Master of Public Administration

Internship Guidelines

2084 Constant Hall Norfolk, Virginia 23529
Phone (757) 683-3961 Fax (757)683-4886

Revised July 2014
**Introduction**
The purpose of this handbook is to provide information regarding PADM 668 (Internship/Field Experience), offered by the Master of Public Administration program at Old Dominion University. Due to the nature of the internship experience, these guidelines are intended to accommodate diverse and individualized internship experiences.

**Overview**
The primary objective of PADM 668 is to provide a learning opportunity for pre-service MPA students. The goals are as follows:

- To relate concepts and theories of administration and organization to actual situations and issues;
- To understand the context and dynamics of public sector organizations;
- To increase student ability to function as an effective member of an organization;
- To recognize and learn to work within the constraints and opportunities which confront various administrators and organizations;
- To gain an increased awareness and understanding of the dimensions of one or more substantive issue areas;
- To acquire firsthand knowledge of specific administrative processes; and
- To develop contacts; this may lead to future professional opportunities.

Students are expected to develop their own personal goals for the internship, and to discuss these with the Internship Coordinator and host organization supervisor.

While there are no prerequisites for PADM 668, it is recommended that students enroll after completing at least two semesters of course work.

Students work a minimum of 300 hours with their host organization. Internships can be structured to take place over the course of a semester (fall, spring, or summer) to satisfy this requirement. Other internships are structured as longer part-time placements where the student works less hours per week over the course of an academic year.

Undertaking an internship involves a degree of trust between the student and the host organization. Students are placed in positions of responsibility that require sensitivity and understanding of the need to protect the confidentiality of information. The Master of Public Administration program at Old Dominion University fully supports the University policy on ethics in research. Moreover, the program further emphasizes that the ethics policy developed for research should carry over into all aspects of the internship experience.

PADM 668 is a requirement for students deemed as “pre-service” at the time of admission. Students with questions regarding their “pre-service” or “in-service” status should consult their academic advisor.
**STEPS OF THE INTERNSHIP PROCESS**

**Make an appointment with the Internship Coordinator.**
The Master of Public Administration program at Old Dominion University has assigned a faculty member to the role of Internship Coordinator. However, the responsibility for internship planning rests with the student. Students should identify internship interests and communicate with the Internship Coordinator early in their course of study.

**Find the appropriate internship.**
Students identify and propose possible assignments and initiate contact with host organizations. The student then works under the guidance of the Internship Coordinator to arrange placement with the host organization.

*Internships must have a management or research component (cannot be a clerical position). Interns are responsible for negotiating the compensation rate with the prospective host organization. Keep in mind that many internships are offered without compensation.*

**Prepare Internship Proposal & Register for PADM 668**
Students are required to have an approved internship proposal turned into the Internship Coordinator during the first week of the semester that they are registered for PADM 668; failure to do so may result in deletion from the course.

*It is the student’s responsibility to develop the internship proposal once placement has been agreed upon by the Internship Coordinator, student, and host organization. The agreement should include all the information outlined in Attachment A. The appropriate length of this proposal is one page.*

*The proposal is mandatory and is due the first week of the semester that you are registered for PADM 668. Internship hours completed before your proposal is approved will not apply towards the 300-hour requirement. Your internship will begin once the proposal is approved by your employer and the Internship Coordinator.*

**Begin Internship**
Once the student begins their internship, there is a shared responsibility for its administration among the student, Internship Coordinator and the host organization. The student serves as an essential link between the Internship Coordinator and the host organization and bears substantial professional responsibility in helping to maintain lines of communication among those involved. It is very important that the student and internship supervisor determine the best method for tracking the hours the student works.

**Submit Midterm Internship Memo**
Students registered for PADM 668 are required to submit the Midterm Internship Memo. See Attachment B for a sample memo. The appropriate length of this memo is one page. Mid-term memos are due on the last Friday of October, the last Friday of February, and the last Friday of June depending on the semester in which you register for the internship.

