

Fisheries, Wildlife, and Conservation Biology: Professional Experience

Effective Fall 2016

Each student completing the Fisheries, Wildlife, and Conservation Biology curriculum must complete a Professional Experience and the associated reflection class, either ESPM 4096, *Professional Experience Program: Internship*, or CFAN 3096, *Making the Most of Your Internship* (see schedule below). These classes are designed to help you to complete pre- and post-reflection components of the experience.

Be sure to register for one of these courses prior to beginning a professional experience – **retroactive enrollment is not allowed**:

If you are doing your professional experience in...	You should register for.....	And things will start in ...
Summer	ESPM 4096 – Fall Semester*	May/June with pre-internship orientation and “pre-reflection”
Fall	CFAN 3096- Fall Semester	Fall coincident with classes
Spring	CFAN 3096- Spring Semester	Spring coincident with classes

*Concurrent registration in CFAN 3096 during Summer Session is possible for extenuating circumstances

You have three options for fulfilling the FWCB professional experience; each is described more fully below. **Note that one of these options requires discussion with the Major Coordinator and approval of a petition.**

- 1) Complete an approved internship that involves at least 120 hours of supervised work time (you will receive approval when you register in Gold Pass).
- 2) Complete a supervised research experience consisting of at least 120 hours, having appointed and supervised tasks, and independent of a course other than directed study. REU and UROP projects can be used to meet this requirement, and they are especially recommended for students considering graduate school (you will receive approval when you register in Gold Pass).
- 3) Complete an approved study abroad program that includes a comprehensive capstone project addressing fisheries, wildlife, or conservation of biodiversity (you must receive approval from the FWCB Major Coordinator and submit that approval email to the class instructor prior to receiving permission to register).

Research or Internship Experience

The first two pathways for fulfilling the Professional Experience are through a guided research project or internship experience. The subject matter must relate directly to fisheries, wildlife, or conservation biology. This can include work with organisms or their habitats. Students who are interested in pursuing graduate school should seek research experience. Students interested in working with state or federal agencies should seek an internship or volunteer opportunity with an appropriate organization.

If you wish to use a research experience to fulfill the Professional Experience, you should identify a faculty mentor by your junior year. Make an appointment with that person to talk about your research interests and begin lining up a research project. You may also find a research project outside UMN (e.g. REU; federal/state agency; faculty member elsewhere). This option will require at least 120 hours of your time.

If you choose to pursue an internship, you must accept leadership in finding an employment or volunteer opportunity (this will be good training for when you graduate). The Career and Internship Services is an excellent resource; your faculty advisor and fellow students can be good sources of ideas. Think of this as an opportunity to build your resume, and try to find an internship opportunity that makes you stand out from your fellow students. This option will require at least 120 hours of your time.

Study abroad

The third route to fulfilling the Professional Experience requirement is to take an approved study abroad class that includes an extensive research or management project with pre- and post-reflection. These are most common in semester- or year-long programs. A large range of study abroad programs is available through the Learning Abroad Center

(<http://umabroad.umn.edu/>).