



2022

## LEAD Program Peer Advisor

Samantha Goetze

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# COLLEGE OF THE ENVIRONMENT



**Internship Title:** L.E.A.D. Peer Advisor Intern

**Student Name:** Samantha Goetze

**Internship Dates:** 03/29/22-06/10/22

David Rossiter

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**STUDENT SIGNATURE** 

**DATE:** 05/30/22

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# COLLEGE OF THE ENVIRONMENT



## Section 1 – Student Identification

Last Name, First Name:	Goetze, Samantha	Western ID:	W01462651
Email Address	samanthagoetze@me.com	Major/PreMajor	Environmental Studies

## Section 2 – Registration Information

Total Credits:	2	Faculty Advisor:	David Rossiter
Internship Start Date:	March 29, 2022	Internship End Date:	June 10, 2022
Number Credits Per Quarter (F/W/S/Sum)	2 (Spring)		

*Note: You must be registered for credits during quarters you perform **any part** of the internship work (Including Summer Session) to include writing of reports...this can be spread over multiple quarters. You are expected to register an appropriate number of credits based on anticipated hours worked BY Quarter (Example: Working 120 hours during Summer = 4 Credits Summer Enrollment)*

## Section 3 – Organization for Internship

Organization Name:	Learning, Environment, Action, and Discovery (LEAD)
Intern Supervisor Name:	Sydne Tursky and Ava Stone
Mailing Address:	516 High St, Viking Commons 24, Bellingham, WA 98225
Email Address:	lead@wwu.edu
Phone Number:	

Description of Duties (Or Attach Job Description):

- Managing various restoration work parties, seminars or projects
- Promoting awareness of local environmental issues and benefits of service-learning for both students and community
- Making direct contact with students and community members via email and social media
- Using Microsoft Office suite and Google docs for data entry and communication

### Section 4 – Learning Objectives

What do I intend to learn from this experience:

I intend to gain field work experience and use my education in Environmental Studies for a hands-on experience interacting with people, restoring the environment, and building my environmental educator skills. I hope to learn how to effectively recruit and manage volunteers, support work parties, identify local species, and promote awareness of environmental issues.

How does this experience contribute to my educational goals:

This internship provides real world experience that will complement my education in Environmental Studies, Environmental Justice, and Environmental Education. It will also help me to build leadership, communication, and teamwork skills. A focus of my academics has been Environmental Education, which this internship will provide experience for.

If Faculty require any additional Learning Objectives, they should be listed here:

n/a

### Section 5 - Deadlines, Evaluation, and Assessment (Completed by faculty advisor)

<p>Meet with Advisor: <u>as needed</u></p> <p>First Draft Due: <u>Dead week, spring</u></p> <p>Final Draft Due: <u>Finals week, spring</u></p>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 80%;"></th> <th style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">Yes</th> <th style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">No</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Additional Learning Objectives (as assigned by faculty)</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="radio"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input checked="" type="radio"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Oral Presentation Required</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="radio"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input checked="" type="radio"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Daily/Weekly Log Require</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input checked="" type="radio"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="radio"/></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Yes	No	Additional Learning Objectives (as assigned by faculty)	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Oral Presentation Required	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Daily/Weekly Log Require	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Yes	No											
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Oral Presentation Required	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>											
Daily/Weekly Log Require	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>											

### Section 6 – Students Certification

I certify that I have read the University Policy on Risk Management Considerations for Student Internships and I will report any injuries suffered while performing internship promptly to WWU.  
[http://www.wvu.edu/bfa/Risk\\_Mgmt/documents/Internship%20Considerations%20\(14\).pdf](http://www.wvu.edu/bfa/Risk_Mgmt/documents/Internship%20Considerations%20(14).pdf)

I will endeavor to represent myself and my college well and will abide by the relevant policies, procedures and ethical standards of the university and the internship organization.

I understand that **30-hours of work per credit earned is expected** for an internship. I understand that I am expected to enroll in a number of credits commensurate with hours worked each quarter.

