

STUDENT EDUCATIONAL EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM AGREEMENT

BETWEEN THE

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA)
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE (NASS)
AND
THE UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO
MAYAGÜEZ CAMPUS**

This Agreement is the basis for mutual understanding and respective responsibilities between the above parties in matters relating to Federal employment of students in the Student Career Experience Program component of the Student Educational Employment Program. The Student Career Experience Program provides experience that is directly related to the student's educational program and career goals. Programs developed under this component provide for related work in a Federal agency. The work experience must be related to his/her academic/career goals.

- A. **Student Career Experience Program** for Bachelor and/or Graduate Degrees.
- B. **Student Eligibility**

Prospective students must:

1. Be at least 16 years old.
2. Be a U.S. citizen or national (resident of American Samoa or Swains Island).
3. Meet the nepotism requirement - relatives of employees may be hired when there is no direct reporting relationship and the relative is not in a position to influence or control the student's appointment or advancement.
4. Meet security and/or fitness requirements.
5. Be attending a qualifying educational institution on at least a half-time basis.
6. Be enrolled in fields of study related to the assigned work.
7. Meet the qualification standards of the position.
8. Be recommended for assignment in the Agency by the appropriate staff member of the educational institution.

C. Appointment

Students will be appointed under the authority provided in the 5 Code of Federal Regulation, Section 213.3202 (b), Schedule B which may not extend beyond 120 calendar days after satisfactory completion of educational and study-related work requirements.

D. Qualifications, Classification, and Pay

1. Students will be appointed to classified positions at grades based upon their qualifications.
2. Students will be paid at the current rate authorized by the Classification Act.

E. Schedules

The Agency, the participating educational institution and the student should agree on a formally-arranged schedule of school and work subject to the following requirements:

1. Each work experience will be consistent with the academic studies or career goals of each student and will be designed to meet the minimum study-related work hours required for conversion.
2. Work will be scheduled on either a full-time or part-time basis.
3. There are no limitations on the number of hours a student can work per week, as long as the work schedule does not interfere with the student's academic schedule.
4. Work schedules may be at anytime during the year, including summer.
5. Completion of the educational program and completion of work schedules must be accomplished in a reasonable and appropriate timeframe.
6. The Agency is informed and prepared for each student's period of employment.

F. Compensation and Benefits

The students are entitled to the following benefits:

1. Retirement: Participation in a retirement system is mandatory for all students. Federal regulations determine the system providing coverage. Most students will be covered by the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS).
2. Life and Health Insurance: Students are eligible for health and life insurance coverage if they hold appointments exceeding one year and expect to be in work status at least one-third of the time before completion of the Student Career Experience Program.

3. Annual and Sick Leave: Students earn annual and sick leave.
4. Travel and Transportation Payment: Based on Agency review, payment of travel expenses may be made in accordance with Federal Travel Regulations.

G. Performance Appraisals

1. Students will be covered under the Agency existing performance appraisal system.
2. Copies of appraisal information will be shared with the educational institution and made a part of each student's personnel folder.
3. Students whose performance falls below the acceptable level may be given an opportunity to improve their performance. If they do not achieve a satisfactory rating, they will be separated from the program.

H. Termination

An appointment may be terminated at any time for any of the following reasons:

1. Resignation.
2. Change in field of study that will not qualify students for career positions in the Agency.
3. Suspension, expulsion, or withdrawal from the educational institution.
4. Failure to perform all assigned work consistently in an effective, efficient, and timely manner.
5. Failure to maintain academic standards.
6. Medical disability.
7. Administrative reasons (i.e., budget constraints, lack of work, misconduct).

I. Employment After Completion of Program

1. The Agency may convert eligible students non-competitively to career or career-conditional appointments under Executive Order 12015.
2. Students are eligible for non-competitive conversion to a career or career-conditional appointment within the 120 calendar day period following completion of educational requirements conferring a diploma or degree at an accredited institution.

Conditions for Conversion

1. Students must meet the qualification standards for the targeted position to which each student is appointed, including minimum positive education requirements, if any.
2. The position must be related to each student's academic training and career-related work experience.
3. Students must have completed at least 640 hours of career-related work before completion of or concurrently with the academic course requirements.
4. Students must be citizens of the United States at conversion time and employment of relatives requirements must be met.

J. **Responsibilities**

The Federal Agency's Role

1. Designates a staff member to maintain liaison with the qualifying educational institution.
2. Informs school of work experience opportunities and provides job descriptions promptly.
3. Establishes work schedules consistent with the school's academic calendar to enable students to complete the program successfully.
4. Orients the student to the Agency's mission, policies and procedures.
5. Selects appointees referred by schools in accordance with EEO principles.
6. Processes all personnel actions and keeps records related to student employment.
7. Provides quality work assignments and diversified experiences to prepare students for occupations that are related to their academic field.
8. Conducts appraisals and counsels students regarding their performance, completes necessary forms, and shares progress reports with schools.
9. Notifies school of any changes in the employment status of students.
10. Understands the non-competitive conversion requirements to career or career-conditional employment.

The Institution's Role

1. Designates a representative to work with the Federal Agency Student Educational Employment Program representative.
2. Informs eligible students of the Student Career Experience Program opportunities, identifying potential employers.
3. Refers interested and qualified students to agencies without discrimination, including veterans discharged under honorable conditions.

4. Correlates work and study in a manner that will expand the educational development of students.
5. Furnishes the Federal Agency with requested information related to the fields of study and academic standing of students.
6. Monitors academic progress and informs the Federal Agency of any changes in the status of the student.
7. Understands the non-competitive conversion requirements to career or career-conditional employment.

The Student's Role

1. Must be in good standing enrolled in a curriculum with a major leading to the successful completion of a college degree qualifying him or her to be employed as an Agricultural Statistician, Mathematical Statistician, or Computer Specialist.
2. Must maintain at least a 3.0 overall grade point average on a 4.0 scale and receive a B or better grades in all courses in his or her major area of study.
3. Adheres to the Federal Agency's work schedule and the Student Career Experience Program policies and procedures.
4. Assumes personal and professional responsibilities for actions and all assigned work.
5. Uses a courteous, enthusiastic, and professional approach to policies and procedures impacting on the assigned work and organization.
6. Meets academic, performance, and conduct standards set forth by the school and the Federal Agency.
7. Provides the Federal Agency and school program coordinator with periodic progress reports on the quality of work and study assignments.
8. Works effectively with peers and supervisors.
9. Notifies the school or Federal Agency of changes in status.
10. Must meet U.S. citizenship requirements to be eligible for conversion into the Federal career service.
11. Understands the requirements for non-competitive conversion to career or career-conditional employment.

K. Conditions of Agreement

The conditions of the Agreement are in general conformity with Federal regulations. At no time do they supersede, alter, or take the place of such regulations, and are subject to immediate change by new legislation or policy revisions.

Each party to this Agreement reserves the rights to cancel the Agreement upon written notification to the other party at least 30 days prior to the proposed termination. Changes and modifications of the terms of the Agreement can be suggested by either party and will go into effect after they are agreed to, in writing, by both parties and thereby made a part of the Agreement.