

LEGAL STUDIES/SOCIOLOGY 694

FIELD OBSERVATION IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND LEGAL STUDIES HANDBOOK

The Criminal Justice and Legal Studies Field Observation is an internship opportunity that combines community engagement with classroom work. Students will acquire practical experience at an agency focusing on justice-involved or at-risk individuals, those affected by crime, those seeking social/ community services, or on law and legal institutions. Readings and seminars will relate field observations to the broader cultural, economic, and social implications of the justice and legal systems. This intensive, hands-on experience requires significant maturity and judgment.

Students will be supported throughout the application, placement, and enrollment process. If you are unable to find the answer to a question here or need assistance, please contact the advisors at cjcp@ssc.wisc.edu.

This handbook covers the entire process leading up to the Field Observation placement. It lists critical events and activities that take place PRIOR to entering the placement. Students are responsible for keeping track of the dates and times of events and deadlines detailed in the **INTERNSHIP PLACEMENT TIMELINE** document. These events and deadlines are important for a student's successful progress in the internship placement process. Given the short application window, adherence to these deadlines is especially necessary for both agencies and students.

FIELD OBSERVATION GOALS

To experience the justice, law and legal institutions and their community impact through hands on practice and observation (Note: Some internships may be partly or entirely virtual.)

To understand the organizational structure of your agency, the service delivery system, and the relation to other entities

To become familiar with the background characteristics, problems and strengths of the various stakeholders

To recognize your own cultural background, values, and beliefs when working with stakeholders, as well as the importance of professional culturally sensitive practice

To analyze the effects of agency policies, and your own behavior, on stakeholders

To appreciate the challenges of self-care when working with people in crisis or significant stress

To gain clarity with regard to your strengths, challenges, and passion

To connect field observations with the broader cultural, economic, and social implications of our legal and justice systems

To gain professional skills that are useful to future careers and service to community

COURSE AND PROGRAM POLICIES

The following policies guide the field observation application, screening and placement process for all semesters.

Eligibility Requirements

Enrollment and Progress in the Legal Studies major or Criminal Justice Certificate Program

Students must be declared in the Criminal Justice Certificate Program (CJCP) or Legal Studies (LS) major and making satisfactory progress toward completion.

Application Deadlines and Pre-Placement Orientations

To maintain eligibility for the internship students must meet all application deadlines and attend all pre-placement orientations (see **INTERNSHIP PLACEMENT TIMELINE**). The advisors grant final approval for participation in the field observation.

Degree Credits and Prerequisite Courses

Criminal Justice placements:

- Completion of Legal Studies/Sociology 131 Criminal Justice in America
- Completion of or concurrent enrollment in upper level Criminal Justice related course (group 2 or 3)
- Completion of or concurrent enrollment in Group 5 approved course
- Minimum of 60 credits completed by the beginning of the internship semester

Legal Studies placements:

- Completion of Legal Studies/Sociology 131 Criminal Justice in America or Legal Studies/Political Science 217 Law, Politics and Society
- Completion of or concurrent enrollment in upper level Legal Studies related course (Theme groups 1-5 or Core Perspectives)
- Minimum of 60 credits completed by the beginning of the internship semester

Right to Refuse an Applicant

The success of the criminal justice and legal studies internship program depends largely on the willingness of agency staff to volunteer their time and expertise to supervise students and provide a high-quality educational experience. The program cannot risk jeopardizing relationships with supervising agencies by sending ill-prepared students to assume professional responsibilities as this may pose extra demands on busy agency staff and unacceptable risk to clients and stakeholders.

Faculty and staff of the Criminal Justice and Legal Studies Field Observation reserve the right to refuse any student who appears unprepared to assume professional commitments and responsibilities. The program expects all students to have a basic understanding of the justice system or structure of the legal systems affecting their internship placement; demonstrate responsibility by meeting all pre-placement commitments; and show maturity by understanding their personal strengths and limitations. Additionally, students need to have attained a level of confidence and an ability to communicate.

If a student does not demonstrate these qualities, they may be asked to participate in an additional meeting to discuss any concerns and determine the appropriateness of participating in the internship program.

Agencies may require students to complete a criminal history background check.

Financial Aid & Compensation

The CJCP and LS programs will distribute information on internship scholarships and other sources of support whenever possible. Please also consult the UW-Madison Scholarship's website for additional opportunities:

<http://scholarships.wisc.edu/Scholarships/>

For more information on financial aid, please contact: Office of Student Financial Services, 333 East Campus Mall, Room 9701; 608-262-3060; finaid@finaid.wisc.edu

Summer financial aid:

The summer course is scheduled during the 8-week summer session. Scheduling the course in this manner allows for students to receive financial aid for a 3-credit course. (Note: Internships may be longer than 8 weeks, but the course itself is considered an 8-week experience.)

Fall and Spring financial aid:

If students already receive or are eligible for financial aid for fall or spring, this 3-credit course enrollment is no different from any other course for which they receive financial aid.