Student's  
Signature/Date



2/17/22

### Section 7 – Internship Site Supervisor Certification

I have reviewed the student's indicated learning objectives and on behalf of my organization agree:

- To enrich the Student's knowledge by orienting him/her to the occupation, the work setting, and the responsibilities relating to the assignment
- To regularly evaluate/provide feedback to student on progress, projects and areas of growth
- At or near the completion of the assignment to provide an evaluation of the student's performance
- To review and approve the Student's Learning Plan and communicate with the college if areas are not going to be met.
- To supply the student with, and abide by the organization's policy against discrimination and/or harassment in the workplace
- To contact the instructor or the College of the Environment Internship Coordinator (360) 650-3646, [ed.weber@wvu.edu](mailto:ed.weber@wvu.edu) should any problems arise

Internship Site  
Supervisor  
Signature/Date

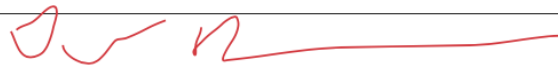
Sydne Tursky

Digitally signed by Sydne Tursky  
Date: 2022.03.01 12:49:49 -08'00'

### Section 8 – Faculty Advisor Certification

I certify that the student intern and I have reached agreement on the learning objectives and academic expectations for this experience. These objectives are challenging and enriching to the student's academic and/or career goals. I will award grades after satisfactory completion of all learning objectives/tasks/reports assigned.

Faculty Advisor's  
Signature/Date



### Section 9 – College of the Environment Internship Coordinator

Actions:

1. Review Agreement
2. Update Course Override
3. File Agreement in Student Records
4. Communicate with Employers as necessary during internship

### *Organization Description*

Learning Environment Action Discovery (LEAD) is an environmental restoration and protection organization at Western Washington University in Bellingham, WA. LEAD aims to build ecosystems that are healthy, stable, diverse, and abundant through community collaboration in the form of restoration work parties. In these work parties, student volunteers work together to remove invasive and non-native species so that ecosystems can thrive. The core focus of their invasive species removal is Himalayan Blackberry, English Ivy, English Holly, Canada Thistle, and other groundcover plants such as Buttercup and Lesser Celandine. These species outcompete native plants and harm natives by increasing disease, blocking sunlight, reducing biodiversity, etc. They are also a focus because they negatively affect plants, animals, and people by destroying habitat, reducing crop yields, creating hazards, decreasing recreational opportunities, and impacting land values. In the spring, volunteers also sometimes help plant native species to improve animal habitat and restore healthy ecosystem functioning. Work parties are held in the campus's Outback Farm and Sehome Arboretum. LEAD is a student-led organization that is currently run by two graduate students (Sydne Tursky and Ava Stone) assisted by two interns (Brie Vogler and myself).

This local place-based program is affiliated with the College of the Environment, the City of Bellingham, NSEA, and the Whatcom Land Trust. Such partnerships connect the community, public lands, and numerous organizations to advance their shared missions and increase the community's environmental awareness. Through these partnerships, LEAD holds events for the Whatcom community at large in addition to their campus-based work parties. Events are held around the county for people of all ages. While LEAD's mission is to serve the local ecosystems, it also aims to ensure healthy environments for the community. Restoration and education

through service-learning are central to this goal. Service-learning is meant to provide hands-on experiences to complement student learning in the classroom. Real world opportunities are useful for students to take what they are learning and apply it to their local environments, as well as for them to gain knowledge and skills that can benefit their schoolwork. LEAD encourages this by working with the College of the Environment professors to incentivize students to come to work parties through extra credit opportunities. LEAD welcomes and appreciates all people and encourages everyone to volunteer with them.



**Figure 1.** The LEAD team at a weekly staff meeting

### ***Duties and Responsibilities***

As the LEAD Program Peer Advisor Intern, I had numerous duties and responsibilities to help support the organization's goals. First and foremost, I assisted with managing various restoration work parties. I co-led student work parties at the Outback Farm with Ava as well as two work parties in the Bellingham area. These community events were held at Fairhaven Park



and the Sehome Arboretum. As the quarter advanced, I gained more responsibility in leading work parties. I began to lead plant removal demonstrations and manage volunteer groups on my own. Before weekly work parties, it was my job to send out emails to those who were signed up, which involved a reminder, instructions, directions, and information about what to bring/wear. I would help respond to volunteer's questions via email and send out group photos as well. I also attended weekly meetings with the LEAD staff to make decisions and prepare for events.

The work parties involved introductions, tool safety talks, plant ID education, and removal demonstrations. Following this, I supervised volunteers, helped with invasive plant removal, answered attendee questions, and engaged students in conversation. I would then manage clean up and partake in conclusions (i.e., thanking volunteers, taking group photos). In conversations with volunteers, I was able to share my passion for the environment, teach them my knowledge about the local environment, learn about the volunteers' passions and knowledge, and work on my environmental education skills. Through formal instruction and informal conversations, I was able to promote awareness of local environmental issues and the benefits of service-learning for students and the community. I spoke with volunteers about environmental justice problems, environmental issues facing the local environment, and the threats brought by invasive species.



