INTERNERSHIP AND FIELD EXPERIENCE

HANDBOOK

FOR

B.A. SOCIOLOGY STUDENTS

B.A. SOCIOLOGY PROGRAM
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

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Revised for Summer 2014
The Difference between an Internship (SOC 460/463) and a Field Experience (SOC 385/386)

To graduate with a B.A. in Sociology, you must complete a 12 credit internship experience consisting of 9 credits of Internship (360 hours) and 3 credits of Internship Seminar. The SOC 460/463 Internship in Sociology will provide you with practical experience and an opportunity to integrate and apply your classroom skills and knowledge in a professional setting. The internship is required for the B.A. Sociology Program because it will give you the experience of working in a sociologically relevant profession. Your supervisor at the internship site and the faculty field coordinator (the sociology faculty member responsible for internships and field experiences) will supervise and evaluate your performance. The internship should be completed at or near the end of your undergraduate career after you have taken all or most of your required sociology courses.

The SOC 385 or SOC 386 Field Experience is an introductory experience that will acquaint you with a professional role and environment, but is not a requirement for graduation, unless you are minoring in gerontology. A field experience may be considered equivalent to an independent study, but off-site. A SOC 385 field experience may be appropriate when a student has an exceptional opportunity in the field of applied sociology (for example, a specific short-term project or research experience). However, field experience students typically do not assume responsibilities commensurate with a professional entry-level employee. You may complete 1-6 credits of field experience (typically 40 hours per credit). A SOC 386 field experience is a requirement for the minor in gerontology and should be completed under the supervision of the gerontology program coordinator.

The Value of an Internship/Field Experience

Internships and field experiences are intended to help students more easily transition from college classroom learning to professional employment. The experience will give you a chance to try out your skills and “try on” a career to see if it meets your expectations and aspirations. Through the internship or field experience, you will continue your education, deepen your knowledge, add to and improve your skills, and enhance your understanding of the complexities of society, communities, agencies, and private enterprises. Each gives you the opportunity to:

1. explore a particular field or occupation as you create your career;
2. explore the different roles and responsibilities within an organization;
3. apply and expand upon the knowledge and skills you learned in the classroom;
4. help an organization meet its goals;
5. develop your professional relationships; and
6. work toward obtaining professional employment.

MnSCU Statement on Background Checks

If you have been arrested, charged, or convicted of any criminal offense, you should investigate the impact that the arrest, charge, or conviction may have on your chances for employment in the field you intend to study or on your chances to obtain federal, state, and other higher education financial aid.

Responsibilities of the Student Intern

It is expected that student interns have professional-level communication skills (both oral and written), will demonstrate basic professional behavior and ethics, will relate well to others, and work well with groups. At all times your interaction with colleagues and clients should be cooperative and helpful. Your behavior, attire, speech, and demeanor during the internship should be professional and consistent with the expectations of the organization and your site supervisor. Remember that you are representing Winona State University, the Department of Sociology, and yourself. You must also abide by the other practices and policies of the internship site.
The importance of regular communication between you and the site supervisor cannot be over-emphasized. Keep in mind that your site supervisor may be a primary source for a recommendation for future employment. It is your responsibility to maintain contact with your supervisor and remind him/her of your internship needs. It is recommended that you meet with your supervisor regularly to discuss your progress in the internship and provide you with feedback.

You will likely begin your internship in the observer or training role. During this period in particular, don’t hesitate to ask questions. The goal of the internship is not for you to become proficient in a single area, but to introduce you to a variety of roles within a particular organization. In addition to your regular duties you may find it useful to attend professional meetings at your organization, to meet with leaders in the organization, to observe other facets of the organization.

It is your responsibility to participate in student discussions and the final paper in a timely manner (see below) and without nagging from your faculty field coordinator.

If problems arise, it is best to address the problem early and consult with your site supervisor and faculty field coordinator. Contact the faculty field coordinator directly or through the Department of Sociology at 507-457-5420 or 1-800-342-5978.

