

Internship Field Experience
Guidelines

Bachelor of Science
in
Rehabilitation & Disability Studies

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Field experiences for students are obtained by working with numerous cooperating rehabilitation agencies/programs. These guidelines are flexible in nature, recognizing that each situation will vary, depending upon the unique nature of the person doing his or her internship, the rehabilitation counselor (or other professional staff member) responsible for immediate supervision, and the unique nature of the client population served by the particular program/agency where the field experience is being obtained.

OBJECTIVES

One of the main objectives of the rehabilitation internship is to provide practical application of the undergraduate training experience. Such a program brings together in a realistic setting the diverse kinds of client behavior, and problems, with which a rehabilitation specialist is concerned. It helps the student acquire proficiency and gain confidence in applying theoretical knowledge and integrating various helping skills, all under the supervision of an experienced and qualified rehabilitation supervisor. It also helps the student evaluate and test philosophies and attitudes within the context in which they must ultimately be made effective, at the same time providing the student with a means of assessing one's strengths and weaknesses in relation to undergraduate work and a chosen area of work.

Other objectives for the student might be:

1. To experience the realities of the rehabilitation worker-client relationship and the part of that self-understanding plays in this relationship, and to aid the student in acquiring the ability to accept individual differences in consumers.
2. To understand the specific organizational structure, protocol, relationship, processes, and working conditions of the field-site setting.
3. To obtain an awareness of the relationships among community organizations in meeting the needs of applicants and consumers.
4. To work cooperatively with one's supervisor, fellow workers, and cooperating rehabilitation personnel to gain experience in working as a member of a rehabilitation team.
5. To demonstrate high standards of professional ethics to gain experience with actual interpersonal relationships which involve ethical decisions and practice in evaluating one's own motives.

6. To provide an opportunity to develop confidence in one's ability to apply professional preparation in situations which shelter the individual from full responsibility yet provide opportunities for maximum professional growth.
7. To try out approaches and techniques under conditions which would not be injurious to the consumers.

Approval of an internship experience is dependent on (1) the purpose and goals of the rehabilitation setting, (2) the scope of services to be provided, and (3) the population to be served. These three factors are all reviewed in the context of the following questions:

1. Is the setting generally considered an agency or program that provides services to individuals with disabilities or persons with addiction?
2. Is the phrase "rehabilitation services, disability, substance abuse services, or rehabilitation counseling" used in the printed materials explaining the services available?
3. What are the rehabilitation and addiction services to be provided and what is the goal or objective of each service?
4. Who is served? i.e. What are the physical, mental disabilities, or co-occurring disabilities of the individuals that are typically served?
5. Will the intern be working with people or with data or written materials?
6. How do the impairments of the individuals to be served affect their ability to work?
7. Will the services assist individuals with disabilities in their efforts to become independent (socially integrated and/or employed)?

The internship is designed to allow the student the opportunity to pull together all of the on-campus course work. It provides the opportunity for supervised application of theory to practice in a rehabilitation setting under direct supervision of qualified persons in the agency and the university faculty. The internship is the last requirement to complete the undergraduate degree in Rehabilitation & Disability Studies. It is taken during the last semester of the senior year and is usually 15 weeks in length. The student typically receives six hours of academic credit for the internship.

The intern is expected to serve a minimum of 600 clock hours for the six hours of undergraduate credit. The intern will work during the agency's regular working hours, 40 hours per week for 15 weeks. In order to understand the scope of

services and the problems of service delivery, students are expected to meet the requirements by working full-time in only one field setting.

Frequent visits and conferences should reduce the need for written communication; however, a final typewritten summary report is required at the completion of the internship experience. The report should include personal impressions, reactions, and examples of meaningful experiences, suggestions for improving the internship and other comments the intern feels appropriate. The report will not be graded, as such, but it should present and reflect a concise picture of the total internship experience.

RELATIONSHIP OF STUDENT TO THE AGENCY

In order to reach desirable goals in the internship, it is essential that both agency and student fully understand the responsibilities of each in relation to the activity. Careful preliminary discussion and planning between the University supervisor and the agency supervisor is necessary as a preliminary to the development of the best possible work climate in which the student will eventually be placed. The climate of the internship is best set when the agency accepts the student as a professional colleague, even though it is understood that the student is neither expected nor required to carry the same responsibilities as full-time staff members.

Both the agency and the student must understand that the internship program is designed to contribute to the training of the students. This, of course, should not preclude the possibility of the agency and the student negotiating a contract for employment if this is the desire of both.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The student must assume responsibilities such as regularity of attendance, conformity to agency rules, regulations, and standards, confidentiality of information, and follow-through with whatever assignments are given to the student by the agency supervisor.

Each prospective intern should discuss and arrange the field experience with the faculty internship instructor at least one month prior to the beginning date of the internship. Arrangements are not finalized until the student has visited and interviewed with the rehabilitation agency or setting supervisor. This interview is arranged by the student with the faculty internship instructor being informed of all interviews. Students should be prepared to explain their reasons for desiring to serve their internships in the particular rehabilitation setting and to provide the setting supervisor with a copy of the Internship Guidelines. After the rehabilitation agency supervisor has consulted with the faculty internship instructor, the student should submit the Internship Field Experience Proposal Form to the faculty internship instructor. After review, the proposed field experience will be confirmed in writing.

