UC San Diego

DEPARTMENT OF URBAN STUDIES & PLANNING
SENIOR SEQUENCE ORIENTATION
April 23, 2025

Agenda

- Structure of Senior Sequence
- Internship Requirement
- AIP Process for Learning Agreement, Tracking Hours, Evaluation
- Additional information on USP 186 and 187
- Who to contact for help
- Student tips
- Q & A

Senior Sequence Structure

- Senior sequence is designed around the Senior Research Project (SRP)
- **USP 186**, in which you plan and write a research **proposal**, is a prereq for…
- **USP 187**, in which you collect and analyze data and write a research **paper**…
- …and a **poster** you present at the **Urban Expo** on Thursday, March 12, 2026
- TIP: Prioritize these classes
- Going to Bauhaus? Talk to Dawn

Senior Sequence Structure

- **USP 186** (Fall) + **USP 187** (Winter)
  - USP 186 prereqs are FIRM: USP 30*, USP 60* (or POLI 30/PSYCH 60/SOCI 60), USP 124, Research Methods, and Technical Elective
  - USP 30 will be waived as a prereqs for students, still a graduation requirement for students that entered UCSD in Fall 2024
  - Prereq grades must be D or higher to be allowed to register for the classes, if received a D in any major requirements will be required to retake for graduation
- Each is 6 credits, including 2 credits for the required **internship**

USP Internship Requirement

- The internship counts for two (2) units each quarter
- It may be **related or unrelated** to your Senior Research Project (SRP)
- It can be **paid or unpaid**; a part-time job can count.
- It can be **in-person**, **hybrid**, or **remote** (but we recommend in-person or hybrid to get the best experience!)
- It should **apply to USP** in some manner
  - If you're unsure how it counts, contact Jennifer. Include the job description.
- It should **align with your career exploration** and be professional development

USP Internship Requirement

For credit…

- **You need 100 hours by the end of Winter Quarter.**
- Hours are tracked in Internlink via AIP
- You can start counting hours **as of Sept. 1** (can continue summer internships)
- Maximize this opportunity! It is what you make of it

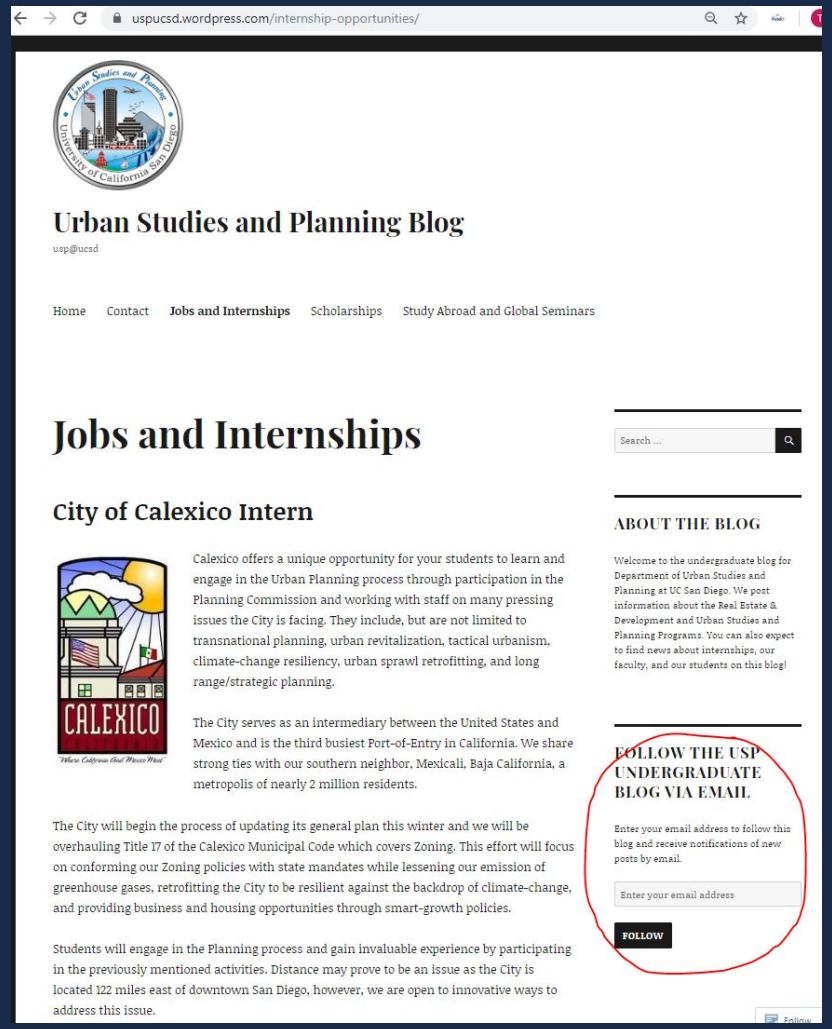
Process: #1 Career Exploration - Start Now

