**Rutgers University Graduate School of Education**

**Ed.M. in College Student Affairs**

**Information for Placement Sites**

Offices that wish to become Field Experience Placement Sites must apply and be approved by the Graduate School of Education. The application information is required to assist the College Student Affairs program in its efforts to comply with the CAS Standards for Master’s Preparation Programs and the ACPA/NSPA (2015) Professional Competencies.

The Field Experience in the College Student Affairs program provides students with the opportunity to apply theory learned in the program to practice. Two separate experiences are required for each student, with their first taken during their second semester of enrollment. A second Field Experiences takes place in a subsequent semester. A third Field Experience is possible as an elective with the approval of their academic adviser.

One of the goals of the Field Experience program is to develop a constructive relationship between the Field Experience Sites and the Graduate School of Education. The College Student Affairs program is committed to developing and maintaining a successful relationship. To that end, it will provide necessary support to Field Experience Sites including helping develop workshops for site Supervisors and other staff and continuing professional development opportunities that might be requested by Student Affairs offices and programs that host Field Experience students.

Agencies or programs that wish to host Field Experience students must apply and be approved. Application signifies an understanding of and agreement to meet the requirements of Field Experience supervision.

Site Supervisors are responsible for the day-to-day supervision of the Field Experience student, for conducting a performance evaluation, and for making recommendations about the final grade to the Field Experience Seminar Instructor. The Site Supervisor is the key to a successful Field Experience. The Field Experience is as much a learning experience as classroom instruction. Its purpose is to provide an opportunity for the student to have practical exposure to a real world work setting and to knowledgeable, experienced practitioners. Site supervisors serve as teachers, advisors, and often as mentors, to graduate students who will soon enter their chosen profession. Site Supervisors have the responsibility to create an experience that will help students hone their skills and to nurture the growth of young professionals. The main responsibilities of site supervisors are to monitor and provide feedback regarding the student’s work efforts, to provide an overview of a functional area including its current priorities and pressing agendas, and to structure a work environment that is conducive to a positive, mutually beneficial learning experience.

Normally, students will work eight hours per week at a site, most frequently divided into two half days. These hours would be scheduled while classes are in session. However, work flow in some offices begins before or extends beyond a semester and it is, where appropriate, possible to adjust a student’s schedule to fit this work flow, recognizing a fixed number of weeks in each semester.

Typically, students will enroll for two separate placements during the two years of their academic program. When appropriately justified, arrangements can be made for placement for two semesters, recognizing that the program encourages two separate experiences.

**Qualifications of Site Supervisor**

The Council of Advancement for Standards for student affairs professionals has established criteria for staff members who serve as site supervisors for Field Experiences. Supervisors should meet the following minimum qualifications:

1. Be employed full-time at the institution in a professional position.
2. Strongly prefer a master’s degree in higher education/ college student affairs or related area.
3. Have experience supervising professional full-timestaff members.
4. Have the support of his/her supervisor to apply to supervise Field Experience students.
5. Have the time and resources to provide sustained supervision, including time to meet with the student on a regular basis.

**Roles of the Field Experience Student**

In most cases, the Field Experience student should be expected to operate at approximately the same level as an entry-level professional. The Field Experience should include the opportunity to:

1. complete a definable project that serves as a learning experience for the student and which could be of value to the site;
2. work with the staff group in general office functions, and
3. complete other tasks that will enhance the student’s understanding of how the functional area accomplishes its goals.

This means that the Field Experience student should also:

1. work in a meaningful way with undergraduate students in small groups or individually;
2. participate in regularly scheduled staff meetings;
3. meet weekly with the site supervisor;
4. sit in on meetings on relevant topics;
5. be responsible for one or two special projects;
6. attend special events; and
7. observe the site supervisor or other staff in workshops and individual or small group meetings with students.

**Site Supervisor Responsibilities**

Having a Field Experience student provides a professional an opportunity to reflect on their own practice, contribute to the professional development of a student, and get some extra help for office projects. The following is a list of items to help the Supervisor understand their responsibilities as a site supervisor.

