



THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL

INTERNSHIP TRAINING MANUAL

**Department of
Health Policy and Management**

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A NOTE TO STUDENTS:

The *Internship Training Manual* explains what is **expected** of you before, during, and after your internship experience. This manual will also assist you in outlining your learning objectives and focusing your efforts to identify the best internship experience for your expected career path.

The technical details of the experience are covered in this guide. If you read this manual in its entirety, you should find that most of your internship questions will be answered. To be successful in securing an optimal placement, start early, maintain frequent contact with your faculty advisor and the career services coordinator, and keep your eyes and ears open. Treat this experience like a class and schedule time every week to work on your search. There are many resources at your disposal: faculty advisor, career services coordinator, program director, professional development director, other faculty, seniors and second-year master's students, alumni, mentors, and sometimes even parents, relatives, and family friends.

Some questions you may want to ask yourself as you begin to identify potential internship sites and make a final selection are:

- **INTEREST:** In what am I most interested? Do I want a management oriented or a policy oriented placement? Am I most interested in a specific content area (aging, managed care, mental health) or a specific functional area (financial management, law, marketing)?
- **SETTING:** What kind of organizational setting will best meet my needs: local organization (public health, community mental health), hospital, HMO, group practice, state-level organization, national organization, federal government, international organization?
- **LEARNING NEEDS:** Do I want a placement where I can practice skills I already have, or one where I can learn skills I do not have? What are these skill areas?
- **GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION:** Do I want to be in or near Chapel Hill, or in my hometown...or somewhere else?
- **STIPEND:** Do I need to have a stipend? If yes, what is the minimum I can afford to accept?

INTERNSHIP TRAINING MANUAL

INTRODUCTION

High quality professional education is a shared responsibility of professional schools and partners. This is particularly true when training requires the acquisition of operational skills through mentored experiences in settings outside the classroom.

The internship is an important component of both undergraduate and master's programs in the Department of Health Policy and Management and is required of all students. Even those students who bring considerable experience with them benefit from a well-planned and supervised internship.

A fruitful internship experience does not happen by chance, but is carefully planned. It requires active commitment to the concept of an internship on the part of students, faculty, preceptors, and internship organizations, so that effective mechanisms for collaborative efforts can be maintained.

The purpose of this manual is to provide students, faculty, preceptors, and others with a reference on policies, guidelines, and procedures pertaining to the Department's internship program.

I. POLICIES

A. Definition and Purpose. An internship is defined as a planned and supervised learning experience gained through first-hand observations and operational responsibilities in a health services or other health-related organization. While specific activities during internship vary from one placement to another, all internships should enable students:

- to participate in learning experiences that are not normally available in the classroom, but are essential for sound training in health policy and administration
- to test the validity and applicability of classroom learning to practice, thus helping students develop their own professional skills
- to develop operational skills, gain experience, and enhance professional self-confidence as healthcare managers or policy analysts
- to make a service contribution during the course of the internship that will not only be useful to the organization, but also will enhance the student's management and analytic skills and self-confidence
- to develop an agenda for subsequent learning

B. Requirement. A full-time internship experience in a department-approved health services or other health-related organization is required of all students:

MHA and MSPH Degrees. Students must submit an approved internship plan and successfully complete at least **twelve weeks (40 hrs. /wk.)** under the joint supervision of the faculty advisor and an approved preceptor. At the end of the internship, the student must submit a report and an evaluation of the internship, and give a short oral presentation to the incoming students, on an internship panel.

MPH Degree. Students must submit an approved internship plan and successfully complete at least **six weeks (40 hrs. /wk.)** under the joint supervision of the faculty advisor and an approved preceptor. At the end of the internship, the student must submit a report and an evaluation of the internship.

C. Design and Schedule. An internship is an integral part of a student's total program of study. Completing twelve weeks of a supervised block internship during the summer months typically fulfills this major requirement.

In the exceptional case, a situation may arise where the student's learning objectives are best met in a "concurrent" internship during the academic semesters. This option is not intended as a convenience for those who do not wish to spend the summer in an internship, but must be a response to a compelling reason that makes the concurrent placement a better choice. The option is designed on an individual basis by the faculty advisor and the student, and must be presented to, and approved by, the appropriate program director, and the department chair or associate chair; documentation of the proposal and the approval will be kept in the student's official file. **The design must include a minimum of 480 hours of work in the field (i.e., the equivalent of 40 hours/week for 12 weeks) for MSPH and MHA students, or 240 hours in the field (i.e., the equivalent of 40 hours/week for 6 weeks) for MPH students.** All policies and procedures pertaining to the summer internship, except those pertaining to schedule, apply

equally to concurrent internship. If concurrent internship is approved, the student registers for the internship (HPM 793) in the appropriate semesters.