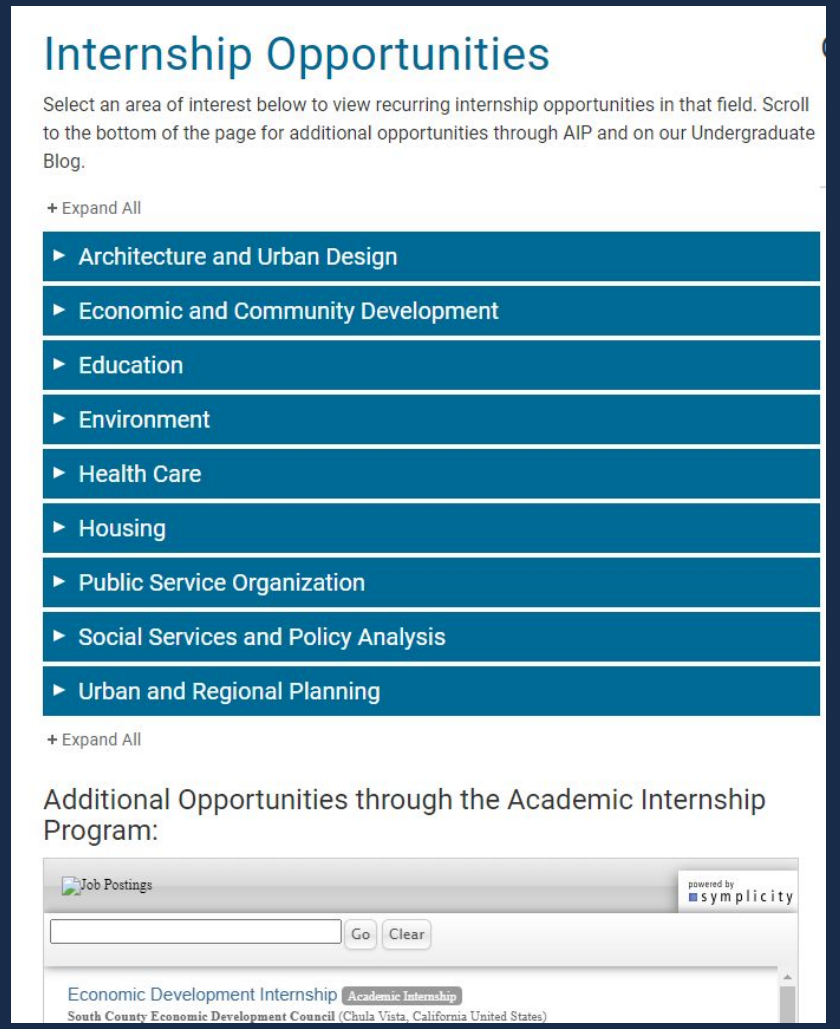
- Career Exploration
  - What are you interested in learning more about?
  - Conduct research and informational interviews
  - Look at full-time jobs
  - What has sparked your interest in your classes or when you read the news? What gets you fired up?
  - Look through the topics researched by previous students. Which posters do you find yourself wanting to read all of?
  - Look through organizations and companies. Which ones pop out to you?

