



**JSGS EXECUTIVE INTERNSHIP**  
**MENTOR HANDBOOK**  
**2025-26**

## **PART I: OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM**

### **Introduction**

The Johnson Shoyama Executive Internship Program was launched in 2005 with a partnership between JSGS and the Saskatchewan Public Service Commission (PSC). The program has since grown to include multiple agencies. Our goal is to have a high-quality mentorship experience.

### **Program Overview**

Internships are eight months in duration and are either a paid by the University of Saskatchewan, The University of Regina or the Federal Government. These partnerships provide students in the Master of Public Administration (MPA) program with the option of enhancing their graduate work with a practical, hands-on internship component.

Students pursuing a JSGS Executive Internship must apply to the school and must complete an extensive training program to be eligible to become an intern . In addition, JSGS students are must have completed of 50% of their program and a minimum 75% average.

Partnering organizations will enter into an agreement with the University of Regina and/or the University of Saskatchewan to host an intern.

After completing the internship program, there is no guarantee of future employment, however, interns will be encouraged and better positioned to compete for future employment.

### **Program Goals and Objectives**

JSGS Executive Internships are intended to expose interns to and give them hands-on experience with a broad range of activities and issues related to public administration and public policy. It is anticipated that the intern's work plan will include some of the following:

- planning, policy development and analysis
- budget development
- program development and delivery
- research and evaluation, and
- strategic planning and reporting

## **PART II: MENTORS**

### **Role of the Mentor**

The mentor must be supportive of the JSGS Executive Internship Program and ideally, be able and willing to dedicate sufficient time to performing mentoring responsibilities, including:

- Determining where suitable intern learning opportunities exist in the organization;
- Monitoring the placement to ensure the experience is rewarding and valuable;
- Ensuring the intern receives an orientation to the organization;
- Sharing knowledge, experience and understanding of procedures at the organization;
- Sharing information about the organization's culture, traditions and values, and how to use this information to accomplish goals;
- Ensuring management processes are in place to support the intern, including the development of learning plans and work plans;
- Providing professional support, guidance and encouragement to help interns achieve their learning goals; and
- Assisting the intern in accessing and developing a network of contacts.

JSGS encourages three practices for structuring the internship

#### 1. Supporting the organization's needs

This can be day to day operations, project work, supporting other staff members, or whatever tasks are needed for your organization. The majority of work should be related to policy, programs, budget development, planning, reporting, and/or research.

#### 2. Major project

Interns are tasked with at least one substantive and meaningful project. The project should be valuable to the student's professional development and develop skills for future employment

#### 3. Job Shadowing

Interns shadow their mentor in meetings, planning sessions, and other meaningful experiences. This should allow the intern to have experiences beyond an entry level position and to see how the organization functions and makes decisions.

## **Internship Planning and Assessment**

In order to make the most of the mentor experience and the intern's experience, JSGS has provided tools to assist in dialogue, progress and evaluation of the intern and the program. All of these tools can be found on the [JSGS Executive Internship website](#).

### **Intern Learning Plan**

The internship learning plan is a useful communication tool to help understand the personal development goals of an intern. This learning plan can be used as is or adapted to meet the needs of the internship placement. The learning plan achieves a number of objectives, including:

- Identifying learning objectives;
- Ensuring that interns are afforded opportunities to learn and demonstrate competencies learned during the placement; and
- Creating a way for interns and their mentors to measure progress at the end of the internship. The learning plan provides a benchmark for assessing whether goals and objectives were achieved, as well as identifying areas of ongoing professional development.

### **Work Plan**

Interns and their mentors may jointly decide to create a work plan for the internship. This optional exercise can help map out the institutional goals the intern will achieve. This is often done using an internal template utilized by the mentoring organization.

### **Intern Progress Reporting**

An internship assessment/check-in provides a means of gauging the intern's progress. The Student Experience Officer meets individually with the mentor or supervisor to determine how the internship is proceeding and whether there is anything that needs to be addressed. The Student Experience Officer then meets individually with the student. The meeting concludes with the intern sharing their plan moving forward with both the mentor and the Student Experience Officer. These meetings start in November.

