Management Research Internship MAN 4947

MAN4940 is an existing course for students to earn 1-4 credits for an internship experience. Traditionally, the students identify a cooperating internship site. The work supervisor there agrees to guide the on-site learning experience and provide feedback on the students' performance to the faculty member. This proposal for a new course, MAN 4947, would expand on the scope of internships in two ways by allowing working students to have internships with their current employer, and to include in the learning objectives an original research project in lieu of a new work experience. This would be a QEP course and the research designation would show on the student’s transcript. The research project would be student-centered because the student articulates how the research interest relates to his/her career. Furthermore, the student, not the faculty member executes the project. The implications are that the faculty member would not submit a research protocol to the university, and would not own the rights to the research results.

Florida State University allows students to use part-time or full-time jobs as an internship for academic credit. This option would be especially beneficial to FAU students in Business as at least a half of those undergraduates are employed. Certain requirements would need to be fulfilled in order for students to use their current jobs for internship credit. These are: 1) the employer must agree to either a) giving the student additional and increased responsibility requiring learning and training or, b) agreeing for the student to conduct novel and independent research in the organization and support the activity by cooperating to provide access to data, for example; 2) the student and work supervisor develop learning objectives for the internship which are approved by the faculty member of record; and 3) the work supervisor agrees to overseeing progress on the learning objectives and evaluating the intern on certain aspects of the work. For this proposal, I am referring to the 1b option. Students and employers would commit to 120 hours in a semester for 3 credits towards graduation. As with internships, students would only earn credit once, and it would be either the existing internship or this proposed research internship.

After securing the cooperation of the employer, the student would submit a proposal regarding the significance of the applied research, questions or objectives, and methodology to the faculty member for approval. The student would be responsible for conducting the research and have as resources both the work supervisor and the faculty member. The student would submit the final research paper which includes the results and discussion. The work supervisor would evaluate the student on the behaviors at work and related learning objectives. The faculty would evaluate to research paper as would be the case for a class. The rubric could include written communication, adequacy of literature review, research design, execution, data analysis and report of the findings.

This innovative course would offer many benefits for the constituents as I see it. One, students would be able to do internships where they currently work increasing access to internships. Two, it would be easier for the student to acquire information and data at the current employer. Three, the research designation appears on the students' transcripts, and for UG it would be a QEP course. Four, students could present and publish their research. Five, there would be no need to identify and match students with internship sites thus reducing the administrative burden. Six, employers would be able to get research done that normally they would not get done. For example in HR, employers tend not to assess the effectiveness of many of their HR processes. A student could access archival data on recruitment, hiring practices, or safety training, analyze the data and provide recommendations to the employer. Seven, it would be yet another mechanism to engage with our community and build good will.    
 The downsides could be that we generate too much interest from students and overwhelm faculty resources, the challenge of ensuring quality control that projects warrant 120 hours, and confidentiality issues on the part of employers may limit opportunities for students to present or publish their research.