

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Recreation, Sport and Tourism
RST 480 & 484

Pre-Internship Requirement; 300 hours

The Department of Recreation, Sport and Tourism understand that not all learning happens in the classroom. To these ends, we have developed a comprehensive internship program. One of the pre-requisites of this program is 300 hours of paid/volunteer work in our industry. The specifics of this requirement are listed below:

- 1) Prior to beginning your senior level internship (RST 484), all RST students will be required to complete a **MINIMUM** of 300 hours of pre-internship experience in the Leisure Industry. These hours can be **PAID** or **VOLUNTEER**. In order to count, these hours must have been completed **AFTER HIGH SCHOOL**. Our Internship Coordinator, Ryan Gower, will have the final determination on what type of activity will or will not count for these pre-internship hours, (e-mail at gower@illinois.edu) but a few things are certain:
 - a. Activity in a non-leisure related industry would not count toward 300 hours.
 - b. Jobs as a waiter/waitress/bartender cannot be used toward 300 hours.
- 2) The 300 hours must come from a minimum of 2 agencies with a minimum of 40 hours in any given agency. **FOR EXAMPLE:** You have worked for 1,000 hours with the New Orleans Convention & Visitors Bureau. You still must earn an additional 40 hours in another leisure service organization. **ALTERNATIVELY**, you could opt to work/volunteer 40 hours for 8 different organizations and meet your 300 hours requirement in this fashion. Bottom line to fill this requirement: **MINIMUM** of 2 agencies, and a **MINIMUM** of 40 hours with each agency, total of 300 hours to meet this requirement. If you work/volunteer for an organizations and do not earn at least 40 hours of work in that organization **YOU CANNOT COUNT THOSE HOURS TOWARD YOUR 300 HOURS REQUIREMENT**. Please go back and read that last sentence again – it is important to understand. We recommend students begin searching for opportunities as early as their freshman year.
- 3) Your hours will be verified. To verify your hours, stop by room 104 Huff Hall to pick up documentation forms. Alternatively, these forms can be picked up from Ryan Gower in room 303 Armory. We will call or write your supervisor to have them verify that you have indeed worked the number of hours that you indicated and to verify that the quality of your work was acceptable. If they indicate that your work was unacceptable, those hours will **NOT** count toward your 300 hours. This is not generally a problem for our students.
- 4) As with any requirement for a specific class, you should always consult the **INSTRUCTOR OF THE CLASS** for clarification of any questions. All questions regarding 300 hours should be directed to Ryan Gower (gower@illinois.edu). Although these requirements have been in place and have been unchanged for over 15 years, faculty/graduate students/TA's and your peers are not always aware of all the particulars of this requirement. They should **not** be consulted for clarification.

From this experience, students can expect to:

- 1) Gain a greater understanding and appreciation of the Leisure Industry
- 2) Develop essential contacts in the field (networking).
- 3) Experience early career exploration – determine their personal strengths and weaknesses.
- 4) Gain experience for use on their resume.