



Quick Reference Guide for 2019-2020 DME Interns

This reference guide is meant to be a document that DME interns can check if they would like an overview or refresher of what all DME interns should know to succeed in this internship. If you would like more detailed information regarding the DME team, please visit the DME Interns website: <https://dmeinterns.org>. There, you can also revisit the Intern Boot Camp that you went through at the beginning of the internship as well as check out other helpful pages, such as the DME Intern FAQ page.

How long will this internship last?

This internship will run from September 2019 to May 2020. However, we often have interns stay on beyond the school year into the summer or even into the following school year, where they have the chance to be promoted to a supervisor position.

What does the DME team do?

Our team is responsible for promoting the Department of Veterans Affairs through the use of digital media. To this end we have interns involved in interviewing veterans; writing, editing, and fact-checking content; running a podcast; monitoring and updating our social media channels; improving our websites; and much more. Your contribution to our team will help us to recognize the contributions of veterans to this country and increase public awareness of their achievements.

Who are my supervisors?

All DME interns are under Dom Rodriguez, Intern Program Manager for the Digital Media Engagement department. Additionally, every intern is part of a specific department based on the position they applied for (e.g. Web Development, Fact Checking, Graphic Design). Each department has an Executive Leadership Team member, at least one Department Head, and sometimes a Division Officer. These department leaders are interns like yourself! If your department is missing one or more of these leaders, it is probably because they are still being recruited for the position. An organizational chart displaying the general hierarchy of the DME team for this year can be found here:

<https://embed.coggle.it/diagram/XO9ZLInY893E9Um6/t/2019-vsfs-dme-org-chart/80506f33a72ea0f33da7e5d5ed2ea3d3e7d1a8eaec8474fe7904f50fb4bb21f2>.

What do all the weird acronyms used in this internship mean?

DH: Department Head

DME: Digital Media Engagement (all interns in this program are part of the DME team)

DO: Division Officer

ELT: Executive Leadership Team

HR: Human Resources

VA: Veterans Affairs

VCL: Veterans Crisis Line

VLM: Veterans Legacy Memorial (an online memorial space for veterans)

VOD: Veteran of the Day (this refers to a specific type of project that describes a veteran's life and recognizes them for their service)

VSFS: Virtual Student Federal Service (this is the program through which you applied to this internship)

Where does all the work take place?

Almost all communication will take place on the DME Interns Slack page, which can be found here: <https://app.slack.com/client/TJBE1U7SS/CJ2V5BX8R>. Please check this page frequently to stay up to date with all developments, receive any new instructions, and ask any questions.

You should also be given access to Trello boards for whichever department you are apart of, which is where you will find most of your work assignments. Trello is a project management tool where you can claim work assignments, communicate with other interns, and post suggestions.

Tutorials for using both Slack and Trello as a DME intern are available on this webpage: <https://dmeinterns.org/training-videos-documents/>.

We recommend that you download both the Slack and Trello apps to your phone in order to stay on top of all developments that happen within the DME team.

Because of the 10,000 message limit imposed by Slack, which causes old messages to eventually be removed, we are also experimenting with DME Intranet, which can be found under the “Pages for Interns Only” tab on the DME Interns website. Feel free to check it out, along with other new features that are being added to the website!

What is expected of me in this internship?

Because this is a digital internship with hundreds of interns across the country participating, we as supervisors cannot be constantly checking on your work. Therefore, you will have a good deal of autonomy in this position to create, amend, and implement projects as you see fit. However, that also means that you may have to take more initiative in this internship than in previous internship experiences, working on projects without direct input from your supervisors.

What am I required to do?