**Responsibilities of Organization and Site Supervisor**

The site supervisor is responsible for:

1. orienting the student to the organization’s missions and operating procedures;
2. reviewing with the student learning goals and assisting the student with refining the goals as necessary;
3. reviewing with the student Form C to add guidelines to meet the goals of the organization;
4. designing a work plan for the student;
5. regularly observing and communicating with the student to monitor progress;
6. participate in a faculty field coordinator site visit, if appropriate;
7. conducting a final evaluation conference with the student; and
8. completing a final evaluation of the student to be submitted to the faculty field coordinator.

The following are additional expectations of the organization and site supervisor.

1. The organization is expected to involve the student intern in a variety of professional-level activities. Assignment of specific responsibilities and projects along with a range of activities is expected. In addition to specific long-term assignments and projects, the student will be flexible and provide assistance to the organization when necessary.
2. Payment is encouraged, but not required. If the organization cannot provide wages, tuition payment, honorariums, etc. which recognize the student’s contributions to the organization are encouraged. It is expected that mileage for work-required travel and other expenses will be reimbursed, as per the organization’s policies.
3. We expect that interns will be appropriately trained and supervised and in return the student’s work will be of value to the organization.
4. The specific work schedule can be somewhat flexible in meeting the minimum number of hours required in a given time. The specific schedule must be set before the internship begins and agreed to by the field supervisor and student.
5. The internship may be terminated by any party only after discussion amongst the student, field supervisor and faculty advisor.
Responsibilities of Faculty Field Coordinator

The faculty field coordinator is responsible for:

1. assisting the student with registration and paperwork for the internship;
2. responding to and providing feedback for student discussions within an appropriate time frame;
3. conducting a site visit (in person or by phone) with the student intern and site supervisor after approximately half of the internship hours are completed;
4. providing timely and appropriate feedback on the final internship paper; and
5. being a resource for both the student and the site supervisor about the internship process.

Your Supervision

The faculty field coordinator and your site supervisor will both supervise you, but in different ways. Both will be concerned with your professional development and learning. You will, of course, be working with your site supervisor, while the faculty field coordinator will monitor your progress through the weekly discussions, a site visit or phone conversation with your site supervisor, and email contact whenever appropriate.

The faculty field coordinator will expect you to meet all of the requirements of the internship. These expectations are spelled out in this handbook. To reiterate, you are expected to:

1. complete all forms on time,
2. carry out all required hours within the agreed-upon timeframe,
3. participate in student discussions on time,
4. improve your participation per feedback,
5. coordinate and participate in a midterm site visit or phone call, and
6. write a final paper.

If you do not meet the requirements set out in this handbook, you will not pass the internship. If you do not pass the internship, you will make arrangements with the faculty field coordinator to make up the requirements or repeat the credits. At the faculty field coordinator’s discretion (and only in specific cases), students who do not complete all of the requirements by the end of the semester will receive an incomplete until all work has been completed.

The primary goal is your professional growth, which will depend in part on applying your sociological skills and carrying out your responsibilities for both your site supervisor and faculty field coordinator. Your learning will depend on your general skill at communicating and relating to your colleagues and the faculty field coordinator; active learning requires your participation. You should ask questions, discuss issues, help identify problems, and offer solutions. Both the faculty field coordinator and your site supervisor are key people in helping you get the most out of your internship.

To take full advantage of your opportunity to learn from your internship, it is your responsibility to think carefully about these criteria and ask for assistance in developing your skills in these areas from your site supervisor.

It is expected that you draw on your sociological skills (research methods, sociological perspectives, and other sociological concepts and themes) during the internship, and to demonstrate this to your faculty field coordinator through your discussion participation and the final paper. You will also need to draw on sociological concepts, terms, facts, ideas and theories. This will be much easier if you have texts and notes from sociology courses you have taken, or paper or electronic copies of these or similar materials.

