

Field Studies Manual

Human Services Program

Department of Health and Community Studies

Woodring College of Education



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Introduction

The Human Services Program at Western Washington University values education that integrates theory, knowledge, skill, and practice. Internships are critical components of this educational experience. This manual provides general background information, policy, practices, procedures, and forms that students need to understand before beginning an internship. These materials will be used extensively while working in internship placements. A [glossary of terms](#) can be found in Appendix A.

Program Philosophy

The Woodring College of Education [Human Services Program](#) at [Western Washington University](#) intentionally provides a dynamic and interactive learning environment for educating students who are interested in providing person-centered and community-based services, and who want to influence change toward an equitable and just society. Through critical reflection on practice in the field, education becomes a transformative personal and professional experience. Students learn ways to collaborate on innovative solutions with individuals and communities in a variety of professional settings to support well-being. Interns work in a wide variety of government, non-profit and for-profit organizations that provide such services as family support, mental health, probation, youth outreach and advocacy, rehabilitation, resource and referral, education, and domestic violence interventions. Students must meet various program requirements prior to enrollment, and throughout their time in the program, as outlined below.

General Course Descriptions

The field studies component of the Human Services Program is a 15-credit, three-quarter, experiential learning sequence (5 credits, 20 hours in HSP (Human Services Program) 435, and 10 credits, 240 hours, in HSP 440) intended to develop student readiness from that of a supervised

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student towards higher levels of independent, professional work. Each of the required field studies courses is 5-credits. HSP 435 is a letter-graded course. HSP 440 is graded in a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) format. This sequence is comprised of one section of [HSP 435: Human Service Organizations](#), the pre-requisite for subsequent internships, and 2 sections (10 credits) of [HSP 440: Internship and Seminar](#). Third and fourth sections of HSP 440 (5 additional credits each) *may be taken as elective courses*, repeatable to a maximum of 10 additional credits, for a maximum of 20 credits of internship and seminar. The Human Services major is intentionally designed to link internship learning to the curriculum. The WWU (Western Washington University) Catalog offers a more detailed look at the [Curriculum Overview](#).

The field studies experience, Human Service Organizations: Context, Structure and Practice (HSP 435) and Internship and Seminar (HSP 440), begins early in the program (in the student's second quarter in the major).

Student Eligibility for an Internship Placement

As noted above, interns work in active human service organizations and agencies, often with vulnerable populations. As is standard in the profession, students complete a criminal history background check prior to being admitted to the major. At the time of application, students must also disclose in writing any pending felony charges and convictions. Students accepted into the program with criminal history (or pending charges) must be aware that such records on background checks can make securing field placements more challenging—as is the case when securing employment in the field. Students with a pending felony charge or a felony conviction are contacted by the Human Services Academic Program Director to discuss appropriate internship options. If a felony conviction or pending charge occurs after a student is admitted to and enrolled in the program, the student must

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promptly report this information to their university instructor and field supervisor. Students who fail to promptly disclose a felony conviction or pending charge will be removed from the program.

Expectations for Academic and Professional Performance

All students are required to read, understand, sign, and follow the Expectations for Academic and Professional Performance ([Form 1](#)) before entering a field placement. Additionally, students are required to read and follow the [Code of Ethics](#) established by the National Organization of Human Services. Students are to abide by these expectations throughout the entirety of the program. Students who do not meet these expectations may be restricted from entering or completing field experience. Restriction or removal can be temporary, long-term, or permanent.

Students must be accepted and matriculated into the Human Services Program and meet any necessary prerequisites to enroll in an internship. To qualify for an internship, students must be in good academic standing. Students with either a cumulative GPA under 2.0 or a quarterly GPA under 2.0 the previous quarter may not begin (or continue in) a placement until probationary status is removed. Students who are on academic probation must receive approval from the Human Services Academic Program Director and university instructor to enroll in the internship courses.

Essential Functions

Students will self-assess their ability to meet “essential functions” ([Form 3](#)) of performance. Interns may be asked to review, resubmit, and discuss that assessment with their instructor or

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internship supervisor at any time. Essential functions are the basic activities that a student must be able to perform. All individuals who enroll in field studies courses must be able to perform essential functions in both classroom and field placement settings, either with or without reasonable accommodation. The program places requirements on students during their academic preparation designed to be comparable to the intellectual and physical demands that a graduate will encounter during early years as a practicing professional. Students are prepared to enter the profession with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to successfully perform the required functions associated with the role of entry-level human services professionals.

Faculty, staff, and field supervisors have a shared responsibility for the welfare of clients who are served by students enrolled in the program. The program is responsible to its partner agencies (and to the community) to assure that interns work towards the well-being of clients and can deliver quality services in an effective and timely manner. Thus, it is important that persons admitted, retained, and graduated, possess the cognitive ability, integrity, compassion, and physical and emotional capacity necessary to practice as a human services professional. Admission and retention decisions are based not only on satisfactory prior and ongoing academic achievement, but also on non-academic factors that serve to ensure that the student can complete the essential functions of the program required for graduation.

Accommodations

Western Washington University is committed to the principle of equal opportunity and does not discriminate based on race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex (including pregnancy and parenting status), disability, age, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression,

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marital status, and genetic information. When requested, the University will provide reasonable accommodation to otherwise qualified students with properly verified disabilities. It is the responsibility of individual students to request accommodations that they believe to be reasonable and necessary to execute the essential functions. Areas of the essential functions where ability is limited may indicate a need for the student to consult with [Western's Disability Access Center](#) about the need for accommodation in the classroom and appropriate placement in the field. Students are encouraged to disclose any limitations to their level of ability to the university instructor to receive guidance and support. Accommodations provided by Western apply in the seminar portions of field experience but may not extend to community agencies. Each student is encouraged to disclose the need for accommodation during interviews with potential field placement sites and negotiate the site's ability to accommodate individual needs as outlined in the [Americans with Disabilities Act](#).

Ethics in the Field

Ethical and professional behavior is at the core of preparing individuals to enter the human services field. The program expects organizations, field supervisors, and university instructors to model the highest standards of ethical and professional behavior for students to observe, understand, and emulate. There may be times when ethical and professional breaches occur by professionals in the field, whose work directly impacts the student. The program recognizes these as learning opportunities for our students, and promptly addresses situations directly and respectfully with agency representatives as matters relate to the student learning environment. Students are expected to discuss with their field supervisor and/or university instructor any observed or suspected incident where questions of ethical or professional behavior arise. There is a [HSP Field Studies Critical Incident Form](#) students can fill out if they are uncomfortable or concerned about themselves or another.

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The Human Services Program abides by the [National Organization for Human Services Ethical Standards](#). Field supervisors are expected to inform the student when other professional codes of ethics are being followed by the agency staff. Discussion about application of ethical standards and ethical decision-making in the field is helpful for student professional development.