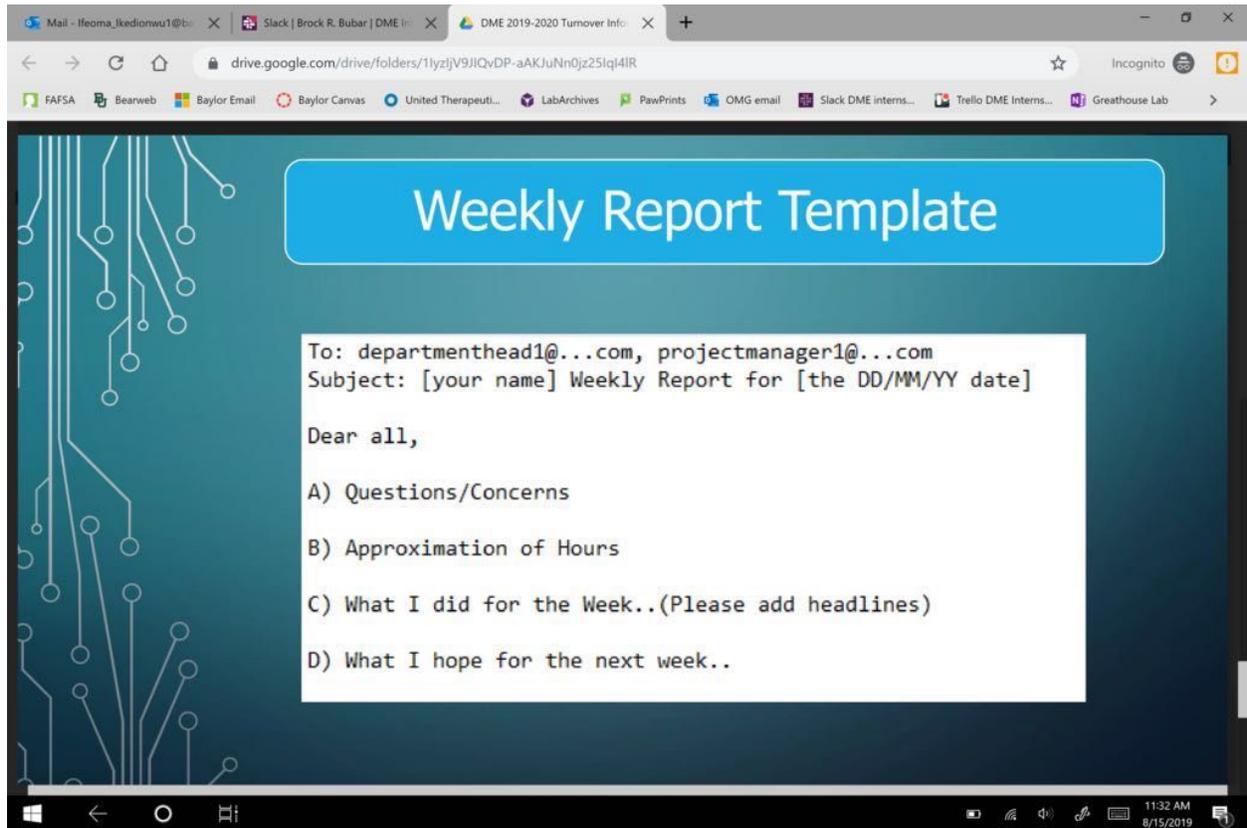
According to VSFS guidelines, all interns are required to work **10 hours a week**.

You are also responsible for sending a **weekly email** to Dom, with your DH(s) and ELT member cc'd in the email, every Thursday by the end of the day (based on your local time) describing what you accomplished during the week. (For a list of the email addresses that should be cc'd in your emails, please see the table below.) Failure to submit three weekly reports, consecutive or nonconsecutive, during the course of this internship will result in removal from the program. DHs will keep up with their department interns and will directly contact anyone who has not submitted a weekly report via email. If no response is given to the DH or no update is given describing the reason for continued inactivity, removal from the program will take place exactly three weeks from the initial email from the DH.

Exemptions will be given for extenuating circumstances, but communication with your DH is crucial. In the event that you are out for an extended period of time, please contact your DH, at least one ELT member, and Dom, stating why you will be out and how long you are expected to be out. If it is not possible to do so ahead of time or during that time, please reach out as soon as you have the opportunity.

Dom, ELT members, and DHs understand that you may have unforeseen circumstances, such as family emergencies or even midterms/finals, that adversely affect your schedule, but communication with your DH is still crucial. It is also understood that your department may have less work during certain weeks, but a weekly report should still be submitted.

The email should be structured like this:



The email addresses that should be included in weekly emails for each department are listed in the table below:

Department	Emails
A Veteran's Story	avs.dh@dmeinterns.org
	write.edit.elt@dmeinterns.org
	dominique.ramirez@va.gov
Accessibility	accessibility.dh@dmeinterns.org
	accessibility.elt@dmeinterns.org
	dominique.ramirez@va.gov
Analytics and Reporting	analytics.dh@dmeinterns.org
	analytics.elt@dmeinterns.org

Editing	editing.dh@dmeinterns.org
	write.edit.elt@dmeinterns.org
	dominique.ramirez@va.gov
Facebook	facebook.dh@dmeinterns.org
	socialmedia.dh@dmeinterns.org
	socialmedia.elt@dmeinterns.org
	dominique.ramirez@va.gov
Graphic Design	graphic.design.dh@dmeinterns.org
	graphic.design.elt@dmeinterns.org
	dominique.ramirez@va.gov
Human Resources (including Turnover and Recruiting)	human.resources.dh@dmeinterns.org
	human.resources.elt@dmeinterns.org
	dominique.ramirez@va.gov
Instagram	instagram.dh@dmeinterns.org
	socialmedia.dh@dmeinterns.org
	socialmedia.elt@dmeinterns.org
	dominique.ramirez@va.gov
Operation Song	op.song.dh@dmeinterns.org
	write.edit.elt@dmeinterns.org
	dominique.ramirez@va.gov
Photo Finders	photo.finders.dh@dmeinterns.org
	dominique.ramirez@va.gov
Podcast	podcast.dh@dmeinterns.org
	podcast.elt@dmeinterns.org

