

Academic Internship in Psychology PSY33-948

Summer 2012

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Office Hours: Mondays 8:00-4:00

Course Overview

The purpose of this course is to provide an academic structure to applied work in psychology. This structure (detailed below) involves specific requirements which must be met in order for academic credit to be granted following the internship experience. This course is graded on a P/D/F basis.

Course Objectives

1. Expose students to a real-world situation wherein they gain experience in the application of psychological principles through direct observation and participation in work in an applied psychological setting or related area
2. Facilitate the integration of knowledge gained from coursework in psychology with applied experience
3. Facilitate the development of new skills and knowledge related to the content area of the internship
4. Help students explore possible career paths in psychology and related fields

Requirements

In order to receive academic credit for your internship, you must meet the following requirements (see details below):

1. Complete 240 hours of work (post-training) directly related to the internship (on-site work)
2. Meet all responsibilities set forth by the on-site supervisor (e.g., attend meetings, complete work assignments, etc.)
3. Keep a daily journal
4. Provide weekly progress reports (email)
5. Complete a paper which illustrates the integration of knowledge gained from psychology coursework with specific internship experiences
6. Complete an accurate and thorough data file for the internship

Placement Supervisor

Your placement supervisor determines your duties and responsibilities, and communicates them to you. You should have a clear understanding of what these are at all times. You should also have regular contact with the placement supervisor so that this communication can take place. You must take responsibility for initiating this contact, and for making sure you clearly understand what is expected of you. I will monitor your progress through direct contact with your on-site supervisor before, during, and after the internship.

Daily Journal

You should make entries in your journal every day that you do internship-related work. Make notes of number of hours worked, nature of work, meetings attended, and assignments you are given (including progress and completion). It is also very important that you record ideas that you have about how your experiences are related to theories, research, or applications you have learned about in your psychology coursework. In this case, make note of the experiences and specific information from courses that you think it relates to – in other words, do not wait until the end of the internship to begin the process of integrating knowledge from coursework with your internship experiences. The purpose of these entries is to decrease the need to rely on memory when writing weekly progress reports and the final paper. These entries also offer the opportunity to write about your emotional reactions to the internship. Some internships can be emotionally intense and stressful because you will be working with individuals who are suffering. Writing about the experiences and

your emotions is a proven effective method of coping with such stress, so you are encouraged to use your journal in this way. The journal will be turned in with your final paper (at the end of the internship).

Weekly Progress Reports

Each Friday you should send me a synopsis of your weekly activities. A one or two paragraph summary should be sent to me via email – in the body of the message rather than as an attachment. These reports should include the total hours worked for the week, summary of activities and duties performed, and the highlights from your daily journal entries. I'm interested in both what you are doing and how it is affecting you – tell me what you are finding challenging, stressful, helpful, etc. This is also an opportunity for you to raise any concerns you have about the internship experience (e.g., you were asked to perform a duty you did not feel properly trained for, or you are being given predominately clerical tasks), and for me to respond with ideas of how you might address the concern. Your reports and my responses will also serve as an ongoing dialogue about your internship experience. I will use this as a means to probe your reactions, stimulate deeper and more intentional thought, and to help ensure that the connections between your foundation of psychological knowledge from your courses and the internship experience are made.

Capstone Paper

The paper you write must:

- a) include a brief description of the agency you worked for, your position, and responsibilities;
- b) summarize your experience (include important events or clients, your reactions to and what you gained from the experience emotionally and professionally);
- c) demonstrate that you have engaged in the intellectual activity of integrating this experience with information you have learned in psychology courses.

Thus, I expect your paper to discuss relevant psychological theories and research, and indicate how they can be applied to the understanding of your specific internship experiences. Alternately, the experiences may have helped you understand the theories and research. Think in terms of both how psychology *was applied and* how it *could be applied* (to problems with systems or individuals). You must explain enough about the theories or research to convey that you understand them (don't just mention the name). Also, please utilize specific theories (e.g., Bowlby's attachment theory, Beck's cognitive theory of depression) as opposed to more general concepts like "child development" or "clinical psychology". A minimum of 5 separate theories must be used. You must cite original sources (i.e., not textbooks or review papers) to support theories/concepts or research you refer to. The paper must be typed and in APA style – title page, abstract, running head, page numbers, and appropriate in-text citations with references. Most critically – be sure it addresses the above requirements. Note that if your paper does not follow these guidelines you will be required to revise it. You should limit the use of first-person in the paper. It is fine to use it where you are summarizing personal experiences, but in other areas (and overall as much as possible) the paper should be written in the style of a professional psychology paper. The length should be approximately 20 to 40 double-spaced pages – this is only a rough guideline, I am primarily interested in the content rather than the length.

The paper is due on August 13th at 8:00a.m.

Data File

An electronic data file is required for each internship. I will send you a template, and you will fill in the requested information about your placement site (contact information, mission, internship duties, etc). You will return your completed file back to me by the end of your first week of the internship. A revised file will be completed at the end of the internship (when you can provide a more complete description of your activities) and is due at the same time as the capstone paper.

Problems and Questions

If you experience problems with your internship, you should first approach your on-site supervisor explaining the problem and asking for help, advice, or clarification. If, for any reason, the matter is not resolved satisfactorily, you should contact me. Some examples of problems you could face include: a) your supervisor

asks you to do something you know you are not qualified to do or think you may not be qualified to do; b) you are mistreated or threatened by someone; c) you are not given sufficient instruction for tasks you are asked to complete. This guideline also applies if there is a time when you are unsure how to act in a given situation (e.g., asked to sit in on staff meetings, but not sure if you should participate).

At the beginning of this syllabus you will find my phone number and email address so that you can reach me should you need to. Throughout the summer, I will check my email regularly – so this is the best place to leave me a message in case I am not in the office.

Ethical Guidelines

Although you are not yet a practicing psychologist, there are some important ethical guidelines you must be aware of and abide by as an intern. I have created a separate document detailing these guidelines. Please read them carefully, and contact me if you have any questions about them. You must sign a copy of these guidelines indicating your understanding before you start your internship.

Grading

The following will be considered in determining the final grade:

1. evaluation from the on-site supervisor (fulfillment of responsibilities, responsiveness to supervision)
2. completion of academic requirements as prescribed and timeliness (journal entries, progress reports, data file, paper)
3. quality of the capstone paper (thoroughness of theory/research integration, quality of writing)