



United States Department of Interior
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Nevada State Office
P. O. Box 12000
Reno, Nevada 89520-0006
<http://www.nv.blm.gov>

SAMPLE TEMPLATE

Student Career Experience Program Agreement

Student Name: Jane Smith

Agreement Created: August 30, 2006

***SCEP-Initial Position:** Human Resources Specialist (Student Trainee), GS-0299-03

****SCEP-Target Position:** Human Resources Specialist (Student Trainee), GS-0299-05

*****Permanent-Full Performance Level:** Human Resources Specialist, GS-0201-11

Supervisor: Dennis Williamson, Human Resources Officer

Mentor: Nancy Taylor, Human Resources Specialist

School: University of Phoenix

Reno, NV 89502

Program: Masters of Science (MS)

Major: Human Resources Management

Nature of Work Assignments:

Performs and carries out student training assignments in the occupation and career field of **Human Resources Specialist**.

The work assignments are designed to meet the requirements of the Student Trainee **Target Level**, which may lead to a permanent, term, or career-conditional appointment at a **Full Performance Level** determined by the organization.

Schedule of Work Assignments and Class Attendance:

All work assignments will support the Bureau's mission, goals and objectives.

The Student Trainee work schedule may be modified at anytime to accommodate the academic course load and semester / term schedules.

The agency supervisor will provide the student a written schedule of tasks for periods of employment by way of an Employee Performance Appraisal Plan (EPAP).

The student and supervisor will assure that work responsibilities at no time interfere with academic performance. If this occurs, the supervisor shall adjust the Student Trainee's work schedule to allow sufficient time for study and completion of academic / degree program requirements.

Requirements for Continuation in Program:

The Student Trainee must maintain at least half-time (or part-time) status as defined by the academic institution, as well as meet BLM in Nevada's enrollment requirements to continue in the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP). The BLM in Nevada's academic enrollment requirements must be adhered to and are as follows:

Undergraduate – a minimum of 9.0 credit hours per semester; or 13.0 credit hours per quarter

Graduate – a minimum of 6.0 credit hours per semester; or 9.0 credit hours per quarter

High School – a minimum of 4.0 to 6.0 hours per day in class per term

The Student Trainee must provide a written class schedule at the beginning and a grade report at the end of each semester / quarter to the supervisor and the Student Educational Employment Program (SEEP) Coordinator. The Student Trainee must receive an overall average of "C" (2.5 grade point average - GPA) or better to continue in the SCEP Program. Students not receiving a "C" will be placed on agency SCEP Program probation and given only one semester to return the GPA to a 2.5 or better. If the student still fails to meet the GPA requirement, he/she will be terminated from the agency's SCEP Program and Federal service.

The Student Trainee must complete a minimum of 640.0 hours of on-the-job work experience prior to graduation. Please note that a Student Trainee must always either be working with the agency and/or enrolled in school / courses.

***Note:** If a graduate student pursuing a Masters or Doctorate degree, once the Student Trainee has completed all coursework directly related to agency employment and begun taking only 'thesis' credits, he or she has only one year to complete and finalize all degree program requirements.*

Financial Assistance and Repayment:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM - Nevada) may provide financial assistance (i.e. tuition, travel, per diem, lodging, etc.) for students participating in the agency's SCEP Program in accordance with the following:

- All grade levels are eligible for tuition assistance, but the assistance is not guaranteed. Any tuition assistance offered is at the discretion of the supervisor and/or dependent on the agency's budget. If funded by BLM Nevada (Field Office, Field Station, Division, Branch), tuition assistance may not exceed \$1,500 per fiscal year. For students who are Washington Office funded, tuition assistance may not exceed \$2,000 per year for in-state students and \$3,000 per year for out-of-state students.
- Tuition assistance will be granted only for courses directly related to agency employment over and above grants, scholarships, and any other private or public assistance already being provided.

***Note:** These expenses must be certified to as the student's 'out-of-pocket' expenses by the educational institution. An invoice (bill) or receipt must substantiate any expenses claimed. The tuition assistance will cover only the following (any unspecified expenses are excluded):*

1) Tuition and matriculation fees

2) Library and laboratory services

***Note:** Textbooks are not included. The government is not in the business of collecting textbooks. Travel and transportation are handled outside of this agency Student Career Experience Program Agreement.*

In return for tuition assistance, the Student Trainee participant agrees to continue employment with the agency for one month for every month of tuition assistance received (1:1 ratio). If a student fails to

continue his/her education, refuses an offer of employment upon graduation, or voluntarily leaves the agency before completing the period of obligated service, the student will be required to re-pay the Federal government for the tuition assistance / fees paid for educational expenses. Any dollar amount due to the agency as a result of failure on the student's part to complete the entered into **Student Career Experience Program Agreement** may be withheld from any monies owed the student by the Federal government or may be recovered by such other methods approved by law. The Student Career Experience Program Agreement does not in any way commit the agency to continue the student's employment. If for any reason (other than misconduct or performance) the agency terminates the appointment, it will waive the student's obligation for the re-payment of monies expended under the Agreement.

