HSS Internship Placement Process:
Important Information

All Healthcare Services and Sciences (HSS) students are required to complete capstone experience prior to graduation. Most students complete an internship. The internship consists of 200-240 hours of work at a health care or health related organization and attendance in the companion course, HSV 4900. Internship typically occurs in the last semester of the senior year. Students should review information about internships located here:

http://www.wmich.edu/healthservices/academics/internships

Students create a meaningful internship based on their individual needs as they ready themselves for a career or graduate study. The careful selection of an internship site is the most significant step in this process.

Internship Options:

• Internship Site Search Suggestions from HSS
  Students are responsible to find their own internship site. However, most students will receive internship site leads from the internship coordinator or HSS graduate student during their mandatory internship meeting. In this meeting, the coordinator and the student will identify two or three sites that are consistent with the student’s future plans for employment and/or graduate study. The coordinator will most often provide the student with an internship site contact name and contact information for that person. Students requiring an internship outside of SW Michigan usually do not receive site leads but the coordinator will provide students with searching tips and suggestions.

• Using current place of employment for internship site
  Only students who are taking the Pre-Physician’s Assistant track may use their current job “as is” in a health-related field as their internship site. Other students employed within a health-related organization may use their employer organization as an internship if they are able to work in a different department or their supervisor is able to designate new responsibilities for the student specific to the internship. This will usually involve working extra-unpaid internship hours at the employing organization. The internship responsibilities must be related to the student’s program of study.

  Any internship established at the student’s current work location must have the approval of the internship coordinator as well as the work supervisor who agrees to serve as the internship site supervisor for internship.

• Finding your own internship site
  Students are encouraged to develop and use their own contacts for locating an internship and may elect to create an internship in a new or unique site. In such cases, students may be aware of opportunities in the community or know a health care professional willing to work with them. The internship coordinator must determine the appropriateness of a prospective site and must approve intern duties. Upon student request, the coordinator will contact a prospective site supervisor to explain the internship and WMU’s HSS internship requirements.

Contacting Potential Sites

When a potential internship site has been identified, the student is required to communicate with the internship site contact. Initial contact with the site may include a telephone call, e-mail, or letter. The student should introduce himself or herself in a manner similar to below (not word for word):

Hello, my name is _________ and I am a student at Western Michigan University majoring in Healthcare Services and Sciences. As part of the requirements for my degree, I must complete a 200-hour field experience in a health care or health related organization. I am writing (or calling) to see if you may be interested in speaking with me about the possibility of my interning at ____________ (organization) for the upcoming ____________ (fall, spring, or summer) semester. I am very interested in _______ (specific unit, experience or
population). My career goal is to ____________(fill in your personal goals either for employment or graduate school) and I believe interning with your organization would provide me with valuable experience. I would appreciate an opportunity to meet with you to discuss internship. Please contact me at your earliest convenience.

Internship site contact people tend to be very busy. If you do not hear back from them in 7-10 days send a professional and polite follow-up email or leave a voicemail requesting contact. If you do not hear back from a site contact after three contact attempts (spread out over a few weeks) contact the internship coordinator to determine a next step.

**Placement interview at potential internship site**
An in-person meeting with the potential internship supervisor is required in order to make a site decision. In the introductory meeting, explicit expectations need to be agreed to by both parties. These expectations include student internship tasks and duties and a discussion concerning the time commitment required by both parties. During the initial meeting the student should provide the internship supervisor with appropriate materials. These may include their resume and the Internship Handbook.

**Internship site acceptance**
- Once the student and the supervisor mutually agree to the internship, please inform the internship coordinator (the organization’s name, supervisor’s name and supervisor email address are needed). Students must honor verbal agreements as binding and may not seek or secure another site once they have accepted an internship.
- Before the start of the internship semester, students must complete all site requirements. These requirements are unique to each site and may include: a physical, Tuberculosis (TB) test, drug screen, and/or a background check. See the HSS website for further information on obtaining needed checks/tests.
- Students must register for HSV 4900. If you cannot self-register, email your advisor with your WIN and the CRN of the HSV 4900 class you wish to register for.

**Affiliation Agreement Requirement**
Affiliation Agreements (AA) are required to be in place prior to any student starting an agency’s internship program. The internship coordinator or GA will determine if an AA is already in place or needs to be completed. Student may accept an internship with the understanding that the only thing pending is the AA, however, student may not begin work at a site until the AA is done. You can review the Affiliation Agreement requirements on the HSS website.

Contact the facilitators with all questions and concerns. Students are responsible for maintaining communication with the HSS program and meeting all HSS contact deadlines throughout the internship placement process.

**Internship Facilitators**

Dr. Kathy Lewis Ginebaugh, Psy.D. (Coordinator)  
(269) 387-2803 kathy.lewis@wmich.edu

HSS Graduate Assistant  
(269) 387-8443 ihs-ga1@wmich.edu