Internship Fall 2021- Spring 2022

Our goal is to assist you in experiencing a high-quality internship!

Frequently Asked Questions: The following are questions asked from recent interns that may be of help to you in this process. Please feel free to contact Dr. Diana Messick, the Internship Director, with additional questions diana.messick@usd.edu or 605-370-8959.

Why can’t I register online for my D2L course?
It is likely you have a petition that prevents your registration of classes. Your application must be approved by the Educational Leadership Division before that petition is removed. The division must review your application for coursework plus the certification and experience of your site supervisor. Your site supervisor, principal or superintendent must be certified and currently practicing in your internship.

If I completed my application, does that mean I am enrolled in the course?
No, your application must be reviewed and your site supervisor approved by Dr. Messick before you may enroll in the course. This typically, takes no more than two weeks. We will release the petition and you will be able to register upon approval. If you have questions, you may contact Wendy Knutson wendy.knutson@usd.edu.

How many credits is the internship?
The internship is four credits spanning the school year. It is typically divided into two credits in the fall and two credits in the spring semester. Students who are accepting financial aid must register for three credits in the fall to be eligible for financial aid. Those students will receive an incomplete for the three credits in the fall until they complete the spring semester.

How many hours is the internship?
Your internship is a minimum of 180 hours over two semesters. The program you are in will dictate how those hours are accumulated.

What if I still have a course to complete?
You should have most of your coursework completed before you enroll in the internship. I suggest that if you just have one course remaining take the course during the spring semester due to the amount of work in the fall semester.

How do I find a site supervisor for my internship?
Your site supervisor is typically your current supervisor who is your building principal or your superintendent. If you are currently a teacher, the supervisor should be your building principal. If you are a principal, it will be your superintendent. If you are completing an internship as a curriculum director, it will be your superintendent or a curriculum director in a nearby school.
district. If you are completing an internship as a superintendent, you will work with the current superintendent in your school district. If you are completing an internship as a Special Ed Director, your supervisor will be your current Special Education Director or your superintendent. Special circumstance should be communicated and implemented with the assistance of Dr. Messick. If you are already a practicing principal or superintendent, you should also contact Dr. Messick for direction. There are typically interns in the program each year who are practicing administrators while also completing an internship.

How do I approach my current supervisor to request the opportunity to be an intern under his/her supervision?

Always, make your request in person. Do not send an email. If you are a principal intern, you are required to have two site supervisors. Your first supervisor should be in your current building which may be either a secondary school or an elementary school. The building where you are located is listed first where you complete 120 hours of your internship and the second building listed will be where you complete the remaining 60 hours of your internship. If you are in a K-8 or K-12 building, you will discuss your options with Dr. Messick. If you are interning as a superintendent, curriculum director, or special education director those hours are determined by your internship plan and must include two shadowing experiences and a Diversity Experience. If you have personal days available, you will want to save them and plan to use them as days to complete your shadowing experiences.

Do I need USD approval before I approach my current supervisor and request interning under his/her supervision?

No, however, your supervisor must be a currently practicing administrator in the position you are seeking. You will submit the supervisors credential information for approval before you may enroll in the internship. Your principals or others administrator’s credentials can be found on your state’s department of education website.

What books do I need to purchase? Available at the USD online bookstore


Additional books are required for specific programs and listed in the syllabus.
Superintendent Course Textbooks:
(* Required reading)

The textbooks for the course are:


Order of reading:
1) National Educational Leadership Program Standards
2) Trust matters
3) The hero maker
4) Embracing social media
5) So now you are the superintendent

What if I cannot locate a site supervisor in my area for my program?
Contact Dr. Messick, the Internship Director (605-370-8959), immediately. She will guide you toward acquiring an appropriate site supervisor.

What are the responsibilities of my site supervisor?
I have attached Suggestions for Site Supervisor for you as a guideline. The D2L course will provide additional information.

What are my responsibilities at the beginning of the Internship?
You will be able to access the D2L site as early as August 2nd and possibly by mid-July. It is required that you attend an Orientation Session online via Zoom. We will also record a session. We developed the Orientation Session based on comments from previous interns, which highlight the
importance of getting together to meet each other, ask questions, and gather suggestions. During the orientation session, we will guide you through the development of your internship plan for the school year. Recent interns will be available for assistance. A copy of the *School Leader Internship should be purchased online before orientation*. Please have your copy available during the orientation session for reference. Previous interns found the time extremely helpful. You will work with interns who have recently completed the internship experience.

**Topics covered during the session relate only to the PK12 principal program**

- Suggestions for site supervisors (regular meeting times)
- Meeting with your site supervisor on a regular basis
- Confidentiality
- Developing, updating, and implementing new policies
- Developing a Local Project (required)
- Evaluating Teachers and certified staff (Danielson)
- Discipline observation and practice (PK-12) or Superintendent District office staff
- Practice of administrative tasks vs. observation
- How to be assertive when requesting administrative tasks
- Scheduling an individual online meeting with Dr. Messick and your primary site supervisor
- Leading professional development

**District Curriculum, Special Education and Superintendent Interns** — the first responsibility for Superintendents is to attend the first board meeting, the first Monday in July. You *should* attend the board retreat and participate in the SASD conference of the Superintendent’s Association in your state if possible.

**What counts as hours towards my internship?**

Is it possible to start tracking hours? Yes, however, the tasks must be administrative in nature and approved by Dr. Messick if they occur before August 2nd or July 1st. If you have a question call or text Dr. Messick. An example would be interviewing teacher applicants, conducting a professional development session for staff, preparing for the opening day of school, registration, working on the master schedule, or attending a Board Retreat (superintendents). I would strongly recommend that you attend the SASD the School Administrators of South Dakota conference in August either in person or online, in Sioux Falls, if you are in South Dakota or your state or regional administrator’s conference held before the beginning of school. You may attend sessions about administration and write a specific reflection of a session for your journal. During this school year, take advantage of professional development and ask your site supervisor to offer those opportunities.
What if I am applying for a Special Education Director or Curriculum Director internship and there is not a director in my area?

Your superintendent may serve as your site supervisor. You will work with Dr. Messick to develop an internship plan to network with other area directors as well as significant interaction with the State Department of Education in your area.

What is the Diversity Experience?

The Diversity Experience is a requirement for all internships. You will spend at least 4 hours shadowing a school with a diverse population and comparing it to your current school. If you are in a diverse school, you will shadow a school that is different from yours—culturally or regarding instructional design—to compare the two school environments. The Diversity Experiences have been a highlight of previous interns. We offer a tour in the fall that includes New Tech High School (a wall-to-wall project based learning school within the new Jefferson high school) and Anne Sullivan elementary or Sotomayor Elementary (a Spanish Immersion School). If you have questions contact Dr. Messick (605) 370-8959.

Does my site supervisor evaluate my performance?

Yes, your site supervisor and your university internship supervisor complete a final evaluation of your understanding and capability to apply the NELP standards. You are also required to complete a pre-assessment and a final self-assessment at the end of the course.

How often does the University supervisor visit?

We visit you individually with your site supervisor online 2-3 times at a minimum, a combination of the fall and spring at least once each semester and for your final PowerPoint presentation.

Who do I contact if I have other questions?

Please feel free to contact me, Dr. Diana Messick at 605-370-8959. There will be approximately 60 interns in the principal program and 15-20 in the district curriculum, special education director and superintendent program. I encourage you to ask questions and prefer a phone call so I can fully understand your individual goals and background. I also understand you are working during the day and I am available if it is more convenient to call after school or on weekends.

All questions about the internship should be directed to Dr. Messick. More information may be found on the website.