The internship is not simply an entry level job. It is a venue in which to actively apply sociology to a real-world
setting while learning about a career. You must draw on sociological concepts and ideas in your discussions and final paper in order to pass your internship.

**Evaluation**

As a reminder, you are enrolling in two separate courses: one for your internship hours (SOC 460) and one for your online student discussions (SOC 463). SOC 460 is a pass/no credit course – your grade in this course will be based on your completion of 360 hours at your internship site and your site supervisor’s assessment of your work. SOC 463 is a graded course (A-F) – your grade in this course will be based on your participation in the online student discussions. Note: the Department of Sociology requires a C or better for a course to count towards graduation.

### SOC 463 Grading Criteria

- **9 weeks of online student participation @ 8 points each**  
  = 72 points
- **1 final paper @ 28 points**  
  = 28 points
- **Total**  
  = 100 points

Online student participation grading will be based on four factors: timeliness/frequency, thoughtfulness, connection/application, and critical thinking.

- **An outstanding discussion** (A, 8 points) will be submitted in time for others to read and respond; will be thoughtful and insightful; will make connections between sociological course work and internship situations; and will illustrate critical thinking.
- **A proficient discussion** (B, 7 points) will be submitted in time for others to read and respond; will be thoughtful and insightful; will make some connections between sociological course work and internship situations; and will illustrate moderate critical thinking.
- **A basic discussion** (C, 6 points) will be submitted on time but with little time for others to read or respond; will be competent, but lacking in thoughtfulness; will make limited connections; and will contain few areas of critical thinking.
- Discussions that do not meet any of the above expectations will not receive any credit.
- Discussions questions and responses must be free of spelling or grammatical errors.

The final paper will be graded using the same criteria listed above. Papers that are not completed by the due date will receive not receive credit, unless prior arrangements have been made with the faculty field coordinator.

**How to Apply for an Internship/Field Experience**

To apply for an internship/field experience, you must be accepted into the B.A. Sociology Program and have junior or senior status (exceptions may be made for the field experience). Prior to applying for an internship/field experience, you must have successfully completed SOC 378 (Intermediate to Social Research) and have successfully completed at least three 300- or 400-level sociology courses. The following steps are required for application. You must carry them out to pass your internship.

**Step 1.** Carefully read all the information in this handbook.

**Step 2.** Complete the online internship survey (available at [www.winona.edu/sociology/internships.asp](http://www.winona.edu/sociology/internships.asp)). This is your way to indicate to the department that you plan to do your internship during the next semester.

**Step 3.** Consider organizations where you may carry out your internship. You are welcome to carry out your internship anywhere in the world, with the faculty field coordinator’s approval. You may ask yourself: With whom do I want to work? Do I want to work with children? Adults? Veterans? Persons with
disabilities? Do I want to work directly with individuals/groups, or behind the scenes? Do I want to work with a government agency? A non-profit? A school? In what city, state, or country do I want to work?

Make an appointment with the faculty field coordinator to discuss your career interests, possible internship sites, the application process and requirements, and the timeline. Bring a recent copy of your DARS and be prepared to discuss your career goals.

Step 3. With the faculty field coordinator’s approval, contact possible internship sites. One way to do this is to simply state to each organization that you are looking for an internship. It is important that your organization/site supervisor know that you are completing a for-credit internship. The advantage to stating up front that you seek an internship is that your supervisor is more likely to seek to give you a broad experience; the intent of your position from the outset is to explore a larger professional experience.

Explain why you are seeking an internship with them, when and how many hours you can offer, and any relevant experience you have. You will want to consider how your present yourself and your skills and experience to this organization. In most cases, an up-to-date resume will be useful. Most organizations welcome interns. Note: you must be persistent in contacting possible organizations. Do not be discouraged and do not wait. Call every other day or more often until you speak to the appropriate person and/or set up an appointment to meet with them.