A well-planned beneficial internship experience requires participation in a series of activities. These activities begin early in the first year of study, continue during the summer and the fall of the second year, and include orientation, site identification and selection, planning, placement, and evaluation. The schedule for typical activities for a well-planned summer internship includes the following:

First Year Master's/ MPH: Fall Semester. The first mandatory internship orientation to the purposes, policies, and procedures of an internship takes place during the student's first semester (usually in October). Students are required to attend the internship orientation and internship panel, to hold discussions with faculty and with students who have completed internships, to review information in this manual and the department's internship files. Students should rely primarily on their faculty advisors and the career services coordinator for becoming acquainted with the internship program. However, the academic program director, the professional development director, and other HPM faculty can provide helpful guidance in specific areas.

The Career Services Office (CSO) internship files, located in the Career Services Resource Area and on the CSO Sakai site, contain descriptive material about past and potential placements, student activity reports, project reports, and other pertinent materials. These files contain invaluable information that provides insights into placements at specific locations and gives the student a point of contact inside a specific organization of interest.

After attending the internship orientation and the internship panel, the student should schedule an appointment with his/her faculty advisor. Faculty advisor and student interaction should be directed toward achieving the following:

- identifying the student's learning objectives based on an assessment of abilities, previous experience, and career interests
- identifying available placement opportunities and selecting the one that is most suitable and feasible for the student

The career services coordinator is available to help make exploratory contacts at potential internship sites.

First Year Master's/MPH: Spring Semester. Early in the spring semester (in January), the career services coordinator will conduct a second mandatory internship orientation session. Specific internship questions will be addressed and a general assessment of the class's progress in finding an internship will be discussed.

During the spring semester, students should work with their faculty advisors to:

- make a final decision on the site for internship placement
- prepare a written internship plan, with appropriate consultation with the field preceptor
- obtain approval of the internship plan by the field preceptor, faculty advisor, and academic program director, with plan filed in the CSO no later than **May 15**
- distribute copies of the final signed internship plan to preceptor and advisor

First Year Master's /MPH: Summer. After reporting to the internship organization on the arranged date, the student will carry out appropriate training activities on a full-time (40 hours/week) basis for the specified length of time, as indicated in the individual internship plan.

Students may not take courses other than internship for credit during the block internship period unless the faculty advisor approves studies and arrangements are made with the preceptor.

Students should initiate a substantive contact with their advisor and should arrange at least one contact between their academic advisor and preceptor. These contacts may be made via phone, email, or in person and should be made sometime between the second and third week of the internship. It is the student's responsibility to facilitate these contacts.

Second Year Master's: Fall Semester. Returning students will need to complete the following in order to meet their internship requirement:

- **Twelve-Week Final Report** (six-week report for MPH students) is to be submitted to the Career Services Office (with a copy to preceptor) no later than **September 30**. (MPH students will have a different summer due date, set by the CSO).
- **Student Evaluation Form** will be emailed to each student at the end of his/her summer internship. This evaluation should be completed by the student and submitted to the Career Services Office attached to the final report on **September 30**.
- Participation in the **Internship Fair**, which will be held early in the fall semester of the second year (MHA and MSPH students only). **All returning masters' students are required to attend and to make a brief presentation on their summer experience.**

D. Stipend. The department recognizes the need for adequate financial support for students during internship and encourages them to seek stipends from internship organizations. However, internship placement decisions should be made principally on the quality of the experience and secondarily on the availability of stipends. When queried by potential placement sites, we encourage them to pay a stipend.

E. Administration. Internships involves active collaboration among the student, faculty advisor, field preceptor, program director, professional development director, and career services coordinator. These responsibilities are as follows:

1. Role of students. Students are the primary beneficiaries of an internship and their role must be as *active* as those of the academic program directors, faculty advisor, and preceptors. Students are expected to:

- develop an understanding of the department's philosophy, policies, standards, and procedures with regard to an internship
- gain a proper appreciation of the potential of various field settings and organizations for meeting individual learning goals through field visits, reading of field reports of students in previous years, and discussions with second-year students, the career services coordinator, and faculty

- work actively with the faculty advisor to select an area of interest to develop during the internship, select the internship placement site, and develop an appropriate internship plan (and supplements, when indicated)
- maintain active communication with the faculty advisor for guidance and monitoring of internship activities
- provide all appropriate documents to the Career Services Office in a timely manner
- conduct themselves as responsible and mature professionals during the internship, complying with the organization's code of conduct, and meeting all obligations and responsibilities according to schedule

2. Role of preceptors. Preceptors are key participants in an internship. The quality of their commitment, interest, and efforts has tremendous influence on the outcome of an internship.

