Introduction to Supervising Human Services Students in Field Studies

For future and current supervisors and preceptors

Department of Health and Community Studies, Woodring College of Education
Welcome, We’re Glad You’re Here!
We Value You!

Our University Instructors want to develop authentic relationships with supervisors at field placement sites.

It is important for us to understand your agency goals, services and needs and how our students can learn by serving your agency in meaningful ways.

We value the investment supervisors make in our students’ education and in the future of the human services field.

Thank you in advance for consideration of partnering with WWU and our students as a placement site supervisor.
The Department of Health and Community Studies uses a Scholar-Practitioner Model, to engage students in hands-on learning and ensure application of and critical reflection on what is taught in the Human Services major.

Quality placements allow students to learn and apply theory, knowledge, skill and dispositions to increasingly sophisticated tasks.

Field Studies prepares our graduates to be generalist human services practitioners.
We have three program sites:

- Bellingham at Western Washington University’s (WWU) main campus
- Everett at Everett University Center, Everett Community College
- Distance Learning, an online site providing Human Services education to students across the state

Students enrolled at WWU in all three programs participate in field studies.
Typically, each student:

Identifies community-based human services populations and agencies that meet their interest in the field.

Schedules and conducts informational interviews, job shadows or volunteer engagement at agencies of interest.

Applies and follows agency protocol for selection as an intern.

Negotiates a field placement at one agency.

Develops a learning contract with the Placement Supervisor.

Completes 2 quarters (120 hours each quarter) of supervised field service.
About Being a Supervisor

Supervisors:

• Identify as human services professionals and, at minimum, hold a bachelor’s level academic degree which they apply to the broad field of human services. One year of experience supervising others is preferred.

• Agree to act in the role of mentor or educator-in-the-field; providing orientation, training, support, modeling and supervision to the learning student within the context of the placement setting.

• Agree to abide by and help students apply the NOHS Ethical standards within each work setting/organization. The NOHS ethical standards can be reviewed at: http://www.nationalhumanservices.org/ethical-standards-for-hs-professionals
About Being a Supervisor

Supervisors:

• **Set aside a time each week to discuss learning** in addition to delegation of and feedback on duties.

• **Meet once with University faculty** each quarter during the student facilitated field visit.

• **Evaluate the student** at the end of the term.

A full list of roles and responsibilities for students, instructors, supervisors, precepts and organizations is in our Field Study Manual. See link on final slide.
Length of Service at Your Site

Students are generally recommended to serve at two different field placement sites over the duration of two terms of field study. It is possible for a student to serve at the same field placement for multiple quarters with approval from the university instructor and other requirements (see "Number and Types of Placements" in the Field Studies Manual).

Generally, a student chooses to serve in your placement site for one or two academic terms (quarters). A third and fourth quarter is an option for students who need or want elective credits.

At Western Washington University—quarters are 10-weeks* long.

- Fall: Late September to Early December
- Winter: Early January to Mid-March
- Spring: Late March to Mid-June
- *Summer: Late June to Mid-August—6-week and 9-week sessions.
Paid or Unpaid Field Study

While all sites must consider current employment laws and union contracts that cover legal and ethical use of student interns:

- The majority of placements in government and non-profit sectors are unpaid.
- When possible, stipends and cooperation with programs such as workstudy are appreciated.
- For-profit sites often provide payment to interns in accordance to community and industry-sector standards.
- In some approved cases, students may choose their place of employment as a field placement site.
Field Study Sequence

Students participate in three quarters of field experience. To graduate, they must successfully complete 260 supervised field hours and participate in seminar each quarter.

- HSP 435: Human Service Organizations (5 credits)—20 hours
- HSP 440: Internship (5 credits)—120 hours
- HSP 440: Internship (5 credits)—120 hours

HSP 440 may be repeated up to 20 credits. 10 credits are required.
In Human Service Organizations, students study foundational professional, ethical, and legal matters broadly applicable in the field as well as foundational information about human services organizations’ structure and governance.

Additionally, students spend 20 hours exploring the local human services community seeking placement.
Internship

Students are required to pass at least two sections (10-credits) of HSP 440: Internship & Seminar. Learning emphasizes student-designed learning objectives and learning activities. Student experiences in the field progress to primary responsibility for individual caseloads and/or administrative responsibilities. Students are expected to seek increasing levels of responsibility, engagement, and autonomy from each field experience that clearly indicate that the student will expand their depth and breadth of applied skills and knowledge from previous field placements. We prepare students to accept increasing levels of responsibility as they progress through field experience.
Selecting a Student

Students may seek you out and ask for an informational interview. It is up to each agency to determine how much time can be invested in the selection process. We understand there are limits.

Every agency’s application and selection process will be different. Students expect this and may ask you how to proceed. We encourage you to interview students similar to a job interview.

All of our students have had a national background check conducted upon admission to the program. Some criminal histories do not create a barrier for acceptance into the program. For a list of crimes that deny acceptance see: https://wce.wwu.edu/hs/prohibited-convictions Agency’s must ultimately rely upon their agency background clearance procedure.
Selecting a Student

It is best to interview each student and get a sense of their assets, skill level and knowledge at that point in time. Each should come with a resume focused on his/her human services skills or experience.

We encourage you to select the best candidate, but be willing to meet lesser experienced individuals where they are at, with a plan to encourage growth beyond that point.

The level of responsibility and independence students are ready for will vary greatly. We tell students to expect that Internship tasks may include involvement in minor to moderate direct and in-direct services tasks and observation of major tasks. We respect your needs, limits and expectations.
Let us Know Your Needs!

There are several opportunities to convey your internship needs to our students and the Human Services program.

- Participate in WWU’s Internship and Volunteer Fair Fall Quarter.
- Participate in the Human Services Internship Fair Winter Quarter.
- Provide internship position descriptions to WWU’s Career Center, specify interest in Human Services Students.
- Send internship position descriptions directly to us at HS.Bellingham@wwu.edu
For More Information:

Visit the Health and Community Studies websites at:
https://wce.wwu.edu/hcs

To read the Field Placement Manual
https://wce.wwu.edu/hs/field-studies

To request contact from a field studies instructor in your area:
https://wce.wwu.edu/hs/internship-position-info

Additional Contact: hsp.info@wwu.edu