Prior Experience in the Field

Prior experience in a justice or legal setting is generally not a prerequisite for field experience. Volunteering is extremely helpful and recommended if possible. Volunteering will help students by exposing them to different stakeholders and terminology. It will increase their understanding of the demands of a professional setting and help them begin to determine goals for the internship. The links below provide excellent resources for seeking out volunteer opportunities.

Morgridge Center for Public Service: www.morgridge.wisc.edu

Volunteer Your Time: www.volunteeryourtime.org

New Placements

Over the past several years, the CJCP has cultivated relationships with many criminal and juvenile justice agencies, as well as social/ community support programs. Expansion of the Program to include law and legal institutions placements is ongoing. Many students may be served within this existing network of contacts. We are happy to work with students to develop new placements.

Creating a new placement is a joint effort between the student and the advisors.

1. The first step is to note the new agency on your field observation application.
2. Students are responsible for initially contacting the new placement to determine the possibility of an internship placement. They will need to ask the agency if they are able to support the hours per week required by your enrollment (hours for fall/spring differ from summer). Students should review the course goals prior to contacting an agency.
3. If the agency is willing to consider an internship, the student will need to supply the CJCP/LS advisors with the name of the agency, appropriate contact person, address, phone number, and website if available.
4. An advisor will follow up with the agency to make final determination regarding approval of placement.

FIELD PLACEMENT AND SEMINAR TIME COMMITMENTS

Seminars are designed to assist students in sharing observations, processing experiences and receiving feedback. The University instructors work with agency representatives to provide support for each student and develop meaningful educational experiences.

Summer Interns:

20-32 hours a week for 10 weeks

Students attend two full day seminars: one in June and one in July. Students are assigned to either Group 1 or Group 2 and attend the seminar dates associated with their group assignment. Attendance is required and is included in the field hours requirement. An online option is also available for out-of-state students.

Fall and Spring Interns:

Generally, 8-15 hours per week, on site, for a semester. Individual placement requirements may vary.

In addition, students must attend a 2-hour seminar every week on campus.

Grades for the course are based on seminar participation, assignments, and agency/instructor evaluations. A grade breakdown will be provided in the course syllabus.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Preparing for the internship is a process that begins long before a field placement. A student's full participation is necessary for optimal placement preparation. The following section briefly describes each step along the way. For a schedule summary, please see the **INTERNSHIP PLACEMENT TIMELINE** posted on the website and the pre-internship Canvas site.

Initial Orientation

All students must attend this orientation meeting, which will orient them to the application process, eligibility requirements, and placement options.

See the **INTERNSHIP PLACEMENT TIMELINE** for times and locations.

Research Agencies

The online Field Observation Application will ask students to list placements where they would like to do their field observation. Responding to this question will take some research. The following information will help:

- Review the provided list of agencies/placements and their websites
- Review agency evaluations from past students available online in Canvas. Placements may vary by semester. Those offered in spring or fall semester vary from those offered in summer.
- Attend Speed Mentoring and job shadow opportunities
- Connect with past interns thru provided emails
- Conduct Internet search of possible agencies. The advisors do not always have all available or up to date resources.

Complete Initial Agency Choices Survey

All students must submit the online Initial Agency Choices survey within the pre-internship Canvas site. Responses will help students begin thinking through the internship experience and assist program advisors with matching students with an appropriate placement.

Small Group Meetings

All students must participate in a small group meeting following submission of their initial agency choices. See Internship Placement Timeline for dates. The meeting gives students the opportunity to ask questions and clarify placement choices. This meeting will also assist us in making sound placement referral decisions.

Some agencies require applications in addition to resume and cover letter. Students will be notified of application requirement during the small group meeting.

Resumes, Cover Letters, and Agency Applications

For help with cover letters and resumes, please visit **SuccessWorks**. Career services advisors and staff are experts in writing cover letters and resumes. They are the best resource for this type of assistance. Program advisors have coordinated workshops with SuccessWorks for you to attend. See Internship Placement Timeline for dates.

Placement choices may change during small group meetings. Students should wait to submit their resumes and letters until after that meeting. CJCP/Legal Studies advisors will forward materials to the placement in advance of interviewing.

Students upload their **resume and cover letters for their top five placement choices**, along with any required applications, to the pre-internship Canvas site. PDF is required.

Please save resume as "LastName, FirstName Resume" and submit to our Canvas site.

Please save cover letter as "LastName, FirstName AgencyName" and submit to our Canvas site.

Initial Agency Contact by Students

Advisors will notify students when they should contact the agencies. Once given this notification, it will be the student's responsibility to initiate contact with the agencies with a request to interview. In person interviews typically last between 20-60 minutes. Students should confirm interview length and location when setting up the interview.

Interviews

Students should consult **SuccessWorks** for interview tips and practice. Program advisors have coordinated workshops with SuccessWorks for you to attend. See Internship Placement Timeline for dates.

Students should be prepared to answer questions about goals for their internship, ask questions about their responsibilities in the agency, scheduling, and other areas of concern. It is also a time for students to select an agency they feel will contribute to a meaningful learning experience. Competition for placement at each agency varies.

