

PSY 290: Internship Program in Psychology

PSY 390: Advanced Internship Program in Psychology

PREREQUISITES: Two courses in psychology and permission of instructor. PSY 290 is a prerequisite for PSY 390.

GRADED: S/U

SEMESTER HOURS: 2-4

OFFERED: Fall Semester, Winter Break, Spring Semester, and Summer

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Internship Program in Psychology provides a means and method of learning and reflecting that combines academic classroom curriculum in psychology with a meaningful opportunity for application of that learning in the real world. More specifically, it integrates meaningful real-world activity with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, to allow students to apply their learning to real-world problems, to provide an opportunity for the sharing of learning to create a more just and peaceful world, and to grow one's own understanding and appreciation of diversity, culture, and other ways of knowing [adopted from National & Community Service Act of 1990]. The Internship Program in Psychology has the following objectives:

- To apply classroom/course-based learning in psychology to real-world problems, issues, projects, and activities outside of the classroom (learning by doing).
- For off campus internships: To expose students to influences and problems, issues, projects, and activities beyond those they could otherwise find on the Wells campus.
- To broaden one's perspectives, understanding of others, and cultural literacy.
- To engage the learner in ongoing critical reflection, to ensure that learning – knowledge, concepts, skills -- is linked in meaningful ways to the learner's experience.
- To consider and explore potential career or occupational avenues in psychology for post-graduate pursuit.

PROCESS

Step 1. Ideally, the internship process has root in a discussion between student and faculty about the student's career or occupational aspirations and the real world applications of psychology that the student wishes to explore. The faculty member can provide guidance in the articulation of such goals. The student can and should consult with the Office of Experiential Learning & Career Services for assistance and advising as well. Ideally, these discussions and articulation of goals are what 'drive' the search for an appropriate internship experience (as opposed to first finding a site and then expeditiously 'fitting' the goals to meet the needs of the site instead of the student's.) Once the student's goals are determined, the major faculty can provide guidance on what type of setting might best allow the student to meet these goals and may even be able to provide a referral to a specific internship site. In addition, the Office of Experiential Learning &

Career Services has excellent resources for helping students identify appropriate internship sites and again, students are encouraged to make good use of their services. Once a desired site is identified, the student should approach the site contact to establish whether they will agree to host the student in an internship and can provide the desired type of experience.

Step 2. Before starting the internship, students must obtain and review the necessary internship paperwork - *Internship Learning Contract and Student Internship Agreement* - from the Office of Experiential Learning & Career Services and meet with the psychology internship coordinator (the Experiential Learning staff and psychology academic advisors will know who this is). Based on discussion with the student, the coordinator will suggest who among the psychology faculty might best serve as the faculty sponsor of the internship, will verify that the student has read and understood the process and requirements outlined in this document, and will answer any remaining questions the student may have about them. If the student has already made arrangements to work with a particular faculty sponsor, they must still notify the coordinator with the name of the faculty sponsor, the internship site, the nature of the internship, and the registration information (course number, number of credits, etc.). This information allows the psychology program to track the internship experiences of its majors, assess its internship requirement, ensure an equitable supervisory distribution among faculty, and maintain equitable academic requirements for its students.

Step 3. Meet with the assigned faculty sponsor to discuss the internship plan and obtain their approval (signature on the *Contract*). The faculty sponsor can assist with refining goals and objectives for purposes of the *Contract*. The faculty sponsor will determine the specifics of the requirements (e.g., the form that the ‘sharing’ component will take) and assign a due date for the required materials.

Step 4. All required forms *must* be submitted to the Office of Experiential Learning & Career Services *prior* to starting the internship *and by the deadline specified by that office*.

Step 5. Complete the internship and requirements as agreed. At the mid-point of the internship, revisit your goals and objectives and reflect on how well you are meeting them. Seek advice or guidance from your faculty sponsor or on-site supervisor as needed. At a minimum, check in with your faculty sponsor at the mid-point of your internship to let them know how things are going; do so immediately (and with the Office of Experiential Learning) if there are any concerns or issues. Get as much out of the internship experience as you can and enjoy it!

Step 6. After the internship is completed, submit the *Internship Time Progress Report* to the Office of Experiential Learning and turn in the required materials to your faculty sponsor by the date specified. A date and time will be established for satisfying the post-internship ‘sharing’ requirement. This may take the form of a one-on-one meeting between the intern and faculty sponsor, a group process meeting with other psychology interns, a poster/portfolio session, or a brief public presentation (e.g., PechaKucha). If your sharing component is in a group or public situation, your faculty sponsor may also wish to meet with you individually to provide feedback from your site supervisor’s evaluation, on your materials, or simply to debrief and process the experience or to discuss how the experience may have informed your post-graduation plans.