**Figure 2.** May 18<sup>th</sup> Outback Farm student volunteer group with some of the invasive species they removed.



**Figure 3.** April 13<sup>th</sup> volunteers and me (second to the left) at the Outback Farm.

In addition to managing work parties and contacting volunteers, I volunteered at four restoration events in the community. Three were run by the City of Bellingham at local parks, where I removed invasive plants and mulched to prevent them from returning. Here, it was my duty to bring a LEAD presence to community events. I engaged with other volunteers and the staff at these work parties. My fourth volunteer event was at the Foothills Food Bank, in which I helped harvest and garden at the food bank's small farm. I also helped prepare materials for community members to participate in gardening. Aside from work parties, I assisted with a tabling event at Western's Earth Day fair, in which we recruited volunteers and spread awareness of environmental issues related to invasive species.

### ***Reflection***

My learning objectives at the beginning of the LEAD internship were to gain field work experience and use my education in Environmental Studies in a hands-on setting interacting with people, restoring the environment, and building my environmental educator skills. Additionally, I hoped to learn how to effectively recruit and manage volunteers, manage community events, identify local species, and promote awareness of environmental issues. I was able to achieve these objectives and more. The LEAD internship was the perfect way to culminate my college experience. It perfectly complemented my Environmental Studies major and Environmental Justice and Environmental Education minors. This position deepened my passion for environmental education, community outreach, and environmental stewardship and allowed me to confirm that I want to follow a career path related to these areas. I am currently applying for environmental stewardship coordinator positions at nonprofits and environmental education opportunities in schools. I would never have found or considered some of these positions if it

weren't for talking with LEAD volunteers. These jobs will allow me to continue the work I began with LEAD: help people in my community build relationships with the environment, learn about the natural world, and gain stewardship ethics. This internship provided me skills and knowledge that I will need in my career, such as event coordination, community organizing, plant ID and protection/removal knowledge, and experience interacting with people with diverse beliefs and needs. Moreover, I gained office skills and improved my knowledge of Outlook and Google docs. LEAD also enabled me to improve my leadership, communication, and teamwork skills and helped me to gain confidence in these areas. Through field work and observing other leaders at work parties, I was able to attain skills that will assist me in reaching my goals of learning how to be an effective environmental educator and outreach coordinator. Thanks to my LEAD experience, I know I want to work with people outdoors and am better equipped to do so.

Through LEAD, I was able to build stronger relationship with my local environment by directly interacting with numerous ecosystems, learning plant ID, understanding how I can care for the environment, and teaching others how to as well. In these ways, LEAD has benefitted me personally, academically, and professionally. On a personal level, it has been difficult to realize the extent of the issue of invasive species and to feel that I am not making a dent in the problem. However, this has made me more motivated to continue restoring local environments and educating people. While challenging, I've learned that this work is also extremely rewarding. LEAD further strengthened my understanding that interacting with the natural world allows people to better care for it and strengthens their sense of responsibility and stewardship. To have a positive experience at a work party—even if someone is just going for extra credit—might inspire them to continue volunteering, be more mindful, or simply spend more time in nature.

The LEAD internship built on my academic knowledge and allowed me to apply what I have been learning in my courses to real-world experiences. First, it enabled me to gain more knowledge of local environments and how they function. Additionally, I got to put my Environmental Education minor to use by becoming an environmental educator. I was able to help people build relationships with the natural world, which has become my goal as an educator. The internship provided me a hands-on learning experience in the outdoors where I got to get my hands dirty and directly interact with people. I was also able to utilize my Environmental Justice minor in that I learned to interact with people from diverse backgrounds and perspectives. Through discussions, I was able to learn about people and their experiences with the environment. Volunteering at the Outback Farm and Foothills Food Bank—where food is grown for people who don't have equitable food access—greatly benefitted my environmental justice knowledge. Helping to provide opportunities for people who might not otherwise have the time, access, or resources to learn about or interact with green spaces was also an honor for me. I also witnessed how degraded environments are often in close proximity to less-privileged areas—something I've learned in my classes but not seen in my community. I was able to recognize environmental injustices in Bellingham and the greater Whatcom area first-hand thanks to this internship. Overall, my LEAD experience complemented my academics, helped me reach my educational goals, prepared me for my career, and allowed me to put my knowledge to use in a way that positively impacted my community.