Optional One-on-one Check-In with Program Advisors

Brief meeting to discuss internship search progress and future internship and course questions.

Final Selection

Students will be notified of an agency's choice by the agency or an advisor. During the agency interview, students are responsible for asking how notification will take place. Unless otherwise directed, students are required to communicate their decision to decline or accept directly with the agency. This must be done in a timely manner; avoiding this responsibility directly affects other students and may jeopardize continuation in the program.

Once a student has accepted a placement, they must inform all agencies--even those they will not be interning with--and the advisors. In the event a student is not satisfied with any of the agencies with which they interviewed or are not selected by any of the agencies, the advisor will assist in setting up additional interviews.

Student/Agency Agreement Forms

The required Student/Agency Agreement Form can be downloaded from our Canvas site or from www.criminaljustice.wisc.edu/academics/internships/

Students are responsible for filling out an agreement form and getting it signed by their agency contact person (usually their future supervisor). **Students will need to make** sure the form is filled completely and returned us via Canvas. We will obtain the Board of Regents signature. ***Students will not be allowed to begin the field observation prior to the submission of a completed agreement form.***

This section addresses student responsibilities in the field and other important details to be aware of while completing the Criminal Justice/Legal Studies Field Observation.

Orientation 2: Professional Expectations and Syllabus

This orientation addresses professional principles and behavior, beginning placement, and roles of Agency Supervisors and University Field Instructors. Course details will be reviewed and student questions will be addressed.

Summer:

This orientation meeting will take place during the spring semester.

Fall/Spring:

This orientation meeting will take place during the first scheduled Legal Studies/Sociology 694 class period.

Success of Your Internship

Perhaps the most important assignment students must take on is that of taking responsibility for the success of their internship. Students must take the initiative early on to maintain good communication with their supervisor, co-workers and the instructor regarding the appropriateness of responsibilities and the breadth and quality of their overall experience. Students must take the lead in initiating change if necessary. Many individuals are available to help accomplish desired goals, but students must advocate for the education they desire.

Agency Supervisors

At the placement, students will be assigned to an individual who will serve as their on-site supervisor. The overall experience will be their responsibility. That individual will orient the student to the agency, assign duties, answer questions, make introductions to the staff, monitor progress, and evaluate intern work.

Agency supervisors also are asked to perform an educational function by providing appropriate learning experiences and by assisting in integrating theory, knowledge, and professional standards. Supervisors are encouraged to discuss policy and philosophical issues to ensure that students gain a broad perspective on the system.

Similarly, supervisors have been asked to provide a well-rounded experience by creating opportunities to work with a variety of clients and staff members, and scheduling students to attend agency meetings. They have also been asked to grant time for students to visit other agencies, thereby expanding their experiences in the system.

Most supervisors are highly trained individuals with a number of years of experience in the system. Students should use them as a resource throughout their placement.

Agency Work Responsibilities

Work responsibilities vary from placement to placement and depend on the abilities, interests, and motivation of each student. In general, an initial period of observation and orientation to the agency will be followed by simple tasks. Increasingly complex activities will be assigned.

It is important for students to maintain good communication with their supervisor on this issue. In addition, it is good practice to become familiar with a variety of staff at the Agency. They can be an additional resource by exposing students to a variety of styles, tasks and experiences.

Student experiences may include exposure to the agency, clients and stakeholders associated with the agency, the system as a whole, professional standards and culturally competent practice. In order for this to occur, it will be important to assume some direct responsibilities for clients, possibly even manage a small caseload, work with various professionals at the agency, or carry out a special project. Visits to other agencies, as a part of the work responsibilities, will help students to develop perspective.

Professionalism at the Internship Site

Office Policies - While in placement, students are expected to follow all agency policies. Especially important are those rules and regulations that govern staff-client relations and confidentiality of client information. Policies establishing work hours and attire, are also important.

Feedback - Accepting positive feedback and constructive criticism is a part of professionalism. Students are encouraged to accept feedback with an open mind and to improve work habits as a result.

Premature Departure from Placement - If for any reason a student must leave a placement prematurely, it is extremely

important that the student discuss their plan to leave with the agency and course instructor. This should be done prior to leaving.

Ethics on the Job - Throughout placement, students may encounter ethical dilemmas. These types of incidents can be very uncomfortable and create stress. If the appropriateness of a situation comes into question, students need to talk to their agency supervisor before acting. If the incident involves an agency supervisor, students should speak with the course instructor.

Issues falling under professionalism and ethics are crucial to the success of field observation and will be discussed in the course seminars. Should immediate resolution to an issue be important, students should contact the course instructor. Waiting until the next seminar is not advised.

By design, internship courses delegate a substantial portion of responsibility for students' education to off-campus supervisors. Nonetheless, University instructors and advisors are available to students throughout the placement to answer questions, assist in problem solving, and to help facilitate goals.

Gaining professional experience and skills through the Field Observation Internship and Course is a great opportunity for interested students. Program Advisors and Instructors look forward to guiding you through this process!

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