	dominique.ramirez@va.gov
Researchers	researchers.dh@dmeinterns.org
	researchers.elt@dmeinterns.org
	dominique.ramirez@va.gov
Twitter	twitter.dh@dmeinterns.org
	socialmedia.dh@dmeinterns.org
	socialmedia.elt@dmeinterns.org
	dominique.ramirez@va.gov
Web Content Management	web.content.dh@dmeinterns.org
	web.elt@dmeinterns.org
	dominique.ramirez@va.gov
Web Development	web.dev.dh@dmeinterns.org
	web.elt@dmeinterns.org
	dominique.ramirez@va.gov
Writing	writing.dh@dmeinterns.org
	write.edit.elt@dmeinterns.org
	dominique.ramirez@va.gov

What should I do if I do not know what I am supposed to be doing?

Start by checking the Trello board for your department and seeing if there are any assignments that are unfinished. If you find no unfinished assignments there, head over to the Slack page to see if there is anything that needs to be done. Oftentimes, supervisors with a task that needs to be done right away will ask for volunteers on Slack, which is another important reason to be constantly checking the Slack page. You can also directly contact your DO, DH, or ELT member to see if they have any assignments for you. Otherwise, you can contact your fellow interns to see if they need help with any of their tasks, including any interns outside your department. If you have

any ideas for a project of your own that you believe will benefit veterans or the DME team, feel free to take initiative!

What should I do if I see a veteran saying or posting troubling content?

Part of your role may involve interacting with veterans online. If you see or hear veterans making any comments that you find troubling or disturbing, such as an intent to commit self-harm, alert one of the following people: **Dominique Ramirez** (Slack: @DME_Dom, email: dominique.ramirez@va.gov), **Rey Leal** (Slack: @DME Rey Leal, email: reynaldo.leal2@va.gov), **Adam Stump** (Slack: @DME_Adam, email: adam.stump@va.gov), **Jason** (Slack: @DME_Jason, email: jason.davis8@va.gov), or **Tanner Iskra** (Slack: @DME_Tanner Iskra, email: tanner.iskra@va.gov) immediately. If you cannot find one of these individuals, alert your DH or ELT member. If you alert one person and they do not respond promptly, continue to alert others until you have received a response.

If you need to submit a crisis report directly to the Veterans Crisis Line, or if you are on the phone with a veteran and feel the need to transfer the call to the Veterans Crisis Line, please refer to this document regarding how to do so:

<https://app.slack.com/client/TJBE1U7SS/CHXSGR0MQ/files/FML31DSNR>

Helping veterans in crisis is one of the most important things that you can do as an intern, so please ensure that you are familiar with the protocol for doing so.

Can I get college credit for this internship?

Many schools offer units or even scholarships for students involved in internships. Please contact your school advisor to see whether you qualify for one of these as a DME intern. If you have documents that must be signed by your supervisor, please fill them out and contact your DH or ELT member to get them signed. Given the amount of interns in the program, you will likely receive a quicker response if you fill out as much of the document as you can before giving them to your supervisor, even if the document says that you are supposed to give them to a supervisor to fill out.

How can I leverage this internship for future job applications?

Of course, this internship should be added to your resume or CV. However, if you plan to include Dom or any other supervisors as a reference in any future applications, it is important that they know who you are and what you have been doing so that they can say something good about you. The best way to ensure this is to be active on Slack and to submit your weekly emails on time.

There is also the possibility of receiving a letter of recommendation for this internship. DHs will write letters of recommendation for the top 25% of interns, rounded down to the nearest whole number, within their departments, based on merit and communication. For example, if a department has 10 interns (25% of 10 is 2.5), then the DH will submit their top 2 names (2.5 rounded down is 2). DHs will be writing the letter of recommendation themselves, detailing chosen interns' accomplishments and hard work during the year. Once the letter is completed, the DH will submit the letter to Dom for review and signature.

This selection process will be finalized the last week of February, and letters will be completed in March. A generalized letter detailing the completion of the VSFS internship will be given out to all interns as well.

Who should I contact if I have further questions?

If you have a question regarding what you are supposed to be doing, please post it on the appropriate Slack channel, where you will receive a prompt reply from either a supervisor or one of your fellow interns. Alternatively, if you have a more technical question, consider posting it on dmeinterns.org/help, where you will also receive a prompt reply. If you would like to contact your DH, ELT member, or Dominique directly, you can reach out to them either via a direct message on Slack or via email. Individuals' email addresses can be found on their Slack profiles.

We look forward to a great year together!