Preceptorship of an internship implies a dual set of responsibilities. First, preceptors are similar to clinical or laboratory instructors, ensuring a meaningful learning experience for the student with the commitment, zeal, and enthusiasm of a good teacher. The preceptor is also a responsible official in the organization who ensures that students fully comply with its policies and standards. Preceptors should:

- develop an understanding of the department's philosophy, policies, standards, and procedures pertaining to an internship
- participate in the preparation of the student's internship plan
- take a proactive posture in all matters pertaining to an internship, including providing the Career Services Office with up-to-date information on their organization for inclusion in the internship resource files and facilitating possible long-term internship arrangements with the department
- make the student feel welcome to the organization, facilitate the student's orientation, assign appropriate tasks, and provide suitable and regular time for supervisory discussion with the student
- certify completion of internship by the student and return an evaluation of the student's performance, as well as the department's internship process, to the Career Services Office

Willing and interested preceptors may serve as future liaisons between the department and their organization.

3. Role of faculty advisors. Faculty advisors are responsible for participating in the planning and supervision of the internship of their advisees. Advisors should:

- help each advisee to identify learning objectives that are best met through an internship
- increase their knowledge of internship opportunities available for students and subsequently help each advisee to gain a proper appreciation of learning opportunities available in different settings
- guide the student's preparation of the internship plan, in consultation with the preceptor and the Career Services Office

- refer students, when appropriate, to other members of the faculty for advice
- recommend new preceptors to the Career Services Office
- respond in a timely manner to any issues that need faculty advisor attention
- contact the program director and the CSO with particular problems that may arise
- contact their advisees' preceptors at least once during the summer to check in with them and thank them for their participation

4. Role of academic program directors. The academic program directors are responsible for reviewing and approving completed internship plans and assigning final internship grades in conjunction with the professional development director. They may also:

- monitor internship activities to ensure high standards
- intervene when appropriate in situations that may arise during the placement

5. Role of professional development director. The professional development director is responsible for guidance in the general oversight of the internship program, including preceptor development and overall quality of the internship experience. In this role, the director will:

- arrange for appropriate activities for faculty, students, and preceptors to ensure high-quality internships, possibly to include a professional development conference
- undertake appropriate developmental activities to expand opportunities for high-quality internship placements
- assure the maintenance of an appropriate database of past internship experiences as a resource for students in the department

6. Role of career services coordinator. The career services coordinator is responsible for facilitating and coordinating internship activities and for serving as a resource to the academic program directors, faculty advisors, students, preceptors, and professional development director. To this end, the career services coordinator will:

- serve as a general resource and consultant to the students and to the faculty in all matters of an internship, with special attention to organizations in Area Health Education Center (AHEC) areas
- assist with logistics of the internship placement process
- make initial contacts at new organizations for students
- make periodic reports to the department associate chair, program directors, and professional development director on all matters related to internship activities in the department
- collect and organize the student's written work for the internship and deliver it to the program directors and the professional development director for grading

II. GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

A. Identification of an Internship Site and Preceptor. Each faculty advisor works with his/her advisee and the CSO to ensure suitable internship placements. The Career Services Office maintains extensive descriptive information on potential internship placements, along with many other reference materials.

1. An organization chosen for an internship should:

- be an established organization providing one or more health or health-related services
- consider participation in an internship a professional obligation
- have one or more ongoing programs that could provide the student with needed learning opportunities
- have an opportunity for the student to gain important operational experience
- have competent staff who are interested in ensuring that the student learns as much as possible while in the organization
- provide necessary materials support to the student, such as a desk, supplies, travel, secretarial support, and the like, in order to facilitate the completion of any tasks the student is assigned as part of an internship

2. A professional chosen as a field preceptor should:

- hold a responsible position within the organization
- recognize the preceptor's role as an opportunity to teach
- be professionally qualified to meet the needs of the student
- participate in the development of the internship plan
- have the ability to assign duties, provide necessary resources to the student, and facilitate communication with others as appropriate
- be able to devote sufficient time to internship activities, including planning, supervision, and evaluation
- be amenable to working and interacting with the faculty advisor

A student, who wishes to do an internship in an organization in which she/he is currently working, or has previously worked, must:

1. hold a different position than that currently/previoursly held and/or be assigned different tasks than those currently/previoursly assigned; **and**
2. report to a different supervisor than currently/previoursly responsible.

In unusual circumstances, and on an exception basis, it may be appropriate for the student's internship to comprise a major research project and for a faculty member to serve as the student's preceptor. *In such*

cases, the director of the student's degree program and the department chair or associate chair **must** review and approve the placement.