PHASES OF TRAINING

It is suggested that the supervised internship be divided into three phases; (a) Orientation; (b) Observation; and (c) Participation. It is hoped that the time devoted to participation be relatively longer than that devoted to orientation and observation. The participation phase is dependent upon the readiness of the student.

a. Orientation

1. Physical Facilities – Tour of Facility
2. Agency Functions and Services
3. Agency Routines and Office Regulations
4. Staff (Introduction to)
5. Consumers

b. Observation

Most students have not had direct full-time rehabilitation experience. In order for the student to feel secure in the new setting, it may be desirable to provide a period of observation prior to direct involvement with consumers. Observation of the following may be necessary:

1. interviewing
2. procedures involved in diagnostic work-up
3. case or team conferences
4. staff meetings
5. medical and psychiatric consultation
6. case recording
7. various vocational and evaluation techniques
8. other duties as typically performed in the agency

c. Participation

Students should be permitted to engage in as many activities as individual readiness and time available will allow. The student should progress to a point near the end of his internship where he will be able to complete a few less-complicated cases or at least carry them far enough to have a sense of accomplishment in seeing the progress of the individual as they move toward appropriate goals. Cases of increasing complexity can be assigned, including a variety of problems and requiring services outside the agency, as student growth and capacity increase. Students should have opportunity to become involved, test their impressions, and to develop an awareness of their own use of relationship skills from initial interview to final contact with the consumer.

1. With consumers:
 - (a) screening interview, intake interviews, vocational evaluation, planning interviews, follow-up on training or placement
2. With facilitating personnel and agencies:
 - (a) individual consultation with other professional personnel, intra- or inter-agency, concerning an assigned case; social worker, psychiatrist, physician, therapists, teacher, vocational evaluator, employment service, and other community resource personnel, and employers.
 - (b) Intra-agency team conference with the above personnel.
 - (c) Interagency department, sheltered workshops, training agencies, state employment services, private health organizations, and family-service agencies.

SUPERVISION

The role of supervision in internship is a difficult one and very often is the decisive factor in the success or failure of a student's experience. It involves at least four major dimensions: planning, assignment, observation, and evaluation. The goal of supervision, and of the entire internship, is helping and assisting the student to develop a professional attitude and approach to rehabilitation work. Supervision is basically a teaching situation. In this relationship the agency supervisor shares with the student the knowledge and skill as gained through years of practical experience in the field. Through the period of supervisory relationships, the agency and the faculty supervisor need to be aware of the capacity and potentialities of the student in order that they may be able to help the student develop the utmost ability.

In the planning phase of supervision, the supervisor should meet with the university faculty and discuss the opportunities for student assignment within the agency and how the student's interests and needs can best be met by the opportunities the agency will provide. A planning session should also involve some discussion of the curriculum which the agency will provide and discussion of the respective roles of the university and the agency.

A. AGENCY SUPERVISOR

The selection of the supervisor should involve the following criteria:

1. Experience and training have given the supervisor identification with rehabilitation, which will enable them to give the student a proper orientation to the field of rehabilitation.
2. The supervisor has sufficient experience as a rehabilitation professional in the community to be able to help the student balance professional aspirations with the limitations of the agency/facility.
3. Supervisory conferences should occupy an integral part of the

supervisor's assigned duties rather than be subordinate to other administrative activities.

B. FACULTY SUPERVISOR

A member of the university faculty is assigned to work with the agency supervisor. This faculty member has the following assignments:

1. Provide the agency any appropriate information on the student, level of competency or other aspects which the agency should consider carefully throughout the period of the internship.
2. The faculty supervisor is responsible for developing and maintaining the field instruction program.
3. The faculty supervisor should visit the field work facility for conference with the student supervisor at stated intervals, and whenever specific problems arise. The purpose of these conferences should include:
 - (a) Giving support and assurance to the student that the university is continuing an interest in the program and studies.
 - (b) Assisting the student to integrate academic knowledge and theory with the field experience.
 - (c) Giving an opportunity to the faculty supervisor to maintain an on-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the student's academic work in terms of the ability to relate it to current experiences.
 - (d) Revealing information which might lead to a necessary modification of the internship program whenever appropriate.

STUDENT EVALUATION

One of the most effective methods of communicating the results of the internship to the on-site supervisor and the university supervisor is through reports by the intern. It is essential that the intern keep a journal of activities and impressions. These written records will be submitted to the faculty supervisor every two weeks for review. The University supervisor shall evaluate the reports to see how well the field experience is meeting the intern's needs and the internship objectives.

The university's policies require that students be assigned a grade at the conclusion of each unit of supervised field experience. The assignment of the final grade is the responsibility of the university supervisor. The evaluation from the on-site supervisor will be sought to assist in the grade determination.

The emphasis is on the student's individual growth toward professional maturity. Along with this, the student's readiness to enter the profession, needs for further training including course work and/or supervised field experience will be evaluated. In general, interns will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- 10% 1. completion of goals and submission of proposal information
- 30% 2. daily log and final summary report
- 25% 3. on-site supervisor assessment (attitude, counseling skills, ethics, objectivity, case-recording)
- 10% 4. intern self-evaluation
- 25% 5. university supervisor assessment