### **Mentor Evaluation of Intern**

In addition to completing a progress report, it is required that a formal evaluation of the intern be administered upon completion of the internship. The mentor evaluation of intern form serves as a means of identifying competencies achieved as a result of the internship, along with areas requiring further development. This tool can also serve as a starting point for dialogue and self-assessment. The ultimate question to be answered is whether or not the intern is ready to begin an entry-level position.

## **Internship Remuneration**

Remuneration for federal internship placements is based on an hourly wage determined by the host federal department. Provincial, municipal and interns in other agencies receive a payment of \$35,000.00 paid to the intern in pro-rated bi-weekly installments.

## **Early Resignations from Internship Placement**

Students are encouraged to complete the period indicated in the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) signed by all parties before the placement begins. If for any reason, a student is unable to fulfil this commitment, they are required to discuss this with their mentor and the SEO urgently.

If a student ends their placement before the time stipulated in the agreement, the employer will be refunded the balance remaining after the student's last payroll.

Early resignations will result in the student being asked to withdraw from JSGS 850. Students who have not completed the placement will not receive a grade for JSGS 850.

## **Recommendations for Mentors**

The following recommendations for future mentors are kindly provided by past mentors.

- Meet with the intern at the start of the internship to outline expectations and determine areas of interest.
- Create a learning and work plan. Include one substantive, meaningful project that is aligned with the intern's interests, as well as other, short term tasks. Whenever possible, give the intern a choice on the projects they will be working on, which best uses their skills and are aligned with their interests. Create a work plan that provides the intern with a "well-rounded" internship experience.
- Expose the intern to as many areas of the organization as possible.
- At the start of the internship, ensure the intern is oriented to the workplace and introduced to other colleagues and staff. Ensure that colleagues and staff understand the role of the intern, as well as the knowledge and expertise interns bring to the workplace.
- At the beginning of projects introduce the intern to the people they will be working with or advise the intern to introduce themselves.
- Meet with the intern regularly, weekly if possible, especially at the start of the internship.
- If you are too busy to meet with the intern regularly, consider co-mentoring the intern with someone else (e.g. executive director) to ensure the intern is able to connect regularly with a mentor and make the most of the internship.
- Whenever possible, employ an "open-door" approach to mentoring and allow interns some flexibility in their day-to-day activities and independence in work preparation and execution.

## PART III: JSGS INTERNS

### JSGS Intern Scheduled Days off

*Work hours:* Interns are required to work full-time hours (generally, Monday to Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. unless alternate work arrangements are made and mutually agreed upon).

Johnson Shoyama Graduate School interns are registered as students throughout the duration of their internship. Given their status as students, the school recommends the following guidelines be used to negotiate time off.

*Vacation/Scheduled Days Off:* The intern's hours of work are fairly flexible and differ for each placement. Therefore, it is anticipated that the mentor will start from the following scheduled breaks.

The student and the mentor can then negotiate an agreed upon alternative schedule suitable to both parties. The one exception is the Christmas Break, as the University is closed during this time, so it is best for the student to be off during that time. The 2025-2026 university scheduled breaks are as follows:

#### Internships Holidays

- September 30, 2025 – National Day for Truth & Reconciliation
- October 13, 2025 - Thanksgiving Day
- November 11, 2025 - Remembrance Day
- November 10-14, 2025 inclusive - Fall break
- December 24-31, 2025 - Christmas/New Year's Break
- January 1, 2026 – New Year's Day
- February 16, 2026 - Family Day (university closed)
- February 16 to 20, 2026 - Winter break
- April 3, 2026 (Good Friday)

*Personal Days Off:* In addition to the university vacation days outlined above, interns will be provided with **8 personal days** for an eight-month internship placement, to be determined in consultation with the intern's mentor. Personal days can be used to attend JSGS lectures, seminars and workshops and to schedule personal appointments. One personal day is earned for every month worked.

*Sick days:* Interns are given **6 days**. Any days used beyond this in the internship must be discussed with both the intern's mentor and the Student Experience Officer.

**Note:** Federal interns are hired by their respective departments and are required to follow the department's guidelines for employee schedule for days off.

## JSGS Interns taking Classes

Interns are permitted to take classes during their internship, but it is recommended that interns take only **one** course per semester in addition to JSGS 850 (Executive Internship course). If an intern chooses to take classes, they are to ask permission from their mentor to ensure it does not interfere with the internship. It is the hope of JSGS that mentors are able to find a way to allow students to take the classes they wish to take if possible.

Questions?

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