Process: #2 Prepping Application Materials - finalized mid-July (or asap if searching for summer internships)

- Create and update your resume and understand the basics of writing a cover letter.
  - Many posted internships will have multiple applicants and sometimes postings will only be up for a week or two so you want to have your resume ready as soon as possible.
  - Hiring timeline can be lengthy - 2-8 weeks.
- Resume template will be emailed.
  - Do NOT use Canva/get fancy.
  - Add in course projects.
- Attend Summer Internship/Job Search and Resume workshop held in early July if want a refresher or missed previous workshops/USP 30.
- Have your resume reviewed by Jennifer and/or the Career Center staff.
- Optional: Portfolio (necessary for arch/design) and LinkedIn

#3 Identifying Internship Opportunities & Start Applying





#3 Identifying Internship Opportunities & Start Applying in August (or asap if applying to summer internships)

- Online resources
  - DUSP Blog
  - Check out list of Where to Look
    - Handshake, Prof Assoc websites, Indeed, LinkedIn
- Apply to posted positions or pitch yourself or a project
  - Interested in architecture? Will require proactive outreach

#3 Identifying Internship Opportunities & Start Applying in August (or asap if applying to summer internships)

- Networking
  - Faculty, advisors, and supervisors
  - Friends, family, and colleagues
  - Networking events with Professional Associations
  - Alumni
  - Informational interviews
- UCSD Spring Career Fairs Thurs 4/24 and Fri 4/25
- Do NOT put all of your eggs in one basket - keep applying until you have accepted an offer

#4 Prepare for Interviews

- Do online research about the organization
- Use Big Interview
- Prepare references
- Two way street - will this be a good opportunity for you? Ask questions.
- Be sure to send a thank you email after the interview

What to look for in an internship

- What do you gain from the experience?
- What sector are you interested in working in?
- What kinds of projects would you like to work on?
- What opportunities for feedback/mentoring exist?
- Are there opportunities to learn about the organization as a whole are will you be focused mostly on your own projects?

What to look for in an internship

Consider the logistics

- Is the internship in-person, hybrid, or remote?
  - For remote internships, what software and hardware are provided for you to be successful? Are there resources for remote support?
  - Recommend in-person or hybrid for optimal learning
- Is the internship easily accessible?
- Is it possible to take an unpaid internship or do you need one that is paid?
  - Stephen Lew Scholarship

Documenting your Internship

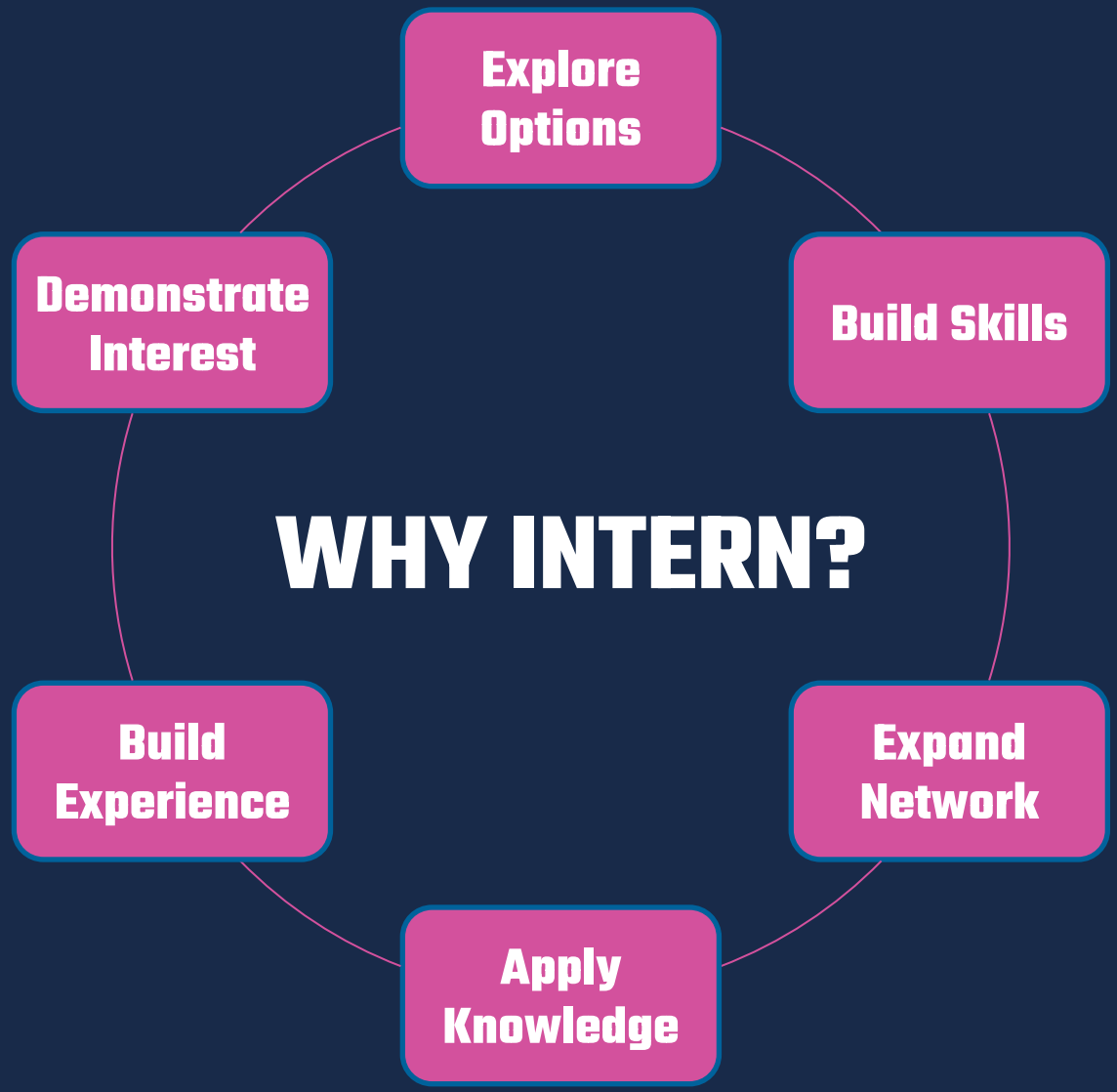
Submitting a Learning Agreement

Tricia Taylor Oliveira
Academic Internship Program (AIP)

UC San Diego
TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMONS

Employers consistently rate ***internships*** among the ***most influential factors*** in hiring decisions

NACE Job Outlook



Internship Documentation

1. Submit a Learning Agreement via AIP's InternLink database
   - Internship details
   - Learning objectives
   - Supervisor approval

2. Track engagement using Track Hours tool

3. Supervisor submits evaluation

Learning Objectives

1. Set your intention
2. Communicate your goals to your supervisor

May focus on:

- Specific skills/competencies
- Industry knowledge
- Career exploration
- Academic interests

SMART Goals

Specific

Measurable

Attainable

Relevant

Time-phased

NO

- Gain skills to enter the workforce
- Decide what I want to do in the future

YES

- Practice and further develop my skills using GIS in a professional setting
- Increase my knowledge of the professional roles involved in local planning

Remember...

- The Learning Agreement is professional communication shared with your Internship Supervisor

- Submit the Learning Agreement once you have your internship secured (and no later than 2 weeks after starting)

