

HEALTH SCIENCES  
INTERNSHIP PROGRAM HANDBOOK  
EM 490, HS 490, and HS 590

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	<u>Page</u>
1. Rationale for the Internship	3
2. Objectives for the Internship	4
3. Internship Eligibility	5
4. Application and Site Selection	5
a. Site Selection, Site Approval, and Site Interviews	5
b. Preparing for the Interview	5
c. Application Process and Submission Dates	6
5. Scheduling the Field Experience	7
6. Responsibilities of the Student	8
7. Criteria for Evaluating the Internship	8
8. WIU Health Sciences Internship Coordinator Contact Information	9

## Rationale for the Professional Internship

The professional internship is one phase of the total training program. The two parts, course of study and internship, are designed to contribute to a basic objective, which is to provide opportunities for the student to develop the competencies necessary to assume responsibilities in the public arena, health care, business and industry, and in related areas.

Although academic study and fieldwork are often thought of as two distinctive types of experiences, they have much in common: theoretical insight and the development of sound concepts are important parts, both of academic course work and the field experience. Thus, the professional internship provides an opportunity for the testing of hypotheses and of the classroom experience in an applied setting. Both experiences are learning experiences and the same educational principles apply to both situations.

The professional internship must contribute to the student's goals for professional growth. These goals should be clearly perceived and consciously striven for by both students and supervisors. Effective field training principles must be followed to insure a sound educational experience. The following principles are starting points for planning the internship.

1. The student is an active participant in planning the internship experience.
2. Field training for an individual student must be planned in terms of his/her/their abilities and needs and as an integral part of the total training experience in which he/she/they is/are participating.
3. The experiences offered the student should meet real needs of the agency/organization. In so far as he/she/they is/are capable, the student should be given the opportunity to function as a full-fledged staff member.
4. The training experience should be so designed that the student has an opportunity for responsible participation in a wide variety of tasks and relationships common to the activities of professional public health, health sciences/community health, emergency management/preparedness, and/or health services management workers. The resources available must be adequate for this purpose.
5. Field training shall be under the guidance and supervision of an individual who is able to make a learning experience out of a work situation and who is professionally competent.
6. The agency/organization shall provide experiential learning to improve student competencies.
7. Evaluation of the field training experience must be in terms of:
  - a. The student's growth in understanding and abilities needed in situations faced by public health, emergency management



## Internship Eligibility

All undergraduate students must:

1. Complete all course work for the degree with the exception of six hours to be completed in the minor or general education.
2. Receive departmental approval of the internship site.
3. Have a minimum grade point average of 2.5 in the major and 2.0 overall.

All graduate students must:

1. Complete a minimum of 24 semester hours to include the core courses (**HS 511, HS 512, HS 530, HS 570, and HS 571**).
2. Receive department and site supervisor approval for the internship site.
3. Have a minimum grade point average of 3.25 in the major and 3.0 overall.

When the student meets the above prerequisites he/she may consider the professional internship for next semester. The professional internship is required of all candidates for the Bachelor of Science degree in Public Health and Health Services Management. The professional internship is required for those candidates for the Master of Public Health if no field experience was completed as an undergraduate or if the candidate has not had equivalent work experience.

## Application and Site Approval

### Site Selection, Site Approval, and Site Interviews

After the student has selected the possible internship sites and preapproval of the site has been made by the Internship Coordinator, an interview is arranged between the student and the agency. This meeting should allow the intern and the agency to determine the feasibility of arranging the internship between the two parties. The interview should be treated as a typical job interview with the student preparing in advance for possible questions and responses. It also should provide an opportunity for the student to gather pertinent information about the agency's internship program or potential program to determine if the student's goals and objective will be met. Listed below are some tips and guidelines that may help with the initial agency interview.

### Preparing for the Interview

1. Find out as much as possible about the agency BEFORE going to the interview.
  - a. Call and have the agency send copies of pamphlets, brochures, or materials explaining activities and programs sponsored by the organization.
  - b. If available, read previous summary papers from interns who completed internships at that agency.









4. The satisfactory performance on an oral presentation before two or more Health Sciences faculty members and invited guests. The internship paper must be received at least two weeks prior to the presentation. Oral presentations will not be conducted during any break period or during finals week.
5. All interns are expected to check WesternOnline at least three times a week.
6. Satisfactory demonstration of work-force, academic, and interpersonal skills by the student during the internship as determined by the site supervisor and WIU Health Science Internship Program Coordinator.
7. Submission of completed progress reports with supervisor signature within ten work days of work period ending. The progress reports are due every two every two weeks. An evaluation of the agency at the end of the internship experience must also be submitted.

An incomplete "I" will be recorded for