**Submit Student Internship Reflection & Supervisor’s Evaluation**
See Attachment C & D. These documents are due the last week of your internship. The student is responsible for regularly meeting with his/her supervisor to verify the number of completed hours worked for the internship. *This is very important!* The total number of hours worked will be reported in the Supervisor’s Evaluation.
Proposed Location:

Internship Field Supervisor:
*Name, Address, Telephone Number and E-mail Address*

Intern:
*Name, Address, Telephone Number and E-mail Address*

Assignment Nature:
*In this section, the intern should describe the mission of the placement organization, its clients, and its structure. The intern should also elaborate on the position type and where the position falls in the organization. The intern should also provide a detailed description of the job (a job description).*

Assignment Relevance:
*In this section, the student should provide an explanation of how the nature of the internship relates to the field of public administration.*

Internship Objectives:
*In this section, the student should explain his/her goals (personal, academic, and professional) for this internship.*

Time Schedule:
*This assignment would begin approximately ____________ and extend through approximately ____________. The intern will work _____ hours per week during the duration of the placement.*

**Internship Mid-Term Memo /Student Internship Reflection & Supervisor Evaluation**
According to the above time schedule, I will submit a mid-term memo by ____________ and my Student Internship & Supervisor Evaluation by ____________.

Intern’s Signature and Date
___________________________________________________________

Agency Intern Supervisor’s Signature and Date
___________________________________________________________

Internship Coordinator’s Signature and Date
___________________________________________________________
ATTACHMENT B
MIDTERM INTERNSHIP MEMORANDUM

TO: MPA Internship Coordinator
FROM: 
DATE: 
RE: Midterm Internship Memo

The Midterm Internship Memo lists the number of internship work hours that you have completed to-date, the tasks which you have completed as an intern, and any skills that you have learned up to the date of the memo. An appropriate length of this memo is one page single-spaced.

Mid-term memos are due on the last Friday of October, the last Friday of February, and the last Friday of June depending on the semester in which you register for the internship. These mid-term reports are MANDATORY. Failure to submit a mid-term memo will result in a failing grade on internship hours.
ATTACHMENT C
STUDENT INTERNSHIP REFLECTION

Name:

Please answer the questions below in no more than two (2) pages single-spaced. Be sure to address each question in a thoughtful and reflective manner.

Enumerate the principal responsibilities and tasks that you performed. Describe the working conditions and general working environment.

What on-the-job problems did you encounter?

What did you learn from the on-the-job experience?

What were the special benefits from this experience (if any)?

What was the nature of supervision and was it useful?

If you did this internship again, what changes would you recommend?

Student Signature: ________________________________
ATTACHMENT D (PART 1)
SUPERVISOR’S EVALUATION

Intern’s Name ____________________________________________

Internship Coordinator _____________________________________

Agency Intern Supervisor ___________________________________

Agency Name and Address ___________________________________

Attached is a performance evaluation of the student’s intern experience in your agency. The primary focus of your evaluation should be on the skills, knowledge, and abilities developed during the internship. It will be particularly helpful if the evaluation is submitted within one week after the student completes placement with your agency.

Please return by mail, Email, or fax to:

MPA Internship Coordinator
School of Public Service
2084 Constant Hall
Norfolk, Virginia 23529
mpa@odu.edu
757-683-4886 (fax)
Has the student completed the 300-hour internship? Yes ______ No __

If no, how many hours has the student completed?_______

Please rate your student intern by circling the appropriate score.  
5=Superior  4=Good  3=Average  2=Fair  1=Poor  0=N/A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ability to work with specific community problems through an agency or institution.</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Understanding of agency purpose &amp; function.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Ability to use agency policies &amp; procedures efficiently.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ability to plan, organize &amp; use time effectively.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Knowledge &amp; use of community resources.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Development of Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ability to obtain pertinent information when needed.</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ability to obtain pertinent information when needed.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Ability to distinguish relevant from irrelevant material.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ability to plan a course of action.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ability to relate &amp; apply knowledge of specialized area to problem/agency function.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Ability to communicate with staff and citizens.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Ability to obtain relevant facts from materials.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Ability to record pertinent facts.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Ability to write &amp; summarize reports.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Ability to give oral reports.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Knowledge of supervisory responsibilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ability to prepare meetings/conferences.</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Preparation for meetings/conferences.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Understanding and use of supervisory skills.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Participation in evaluations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Capacity for professional development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ability to integrate theory &amp; practice.</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ability to integrate theory &amp; practice.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Demonstration of continuous learning.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ability to focus on problems &amp; needs of agency.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ability to follow orders &amp; accept criticism.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Ability to approach a problem professionally.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Promptness.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Dependability.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please make additional comments on the back of this form or in a separate memo.

Signature of Agency Supervisor

Printed Name and Title