Case Conference Policy

When professional performance standards are in question or a student is unable to perform the essential functions established for field studies, a *case conference* will be held to review the situation and determine the best plan of action. A case conference is an opportunity for a student's professional performance to be assessed against the program's requirements and expectations. A case conference allows university instructors to review facts of a specific situation and determine options and actions to ensure a student's rights are upheld and that placement is in the best interest of the human services field. The case conference is convened by a committee of at least three faculty members. At least one of the committee members will be associated with the student's specific site (Bellingham, Everett, or Distance). A final decision is provided by this committee according to an established timeline. Temporary, long-term, or permanent restriction from field study may occur. Permanent restriction from field study would result in a student being unable to continue in the Human Services major.

Grievances and Due Process

All students are entitled to a due process following a decision that has been made. For information on the academic grievance appeal process, see the [Appendix in the Western Washington University's Catalogue](#).

Unanticipated Agency Situations

Dismissal from a field placement may result from the agency's inability to continue to support

student learning. Examples include staff (field supervisor) resignations, budget reductions, client terminations, or an agency determination of a mismatch. In these instances, the field supervisor should inform both the student and the university instructor as soon as possible. If a mid-term change is necessary, arrangements will be made for the student to be placed in a different agency. In these situations, the student will be given full credit for hours that have been accrued during the term. Every effort will be made to assist the student in this type of transition.

Unanticipated Intern Situations

A student may experience life situations that make completing a placement difficult or improbable. Examples might include emerging health situations or personal or family issues. Students who elect to leave or withdraw from a placement during an academic term will need to notify their field supervisor and instructor as soon as possible, and then withdraw from the internship course and re-enroll in a subsequent academic term. Hours that were completed during the academic term in which the withdrawal took place may be applied towards coursework in later terms—this should be discussed with your instructors and is not guaranteed.

Unprofessional or Unethical Intern Behavior

A placement site has the right to terminate a student's placement at any point in the term for unprofessional behavior or unsatisfactory performance according to department, university, and/or agency standards. Should this occur, the matter will be referred for a [case conference](#) to determine the fairest solution regarding the student's future in the field studies sequence. When the Department receives a complaint of serious misconduct by an internship student that is alleged to have taken place within the context of agency work, the student will usually be placed on immediate leave from the placement and the case conference process will begin. If there is reason to believe that misconduct is of a criminal nature, then the program will cooperate with law enforcement officials and make any

necessary notifications as required by mandated reporting laws.

Course Overviews

HSP 435: Human Service Organizations: Context, Structure and Practice

Human Service Organizations: Context, Structure and Practice (HSP 435) provides a pre-internship experience where students acquire basic information required for success in later placements. The primary purpose of Human Service Organizations (HSP 435) is to prepare students for professional work in the field during subsequent quarters. This course applies systems thinking and critical lenses to explore the structure, governance, and practice of human services organizations, and the context within which these organizations (and larger communities) exist. Students examine foundational professional, ethical, and legal matters applicable in the field as well as foundational information about human services organizations' structure and governance. Human Service Organizations: Context, Structure and Practice (HSP 435) assists students in familiarizing themselves with local agencies and identifying, selecting, and committing to a placement for the following quarter. Students are responsible for securing their own field placements each quarter.

During HSP 435, students spend approximately 20 hours interacting with agencies and professionals in the field. Hours may be served conducting informational interviews, participating in internship selection interviews, engaging in service, orientation, or training at potential field placement sites, and/or shadowing or observing the work of practicing human service professionals.

Human Service Organizations: Context, Structure, and Practice (HSP 435) assesses basic knowledge of confidentiality laws, universal precautions, ethics/boundaries, mandated reporting laws, liability/negligence/malpractice, and the ability to write a learning contract that includes learning objectives with accompanying learning activities. HSP 435 is 5 credits with prerequisites of HSP 301:

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HSP 306 or concurrent. Students in this course receive a letter grade. All students must pass HSP 435 (C- or better) before proceeding to Internship and Seminar (HSP 440).

HSP 440: Internship and Seminar

Students are required to pass two sections (10-credits) of HSP 440: Internship and Seminar.

Learning emphasizes experiential learning with student-designed learning objectives and learning activities, in a human services organization internship setting. Student experiences in the field progress to primary responsibilities in areas such as individual caseloads, program planning, evaluation, research activities, administrative/operational responsibilities, etc., working in direct or indirect service positions. 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.

The primary goal of the two required quarters of internship is to provide field and seminar experiences that continue to increase students' applied skills and knowledge of services delivery. If a student chooses to take HSP 440: Internship and Seminar for a third or fourth time as an elective, the expectation is that the student will continue to improve upon and develop their professional skills.

HSP 440 Internship and Seminar has four primary objectives. Students will:

- Engage in a minimum of 120 hours of guided field study each quarter, under the direct supervision of a qualified agency professional.
- Meet HSP 440 requirements that focuses on integrating knowledge from experiential and classroom learning at an advancing level.
- Design and work towards completion of at least two professional learning objectives with accompanying learning activities that demonstrate increasingly sophisticated levels of professional knowledge and skills.

Requirements

To ensure student preparedness for a professional field placement, the program has identified two requirements that students must satisfy to pass Human Service Organizations: Context, Structure, and Practice (HSP 435), and proceed to Internship and Seminar (HSP 440):

- Students must demonstrate the ability to abide by the professional performance expectations as outlined in the Expectations for Academic and Professional Performance and assess their ability to meet the *Essential Functions* on [Form 3](#).
- Students must demonstrate the ability to write appropriate learning objectives with corresponding learning activities.

At completion of the first quarter of Internship and Seminar (HSP 440), there are additional assessments that a student must pass to proceed to future internship field experience:

- Successful completion of 120 hours working in a supervised practicum placement.
- Satisfactory completion of 80% of all assignments in the seminar component of HSP 440, including the *Intern's Self-Assessment of Internship* ([Form 7](#)).
- Demonstration of professional and ethical behavior as documented by a satisfactory evaluation on the *Field Supervisor's Performance Evaluation of Intern* ([Form 8](#)) with concurrence by the university instructor.
- Demonstration of skills and knowledge as documented by successful completion of learning objectives identifying increasingly sophisticated levels of professional knowledge and skills.

Any student who does not meet each of the requirements will receive an unsatisfactory grade and need to re-take the course after consultation with their instructor and approval from the Human Services Academic Program Director. Each additional quarter of field work will require satisfactory completion of all requirements. If a student receives an unsatisfactory grade in a subsequent quarter of the required 10 credits of HSP 440, they will be required to withdraw from the program. The student has the right to petition their dismissal from the program through consultation with their instructor, advisor, and Academic Program Director, who will have final say in the matter.

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Coordination of assessment between field and classroom learning occurs in several ways. Class and small group meetings, along with quarterly field visits between university instructor, students, and agency-based field supervisors, are meant to foster communication around student learning outcomes and objectives. Field supervisor evaluations and student reflections and self-assessments are important evaluation tools that assist the university instructor in determining an appropriate grade for the student.

