Internship Contract
George Mason University
College of Visual and Performing Arts
BFA in Computer Game Design

Student: Once completed, please make a copy of this contract and give the original to Jeremy Tuohy.

NOTE: Registration for internship course will not be allowed until this contract is received.

Intern Contact Information

Name: _____

Mason E-mail: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Site Contact Information

Internship Site: _____

Address: _____

Site Supervisor: _____

Site Supervisor E-mail: _____

Supervisor Phone: _____

Work Commitment:

A minimum of 135 work hours is required for 3 credits (180 hours for those needing 4 credits). More time on the job is encouraged and often required.

Start date:

End date:

Student will work _____ hours per week (_____ total hours)

Initial work schedule

Monday:

Tuesday:

Wednesday:

Thursday:

Friday:

Wage:

Vacation days allowed by the site: _____

Any changes to work schedule must be submitted to site supervisor in writing and approved.

Position Description:

Define what your role will be with the organization. What skills will you use? What will your daily responsibilities be? This should be written in consultation with your on-site supervisor.

Student responsibilities:

1. Complete tasks assigned to you by your site supervisor and Instructor.
2. Attend regularly and produce high quality work.
3. Follow all policies and ethical principles of your internship site.
4. Inform Internship Coordinator of problems or significant changes in the nature of the work.

Director responsibilities:

1. Serve as liaison between students and site supervisors as needed.
2. Provide feedback on written assignments.
3. Support students as needed.
4. Assign final grades.

Site Supervisor responsibilities:

1. Explain policies, procedures, and expectations. Provide the training normally given to employees with similar responsibilities.
2. Provide sufficient work to fulfill the agreed number of internship hours.
3. Meet with students regularly to provide guidance and feedback.
4. Confer with Internship Coordinator or Director if questions or problems arise, and inform him/her immediately if a revision of the internship guidelines becomes necessary.
5. Complete Internship Evaluation form at the end of the term.

Final Grade: The final grade will be based on the student's progress toward learning objectives, the site supervisor's evaluation, and the quality of the internship portfolio.

The following signatures acknowledge that the internship guide has been read in its entirety and the learning contract has been agreed upon by all parties.

Student Name (printed): _____

Student Signature/Date: _____

Site Supervisor Name (printed): _____

Supervisor Signature/Date: _____

Director of Computer Game Design: _____

Director Signature/Date: _____

Attachment C: Consent and Release Form

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY INTERSHIP/EXTERNSHIP PROGRAM
CONSENT AND RELEASE AGREEMENT**

This Agreement is designed to protect all participants in George Mason University's internship/externship programs, including but not limited to, students, faculty, staff, George Mason University and the agencies and individuals cooperating with the University. The student must sign this Agreement, with parental or guardian approval if the student is under the age of 18, to indicate agreement with the terms and conditions of the Agreement and permission to participate in the designated program.

Name: _____ **Student ID:** _____

Undergraduate/Graduate/Law School: _____

I understand that participation in the George Mason University Internship/Externship Program is voluntary and that any such internship program involves some element of risk. I agree that in consideration of George Mason University sponsoring this activity and allowing my participation, I (including my parents, guardians, and legal representatives) will release, indemnify, and hold harmless George Mason University, and its Trustees, officers, employees, faculty, agents, successors, and assigns from liability for any and all claims, demands rights or causes of action, present or future, resulting from or arising out of any activity or travel conducted by or under the auspices of the George Mason University Internship/Externship Program.

I understand that the University requires that all students be covered by appropriate accident and medical insurance and that the student be financially responsible for such expenses. My signature below verifies that I am covered by such insurance.

**I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE PROVISIONS AND
AGREE TO BE BOUND BY THEM AS INDICATED BY MY SIGNATURE
BELOW.**

Signature of Participant

Date

Printed Name of Participant

Semester/Academic Year

**Signature of Parent or Guardian
(if Student is under the age of 18)**

Attachment D: Employer Evaluation

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY - COMPUTER GAME DESIGN
INTERNSHIP PROGRAM
Employer Evaluation**

Please use this form to provide feedback to your intern regarding his or her job performance at the close of the semester or after working with your company. This final evaluation represents approximately 65% of the student's academic grade. The evaluation is divided into four areas:

- 1) learning objectives as described on the internship learning contract*
- 2) general performance*
- 3) student's strengths and areas to improve*
- 4) overall comments.*

Please give the completed evaluation to the student or e-mail it to Jeremy Tuohy (wtuohy@gmu.edu). If you have any questions about the evaluation process, please contact Jeremy Tuohy at (703) 993-2041. Your input is vital to the student's internship experience. Thank you for taking the time to provide this important feedback.

Student: _____

Job Title: _____

Company: _____

Supervisor: _____

Supervisor Phone:

Supervisor E-mail:

Please use the following scale and provide comments as appropriate. Feel free to add pages where necessary.

5=well above average 4=above average 3=average 2=below average 1=well below average

A. General Performance:

Dependability: _____

Ability to work with others: _____

Initiative in accomplishing tasks: _____

Ability to meet deadlines: _____

Ability to work independently: _____

Ability to use constructive feedback: _____

Quality of work completed: _____

Openness to new ideas and responsibilities: _____

Comments:

B: Strengths and areas that might be improved

Please identify what you observed as the student's strengths in performing his or her internship duties.

Please comment on what areas the student could use improvement.

Final Grade:

Based on the comments and scores above, circle grade you would assign the student for his or her job performance to date:

A A- B+ B B- C+ C D

Comments:

Thank you for the time you have taken to complete this evaluation. Please feel free to contact the Internship Coordinator on ways we could make this a more positive experience for both your company and our interns.

Supervisor Signature: _____

Supervisor Title: _____

Date: _____

() Check if you would like the GAME Internship Coordinator to call you to discuss the student's evaluation.

() Check if you would like to continue using GMU GAME Interns.

Attachment E: Student Evaluation

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY - COMPUTER GAME DESIGN
INTERNSHIP PROGRAM
Student Evaluation**

Student Name:

Job Title:

Internship Dates:

Supervisor:

Department:

Please use the following scale and provide comments as appropriate. Feel free to add pages where necessary.

5=well above average 4=above average 3=average 2=below average 1=well below average

Cooperation and support of co-workers: _____

Appropriate on-site supervision: _____

Willingness of supervisor to teach: _____

Opportunities to progress and learn: _____

Quality/challenge of work assignments: _____

Opportunities to work independently: _____

Help in defining career goals: _____

Overall, rate your internship experience: _____

Comments:

