

USDA NIFA AWARD No.2011-38422-31204

Award Title: Watershed Management Experiential Learning for USDA Careers

Lead Agency: Cal State San Bernardino University Enterprises Corporation (FF20717)

Award Period: 09/01/11-08/31/15

Si necesita asistencia en Español por favor comunicarse con Laura Ramos a el correo electrónico lramos@csufresno.edu o numero de teléfono 559-278-2066.

How to Fulfill the USDA Career Identification Requirement: Process for Watershed Management Interns

PLEASE FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS:

One of the key components of this award is the requirement that interns go through a career identification process to prepare for potential careers with the USDA after graduating from college. The USDA offers career opportunities for graduates from a variety of disciplines.

In order to learn more about the USDA:

1. Open the document called **Online Resources for USDA Careers** on this webpage.
2. Review all of the resources listed in the first section of this document to learn more about working for the U.S. Federal Government in general, and the USDA in particular.
 - a. Item 1 is a link to search for any job in the U.S. Federal Government.
 - b. Item 2 is a link to information for job seekers from the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM).
 - c. Item 3 is a link to a document that allows students to start with their majors and identify careers throughout the U.S. Federal Government (not only the USDA) based on those majors.
 - d. Item 4 is a link to a USDA and Purdue University site that lists 51 job titles within the USDA for students to explore, and discusses courses to take to be eligible for these jobs. (This site is targeted to High School students, but the information is still useful).
3. Review all of the job links and career resources listed **under each individual agency within the USDA** to learn more about the kinds of jobs each agency offers.

- a. Please Note: Some agencies offer more detailed job descriptions than others. If you are interested in a job that is not well described online, you will need to contact the agency directly or go to <http://www.usajobs.gov/> for more information.
4. While students selected for internships are allowed to select **any career track** within the USDA to fulfill this requirement, the primary focus of this award is on preparing students for careers within 3 USDA agencies:
 - a. **The Forest Service (FS)**
 - b. **The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)**
 - c. **The Agricultural Research Service (ARS)**

On the website there are links to the above agencies that provide a variety of job descriptions for your use in fulfilling this requirement.

These **priority agencies are also highlighted in yellow** in the Online Resources for USDA Careers document.

5. Next, download the **USDA Career Identification Worksheet for Watershed Management Interns** and use this form to record the information required in the steps below.
6. Students are required to select at least one USDA career path and write down the entry level job requirements for the particular job that interests you.
7. Next, you must review the required academic courses (and hours) specified on the USDA job description you have chosen, and identify the equivalent courses on your CSU campus.
8. Compare the *USDA required courses* (to be eligible for the selected USDA entry level job) with those in your current academic course plan.
9. If the *USDA required courses* are not already part of your academic plan, these courses need to be built into your academic plan going forward.
10. If any of the *USDA required courses* are not available on your CSU campus, you must identify where those courses are available and devise a plan to include them in your academic plan.
11. Have your faculty or academic advisor review this document, and if they approve of your work, sign off on the document. (Please note: you must get approval and signature of your advisor in order to complete this USDA Career Identification Requirement).
12. Once complete, submit this document to the WRI Program Manager, Julie Lappin, at jlappin@csusb.edu.
13. For an Example, see below.

Here is an **EXAMPLE** of this process for careers available within the Forest Service (FS).

1. Select the link named **Forest Service** which provides introductory job descriptions for a variety of career paths within the Forest Service. (This and other FS careers are also available on the web at http://www.fs.fed.us/fsjobs/jobs_overview.shtml#profiles).
2. Review any of these job descriptions that interest you and select at least one Forest Service entry level job that you plan to apply for after graduation (remember, this is only an example).
3. If you are interested in becoming a **Soil Scientist**, read through the description of the Work Environment, which includes the types of activities Soil Scientists are typically involved in.
4. Further down the document in a section called Career Paths and Requirements, the job description says: "To begin a career as a Soil Scientist with the Forest Service, you must meet one of the following requirements:
 - a. **Degree:** soil science or a closely related discipline that included 30 semester hours or equivalent in biological, physical, or earth science, with a minimum of 15 semester hours in such subjects as soil genesis, pedology, soil chemistry, soil physics, and soil fertility.
 - b. **A combination of education and experience** with courses equivalent to a major in soil science or a related discipline that included at least 30 semester hours in the biological, physical, or earth sciences. At least 15 of these semester hours must have been in the areas specified in one of the above, plus appropriate experience or additional education."

Since most CSU students are attempting to complete at least a Bachelor's degree, the first Degree category provides the academic requirements information needed for this USDA career identification process.

5. Review the specific courses (and hours) on the job description that are required in order to be eligible for hire as an entry level Soil Scientist, and then identify the equivalent courses on your CSU campus.
6. Next, compare the courses required to be eligible for an entry level Soil Scientist position with the courses in your current academic plan.
7. If the courses required to be eligible for an entry level Soil Scientist job are not already part of your academic plan, these courses need to be built into the your academic plan going forward.
8. If any of these courses are not available on your CSU campus, you must identify where those courses are available and devise a plan to include them in your academic plan.
9. Have your faculty or academic advisor review this document, and if they approve of your work, sign off on the document. Email the completed document to the WRI Program Manager, Julie Lappin, at jlappin@csusb.edu.