Tricia Taylor Oliveira
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UC San Diego
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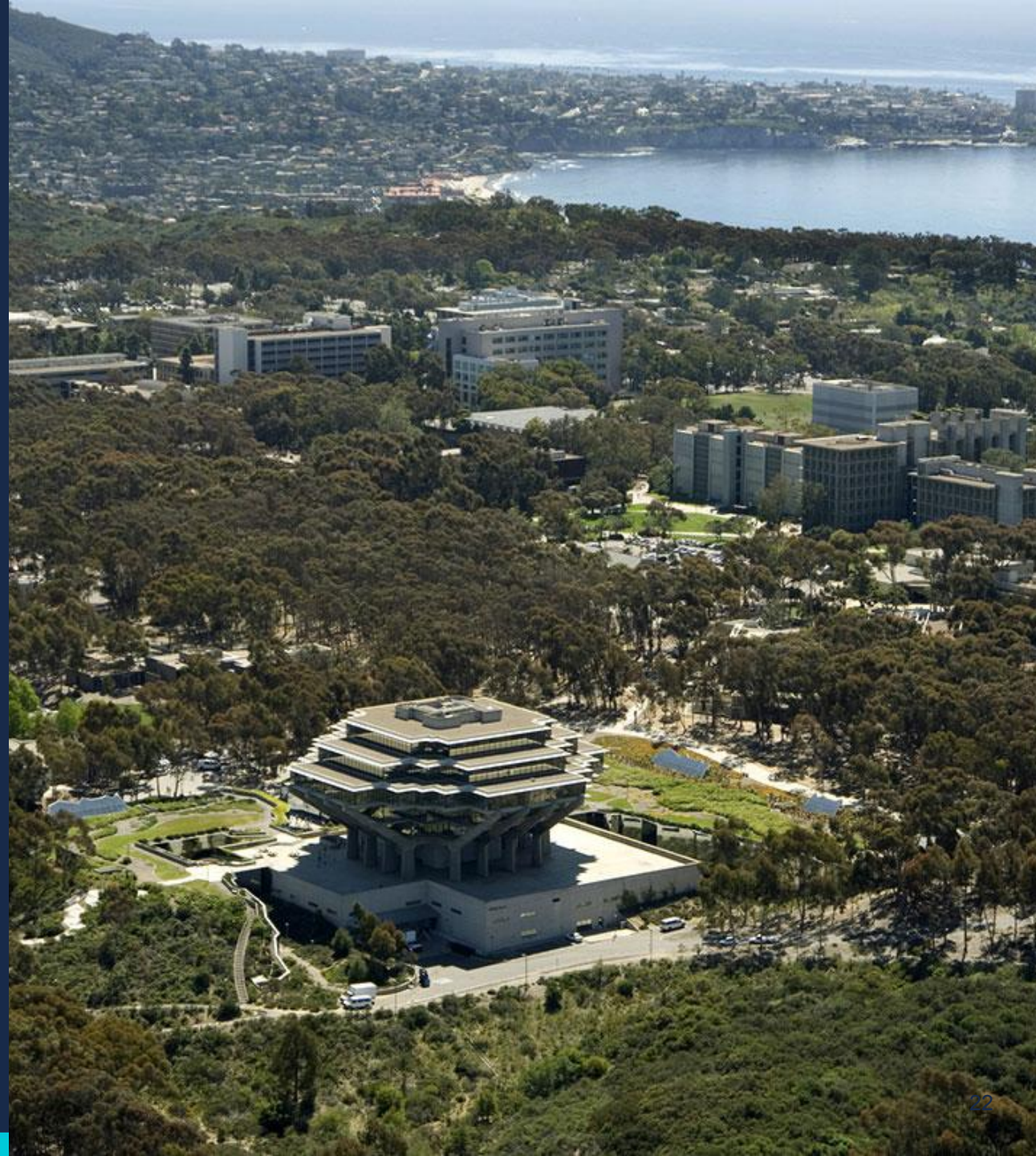
Contact me on the VAC!



Advice from former students

In Winter 2025, the final assignment in USP 187 was to write a short reflection on the internship experience. One of the optional prompts was to offer advice to future students in the Senior Sequence. 58 students submitted reflections.

Here are some of the most common themes in their advice with some of Prof. Martin's observations.

34% advise you to align your internship with your research topic

- It can help with time management
- It can help you stay motivated
- It can give you access to unique data
- You can align them by picking your internship to match your topic *or by changing your topic*

28% advise you to manage your time carefully

- Keep up a steady pace with a regular schedule
- Use a calendar
- Plan months in advance
- Finish some things early if possible
- *No one* was glad to have procrastinated

19% advise you to communicate clearly and often with supervisors & instructors

- Ask supervisors for the schedule you need
- Check in regularly with TAs and instructors
- Ask for help with contacts, data, & methods
- Come to office hours early in the quarter

16% advise you to start looking for an internship early

- Think about possible research topics now
- Start looking for potential internships now
- Ask around! Use your networks!
- Your first ideas might not work out

7% advise you to take care of yourself as your highest priority

- The Senior Sequence can be stressful
- *All* of these tips will mitigate stress

Additional USP 186/187 Information

Who can help you?

- Questions about your academic schedule = **Dawn**
- Questions about career exploration, resumes, cover letters, internship search = **Jennifer**, **Tricia**, **Career Center** staff
- Questions on if a particular position can count for internship requirement = **Jennifer**
- Questions on how timing and hours of internship impact grade and any extensions on deadlines = **Prof. Martin & Prof. Bussell**
- Brainstorming internship ideas and connections = **DUSP Faculty**, **Jennifer**, & **Tricia**
- Questions on AIP paperwork/forms = **Tricia**

PLEASE UTILIZE YOUR RESOURCES EARLY!