

F26.45 Learning in Partnership: program evaluation

Overview

The intern for this project will participate in the Care for Nahasdzáán program in Fall 2025, participate in IRB approved data collection and evaluation, and assist/co-author an academic article focused on the concept of learning in partnership.

The intern is expected to be comfortable in outdoor, backcountry, and remote locations, backcountry camping, and with working with groups of students. The candidate should be informed about Indigenous nations and history.

The selected student will travel to Indigenous reservation lands for three predetermined weekends. They will camp with the student group and their faculty and Indigenous facilitators. As participant in the group, they are expected to contribute to planning, packing, and facilitating (work projects, cooking, hiking, discussions), the same as the student participants in the class.

What the student will DO and LEARN

The practical part:

The intern will gather hands-on experience and participate in planning and executing of three weekend trips on reservation land with a student group of 10 plus faculty facilitators. They will learn best practices around running a program that exists in partnership with Indigenous hosts and educators. Standard backcountry/outdoor educational program processes will be taught as well.

The analytical part:

The intern will assist in evaluating quantitative program data that has been collected over five semesters and add qualitative, observational data to the project. This data collection is student-learning focused and approved by NAU IRB.

The selected student will be able to apply their methods training in qualitative and quantitative analysis to this project and the existing data set. Faculty will mentor and teach methodologies as needed.

The academic part:

The intern has the opportunity to co-author an academic journal article that focuses on the merits, concerns, and practical aspects of a program taught in partnership with Indigenous nations, educators, and hosts. This is a departure from traditional experiential learning or service learning practices and literature. We expect the intern to be motivated to work on literature review, data analysis, and academic writing under faculty mentorship.

The intern is expected to work independently and self-directed and to bring with them a genuine interest in working with Indigenous communities. Experience in the outdoor setting is beneficial.

Additional benefits

This is a very applied academic program: the student will gain fieldwork experience, training in tribal consultation and work with Indigenous communities, and learn in which ways cultural exchange can happen in a reciprocal and collaborative way.

The student is encouraged to present at an academic conference with the faculty mentor.

Additional qualifications

experience in the outdoors is beneficial

Time commitment

6 hrs/week for 30 weeks