Completing the Internship Learning Agreement for 
Product Design  
Department of Design, Housing, and Apparel

Information and Documents:
- Frequently Asked Questions About Internships in Product Design – see below for specific information about the internship requirements
- Internship Learning Agreement (complete on GoldPASS) – your proposed learning agreement -- which must be agreed upon by the Product Design program director and internship site supervisor – and internship course registration information
- CDes Internship Program: Responsibilities & Terms of Arrangement – an outline of the responsibilities of the faculty academic adviser, internship site supervisor and student
- Internship Guide (online) – general information on finding and preparing for an internship
- Internship Scholarship – a competitive grant that awards up to $500 to DHA students in paid or unpaid internships. Applications are available in the rack outside CDes Student Services (12 McNeal Hall) or online.

Internship Checklist (Be sure to complete these in order.):

1. Access and read thoroughly all of the information and documents listed above.
2. Meet or email with the Product Design program director early in the semester PRIOR TO the semester in which you wish to complete the internship to:
   - discuss your internship plans and initial ideas about learning goals and objectives,
   - understand the internship requirements and process, and
   - gain preliminary credit approval.
3. Visit Career and Internship Services in 198 McNeal Hall for assistance in locating an internship, writing your resume, creating your portfolio, and practicing your interview skills.
4. Meet with the potential internship site supervisor to discuss the possibility of an internship.
   - Provide them with a copy of the CDes Internship Program: Responsibilities & Terms of Arrangement. Arrange the details of the internship with him/her. Discuss your proposed learning goals as well as tasks, projects and responsibilities that will allow you to meet those goals.
5. Discuss (in email or in person) the role and objectives of the internship with the Product Design program director.
6. If you will need any accommodations or if you would like to discuss accommodations related to a documented disability, you are strongly encouraged to speak with the program director, advisor, and your internship site supervisor, as well as consult with University of Minnesota Disability Services, in preparation for your internship experience.
7. Complete the Internship Learning Agreement on GoldPASS:
   1. Log in to your GoldPASS account (If you have not used GoldPASS before, you will be prompted to set up your account before you can complete your Internship Learning Agreement.)
   2. Select “Complete Internship Agreement” on the left side of your GoldPASS homepage.
   3. Follow the prompts to complete the form.
   4. Enter your e-signature and career services office then click finish.
   5. Once you have submitted your Learning Agreement on GoldPASS, it will first be reviewed and processed by Career and Internship Services. Then it will be automatically emailed to your internship site supervisor for their electronic approval. (You should alert your internship supervisor that they will be receiving this email.)
   6. After your internship site supervisor has approved the Learning Agreement, an email will be sent to the Product Design program director for their electronic approval.
   7. Once your Learning Agreement has been approved by BOTH your internship supervisor and the Product Design program director, then - and only then - will you be issued a permission number via email from the DHA office. Please note that this process may take a few days depending upon how quickly your Learning Agreement is approved at all levels.
8. Register for PDES 3196 with a permission number. Once approved by all parties, the DHA office will email you a permission number allowing you to register for PDES 3196.
IMPORTANT NOTES:

- It is important to register for PDES 3196 for the semester in which you are completing your internship hours.
- Permission to register will not be granted until the contract has been completed in full and all signatures have been obtained.

QUESTIONS? Contact the Product Design program director.

Frequently Asked Questions
About Internships in Product Design

Is this a class?
As you are registering for a 1-credit course (PDES 3196), it may seem as if you are signing up for a class that has a regularly scheduled lecture or discussion. This is not the case. There is no lecture or regularly scheduled times for this internship credit. Students sign up for the academic credit so we can ensure that students complete the internship requirements as part of the curriculum. It is up to you to find the internship and work with the employer to figure out your dates of employment, salary and hours. The academic part of the internship only comes into play at the beginning and at the end of the internship. Prior to starting the internship, the Product Design program director reviews the internship description and determines if it is appropriate in nature. You can do this over email, in person, or directly through the GoldPASS Internship Learning Agreement only if you are confident it would be appropriate. In order to receive the S/N grade for completing the 1-credit internship, you must present your work from your internship to the Product Design program director. This should be in the style of several portfolio pages and can be done via email or in person (details below).

What is the purpose of an internship?
The purpose of an internship is to provide a new and challenging career experience under supervision in the Product Design field. Your internship experience is intended to synthesize classroom knowledge with work experience. It is not the continuation of a current work experience nor is it credit for previous work experience; it is a new experience that is more challenging and prepares you to enter the demanding field of Product Design.

When should I complete an internship?
You are required to complete two separate internships in two different work environments. The first can be anytime after completing Fall of Year 2, so you can apply the fundamental Product Design courses of PDES 2701, 2702, 2703, 2704, 2777, and 2771. The second can be in Year 3 or 4 after completing most of the core courses. The purpose of requiring two separate internships is to diversify your portfolio and give you work experience in different settings. It is beneficial for students entering senior year to have at least two different real world design experiences. It is possible to complete your internship during the first semester of senior year. The second semester of senior year is likely too late for internship work to be included in your portfolio. We do not advise doing an internship prior to Spring of Year 2 as you will not have developed enough core skills in your courses.

How do I find a site for an internship?
Your internship could be at a small company that develops products (such as YOXO), a large corporation that develops consumer goods (such as Target), a large corporation that develops specialized products (such as Medtronic), a large corporation that provides services (such as Heath Partners), a product design consultancy (such as Worrell), a start-up or venture that involves products, a product branding/marketing/advertising company (such as Pixel Farm Digital), or any real company that is connected to Product Design. A sales position would not be considered an appropriate internship for Product Design. In the internship, you should be doing the actual design of products or services. You should try to find internships that excite you, but also try to diversify your portfolio. A list of many Product Design related companies can be found on the careers page of the Product Design website.

It is your responsibility to schedule appointments with the appropriate individuals to arrange for the internship, e.g. appointments with a career counselor in Career and Internship Services, interviews with prospective internship sponsors, etc. Internship postings are listed in GoldPass, although students frequently find an internship by contacting a work site directly to inquire about internship possibilities. Staff in Career and Internship Services can help you.
When do I complete the Internship Learning Agreement?
   The portion of setting up your internship on GoldPass should occur after you have discussed it with the Product Design program director and your internship site supervisor to work out the arrangements of the internship.

   **Fall and spring term internships:** Prior to agreeing to an internship, you should discuss the internship with the Product Design program director no later than the second week of the semester in order to obtain his/her approval on your learning contract.

   **Summer internships:** Prior to agreeing to an internship, you should discuss the internship with the Product Design program director no later than May 1 in order to obtain his/her approval on your learning contract. Please note that program director is not on staff during the summer. Documentation from summer internships must be submitted during the first week of Fall semester.

How do I get credit for the internship?
   The Product Design program requires that you carry 2 separate 1-credit courses in order to complete the internship requirement. You should complete a minimum of 50 hours of internship work for each credit hour, but typical internships are approximately 100 hours. The internship grade base is S/N. A grade of “I” (Incomplete) will be assigned until you have submitted the required materials.

What tasks are expected of me during my internship?
   Internship tasks will differ from site to site. Together with the program director and your internship site supervisor, you will create your learning goals as part of the [Internship Learning Agreement](#).

   Upon completing the internship, you should prepare several pages that would go into your portfolio to showcase the work completed. This could include a brief description of the project and images from your design notebook, sketches, CAD models, prototypes, and any other documents to best portray your work. These pages should be shared with the program director in person or in email to receive the grade for completion. In sharing this document, you should note your role in the project and present a log of hours completed during your internship.