In addition to this agreement, Student Trainee's must sign and understand the SCEP Student Withdrawal Form. The Withdrawal Form states that the SCEP student must re-pay the Bureau for financial assistance if he/she voluntarily separates from the SCEP program. Individual offices may collect the outstanding monies through the following six-step procedure.

1. The Bureau office determines the dollar amount that the SCEP student owes according to the signed SCEP agreement. The Bureau office documents that funds paid to or for the student are not considered a student loan.
2. The Bureau office contacts the National Business Center's Accounting Operations Division (BC-621) to establish a Bill of Collection with Notice of Actions in cases of delinquency to the debtor. The Bureau sends the Bill of Collection to the debtor.
3. BC-621 enters a billing document into the Bureau's accounting system which documents the initial accounting code charged with the financial assistance and ensure proper reimbursement of charge codes.
4. The student must pay the Bill of Collection within 30 days or sign a repayment agreement. The repayment agreement requires the payment of debt within three years or less. Upon default, the debt is due in full. Interest is assessed from the date of the bill, if not paid within 30 days. A 6% penalty is assessed from the date of the bill, if the bill is delinquent more than 90 days.
5. The Bureau issues at least one additional demand letter beyond the original bill. An administrative charge of \$15 is assessed for each demand letter.
6. If payment is not received, the Bureau refers the debt to Treasury for collection action, administrative offset. The Treasury may report the debt to the IRS and a 1099c may be issued that reports the unpaid debt as income.

Individual offices may implement the six-step procedure but should ensure due process by providing the student with the following information before he or she accepts the financial assistance:

- The basis for debt and rights that the debtor may have to seek review within the Bureau, such as right to review documents and request a waiver;
- The standards for imposing interest, penalties, or administrative costs;
- The name, address, and phone number of contact person(s) of office within the Bureau;
- The opportunities for alternative methods of payment, such as a repayment agreement (installment payments); and
- The actions in event of delinquency, such as referral to Treasury, IRS, and credit reporting agencies.

Additional information is referenced at the following: Federal Claims Collections Standards 31 CFR parts 900 through 904 and 31 U.S.C. 3711 about Authority; 31 U.S.C. 3716(a) about Due Process; and 31 U.S.C. 3720A and 31 CFR 285.2 about Tax Refund Offset.

Break-In-Program:

A break-in-program is allowed and defined as a period of time when a SCEP Program participant is working at the agency but is unable to go attend school; or neither attending classes nor working at the agency. A break-in-program must be approved by the agency, and they may use their discretion in either approving or denying a break-in-program.

Program Separation:

Students, in the excepted service program, regardless of how long they have worked for the agency, generally have no procedural or appeal rights if separated for poor performance, failure to meet program requirements, or conduct.

Evaluation Procedure:

The Student Trainees' work performance will be evaluated during regular performance monitoring sessions and evaluation procedures required by the Department of the Interior's Performance Management System, as well as at the end of new assignments. The Student Trainee must be rated "Exceptional", "Superior", or "Fully Successful" per performance element for continuation in the SCEP Program.

Requirements for Conversion:

Conversion to competitive status is not guaranteed. Though the agency will make every effort to convert the student, the ability to convert will be based on a number of factors, including funding, work-months, mission needs at that the time of conversion, and successful completion of the **Masters of Science degree** by **Fall 2008**. If converted, the Student Trainee will be converted to the position of **Human Resources Specialist** with a **full performance potential of GS-0201-11**. Promotion to the GS-07, as well as to the full performance level GS-09 is determined and recommended by the supervisor, and is based on job performance and accomplishment of assigned work tasks.

Upon conversion, the Student Trainee may be placed in any geographical area within the Bureau of Land Management, though all efforts will be made to keep the student in the host State.

Signatures of Agreement: All signatures are required for this to be a valid Student Trainee-agency agreement. If possible, original signatures are preferred.

BLM Nevada Student Trainee

Date

BLM Nevada Supervisor

Date

BLM Nevada Mentor

Date

University of Phoenix Academic Advisor

Date

BLM Nevada Student Employment Program Coordinator

Date

Note: ***Initial Position:** The Student Trainee position and grade at which the student is hired.
**** Target Position:** The highest Student Trainee position and grade a student can achieve prior to conversion.
*****Full Performance Level:** The highest grade a converted Student Trainee (upon completion of the Student Career Employment Program) can non-competitively achieve in the assigned converted position.