The Field Visit

Students are required to facilitate a field visit during each quarter of internship. Because of the unique needs of each of the sites, field visits may be accomplished in several diverse ways. At the Bellingham and Everett based sites, students typically are required to participate in an in-person field visit that takes place between the university instructor and the field supervisor. In the Distance Learning Program, a variety of communication modes may be used to plan for and conduct visits, including in-person meetings, telephone, or video conferencing, and/or e-mail depending on the geographical distance between the agency and the location of the university instructor and the individual needs and circumstances of the intern and the agency. Additionally, in times of a pandemic, or other circumstances, field visits may be conducted online (Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Skype, etc.) if preferred by the field supervisor, student, and with approval from the instructor. University protocols for internships, [COVID-19 Off-Campus Experiential Learning \(e.g. Internship\) Protocols](#). University Policy: POL-U2100.03-[Managing the Risk of Off Campus Experiential Learning Programs](#). [COVID Safety Practices at Western](#).

Additional members of an agency are invited to attend at the request of the student.

Determining who will attend the field visit is typically the responsibility of the student.

Field visits provide students with the opportunity to plan and facilitate a professional meeting, discuss learning objectives and activities, show evidence of learning, receive feedback on performance, and discuss future career directions with both the university instructor and the field supervisor. It is up to the student to coordinate arrangements for a field visit early in the quarter.

The university instructor typically asks the student to take the primary role in drafting an agenda for the field visit and facilitating the meeting. Field visits usually last 30-45 minutes. However, this period may vary depending on the field supervisor's previous experience with the program and depending on whether this is the intern's first quarter at the site. Typical recommendations for coordinating the field visit are provided below, however students should follow the instructions provided by their instructor, as in some instances there are different approaches to the field visit.

Planning For an Intern-Led Field Visit

Before the Meeting:

- Plan the meeting carefully (who, what, when, where why, how many, how long).
- Set the time and date and notify university and agency participants. Typically, the meeting includes the field supervisor, student, and university instructor. In some instances, additional staff are involved. Provide the university instructor with clear driving directions to the facility, parking instructions, and clear directions to the location within the building.
- Prepare and send out an agenda in advance (more than 24 hours prior to the visit). The agenda should always include discussion of learning objectives and activities and student performance, and include other pertinent points of discussion (i.e., next term's placement, transitioning to paid employment or graduate school, appropriate closure with clients at the end of the quarter). Make sure that the university instructor and field supervisor have an opportunity to add their own agenda items. They should be contacted one week in advance and given the opportunity to add to the agenda. You may use any professional format for your agenda (standard agenda, PowerPoint, etc.).

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- Make photocopies or send digital copies of any paperwork that will be discussed to distribute at the meeting.
- Arrive early and set up the meeting room. If the meeting is conducted by phone, make sure a speaker phone or other appropriate technology is available and participants have each other's contact information. Determine who will initiate the call. If a speaker phone is not available, the student and field supervisor should be on two phones, and the university instructor will initiate a conference call. Skype, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, or other forms of teleconferencing may also be an option.
- Dress professionally and appropriately for the meeting.

At the Beginning of the Meeting:

- Start on time. Take the lead in transitioning from small talk to formal meetings.
- Have participants introduce themselves (if this is their first meeting). Consider providing a brief tour of the facility after the meeting if this is the university instructor's first on-site visit.
- Clearly define roles and responsibilities.
- Review and revise the agenda (if necessary).
- Set clear time limits.
- Review any action items remaining from any previous field visit.

During the Meeting:

- Follow the agenda and stay on time.
- Listen carefully for positive feedback and constructive criticism.
- Take notes to remember valuable information/ideas. If information is extensive, type the notes and share with members following the meeting.
- If any serious issues are noted, identify who will write a written plan that outlines the process for remediating performance concerns.

At the end of the Meeting:

- If applicable, establish action items (who does what, when etc.).
- If working at the same placement next term, consider setting the date and place of the next

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meeting, and develop a preliminary agenda.

- Review or summarize the meeting.
- Close the meeting crisply and positively.
- Clean up and rearrange the room.

After the Meeting:

- Prepare any materials that were discussed at the meeting (i.e., updating the Learning Contract, obtaining recommended readings).
- Follow up on any action items. Debrief with the University Faculty.

Internship Considerations

Performance Domains

Students identify and secure each of their internships independently, based on their interests in the field. The field work in which students engage can be broadly framed by four performance domains: professional development, ethics, organizational systems, and indirect/direct-service skills. Students consider these domains in choosing learning objectives, and when reflecting on field experiences to make meaningful connections between the theoretical teachings provided across course curriculum and the community-based experiential learning. Specific behaviors expected within these performance domains are listed in the *Field Supervisor's Performance Evaluation of Intern* ([Form 8](#)) and provide a basis for assessment of students' skills and professional behaviors.

Professional Development

- Understanding self in a professional role, developing appropriate boundaries and self-care.
- Understanding of values, beliefs, and philosophies from a professional perspective.
- Assessment of personal knowledge, skills, and dispositions required in the field.

Ethics

- The application of National Organization for Human Services (NOHS) ethics in the broad field of human services.
- Specific application of ethical standards in workplace situations.
- Understanding the interdisciplinary and interprofessional nature of the field and how ethics across fields can have commonalities and differences.
- Assessment of student knowledge and skill in ethical decision-making.

Organizational Systems

- Understanding systems theories and concepts within a community context.
- Making meaning of organizational structures and relationships as well as internal and external forces that influence systems.
- Identifying and addressing systems issues and their potential solutions.

Indirect/Direct Service

- Concepts and skills taught across the curriculum. These include, but are not limited to, the practice of strength-based perspectives, cultural competency, and boundary development with clients, and include skills such as interviewing, case management, program coordination/management, and program planning and evaluation.
- New or emerging strategies or interventions used in Human Services settings.

Preparing for Field Placement

Field placements are available in a wide variety of agency settings, both public and private. The Human Services Program maintains informal and formal partnerships with a diverse group of agencies that can meet the learning needs of most students. With the primary goal of helping to prepare the next generation of human services professionals, agency staff and field supervisors make their time, facilities, and resources available to student interns. Sites are deemed appropriate for Western's Human Services students when it is determined that the agency can provide high-quality field experiences and supervision. The following list of characteristics is intended as a guideline to help students and agency staff members evaluate the likelihood of a placement being approved.

Agency Characteristics

1. The agency/facility should be well established and recognized as providing professional human services. This guideline may be measured by such characteristics as reputation in the community, longevity, nonprofit status, accreditations, state licenses and/or certifications, and resources (offices and staff). In some instances, it is appropriate for students to be placed at newly emerging, or 'start-up' organizations. If there is a question about the viability and appropriateness of a placement site, students are expected to consult with their instructor the quarter prior to the placement.
2. The agency/facility should have both a full-time professional staff whose member/s can identify

with the human services profession *and* the resources to support this work (adequate office space, computers, etc.). The agency should not be dependent on student interns to remain open for service delivery. Rather, interns should supplement existing staff.

