

BS-HSS Internship Placement Process
Important Information, Updated January 2023

All 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:

Selecting your own internship site

Students are encouraged to use and develop network contacts for locating their 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 site that the prospective intern proposes and must approve all internship sites. Upon student request, the coordinator will contact a prospective site supervisor to explain the internship and WMU's HSS internship requirements.

Using current place of employment for internship site

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.

Internship Site Leads

Most often, students will need to consult with the coordinator to acquire internship site leads. The coordinator and the student will meet to identify one or two 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.

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 Interdisciplinary Health Services. As part of the requirements for my degree, I must complete a 200-hour field experience in a health care or health related organization. Western calls this an internship and it is similar to a service learning experience. 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 (we need the organization's name, supervisor's name and supervisor email address). 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: physicals, TB tests, drug screen, and a background check. See the HSS website for further information on obtaining needed checks/tests.
- Students must also register for HSV 4900 when registration opens for the Spring. If you cannot self-register, email your advisor with your WIN and the CRN of the HSV 4900 class you wish to register for.

To Access Site Contact Information

- You will find the agencies that were suggested to you in your internship meeting on your **Student Detail Page** on the Internship Placement Tracking website. You can access this by logging into your account
- Log into your account at www.runipt.com with
- **The Organization ID: wmuchhs**
- Your username: Your WMU email address
- Your password: If you have forgotten your password, you may click the "forgot your password" link and the system will send you a new temporary password so that you can create a new one.

Internship Timeline
HSS Internship Preparation Application Due Approximately Six Months Prior to the Internship
HSS Internship Meeting Appointments Begin Several Months Prior to Internship
Check-in with Facilitators by 1.5 months prior to start Confirmed HSS Internship Placement One Month Prior

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. Janet Hahn (Coordinator)
Alyssa Powers (Graduate Assistant)

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