B. Registration. A student must be registered while serving an internship. Registration and billing for internship is done in accordance with UNC Chapel Hill's Summer School schedule. Registration for internship credit is required for each degree program as follows:

MSPH and MHA Students: Register for two credits for **HPM 793** for the fall semester. In addition to paying tuition, **students will also pay a one-time Field Training internship fee of \$450.**

MPH Students: Register in March for **one** credits for **HPM 704** (Summer Session I), and pay the **internship fee.** In addition to paying tuition, **students will also pay the one-time Field Training internship fee of \$450.**

C. Fee. The Field Training internship fee, approved by the university, contributes to the support of the Career Services Office and to faculty and student activities pertaining to internships, professional development, and job placement.

The internship fee is \$450 for graduate students. The total cost for the internship (tuition plus internship fee) depends on whether the student is an in state or out-of-state student for tuition purposes, is an undergraduate or master's student, and the number of credit hours to be earned. Students will also be required to pay any additional fees the University sets.

D. Written Materials. Each student, faculty advisor, and preceptor is required to prepare appropriate documentation pertaining to various phases of internship and to file these with the Career Services Office. These documents are as follows:

- **Internship Plan.** A detailed internship plan must be submitted to the Career Services Office prior to starting the internship. This plan is an agreement among the student, preceptor, and the department that ensures that each party agrees to all objectives of the internship. All involved parties must sign the plan before an internship can start (preceptor, student, faculty advisor, and program director). Students should also submit a copy of their internship plan to **both** their field preceptor and their academic advisor. The deadline for submission is **May 15.**
- **Internship Report.** The final internship report should be 3-4 pages in length. It should include a brief statement of activities performed by the student and should address whether all of the internship plan learning objectives were completed and if not, why not. Identification of any issues that need the faculty advisor's attention should also be included. Copies of project reports and/or other examples of the student's internship work should be included if available and non-confidential. The deadline for submission is no later than **September 30.** MPH students will have an earlier deadline set by the CSO and communicated to them via email.
- **Student's Evaluation of Internship.** All students will be sent a link to the student evaluation form by email. This evaluation helps the department evaluate the internship process and make changes if necessary. This evaluation is due no later than **September 30.**
- **Preceptor's Evaluation.** Preceptors will receive an evaluation form from the Career Services Office at the culmination (or shortly before) of the internship period. Preceptors are asked to complete the evaluation of the student and the internship process and return it to the CSO. This evaluation will be strongly considered when assigning the student's permanent internship grade. **Due by August 30.**

E. Grade. The professional development director and the respective program directors assign grades for the block field experience after the completion of the training period. Internship is a formal degree requirement; therefore, performance is evaluated with the same rigor as for classroom activities. In determining the grade for each course, the student's participation in the following areas is taken into account:

- internship orientation
- determining learning needs
- placement arrangements
- preparation and submission of internship plan
- preparation of internship reports, according to deadlines
- performance during internship
- follow-up activities

F. Grading Procedures. For clarity and to avoid misunderstandings, the following criteria for grading have been established:

1. Student has met with faculty advisor during the fall semester to discuss internship. *Failure to meet this criterion results in a 1/3-point reduction (e.g., from A to A- or H to H-).*
2. Signed internship plan was submitted to the CSO by **May 15**; this deadline can be extended at the discretion of the program director for circumstances beyond a student's control. *Failure to meet this criterion results in a 1/3-point reduction (e.g., from A to A- or H to H-). If the internship plan is more than two weeks late, a second 1/3-point will be deducted (e.g., from A- to B+ or H- to P+).*
3. One advisor/preceptor contact initiated by the student and completed between the second and third week of the internship. *Failure to meet this criterion results in a 1/3-point reduction (e.g., from A to A- or H to H-).*
4. Completed internship report and student evaluation submitted to the CSO by **September 30** (MPH students have a different date established by the CSO). *Failure to meet this criterion results in a 1/3-point reduction (e.g., from A to A- or H to H-).*
5. Preceptor's evaluation of the student. Five-point performance scales are used in the evaluation. Based on past experience, the following metric is used:
 - a. Average score on quantitative scales greater than or equal to 4 = full credit
 - b. Average score on quantitative scales greater than or equal to 3 and less than 4 = one-third grade deducted
 - c. Average score on quantitative scales greater than or equal to 2 and less than 3 = two-thirds grade deducted
 - d. Average score on quantitative scales less than 2 = 1 full grade deducted.

We often find rating bias in preceptor evaluations. It is recognized that extraordinary circumstances outside the student's control may sometimes account for poor ratings on an internship evaluation.