3. Field supervisors are expected to have a bachelor's degree and two years' experience in the human services field. One year supervising others is preferred. However, adaptations may be made to the field supervisor requirement dependent upon placement and circumstances. Speak with your HSP 440 Instructor if you have an internship site you want considered and the field supervisor does not have the qualifications listed above.
4. The agency/facility should be committed to the human services profession and be willing to cooperate with the intern and the university instructor in designing and evaluating fieldwork experiences that will benefit both the intern and the agency.

Securing an Internship

Securing a quality placement involves strong coordination between the student, the university instructor, and the agency/organization. The student must remain actively engaged throughout the entire process. Securing a field placement should begin during the initial weeks in HSP 435 (Human Service Organizations: Context, Structure and Practice). After interviewing at several placements, students may arrange for an internship placement meeting with the university instructor to discuss the advantages of potential sites. It is up to the HSP 440 instructor (for the quarter in which the internship will take place) to make a final decision on the suitability of a placement, and in some instances, this may be done in consultation with the Academic Program Director or other faculty members.

If a HSP 435 student is securing an internship for the following quarter, the HSP 435 instructor will approve the internship and the HSP 440 instructor may review learning objectives and recommend changes. If the student decides to change their internship after the HSP 435 class has concluded, the

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student's current HSP 440 instructor would approve the new internship. Withdrawal from the previously arranged internship must be done professionally.

Students must not make assurances or a firm commitment to any placement until after discussing the arrangements and receiving approval from their HSP 440 instructor.

Once a decision is made and the agency has agreed to work with the student, the student will supply the initial field placement paperwork to the university instructor as outlined in the field study forms and in the course syllabus. Students should understand that scheduling a placement is a professional endeavor and that students represent not only themselves but also the Human Services Program and Western Washington University. It is expected that students make a phone call or write a letter thanking each agency contact person for their time and consideration and providing them with the student's decision regarding future placement at the agency. The student must reach closure with every site contacted. After the student submits all the necessary paperwork and the placement is approved, the student begins the internship at the start of the quarter. It is strongly suggested that approximately one week before the scheduled internship start date, the student contact the field supervisor to confirm arrangements, such as start date, time of arrival, and location.

While HSP 435 emphasizes classroom-based learning, students are required to spend a minimum of 20 hours in embedded field studies activities. Embedded field studies serve two purposes: 1) Students learn prerequisite skills outside the formal classroom setting that are necessary for success in Internship, and 2) Students become familiar with several agencies and thus have more information to help determine where they may be interested in interning. While the embedded field study involves a variety of different activities and assignments depending on each instructor's requirements, all students will participate in informational interviewing, and application processes.

Organization Visits and Informational Interviews

Students are encouraged to visit and observe human services agencies and professionals at work in the community. This may entail informally visiting offices during the business day to get brochures or information. It may mean attending panel presentations, career, or internship fairs, or attending community events sponsored by organizations in your areas of interest. Students are required to participate in informational interviews, to gather information about various career options within the profession, and to learn about the work of specific agencies. Informational interviews also provide opportunities for students to meet with potential field supervisors with whom students may be interested in working the following quarter. Informational interviews can be conducted individually or with a small group of students.

Informational interviews are not job interviews, and students should not make inquiries about paid opportunities at the agency. Informational interviews are arranged in advance with the agency and should be face to face. In circumstances that warrant online, e.g., during pandemic times, inclement weather, etc., and/or for agencies that are remote, Zoom, Skype, Microsoft Teams, or some other form of technology which provides a platform for a professional meeting may be used. When informational interviews are used for investigating internship placements, students should request to talk with a staff member who oversees interns and indicate that they are students in Western Washington University's Human Services Program. Because of the busy nature of most human services agencies, if an interview is granted, a student should not expect the interview to last for more than 20 or 30 minutes. Students should bring a copy of their résumé to the interview.

In addition to the formal questions and answers that take place during an informational interview, it is also a good opportunity for students to look at the working environment at the agency. Students should arrive several minutes ahead of the appointed interview time. This provides an

opportunity to assess employee dress, office arrangements, mood, and atmosphere in the agency.

When attending an informational interview, students should dress and act professionally, and state (or restate) the purpose of the interview. If the purpose is to seek a field placement, the agency representative should be made aware of this fact right away. At the conclusion of the interview, a plan should be in place as to whether the student is interested in pursuing further discussions about an internship placement with the agency. If a student is interested, but plans to interview with other agencies, this should be indicated. If the student learned through the interview process that the agency would not be a good match, this information should also be shared in a courteous manner. Regardless of whether the student plans to pursue a placement with the agency, it is important to provide closure to any placement decisions as soon as possible.

It is essential that students carefully prepare for the informational interview by reviewing materials about the agency's mission, client base, and ongoing activities. This can be done by talking with previous interns and carefully examining the agency's website, if available. The best questions to ask reflect motivation to learn and interest in finding a placement that is a good match for both the student and the agency. It is important to avoid asking questions that are too personal or that imply that a student could be demanding or complaining. The following list of questions emphasizes those that could be asked at an interview for the purpose of securing a field placement:

- What is a typical career path for someone in this field?
- What are some unique features of this agency?
- What skills or talents are most important for interns to possess when working here?
- What kinds of activities are interns typically involved in?
- Have past interns found jobs available in this area after internship?
- What are the strengths and limitations of being an intern at this agency?
- What are the expected hours?

A part of considering what questions to ask at an informational interview is keeping in mind questions

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not to ask, such as:

- Persistent questions about moving into a paid position at the agency.
- Questions about an interest area that is unrelated.
- Questions indicating that students would promote a personal agenda that is unrelated to the mission of the agency.

It is safe for students to assume that while they may be visiting the agency to conduct an informational interview, it is likely that they in turn will be asked some questions by the interviewee, such as:

- What are your interests in the field of human services?
- What experiences and skills could you bring to the placement?
- What are you looking for in an internship?
- Describe your experiences working with clients from diverse backgrounds.
- What are your future career plans and goals?

By the time students leave the informational interview, they should have a basic understanding of the purpose and goals of the organization, general duties, and responsibilities of interns, and whether this might be a suitable placement.

Shadowing

Job shadowing involves a short-term opportunity to observe human services professionals throughout the course of a typical workday. The purpose of job shadowing is to help students discover career interests and orient to agencies that might provide a field placement. Formal shadowing involves a visit to an agency for a tour of the facility and discussions with employees, in addition to the opportunity to observe human services professionals interacting with clients, attending meetings, listening to conference calls, participating in hands-on projects, and engaging in other work activities.

Shadowing can take place for as little as one or two hours, or if multiple days, depending on the student's interests and staff availability. While shadowing enables students to gain first-hand insights into what it might be like to work as an intern at the agency, it is important to note that due to the

confidential nature of client-professional relationships, many agencies must limit the types of activities that students can observe.

