**Guidelines for the Supervised Field Experience**

**Introduction**

A supervised field experience is a requirement for MPH and MHA students in the Department of Health Policy and Management. The supervised field experience provides an opportunity for the student to gain valuable knowledge and experience that would not normally be available through other courses in the College and Department. The field experience will occur outside the College, in health services organizations, public programs, insurance companies, or international health agencies.

**Objectives of the Supervised Field Experience**

The specific objectives of the supervised field experience are:

1. To provide the student with the opportunity to utilize knowledge and practice new skills learned in the MPH and MHA courses and work outside of class;
2. To expose the student to a broader range of professional activities than the student has experienced to date.
3. To contribute to the student's professional education through assignments that are useful to the field organization and that refine the student's professional skills.
4. To help the student identify his or her own professional strengths and weaknesses and areas of knowledge for further study.

**Administrative Guidelines for the Supervised Field Experience**

http://health.usf.edu/publichealth/academicaffairs/fe/

The number of credit hours (1-12) needed in the field experience is determined by the student's advisor after carefully reviewing the student's experience. For each semester credit hour the student is expected to spend a minimum of 3 hours in field experience per week during the semester in which the student is enrolled for the credit hours. The normal number of hours for enrollment for students with health care experience of one to two years of supervisory or management experience in health care is 6 credit hours. Students with little or no experience in health care will normally enroll for 9 or 12 hours. Students with significant management experience (up to 3 years) will enroll for 1 to 3 hours.

An *Application for Field Experience* is to be submitted to the Office of Academics by the end of the first week of the semester in which the field experience is to occur. The field experience should occur after the student has completed 30 credit hours of the MPH program, including all College core courses.

An agreement between the College and the agency must be on file with the advisor and the Office of Academics within two weeks of the beginning of the semester during which the field experience takes place. The agreement should specify to the extent possible the expectations for the student's participation (e.g., special work conditions, hours of work, products, activities,
travel).

For students doing a Field placement in which a formal affiliation agreement between the College and the field agency is necessary, the affiliation agreement must be on file with the advisor and the Office of Academics within two weeks of the beginning of the semester during which the field experience takes place.

Responsibilities of Student, Faculty Advisor, and Preceptor

Supervision of the student during the field experience is a joint responsibility of the agency in which the field experience is taking place and the student's advisor or the advisor's designee.

A. Responsibilities of the Student

1. Carefully assess her or his academic preparation, experience, and professional development to identify areas to address in the field experience.
2. Assume lead responsibility for identifying suitable field experience sites and preceptors.
3. Initiate the activities necessary for the completion of the Application for Field Experience, the agreement between the College and the field agency, and the affiliation agreement if necessary.
4. Submit a proposal for the field experience to the advisor before beginning the supervised field experience. The proposal should include the goals, objectives, and activities of the field experience and the responsibilities of the agency. The proposal must be developed jointly by the student, the advisor, and the field agency preceptor.
5. Participate fully in the field opportunity structured for him or her, performing activities necessary to complete the field experience as defined in the proposal and agreements.
6. Follow the rules, procedures, and customs of the field organization.
7. Maintain regular communication with the advisor.
8. Provide appropriate feedback to the preceptor, advisor, and College officials (e.g., department chair, or College coordinator).
9. Submit a report on the field experience to the preceptor and advisor, following guidelines provided by the advisor.

B. Responsibilities of Faculty Advisor

1. Aid the student in developing goals and outlining the educational and experiential objectives of the field experience.
2. Assist the student in identifying suitable field sites and preceptors.
3. Review and approve the prospective site and preceptor and the written proposal for the field experience.
4. Respond to requests from the preceptor for information about the placement experience and the student.
5. Respond to requests from the preceptor or student for assistance in facilitating the field experience.
6. Consult as necessary with the College coordinator of field experiences to address issues relating to the field experience.
7. Send a letter to the preceptor outlining the expectations of the field experience. Discuss the student's progress with the preceptor at least once during the field experience, either during a site visit or by telephone.
8. Review the preceptor's evaluation of the student's work during the field experience.
9. Evaluate the student's field experience report.

C. Responsibilities of the Department and the College

1. Establish affiliation agreement with the field organization.
2. Provide incentives to encourage the field organization to continue to participate in the field experience program.
3. Arrange meetings of all preceptors to orient them to the program, gather recommendations for its improvement, and recognize them for their contributions.
4. Resolve issues that may arise, such as liability insurance for students.

D. Responsibilities of the Preceptor

1. Meet with student seeking placement with the agency, assist in developing field experience proposal, and approve the proposal.
2. Provide a current resume or curriculum vitae to the faculty advisor of the student.
3. Provide the student with a formal orientation to the agency.
4. Provide direct supervision of the student and establish an ongoing regular reporting relationship with the student during the field experience.
5. Provide resources necessary to successful field experience, including office space, desk, supplies, and the opportunity to observe major agency functions.
6. Be accessible to resolve issues or problems that may arise.
7. Respond to the faculty advisor's requests for information regarding the student's performance and the status of the field experience.
8. Provide to the advisor a written evaluation of the student's performance at the end of the field experience. The faculty advisor may choose for the evaluation to be presented in the form of a letter or by use of a standardized form provided by the College.

Format For Proposals and Reports for Field Experience, Special Project, and Internship

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1.0 Introduction
   1.1 Statement of the Management Problem
   1.2 Objectives of the Internship
   1.3 Review of Relevant Literature

2.0 Methods
   2.1 Methods for Achieving Each Objective
   2.2 Timetable for the Management Study

3.0 Results
   *(This section should be organized according to the objectives stated in section 1.2, above.)*

4.0 Summary and Conclusions
   4.1 Executive Summary of the Results
      *(This may be placed at the beginning of the Internship Report.)*
   4.2 Conclusions

APPENDICES

NOTE: The Internship Proposal will include sections 1.0-2.0 (*plus expected Results*), and the Internship Report will include sections 1.0-4.0.