

## Field Experience in Applied Settings

A joyful welcome to the Psychology Department's field experience! You can only learn so much from your textbooks; now it is time to experience. In many ways, this internship constitutes a capstone by which you integrate your learning within psychology and by which you explore your interest and suitability for a career in an applied setting.

### Catalog Description:

(Prerequisites: Psychology major; junior or senior standing with priority given to seniors; a grade of B or higher in the psychology course that the faculty mentor deems most relevant to the field experience; permission of instructor) This course involves 100 hours of field experience in non-clinical settings that apply psychology, including cognitive, developmental, environmental, gerontological, language, quantitative, organizational, personnel, and social psychology. Students will meet 6 times in a group seminar and an additional 6 times individually with a faculty mentor. An on-site supervisor will direct weekly duties. Graded Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory. Spring semester only.

### Faculty Information:

Seminar instructor: John C. Norcross, PhD, Distinguished Professor of Psychology  
Office hours: Monday 11:20 – 12:50, Tuesday 9:00 – 11:00, and by appointment  
Office: 224 Alumni Memorial Hall  
Contact numbers: 570-941-7638 (office); norcross@scranton.edu (e-mail)  
Web page: [www.scranton.edu/faculty/norcross](http://www.scranton.edu/faculty/norcross)  
Faculty mentor: varies by student

### Required Textbook:

Switzer, H. F., & King, M. A. (2014). *The successful internship: Personal, professional, and civic development in experiential learning* (4<sup>th</sup> edition). Belmont, CA: Cengage.

### Student Learning Outcomes:

As evidenced by your satisfactory completion of 100 hours of field experience, assigned readings, journal entries, seminar discussions, faculty mentor meetings, and on-site supervision, the expected learning outcomes are:

- ◆ increase procedural knowledge and skills in an applied area of psychology (Psychology Department's goal 1 of Knowledge Base in Psychology)
- ◆ apply psychological knowledge and methods to a real-world setting (Psychology Department's goal 3 of Ethical and Social Responsibility in a Diverse World)
- ◆ enhance ability to learn in a self-directed fashion (Psychology Department's goal 5 of Professional Development)
- ◆ refine a sustaining ethical perspective in diverse work settings (Psychology Department's goal 3 of Ethical and Social Responsibility in a Diverse World)
- ◆ clarify students' educational and occupational goals (Psychology Department's goal 5 of Professional Development)

**The Internship Team:**

This field experience operates on the team approach with you at its center. You, the student, are known as the *intern* or *trainee*. The individual psychology faculty member supervising you is known as your *faculty mentor*. The professor running the seminar (Norcross) is called the *course instructor* or *seminar instructor*. Finally, the professional with whom you will work with and report directly to at your practicum site is known as your *field supervisor* or *on-site supervisor*.

**Course Requirements:**

- ◆ Attendance at all 6 seminar meetings (75 minutes apiece).
- ◆ Preparation for the seminar meetings, including reading and written assignments prior to class.
- ◆ Completion of a Field Experience Learning Agreement (signed by your on-site supervisor, your faculty mentor, and you)
- ◆ Attendance at 6 meetings with your faculty mentor.
- ◆ Completion of a minimum of 100 hours of field work at your placement as directed by your on-site supervisor. (Typically, 8 hours a week for 13 weeks in the semester.)
- ◆ Documentation of your hours, reactions, and connections throughout the semester in a Journal, which will be reviewed by your course instructor and your faculty mentor.
- ◆ Preparation of a structured Self-Study at the end of the course. (Guidelines for the preparation of the journal and self-study appear later in this document.)
- ◆ Completion of a written evaluation by your on-site supervisor, which must contain an overall assessment of your performance of at least “satisfactory.”

A Satisfactory/ Unsatisfactory grading system will be employed. Fabricating or misreporting hours worked at your placement will result in a grade of Unsatisfactory for the course and will constitute academic dishonesty, which will be reported to the Dean.

**Faculty Mentor Meetings:**

Your psychology faculty mentor and you shall arrange for at least 6 meetings throughout the academic semester. These meetings shall focus on the application and methods of psychology at your internship. At these meetings, your faculty mentor may review and discuss your Journal. You, not the faculty mentor, are responsible for scheduling these meetings and for initiating the conversation and content of the meeting. Be a conscientious, self-directed learner!

**Course Policies:**

Any student who, because of a disability, may require special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements, should contact the professor privately as soon as possible. In order to receive appropriate accommodations, students with disabilities must register with the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence and provide health documentation.

Kindly turn off your cell phone while in class. Violation of this policy will demand a mild punishment that will enhance our learning.

The syllabus is subject to revision. Any revisions will be announced in class. On select occasions, you may also receive-mail announcements through Desire2Learn, so please check your University e-mail account.

