



ENV 440H1 Professional Experience Course

Throughout the School of the Environment's programs, links with the professional environmental community are stressed by drawing on the professional experience of full-time and sessional staff who are involved in addressing contemporary problems; by utilizing guest lecturers who work as environmental professionals; and by concentrating on informed environmental practice, either through the fourth year Applied Social Science Environmental Research course, ENV 421H1, or the Professional Experience Course (ENV 440H1). **The Professional Experience Course** allows students to enhance their environmental experience prior to graduate study or employment.

WHAT IS A PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE COURSE?

The Professional Experience Course involves a work placement of 100 hours, generally off campus, in an organization (environmental non-government organization, environmental consultant, government agency or private company). The course is taken in the fall term of a student's fourth/final year of undergraduate study. The work placement itself may be taken during the summer academic session (mid-May to early August) or in the fall term, both of which involve the equivalent of one day of week at the placement organization. Summer work placements may be outside of Toronto, or even outside of Canada, for students who are able to find their own work placements. Placement projects involve some combination of research, and program design, delivery, and administration. In addition to the 100 hour work placement, there is an academic component to the ENV 440H1 course, which involves reflection on the work placement experience, drawing upon the literature and the student's experience at the work placement.

BENEFITS TO STUDENTS:

1. Better quality learning (practical career experience and educational relevance):
 - integrate conceptual learning in classroom with actual application in workplace;
 - find more meaning and relevance in their academic learning;
 - engage with instructors and classmates in small, interactive course seminars.
2. More realistic understanding of the profession and the workplace:
 - assess suitability of career choice and increase likelihood of career satisfaction.
3. Better graduate employment opportunity (employment advantages):
 - work experience acquired during placement puts graduate in an advantageous position;
 - provides contacts for graduate employment.
4. Enhanced personal development:
 - students develop better oral and written communication skills, increase self-confidence, independence and ability to relate and work well with others;
 - gain knowledge about themselves and recognize their strengths and weaknesses.



Sample Job Description for 2016 Work Placements

Host Organization: High Park Nature Centre

Address: 375 Colborne Lodge Drive

Telephone: 416-392-1748

Organization's Website Address: www.highparknaturecentre.com

Contact Person (Student Work Placement Supervisor):

Name: Katrina Maurer

Title: School Programs Coordinator

Email address: katrina@highpark.org

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ORGANIZATION

The High Park Nature Centre is a not-for-profit organization that teaches students and the community about nature and stewardship through experiential outdoor education. We serve a diverse audience from across the GTA. Most of our visitors are elementary-aged children (kindergarten - grade 6) though we also serve intermediate and senior-grade levels (grades 7-12), as well as hosting adult workshops. Our work environment is a dynamic one and no two days are the same!

WORK PLACEMENT JOB TITLE

Nature Interpreter Intern

PLACEMENT IS FOR

Both Summer and Fall terms

RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES OF PLACEMENT POSITION (PLEASE BE AS SPECIFIC AS POSSIBLE)

Fall Term: As the Nature Interpreter Intern, you will play a supportive role in the delivery of our school and community programs where schools/groups visit the Nature Centre for a 2 hour program exploring an ecological/stewardship themed program (ie. learning about and removing non-native and invasive plant species from High Park's forests and black oak savannah).

- Assisting with daily set up and clean-up of programming materials
- Creating/sourcing materials
- Assisting with program delivery

Summer Term: Responsibilities will include hiking with each (school or summer camp) group, leading activities and games both indoors and outdoors, assisting to look out for child safety, helping to create and source materials, the set up and clean-up of daily programs, interacting with students/children, teachers/parents and families. You will be working closely with staff as support at the Nature Centre camp leader, as well as with other interns and volunteers.



*Please note that during summer months (July-August) we are running Summer Camp programming.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

The ideal candidate will have experience working with children, working in nature or working with children in nature, or is interested in gaining the skills required to work with children/the outdoors. The Intern will be required to be outside in all weather (ie. sun or rain) and hiking difficult terrain.

WORK SCHEDULE

One or two days Monday-Friday from 9:00 am to 3:00 (Tuesdays until 3:30 pm) or Weekend or evening work as applicable (depending on intern availability) or Daily from 9:00 am-3:00 pm

REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS (PLEASE INDICATE EXPECTED FREQUENCY AND DURATION OF SUPERVISORY MEETINGS OR MONITORING)

Meetings to discuss placement will occur once before, once during and once at the end of the placement, or on an as-needed basis.

DAYS AND HOURS WHEN STUDENT SUPERVISOR IS WORKING AT JOB SITE

The Nature Interpreter Intern will work closely with supervisor or a staff member on a daily basis. Meetings to discuss placement will occur once before, once during and once at the end of the placement.