Where average scores fall in the "C," "D," or "F" category, discussion with the preceptor and the student by the program director, faculty advisor, and/or the professional development director is recommended to resolve issues related to student performance.

6. Presentation of the internship experience during an Internship Fair.

This fair will be structured and conducted by the director of residential programs and the professional development director. All students will be required to participate in this fair where they will be asked to provide a brief summary in a slide deck of their experience and respond to questions. Failure to participate will result in a one-third point deduction from the internship grade. This requirement is intended to put closure on the internship experience, as well as to allow first-year students to benefit from the experiences of second-year students.

7. An internship in a health agency is an important and required component of an undergraduate's degree program here in the Department of Health Policy and Management. A fruitful internship experience does not happen by chance, but is carefully planned.

In assessing these activities and determining a grade, the professional development director, along with the appropriate academic director, will consider the formal evaluation of the student's performance by the preceptor, the student's periodic reports, and whether deadlines were met.

At the discretion of the program director, a student who misses multiple criteria and/or deadlines as indicated in this manual may receive a grade of L/D or F for the internship and will be considered to have not completed their internship requirement.

INTERNSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

	Student	Preceptor	Faculty Advisor	Program Director	Professional Development Director	Career Services Coordinator
<p><u>PRIOR TO FIELD PLACEMENT</u></p> <p>Determine learning objectives and secure field placement <i>Nov.-Mar.</i></p> <p>Field training plan must be submitted to CSO <i>May 15</i> (Preceptor, Student, Faculty Advisor, and Academic Program Director must sign field training plans)</p> <p>Copies should be given to both preceptor and advisor</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>Student meets with faculty advisor and CSO</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>Prepares under guidance and direction of advisor and preceptor</p> <p>One Copy of the signed plan must be submitted to the career services coordinator</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p>Meets with student to explain agency's mission and operations</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p>Provides guidance and input concerning activities</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p>Advises student and contacts preceptors in new agencies</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p>Directs preparation; provides guidance and input concerning learning objectives and activities</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p>Reviews plans for completeness and detail and approves</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p>Provides guidance, referrals, as requested</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p>Available as a resource consultant</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p>Collects and maintains all field training plans; monitors quality</p>
<p><u>DURING FIELD PLACEMENT</u></p> <p>Telephone, email, or in-person contact 2-3 weeks into field training</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>Mandatory facilitation of contact: Student should initiate contact with advisor as well as facilitate contact between advisor and preceptor</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p>Communicates with advisor</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p>Speaks with student and communicates with preceptor. Is available for consultation with student and/or preceptor during the internship.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p>Participates as needed</p>

1 = Primary Involvement

2 = Support

3 = Monitoring

	Student	Preceptor	Faculty Advisor	Program Director	Professional Development Director	Career Services Coordinator
<p><u>AFTER FIELD PLACEMENT</u></p> <p>12-Week field training report due <i>September 30</i> to Career Services Office (CSO).</p> <p><i>**MPH students will submit a 6-week field training report with a separate due date established by the CSO</i></p> <p>Evaluation from student due <i>September 30</i> attached to the field training report</p> <p>Evaluation and completion statement from Preceptor due no later than <i>August 30</i></p> <p>Internship Fair (TBD)</p> <p>Grade assignment due from Program Director/Advisors' (See Section III. F.)</p>	<p>1 Prepares report and reviews with preceptor</p> <p>1 Completes and submits to Career Services Office</p> <p>1 Mandatory participation</p>	<p>2-3 Receives final copy of report from student</p> <p>1 Submits to the Career Services Office</p>	<p>3 May review</p> <p>3 May review</p> <p>3 May review</p> <p>3 May provide input, as desired and/or requested</p>	<p>2 Reviews as part of student evaluation for grade</p> <p>3 Reviews student comments</p> <p>2 Reviews as part of evaluation of student for grade</p> <p>1</p> <p>1 Assigns grade, in conjunction with professional development director, and submits to CSO</p>	<p>2 Reviews as part of student evaluation for grade</p> <p>3 Reviews student comments</p> <p>2 Reviews as part of evaluation of student for grade</p> <p>1</p> <p>1 Assigns grade, in conjunction with program director, and submits to CSO</p>	<p>3 Provides copy to program director; monitors and maintains reports</p> <p>2 Collects, distributes to program directors, and maintains forms</p> <p>2 Collects, distributes to program directors, and maintains forms</p> <p>2 Plans and facilitates panel Records student participation</p> <p>2 Submits grade to registrar</p>

1 = Primary Involvement

2 = Support

3 = Monitoring