1. Participate in the selection fair during October.
2. After a student has been assigned to a site, the Site Supervisor should meet and discuss the experience that the student will have at the site.
3. Become familiar with the responsibilities and purpose of the experience.
4. Provide assistance in the completion of the contract.
5. Arrange for the appropriate work environment including a defined work space, a mail box, and introductions to members of the office/unit.
6. For the site supervisor who has not participated as a Field Experience supervisor previously, attend an informational meeting for site supervisors on the day of the selection fair in October.
7. Within the first two weeks, review the Site Supervisor Evaluation of Student Performance form with the student as a vehicle for discussing expectations including arrangements for absences, meeting schedule, proper dress, etc.
8. Meet with the student at least weekly for a minimum of 45 minutes to one hour to discuss on-going projects, review work, discuss student’s observations/questions regarding issues and group dynamics in staff meetings and other meetings attended, and provide feedback to the student. Discuss questions raised by the student, including student observations about how theory is implemented or not implemented in the agency.
9. Provide the student with an understanding of the mission, goals and current objectives facing the unit along with a familiarity with the organizational structure.
10. Provide the student with readings that enhance their understanding of the specific functional area.
11. Observe the student at the workplace, working with colleagues, and with students; provide the student with constructive feedback about his/her performance.
12. Develop ways to keep the student informed about what has happened between times they are working in your office.
13. Contact the Field Experience Seminar Instructor or Coordinator in a timely manner about concerns relative to the student’s performance (e.g. failure to meet the work schedule, to complete tasks on schedule, etc.).
14. Participate in a mid-semester meeting with the student and Field Experience Seminar Instructor during a site visit to review the quality of the experience and to discuss suggestions for improvement.
15. Take the student to some outside meeting you attend to help broaden their perspective.
16. At the end of the Field Experience, meet with the student to formally evaluate his/her performance and the quality of the Field Experience activities. Review in this meeting the written comments shared in the “Site Supervisor Evaluation of Student Performance.” Submit the completed evaluation to the Field Experience Seminar Instructor before the last day of classes in the semester. Students are graded Pass/No Credit in the Field Experience.
17. While Site Supervisors have primary responsibility for meeting these requirements, they may also have other staff in their office supervising some aspects of the student’s work. For example, supervision of the project may be delegated to another professional staff member.

Since Field Experience students are enrolled in other coursework and have a Graduate Internship, it is important that realistic goals be established and that a schedule is fashioned which does not interfere with the requirements of attending other classes. Students enrolled in the Field Experience participate in a required seminar with their Field Experience Seminar Instructor and submit a journal as well. Dates for seminars and journal submissions are scheduled each semester. The syllabus and required readings will be shared with site supervisors.

Students are expected to spend sufficient time in the office to meet the objectives of the Field Experience. The site time commitment includes time spent on site, as well as work on a site project or regular activity. If project work is done elsewhere (e.g., in the student’s home, the library) that time is to be included in the equivalency of the overall one-day per week commitment.

Special Site Requirements: Some sites may want to establish special requirements for placement at their site. Special requirements might include two consecutive semesters, summer only, course prerequisites, or other conditions. Those requirements should be specified on the application. Prior discussion with the faculty about special conditions would be beneficial for both the site and the department.

**Assignment Process for Field Experience Placement**

In brief, the Field Experience Placement will operate in the following way: In October of each year, the Graduate School of Education College Student Affairs Program will organize and facilitate a Field Experience Interview Day for a student’s first Field Experience. This will be an opportunity for Site Supervisors and/or their designees to meet and talk with prospective students. At the end of the day, Sites will complete a request form for students they are interested in having assigned to their agency. Prior to the Interview Day, students will have reviewed material about the site, including literature and the Site Application, and will have discussed appropriate site assignment with their adviser. On the Interview Day, students will meet and talk with Site Supervisors of agencies where they are interested in working. Following the Interview Day, students will submit a site request form to the Field Experience Coordinator indicating their preference for site assignment. Field Experience sites will also submit a list of preferences for students to be assigned to their site based on interviews. The College Student Affairs faculty will match Site and student requests and make assignments in November.

For their second or third Field Experience, students will apply to approved sites by submitting their resume and requesting an interview. This second or third Field Experience will normally take place during the summer or second fall semester. Sites that receive applications may select who they want to interview and make offers directly. Once a Site selects a student for a Field Experience they should negotiate a contract and submit that contract to the Field Experience Coordinator. Completed contracts should be submitted in sufficient time to allow the student to register for classes. Registration for the Field Experience requires a special permission number and is issued only after a completed contract is submitted.

See placement site application form.

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