Step 4. After getting approval from the faculty field supervisor to proceed, you will receive the Internship/Field Experience paperwork. Keep these in a safe place – you will complete them throughout your experience. Once a site has been determined and approved, complete the contract and ethical guidelines paperwork and turn them in to the faculty field coordinator.

Step 5. Once you, the faculty field coordinator, and an organization have agreed upon the conditions of your internship, including when it will take place, you should register for the appropriate term and number of semester hours (credits) of SOC 460 and SOC 463 via a blue card from the faculty field coordinator. This will require permission from the faculty field coordinator (blue cards). You must be registered for the internship or field experience before you begin your hours.

Note: It is required that all forms be completed, submitted to, and approved by the faculty field coordinator prior to the start of the internship hours. You may not accumulate hours for the internship until then. Any hours completed prior to completing the appropriate forms and registering for the internship or field experience will not be counted towards your requirement.

Reduced Student Fees for Distant Internships

If you are carrying out your internship for an entire term at site more than 50 miles from Winona, you may qualify to pay only half of the Union Facility Fee, Student Life Fee, Athletics Fee, and Health Service Fee. To apply, see [http://www.winona.edu/billing/ReducedFeeAuth.htm](http://www.winona.edu/billing/ReducedFeeAuth.htm) or review the materials at the end of this document.

Important Information Regarding Your Laptop, If You Walk Through Graduation Before Your Internship

If you walk during May or December graduation, you have the option to buy your laptop before your internship and not pay the Laptop Program Fee for your last semester (this is the larger fee, separate from the Technology Fee). If you make this choice, WSU no longer offers service for your laptop. You do have a one-year warranty from the manufacturer, but for service under this warranty you will have to send it to the manufacturer or take it to a certified dealer. For this reason, WSU also offers support at a price lower than the normal Laptop Program Fee. For more information, contact WSU Technical Support.
Internship/Field Experience Requirements

Note: Carefully read and carry out these instructions throughout the internship. If you do not, you will not receive a passing grade.

1. Maintain a detailed log of your work hours.
   Maintain a detailed log of your work hours, to present to your site supervisor and the faculty field coordinator. A suggested format is a table with columns showing the: 1) date of each day you worked; 2) number of hours you worked that day; 3) weekly total; 4) signature of your site supervisor for each weekly total (see below). The final log (with signatures) will be due with your final paper at the end of the internship.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Daily Total of Hours Worked</th>
<th>Weekly Total of Hours Worked</th>
<th>Supervisor’s Weekly Signature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>8</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 2, 2000</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 5, 2000</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Supervisor’s Signature</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Keep in regular communication with your faculty field coordinator.
   Because you and the faculty field coordinator will use email to correspond, and because he/she will use email to communicate with interns as a group, you need to check your email regularly. If you are unable to regularly check your e-mail, you must make arrangements with the faculty field coordinator before you begin your hours.

3. Participate in online student discussions.
   Student discussions will be conducted online on D2L weekly, and will not be live discussions. Rather, each week you will be asked to respond to a set of discussion topics and questions, posed by the faculty field coordinators. Discussion topics and questions will be posted by Monday at 8:00am Central Standard Time. You will have until 5:00pm (CST) on Friday to respond to these topics and questions.

   Your responses to these topics and questions should be honest and thoughtful, should be grammatically correct, and should use correct spelling. Your responses should be used to deconstruct your activities, your observations, and your personal experiences and reflections. Use this opportunity to write as much as possible. No matter what work you do, these responses will provide you with observations and experiences for sociological analysis. You are limited only by your willingness to flex your analytical and sociological imagination.

   In preparation for these discussions and responses, as well as your final paper, you should regularly take personal notes to record your observations, experiences, and feelings. In addition to responding to the posted topics and questions by the instructors, you should also read and comment on your peers’ responses, and reply to your peers when they ask questions about your posts. This means that you should plan on logging in multiple times during the week.

   Again, you must draw on your sociological knowledge (facts and ideas such as statistics, history, documented processes, social structures, terms, concepts, and theories) and skills (applied sociology, research methods, sociological perspectives) to describe, analyze, and explain what you observe and experience. This is explicitly required. Students who do not think critically and sociologically in these discussions will not earn a passing grade.
4. **Arrange for a midterm site visit.**
   The faculty field coordinator will visit your internship site or will make a phone call to your site. When you complete approximately half of your internship hours, notify the faculty field coordinator and arrange the visit. This meeting typically lasts approximately 20 minutes. The faculty field coordinator will take a brief tour (if appropriate) and meet with you and your site supervisor(s). Be sure that you make these arrangements with your site supervisor and faculty field coordinator with enough notice. The faculty field coordinator will not ask to observe you in your work, but will use the time to discuss your progress and the remaining requirements of the internship.

5. **Write and submit a final paper.**
   First, briefly describe the organization you worked for and your regular duties. Discuss the purpose or goals of the organization – why do they exist? How is the organization organized? Who does the organization serve? This section should be concise and take up no more than two pages of your paper. Second, describe what you learned during the internship. Specifically, describe what you learned about yourself (your career goals, your professional values, and your own sociological skills), what you learned about society, social groups, and/or social interaction. Use specific examples, observations, or stories to illustrate your points. Be sure to comment specifically on your training and coursework in the Sociology Program.

   Pay attention to your formatting. Your paper should reflect your professionalism. Use a standard font in a standard size. Margins should be set at one inch. Include page numbers. Include your name, the semester and year, and the organization at the top of your paper. The paper should be double-spaced. Carefully check the spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Your final report must be at least 10 pages in length and should not exceed 15 pages. This final paper is due at the end of the semester (via D2L Dropbox) by the due date posted on D2L or by the date individually negotiated with your faculty coordinator if you have done so.

   **Ending Your Internship before Completing the Requirements**

   While it is uncommon for this to happen, it is important that you keep in mind the appropriate processes to follow should your internship end before the requirements are completed, either by choice or necessity.

   If you are removed from your internship site for any reason, you must immediately inform the faculty field coordinator in writing. At this time, you will be formally dropped from both SOC 460 and SOC 463. You will be asked to submit in writing a complete explanation of this event with a specific outline of your plan to avoid similar situations in the future. Your site supervisor will be asked to complete an evaluation for your performance. You will need to retake both SOC 460 and SOC 463. You and your faculty field coordinator will determine the appropriate steps regarding your plans to repeat the experience, whether during the current semester or during a subsequent semester, given University deadlines and policies.

   If you decide to end your internship before completing the requirements, you must immediately inform the faculty field coordinator and site supervisor in writing. You should give your internship organization as much detail and notice as possible. Your site supervisor will be asked to complete an evaluation for your performance. It will be at the discretion of your faculty field coordinator to determine the steps necessary for you to complete the requirements for both SOC 460 and SOC 463.

   You may be removed from your internship by your faculty field coordinator if: (1) you fail to follow any of the ethical guidelines or (2) you fail to meet any of the expectations outlined in this handbook. Whether you are allowed to return to your internship site will depend on the seriousness of the incident/s and will be based on the approval of the site supervisor and faculty field coordinator.

   Remember, you are representing Winona State University in all of your interactions, including this one.
Students are allowed to retake SOC 460 and SOC 463 no more than once (for a maximum of two attempts).
Reduced Fee Authorization

Reduced fees will not apply to courses taken over the Internet.

The reason for this reduced rate is that the student is scheduled for the entire semester at a location 50 miles or more from Winona and is engaged in the following activity: Internship, medical technology, Independent Study, or Student teaching.

**PLEASE NOTE:**
These reduced student fees include the Union Facility Fee, Student Life Fee, Athletics Fee, Wellness Center and the Health Service Fee ONLY. All other fees at Winona State are not affected. These fees will be reduced in half, if the student qualifies.

The link below will open a PDF Document containing the Reduced Fee Authorization form.

[Reduced Fee Authorization Form]