Application and Screening

Students can expect that each field placement site has an individualized application and screening process—some more and some less formal. These matters are the policy and procedure of each site. Students are expected to comply and bear any associated costs, if choosing placement at a site with such requirements. The Human Services Program encourages sites to provide a selection process that will introduce students to field-based hiring practices such as applications and selection interviews. Some placements involve a competitive process, while others can accept any number of students. Sites often require additional applicant screening processes including additional background checks, fingerprinting, drug testing, references, vaccinations, or tuberculosis (TB) testing. Some organizations may reimburse costs if the applicant is selected. However, this issue should be addressed by the student during informational interviews or follow-up conversations prior to placement.

The Learning Contract

Upon securing a placement site, students will work with their university instructor and their field supervisor to develop a Learning Contract that includes “Learning Objectives” and “Learning Activities.” A learning objective is a clear and concise statement describing what the student will know and be able to do because of the internship. Corresponding learning activities describe what students will engage in to help reach each identified learning objective. Typically, students participate in more than one activity to meet each learning objective. Learning activities should be developed by the student in consultation with the field supervisor. Additional instruction for writing learning objectives and learning activities may be found in [Appendix B](#).

Number and Types of Placements

Students may serve for more than one quarter at the same placement site, and some placement agencies want a student intern to make a commitment beyond one quarter. This is something to consider when seeking an internship. Diverse experiences in different agencies are also valuable. If you can, you are recommended to serve at two different field placement sites over the duration of two terms of field study. This develops a breadth of experience for the student by increasing exposure to direct and indirect field work, new concepts, strategies, skills, client populations, and workplace cultures. It is, however, possible for a student to serve at the same field placement for multiple quarters with approval from the university instructor based on the student being able to:

- a) Continue to be on an upward learning curve and to demonstrate this by developing distinctly different learning objectives/activities each quarter.
- b) Access a combination of direct and indirect service experiences over the different quarters.
- c) Change focus to a new aspect of the agency by participating in a different department, unit, program, or function, if possible.
- d) Work under the direction of more than one qualified field supervisor during the two quarters, if possible.

Multiple Sites in One Academic Term

Typically, students complete the required hours at one placement each quarter. Multiple internship placements, at the same time, do not usually provide optimal learning experience. However, there may be occasions that require a student to hold two different placements simultaneously during a particular quarter. The reasons vary, including the possibility that one placement may not provide an opportunity to complete the required hours. In other instances, a student may be transitioning from one placement to another during an academic term and two placements might overlap for a period of time. Students should check with their university instructor regarding guidelines and paperwork

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requirements.

Hours per Week

It is intentional that a student's duration in a placement span across the entirety of an academic quarter. Students serve a minimum of 12 to 20 hours a week in a field placement site depending on the number of weeks offered in an academic period (6 to 10 weeks). Internship responsibilities should not be scheduled during in-class hours. If an internship site is located a distance that requires more than 30 minutes of travel time each way, your travel time may be counted toward your total weekly hours (up to 20 hours, and only with the knowledge and permission of both your internship's supervisor and instructor).

Number of Weeks

The internship is an academic course and students are expected to observe the academic schedule. Students may commence their field study in the first week of the quarter, even if it is prior to the seminar portion of their course. In situations where holidays may interfere with continuity of service, exceptions can be made by agreement between students and supervisors. During the time between academic quarters, students typically are not expected to work at their internship placement. However, in exceptional cases and as agreed with the 440 instructor and site supervisor before the quarter begins, hours served prior to or after the academic quarter may count toward part of the student field experience within the same quarter. Exceptions include situations where a K grade (incomplete) has been requested and approved and some situations where continuity of client services must be considered (and the work has been approved by the university instructor). Individuals may choose to voluntarily remain in service at the organization where they held a placement, with the clear understanding that the department, university, or university instructor has no obligation for the student outside of the official academic period.

It is expected that students will complete their hours over the duration of the academic term (inclusive of Finals Preparation Week, the week before Finals Week). Condensing a placement into a residential or immersion setting (through which the hours could be completed in a 2-or 3-week period, for instance) is not approved due to the limited opportunity for knowledge application, skill practice, critical reflection, and quality supervision. When there may be a deviation from spreading the hours over an entire term, it is necessary to first consult with and receive authorization from the university instructor and Academic Program Director.

International Placements

With pre-approval by the program and appropriate permissions from Western Washington University, students may enroll in one or more quarters of internship study in an international setting. Students who are interested in this option should contact their academic advisor for additional details early in the program. Students are required to meet with Western Washington University's [Office of Education Abroad](#) when contemplating an international internship. Planning should begin many months prior to departure. Students will not be allowed to complete an international internship in a country where there is a travel advisory in effect, or where Western Washington University's liability insurance is unavailable.

Employment Sites as Placement

Students may propose to use their human services-related place of employment as an internship in some circumstances. The use of a workplace as a field placement must be approved by both the university instructor and the student's employer a quarter prior to the beginning of the placement. Approval of the request is based on clear assurances from all parties that:

- The student's learning experiences will be clearly different from day-to-day work experiences and responsibilities.

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- Whenever feasible, the student's supervisor for their paid position will not serve in the dual role of field supervisor.
- Internship instruction and evaluation will be separate and distinct from employee supervision and evaluation.

University instructors maintain responsibility for evaluating and approving each proposed placement and may consult with the Academic Program Director or other faculty when making the final decision.

Roles and Responsibilities

The educational partnership involved in field studies includes multiple participants: The student intern, the field placement site, the field supervisor, and the university instructor. Communication between all parties is critical in developing a strong field experience. Each participant is expected to assume responsibility for their part of the educational process. An effective partnership is based on every person being aware of each other's roles and responsibilities.

Student/Intern

The student intern is the center of the learning team. As adult learners, students are expected to build on their personal and professional strengths by working in collaboration with the field supervisor and the university instructor to create and carry out a Learning Contract ([Form 5](#)). Specific responsibilities of the student include:

1. Follow procedures for establishing a placement and providing the field supervisor and the university instructor with all materials according to university deadlines.
2. Become familiar with the information contained in the Field Studies Manual, and the [Western Washington University Catalogue](#), including [student's rights and responsibilities](#). If an intern is asked to engage in an activity that they find ethically questionable or unsafe, then the intern should consult with both the university instructor and the field supervisor immediately. If for any reason, the student is uncomfortable or unsure a [HSP Field Studies Critical Incident Form](#)

is provided. The HSP 440 Instructor will follow up with the student to review and discuss the situation and next steps and/or in some cases the instructor may refer to the Field Studies Coordinator for follow up.

3. Prepare for, participate in supervision, and field visit meetings.
4. While working in a field placement, student interns are representing the agency, the Human Services Program, and WWU. Interns are expected to be professional in their interactions with clients and colleagues by conducting themselves within the guidelines provided by the agency and the Human Services Program. Interns should dress professionally, in a way that is consistent with other professionals who are working in the same setting.
5. Take primary responsibility for developing a written Learning Contract that includes individualized learning objectives and activities.
6. Report to the agency according to schedule, and complete work that has been assigned by the agency and by the Human Services Program in a timely manner.
7. If a student intern does not believe their learning needs are being met, it is their responsibility to discuss these concerns with the field supervisor and the university instructor.