*Weekly Log*

<b>Week</b>	<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Hours</b>
Week 1: 4/3-4/9	<p>Attended our first staff meeting with Sydne, Ava, and Brie. We discussed the program and what my role would be.</p> <p>Helped move the LEAD office.</p>	4
Week 2: 4/10-4/16	<p>Attended our weekly staff meeting. Discussed plans for attending the City of Bellingham work parties.</p> <p>Sent reminder and informational email to volunteers.</p> <p>I had a medical emergency after our meeting and was not able to attend the work party that day.</p>	1
Week 3: 4/17-4/23	<p>Staff meeting where we planned our tabling event for the WWU Environmental Fair and discussed the upcoming City of Bellingham work party we would be helping to facilitate.</p> <p>Sent reminder and informational email to volunteers.</p> <p>Attended the Outback Farm work party where we removed Himalayan Blackberry and Buttercup. I learned how to do introductions, tool safety, and demos of species removal. I socialized with the volunteers and removed a lot of invasive plants. Prepped for the event by becoming familiar with the area we would be working on.</p> <p>Helped out at the WWU Earth Day fair where we did tabling for LEAD. I informed many students about the LEAD program and got many new sign ups.</p> <p>Helped facilitate the City of Bellingham's Earth Day event. I helped set up, co-led a group of volunteers, and did cleanup. After teaching the volunteers about the City of Bellingham's work, Fairhaven Park, safety, and removal demos, we removed English Ivy and Himalayan Blackberry in our section and mulched. I also networked with the other volunteers during the down time. Spent time prepping for event by learning what I needed to educate my group about.</p>	15

<p>Week 4: 4/24-4/30</p>	<p>Attended our staff meeting in which we discussed upcoming events.</p> <p>Sent reminder and informational email to volunteers.</p> <p>Lead our work party at the Outback Farm. Sydne assisted with introductions and tool safety, and I facilitated the rest of the party solo. We cleared a lot of Lesser Celandine as well as some Himalayan Blackberry. Spent time researching information about these plants to better answer volunteer questions.</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>Week 5: 5/1-5/7</p>	<p>Staff meeting.</p> <p>Sent reminder and informational email to volunteers.</p> <p>We had to cancel the work party because one of our staff was ill.</p> <p>Volunteered at the Samish Crest Racine St. Trailhead work party, led by the City of Bellingham. Removed several types of invasive species and mulched.</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>Week 6: 5/8-5/14</p>	<p>Staff meeting.</p> <p>Sent reminder and informational email to volunteers.</p> <p>Attended the Outback Farm work party. I did some research before the party about the plants, identification, their history, and how they spread to prepare for volunteers' questions. We split the group into two with some people working on Blackberry and the others on Lesser Celandine and Buttercup. I facilitated the latter group and demoed the plant removal.</p> <p>Met with Avery and Ryan from the City of Bellingham to plan an upcoming work party.</p> <p>Attended the City of Bellingham and NSEA work party at Maritime Park. Removed Canadian Thistle and mulched.</p>	<p>9</p>
<p>Week 7: 5/15-5/21</p>	<p>Staff meeting.</p> <p>Sent reminder and informational email to volunteers.</p>	<p>15</p>

	<p>Attended work party. Removed Thistle, Ivy, Blackberry, Lesser Celandine, and Buttercup. Researched plants and effective removal techniques.</p> <p>Volunteered at the Foothills Food Bank in East Whatcom. Helped garden, mulch, weed, plant, and harvest at their farm.</p> <p>Prepped, led, and cleaned up the Sehome Arboretum work party, partnered with the City of Bellingham. Spent time prepping for the event by getting familiar with the area and learning about the plants we would be removing. Led a small group doing English Ivy, Blackberry, and Thistle removal, as well as mulching.</p>	
<p>Week 8: 5/22-5/28</p>	<p>Staff meeting.</p> <p>Sent reminder and informational email to volunteers.</p> <p>Led Outback Farm work party. Removed Canada Thistle, Blackberry, English Ivy, Lesser Celandine, and Holly. Spent time exploring the area we would be working on so that I was familiar with what needed our attention.</p>	4
<p>Week 9: 5/20-6/4</p>	<p>Staff meeting.</p> <p>Sent reminder and informational email to volunteers.</p> <p>Led Outback Farm work party. Removed Buttercup and Lesser Celandine.</p>	4
	<b>Total Hours:</b>	<b>61</b>