Step 7. Finally, complete and submit the Office of Experiential Learning’s electronic *Internship Feedback Form*.

REQUIREMENTS

- 1. Effort Hours:** Per Wells College academic requirements, 40 on-site effort hours are required per semester hour of internship (this does not include off-site time devoted to reading background materials, obtaining security clearance, etc.) Thus, a 2 semester hour internship requires 80 on-site effort hours; a 3 semester hour internship requires 120 on-site effort hours; and a 4 semester hour internship requires 160 on-site effort hours. Your on-site supervisor will verify the number of hours worked via the evaluation they submit following the conclusion of the internship; the student is required to also track hours/tasks in the *Internship Time Progress Report* (and Journal). Track hours/effort as they are completed, i.e., an entry on the form should be made at the end of each ‘shift’ -- as well as impressions in your journal (see next). Human memory is malleable and fleeting!
- 2. Journal/Portfolio:**

 - **Journal:** The journal can be handwritten or electronic and will contain an expansion of your *Internship Time Progress Report*: For each entry, indicate the date and the number of on-site effort hours for the day. Describe what you did during that period (assignments, tasks, etc.) and any impressions, thoughts, etc. that you had while having the experience. These can be related to your thoughts on career or occupation, to personal or professional development, to the nature and structure of the organization, to changes in your perspective, or insights gained on theory or research in psychology. A paragraph-length reflection for each entry is usually adequate, but feel free to expand as you wish. These daily notes and reflections should be consulted in writing your research/reflection paper; at the end of your internship, you will submit the journal to your faculty sponsor.
 - **Portfolio:** Use a binder to collect and organize materials related to your internship experience. The contents of the portfolio will depend on the nature of your internship. Choose materials that best illustrate what you did on your internship: Photos, brochures, and other artifacts or memorabilia from the experience, as well as any journal articles or training materials. You may wish to include samples of your work, e.g., reports, letters, plans, research spread sheets etc. Do not include material of a confidential nature (e.g., student or medical records). You will submit the portfolio to your faculty sponsor upon completion of the internship; alternatively, you may be using the materials collected in a poster/portfolio sharing session (if assigned).
- 3. Thank You Note.** Prepare and send a thank you note to your on-site supervisor. Provide a copy to your faculty sponsor. Please know that hosting an intern often incurs considerable extra effort in the workday of your site supervisor and their organization, and realize that supervisors and their organizations often agree to host interns purely out of professional commitment to developing the next generation of ‘practitioners’ in their field. Be mindful and appreciative of this commitment. Also, please be mindful that the Wells College experiential learning program, and present and future Wells College students, depend on connections with external sites to continue what we believe to be very valuable learning experiences, and that you serve as an ambassador and representative of Wells College when you enter into an internship relationship with external agencies. Your behavior, demeanor, and attitude go a long way toward deepening these relationships and the esteem that Wells College enjoys. Please continue that tradition. The Thank You Note is one simple and obvious means for doing that, but nothing can replace a consistent engaged, conscientious, and considerate attitude throughout your on-site experience. In agreeing to sponsor your

internship, your faculty sponsor expects that you agree to uphold the Wells Honor Code as well as its Community Standards both within and beyond her walls.

- 4. Research/Reflection Paper.** Write a 5-page paper (typed, double spaced, numbered) on your experience. The paper should tie the internship experience with your academic coursework in psychology and also provide a reflection on how the experience has helped prepare you for a career in psychology or caused you to contemplate your future career or academic path, and how it changed your perspective, cultural appreciation, or worldview. Evaluate how well your goals and objectives for the internship were fulfilled. For the 'research' component, at least two scholarly sources should be cited within the text to demonstrate consideration of how the experience ties in to your academic training; a separate Reference page with the sources properly cited in APA format should be included with the paper (this does not count toward the five page limit.)
- 5. Sharing/Processing/Debriefing.** Following the internship experience (usually at the beginning of the next academic semester), the internship coordinator will schedule a time and place for completing the sharing requirement, the goal of which is to 'share' your experience with others in the Wells community so that they may benefit and learn from it too and so that you can perhaps process and gain more insight into the experience as well. Sharing may take the form of a lively group discussion among the psychology interns and faculty. It may be a public poster/portfolio session or it may involve a brief public presentation of your experience. In limited circumstances (e.g., a student who is not returning the following semester), the sharing component may be satisfied through a process and reflection meeting between intern and faculty sponsor. At a minimum, in the sharing session, you must be prepared to describe what you did on your internship and what effect it had on you in terms of career direction as well as the tie-in with scholarship in psychology. You should also be able to reflect on how the experience broadened your perspectives, cultural appreciation, understanding of organizational structure, and/or worldview. Regardless of the form of the sharing assignment, your faculty sponsor may wish to meet with you individually to provide further feedback or to process and debrief on the experience.