Field Placement Site

The approved organization is willing to offer undergraduate learning opportunities and provide a qualified field supervisor to guide the learning process. Participation is voluntary. The partnership with WWU's Human Services Program is successful because of the shared commitment to quality education of human services professionals. As partners in educating human services professionals, an agency's primary responsibilities are to:

1. Demonstrate a commitment to human services education.
2. Accept the university's policies on educating students regardless of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex (including pregnancy and parenting status), disability, age, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, marital status, and genetic information. Any organization that wishes to be an internship site must abide by WWU's equal opportunity policy (available at <http://www.wvu.edu/eoo/policies.shtml>).

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3. Abide by relevant [state](#) and federal laws and administrative code regulating student engagement in [internships](#). This may include making [reasonable accommodations](#) for students covered under the ADA.
4. Provide a qualified field supervisor who has time, resources, and qualifications to carry out field supervisor responsibilities.
5. Provide interns with appropriate training related to agency policies and practices.
6. Acknowledge and manage risk considerations of working with student interns.
7. Maintain expectations of the intern as a learner and developing professional, not as a volunteer or staff member.
8. Provide the intern with resources necessary such as workspace, technological equipment, support, and access to agency records and documents necessary to complete learning objectives and agency assignments.
9. Develop a safety plan for the intern in case of an emergency.

Field Supervisor

The field supervisor is a qualified human services professional who is the student's primary resource within the agency, and who facilitates the student's professional connection with other agency staff, clients, and community contacts. The field supervisor works with the student in developing the Learning Contract aimed at furthering the student's development as a human services professional. Field supervisor qualifications include a bachelor's degree or higher, or a minimum of two years of full-time experience in the Human Services field, and/or experiences approved by your HSP 440 instructor, with competence in areas related to the [National Standards in Human Services Education](#), an expressed interest in being a field supervisor, and approval from the agency. The field supervisor has the following responsibilities:

1. Collaborate with the intern and university instructor in the development and completion of the Learning Contract.
2. Orient the intern to the agency (including policies and procedures), the staff, and to field-based learning at the agency.
3. Inform the intern of any safety/risk concerns and develop a safety plan with the intern that is consistent with agency policies and procedures.
4. Conduct regular meetings with the intern.

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5. Provide the intern with ongoing feedback on performance (verbal and written) in addition to task delegation during weekly meetings.
6. Abide by WWU policies ensuring equal opportunity and prohibiting discrimination, retaliation, sexual harassment, and hostile learning environment, all forms of illegal discrimination (policies available at <http://www.wvu.edu/eoo/policies.shtml>).
7. Support the student intern's right to receive accommodation, under the ADA, by working with [WWU's Disability Access Center](#).
8. Abide by all WWU policy that applies to students such as [campus alcohol policy](#).
9. Participate in a minimum of one field visit (30-40 minutes) with the intern and university instructor each quarter.
10. Support the intern in obtaining access to additional learning opportunities and resources within the agency and throughout the professional community.
11. Complete a written evaluation of the intern at the end of each quarter.
12. Inform the university instructor immediately of any problems in the field placement, and, when necessary, develop a course of action with the university instructor and the intern if problems/issues arise.

Field Supervisors can expect to be sent a digital orientation and copy of the [HSP Field Studies Handbook](#) the forms required during the quarter for the internship. This should be sent to all field supervisors no later than the third week of the quarter. This information will be sent by either the HSP 440 instructor or the Field Studies Coordinator.

Instructor

The university instructor is the liaison between the agency and the Human Services Program, with the primary responsibility of monitoring and evaluating the intern's academic progress. The university instructor is expected to be available to the intern and the field supervisor, to facilitate the learning process, and to help troubleshoot any unexpected problems that arise.

Field Studies Coordinator

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The Human Services Program Field Studies Coordinator is responsible to coordinate overall, the field studies program for the human services major in Bellingham, Everett for the distance learning programs. This position is a resource for students, faculty, and community agencies. For any questions related to this [handbook](#) or the field studies program and procedures, please contact the Field Studies Coordinator at HSP.FieldStudies@wwu.edu.

Online Forms:

Following are links to the online forms. Please complete your form online and submit it to your HSP 440 instructor using Canvas under Assignments. Please make one digital copy for your site supervisor of all forms and keep one digital copy for your records. A typed name serves as a signature for the online forms in cases where people do not have digital signatures. Human Services 435 and 440 forms can be found at WWU E-sign link here: <https://esign.wwu.edu/?deptID=1820>
They are in alphabetical order (only human services field studies forms are at this link).

Form 1 (aka)	Expectations for Academic and Professional Performance	https://esign.wvu.edu/admcs/forms/Human%20Services/_expectations_for_academic_and_professional_performance_1.asp
Form 2 (aka)	Acknowledgement of Risk and Consent for Treatment Form	https://esign.wvu.edu/admcs/forms/Human%20Services/_acknowledgement_of_risk_and_consent_for_treatment_1.asp
Form 3 (aka)	Essential Functions For Students	https://esign.wvu.edu/admcs/forms/Human%20Services/_essential_functions_for_students_1.asp
Form 4 (aka)	Internship Agreement	https://esign.wvu.edu/admcs/forms/Human%20Services/_fe_internship_agreement_1.asp
Form 5 (aka)	Learning Contract	https://esign.wvu.edu/admcs/forms/Human%20Services/_fe_learning_contract_1.asp

Form 6 (aka)	Weekly Internship Schedule	https://esign.wvu.edu/admcs/forms/Human%20Services/_fe_weekly_internship_schedule_1.asp
Form 7 (aka)	Student Self-Assessment Form	https://esign.wvu.edu/admcs/forms/Human%20Services/_student_self_assessment_of_field_studies_1.asp
Form 8 (aka)	Supervisor's Evaluation of Intern Form	
Form 9 (aka)	Timesheet You will also be continually filling in your Web4U Field Experiences Log throughout the quarter. Digitally print the Web4U Field Experiences Log and attach to this form at the end of the quarter.	https://esign.wvu.edu/admcs/forms/Human%20Services/_fe_Internship_timesheet_1.asp
Critical Incident Form	Something happens that concerns you at your site – please go to your instructor or you can fill out this form	https://esign.wvu.edu/admcs/forms/Human%20Services/_critical_incident_form_1.aspx
Petition Waiver Requesting Internship Substitutions	If you want to waive 1 or 2 quarters of internship	https://esign.wvu.edu/admcs/forms/Human%20Services/_requesting_internship_substitutions_1.asp

This checklist helps students to organize paperwork and the Internship learning process. (Additionally, students are responsible for completing all assignments given by their instructor and as outlined in their syllabus).