## **Seminar Outline and Assignments:**

<i>Class</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Assignments</i>
1	Jan. 30	Royal Welcome; Getting Started	Chapter 1 Learning Agreement Getting the Most
2	Feb 13	Ethical and Legal Principles	Chapters 3 & 13 APA Ethics Bring in Journals
3	March 6	Supervision; Professional Boundaries	Chapters 6 & 8 Profit from Supervis Hand in Journals
4	March 27	Stages of Internship; Self-Understanding	Chapters 2 & 4 FIRO-B
5	April 24	Working with Diverse People; Finishing	Chapters 10 & 12
6	May 8	Culmination, Evaluation, & Celebration	Chapter 14 Finish Placement Superv. Evaluation Journal & Self-Study

## Journal Guidelines

Start a new, secure Word file to use as your journal. Immediately create a cover page and record your name, telephone number, and "Confidential" on it.

Adhere to the principle of confidentiality in maintaining your journal. Do not write anything that would identify individual persons or institutions. This means no last names (use first names, initials or nicknames) and no agency identifications. It should be shared only for purposes of learning and teaching, and then in a professional manner.

A field journal is a collection of notes on your observations, thoughts, questions and feelings about your off campus learning experience. Like an anthropologist in the field, you will keep notes on the activities and people around you.

Your journal will serve five major purposes: (1) recording the number of hours at your placement; (2) reporting on and assimilating your field experience; (3) relating the assigned readings and the scholarly literature to your field experience; (4) documenting the dates of your five meetings with your faculty mentor; and (5) facilitating your self-exploration and self-growth.

At least once a week make a dated entry about your field work experiences. Record the number of hours you spent at your placement that day, and maintain a running tally of the total number of hours. As well, maintain a list of the days in which you had a formal meeting with your faculty mentor. These logs, I promise, will help you track and plan for completing your internship requirements.

Once a week in your journal relate your field experiences to the assigned readings (as explained in d below) and once every two weeks relate your field experiences to the scholarly literature in the particular area of your internship (as explained in e below).

The types of topics you can address include:

(a) *concrete details*. "What I did today," "what so and so did today," "what happened on the ward." Concrete incidents that are revealing, amusing, disturbing or otherwise of interest. You might even want to include details that are not so interesting but represent a change, e.g., a new project or high staff absenteeism, which may be significant over the long run.

(b) *your personal reactions*. "How I feel today," "my opinions about an incident," "my guesses about what will happen." By recording your feelings and thoughts you will be able to look back at how relationships developed. Retrospectively, it is more difficult to obtain an accurate and comprehensive picture of early reactions.

(c) *analyses or insights*. "How I conceptualize what happened," "it just occurred to me that," "changes occurring here or in me." Typically, these are based on pertinent information from readings, class, and your placement. You may have a question about something you have experienced, or something we discussed in class happened to you.

(d) *relation to assigned readings*. "I recently experienced what I read about," "Just as I read," "unlike the views expressed by Sweitzer and King." These entries will better integrate your practical experience and intellectual learning. A minimum of 13 of these will appear in your journal throughout the semester; please place these connections to the readings in **bold**. These explicit connections must be to the assigned textbook readings; please provide the chapter or page number of the reading.

(e) *relation to scholarly literature*. Every two weeks (for 6 times total) in your journal devote a paragraph to the connection of your field experience to the research literature in the area of psychology most closely connected to your internship. That scholarly literature may include course textbooks, journal articles, and similar research. These six entries will better integrate your practical experience and psychological science. Please star or bold these connections in your journal, and kindly provide the citation in APA style to the scholarly literature.

One final word: Your journal, like any sort of writing, can be a useless piece of junk and an unpleasant chore to produce; or it can be an exciting record of your work and a dynamic exploration of yourself. The difference rests with your attitude and commitment in writing it. Only in this way will it become a useful tool for reflection and conceptualization.

During the last week or two of the internship, you will summarize your experiences at the placement and in the seminar. This **self study** should include the following topics, numbered as such in your journal. However, you are by no means limited to these, and you are encouraged to reflect on the entire experience.

1. Review your fears and prejudices about the experience before it began. Which of these were borne out? Which were not?
2. Discuss the development of your interpersonal relationships at the agency with coworkers and supervisors. What did you learn from these relationships? What do you still have to learn?
3. How did your field experience relate to and strengthen your previous course work in psychology? Please give specific examples.
4. What have you learned about yourself personally and professionally from the entire experience?
5. What do you consider your biggest successes? Your worst frustrations?
6. Fill in the blanks and discuss the following: (a) "If I were a full-time employee at my practicum..." and (b) "If I were a supervisor..."
7. Look back through your journal and attempt an overview of the semester. Can you identify changes in your thinking and feeling over the semester? How do you account for these changes?
8. Where does this internship leave you? Lead you? Having evaluated the experience, what do you want to do next? Has it altered or reinforced your career choice?