HSP 435- Human Service Organizations

- Read and Understand [Essential Functions](#) for Western Washington University Human Services Students.
- Read, sign, and submit *Expectations for Academic and Professional Performance* (Form 1) to the university instructor.
- Read, sign, and submit *Acknowledgement of Risk and Consent for Treatment* (Form 2) Provide a copy to the field supervisor and one copy to the university instructor. Students should keep a copy for themselves.
- Complete and submit *Essential Functions* (Form 3). Provide a copy to the university instructor and keep a copy of personal records.
- Complete professional resume.
- Conduct informational interviews, agency observations, and/or job shadowing at agencies that match professional interests.
- Consult with the university instructor to finalize an internship placement decision.
- Verify Internship placement with the Agency's assigned field supervisor. (Notify any other potential placements you interviewed with that you will not be completing an internship with their agency.)
- Draft *Internship Agreement* (Form 4). Provide a copy to the future field supervisor and next quarter's HSP 440 university instructor. Students retain a copy.
- Complete *Weekly Internship Schedule* (Form 6). Once the internship starts, students will be expected to enter their hours in their Web4U Field Experiences Log weekly. At the end of the quarter submit your log, click on WWU Experience Log Report, and provide a copy to the field supervisor attached to Form 6 and one copy to the university instructor attached to Form 6. Students retain a copy.
- Confirm start date, time, and location with field supervisor.
- Purchase [Student Malpractice Insurance](#).
- Successfully complete Human Service Organizations: Context, Structure and Practice (HSP 435) prior to proceeding to Internship and Seminar (HSP 440).



HSP 440: Internship Checklist

This checklist helps students organize paperwork and the Internship learning process. (Additionally, students are responsible for completing all assignments given by their instructor as outlined in their syllabus).

- Complete the *Internship Agreement* (Form 4). Give one digital or paper copy to your field supervisor, one digital copy submitted in Canvas to your instructor and retain one copy for yourself.
- Complete the *Learning Contract: Learning Objectives and Corresponding Learning Activities* (Form 5). Submit all three copies to your university instructor, who will add their signature and return two copies to you. Give one completed copy to your field supervisor and retain one copy for yourself.
- Complete *Weekly Internship Schedule* (Form 6) with your field supervisor and submit one copy to your field supervisor and instructor. Student to retain a copy.
- Complete *Intern's Self-Assessment of Internship* (Form 7). Submit one copy to your university instructor and retain one copy for yourself.
- Submit a completed *Field Supervisor's Performance Evaluation of Intern* (Form 8). To your university instructor or forward online survey to your supervisor for completion. Also, one copy for yourself.
- Complete *Internship Time Sheet* (Form 9). With your field supervisor. Attach your WWU Field Experiences Web4U Report to Form 9. Give one completed copy to your university instructor and retain one copy for yourself.
- Participate in Seminar and complete assignments as outlined in the syllabus.
- Coordinate Internship field visit.
- Bring professional closure to your internship. Write a thank you letter to your field supervisor, and relevant others.
- Identify Internship placement for next quarter if applicable.

Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

(Adapted from <https://cshse.org/membership-resources/standards/>)

Client(s) Individuals, groups, or communities that receive services from human service professionals.

Clinical A professional experience that involves direct service to clients individually or in groups.

Externship A term used by some programs is synonymous with field work, implying that the student works off campus.

Field Observation Those activities that involve the observation of clients under the direction of faculty or agency personnel.

Field Supervisor The agency-approved employee who supervises the student's day-to-day functioning in the agency as part of the field work experience.

Field Studies Manual A college/university program-produced document outlining the requirements for fieldwork as well as the responsibilities of students, agencies, and the college/university in the fieldwork experience.

Intern: A student or trainee who works, sometimes without pay, at an occupation to gain work experience.

Internship The advanced or culminating direct experience that occurs within a college/university experience. The experience of fieldwork provides a bridge between the academic experience and later professional employment.

Intervention Direct services involve strategies and techniques for prevention, treatment, remediation, or maintenance of client behaviors, situations, or issues.

Interdisciplinary Faculty, knowledge base, and theory that is drawn from more than one discipline.

Learning Objective A clear and concise statement that defines specifically what a student **wants to learn** from their field experience after completing the defined learning activities. A learning objective describes what the student plans to achieve because of the learning experience.

Learning Outcome, A clear and concise statement that defines what a student **will know and be able to do** after completing a learning experience. A learning outcome describes what the student is to achieve because of the learning experience.

Memos of Agreement Written legal agreements between the University and the agency regarding each entity's roles and responsibilities with educating field placement students.

Multi-disciplinary The comparison and contrast of theories, knowledge, and skills from a variety of disciplines.

NOHS/CSHSE The National Organization for Human Services and the Council for Standards in Human Service Education. These are two national organizations that provide guidelines for the training and practice of human services professionals.

Practitioner A human service provider involved in direct or indirect service delivery. Practitioner is used interchangeably with human service professional in the context of this document.

Professional A human service provider involved in direct or indirect service delivery. This term is used interchangeably with human service practitioner in the context of this document.

Volunteer Work Unpaid activities in agencies or the field that do not involve academic credit or monetary compensation. These may or may not involve supervision (usually by an agency rather than college/university instructor).

Appendix B: Suggestions for Writing Learning Objectives and Learning Activities

Writing a Learning Objective (LO)

A learning objective is a clear and concise statement that defines precisely what a student *wants to learn* from their field experience after completing the defined learning activities. A learning objective describes what the student *plans to know and be able to do* because of the learning experience. The intern works with the field supervisor and consults with the university instructor to develop learning objectives; assuming this responsibility allows students to identify the specific learning objectives that support their academic and professional aspirations. In preparation for writing the learning contract, students may want to address some of the following questions:

- What knowledge, skills, and/or dispositions outlined in the National Standards do I want to practice?
- What identified needs or gaps in service would I like to address?
- What classroom theory do I want a chance to apply or test in a field setting?
- What specific accomplishments would I like to make because of this internship?
- What do I need to learn to meet my professional educational goals?
- What types of professional experiences or trainings would I like to obtain in this field placement?
- In what professional directions do I want to grow because of this placement?

These ideas can then be translated into learning objectives. Writing clear and specific learning objectives helps students focus on the learning gained from the internship placement rather than getting caught up in just “doing.” Listed below are examples of active verbs that are useful when writing learning objectives.

<u>Verbs that Express Learning</u>		
analyze	critique	list
apply	define	locate
arrange	demonstrate	practice
assemble	develop	prepare
assess	describe	rate
categorize	design	research
chart	diagram	review
choose	differentiate	search
classify	distinguish	select
collect	evaluate	simplify
compare	explain	synthesize
compile	formulate	test
construct	generate	utilize
contrast	identify	write

Strong learning contracts include measurable expected outcomes that help a student learn to set and evaluate achievement of tangible goals. An example of a vague statement and more precise learning objective may be:

Learning Objective

Vague: I want to learn about DSHS eligibility.

Precise: Describe and demonstrate how to interview clients to determine eligibility for DSHS medical services.

Measurability might be expressed in terms of number of experiences; a change in ability, knowledge, or skill (increase/decrease); or the ability to measure completion of a task. For example:

Learning Objective

Demonstrate increased knowledge and skill to apply at least three prevention or intervention strategies to de-escalate distressed or angry clients.

Learning Activities (LAs)

Corresponding learning activities describe what student interns will do to help reach an identified learning objective. Students must describe the activities, strategies, and resources they will use to acquire the desired learning. Typically, interns participate in more than one activity to meet each learning objective. Learning activities should be developed by the intern in consultation with the field supervisor. Listed below are examples of activities that, depending on the learning objective, might be incorporated into the learning contract:

- Attend meetings, training sessions, and workshops.
- Consult or collaborate with professionals and experts.
- Observe a professional engaged in an activity that is associated with the learning objective.
- Engage in reflective writing or a learning journal.
- If the learning objective is skill-oriented, practice the skill and obtain feedback.
- Read material recommended by the field supervisor.
- Create a concept map that links to learning objectives.
- Gather information/data and report on findings.

When possible, add measurability to learning activities. For example:

- Attend at least two staff meetings and one board of directors meeting during the quarter.
- Observe two different case managers interview at least four clients.
- Research and read at least three scholarly journal articles.
- Write a minimum of eight journal entries.
- Meet weekly with field supervisor and ensure feedback about ethical and professional behaviors are discussed at least three times during the term.

Appendix C: Additional Considerations and Risks

Not all considerations and risks can be outlined in this document. Each placement site will have areas of consideration and risk specific to its mission, client population, and service delivery. Students are encouraged to use critical thinking and professional communication to assess issues of concern.

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Leaves and Absences

Before or at the beginning of each term, students meet with the field supervisor to discuss a work schedule to ensure completion of the required hours. Vacations and finals week schedules should be discussed with the field supervisor at that time and noted on Form 6. For sick leave and during inclement weather, students must notify their field supervisor if they are unable to attend a scheduled day of internship experience. Students are expected to follow both the Western Washington University Inclement Weather Policy and the specific inclement weather policy of the field placement site. Any missed time must be made up on a schedule agreed to by the student and the field supervisor by the last week of the term.

Safety in the Internship Placement

It is critical that students understand that there are risks associated with internships. Each student should consider their tolerance for risk and safety issues. Students should discuss the types of risks and safety concerns relevant to each field placement site with their field supervisors and university instructors. Every student will sign the Acknowledgement of Risk and Consent for Treatment Form ([Form 2](#)) indicating understanding of the inherent risks associated with an internship.

Each internship site is required to orient students to the safety policies and procedures during an agency orientation, as well as during supervision meetings. It is important to discuss guidelines for prevention and crisis/safety plans. Discussion should also include safety issues in the community, within the building(s), with clients prone to violent behavior, and safeguarding of personal belongings. Students should not see clients alone unless it is determined the student has appropriate knowledge and skills. Students have a right to refuse an internship assignment where they feel there is personal risk or a safety danger. Students should immediately inform their university instructor about safety concerns. The student should not be able to make critical decisions about clients if there are physical

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or legal implications such as a threat of bodily harm. If the field supervisor is not available in emergency situations, there must be a written protocol for notifying another staff member and making sure the client's needs are met.

Injury During Internship

Any student who is injured or involved in an accident while serving at an internship placement must immediately notify the field placement site and the university instructor. Reports of injury must be made as soon as possible (within 24 hours) by the student and/or the field supervisor to the university instructor. The Program Director and the Department Chair must be informed immediately by the university instructor. [WWU's Environmental Health and Safety Office](#) requires submission of an [incident report](#).

Use of Personal Vehicles During Internship

At times, interns are requested to use their personal vehicles for agency work (e.g., conferences, home visits, meetings, transporting clients). Western Washington University does not provide any insurance that covers the use of personal vehicles for internship activities. Students should check with their own insurance company before using a personal vehicle for professional internships to make sure that they are covered. Students must not drive clients in their personal vehicles unless the site secures all necessary insurance, or the student notifies their carrier and obtains written documentation of coverage from the insurance company for this purpose. Students should never transport a client who is injured or who is at risk of injuring self or others.

Malpractice Insurance

The department encourages students to ensure they are protected from malpractice. Students can purchase malpractice insurance coverage online through the [University's Risk Management Office](#)

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or ensure that the field placement site provides adequate coverage for student interns. While the purchase of malpractice insurance is not mandatory, it is recommended. Because this insurance provides coverage for 12 months, students are wise to purchase the premium during Human Service Organizations, but the Department strongly encourages all students to purchase the policy before beginning Internship & Seminar (HSP 440).

Washington State Mandated Reporting Laws

The Revised Code of Washington ([RCW, Chapter 26.44](#)) protects children who have been abused, neglected, and/or sexually exploited by a parent or guardian. When there is a clear and present danger to the child, the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), Division of Child Protective Services (CPS) has the legal right and responsibility to intervene on behalf of the child. Any person who has reason to believe that a particular child has suffered abuse or neglect may report incidents to Child Protective Services of DSHS. Certain groups of professionals are required to report abuse or neglect. These groups of practitioners include medical professionals, professional school personnel, human services professionals, coroners, pharmacists, childcare providers, DSHS employees, probation officers, and law enforcement officers. Responsibilities as a mandated reporter continue whether the individual is in the workplace or off work, and extends to all individuals, not just clients. According to Washington State law, mandated reporters who fail to make a report shall be guilty of gross misdemeanor (RCW 26.44.030).

Reports can be made to DSHS by calling 1-866-363-4276. This is a toll-free number that is answered 24 hours a day. Reports can also be made by contacting a local law enforcement office or directly to the local DSHS office. Information to be reported includes the name, address, and age of the child (or children) and the names of parents or guardians, information about the injury or abuse, and any evidence of previous observed incidences of abuse or neglect. Child Protective Services or law

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enforcement officers follow up on reports of abuse and neglect. In some rare cases, the mandated reporter is asked to testify in court or to share records. In instances where the mandated reporter is working with the child and family, the reporter may request information about the investigation and any decisions that follow from the investigation. All students are responsible for knowing and understanding mandated reporting laws.

Mandated reporting laws extend to vulnerable adults under circumstances where professionals have reason to believe that the abuse, abandonment, neglect, or financial exploitation of a vulnerable adult has occurred. A vulnerable adult is defined as an individual who is over 60 years of age who has a physical or mental inability to care for self, or an individual over 18 who has a developmental disability, has a guardian, or lives in a facility licensed by the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). All students should carefully read and review information on mandated reporting related to vulnerable adults. All students who are working in placements that require mandated reporting should discuss this topic with their field supervisors. Many agencies, educational institutions, and other organizations follow specific protocol when reporting involves a client or intern.

Sexual Harassment

Any student who experiences or witnesses sexual harassment while working in an internship placement should report it immediately to the agency and to the university instructor. A student may also report this to the University's Title IX Coordinator. Any form of sexual harassment or exploitation by a student intern will not be tolerated and may result in immediate dismissal from internship placement, followed by a case conference. Western Washington University's sexual harassment policies can be located at: <http://www.wvu.edu/eoo/policies.shtml>.