

PS 4950 – Internship

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Objectives

An internship will consist of meaningful work experience in the public administration field. This context of experiential learning is designed for professional development as course content is integrated into work experience. Students also significantly contribute to area organizations through an internship.

Course Requirements

1. Internship Selection

The student is responsible for identifying a suitable internship. An internship will provide significant experience with and exposure to the internal administrative and policy operations of an agency. It is important that an internship provides significant professional experience. Also, a significant portion of the final paper will consist of relating your internship experiences to the discipline of public administration, incorporating the concepts you have learned in your courses.

Once an internship has been arranged, you must submit the following to me (email is fine) before enrolling in the internship course.

- a. Internship Site Form: This form identifies the internship and provides contact information for your supervisor.
- b. Current copy of your resume

After receiving the Internship Site form and your resume, I will contact your supervisor by email and send an Internship Agreement Form. Your supervisor will define your responsibilities as an intern on this form. You and your supervisor will then sign this form, indicating that you understand and accept the Agreement. Once I receive the Internship Agreement Form with both your signature and the signature of your supervisor I will open a space for you to register for the class.

You must complete 160 hours of work at your internship for this course.

2. Monthly Reports

Each week you will prepare a report describing your activities at your internship. This will both inform me of your work activities and provide you with a record of your reflections on the internship. Each report should be 1-2 pages in length and contain the following sections:

- a. Log of activities: Prepare a brief summary of your work. Report meetings you attended, projects assigned or completed, and any other meaningful experiences.
DO NOT report confidential organizational matters and DO NOT violate the privacy of clients or colleagues.
- b. Evaluation of activities: Discuss what you have learned through your work activities. What insights have you gained? What have you learned about the profession?
- c. Hours worked that week, Cumulative hours worked to date

Write a report each week and save it. Email all the reports on the first Monday of each month. Please submit them in one document using google docs and invite me to edit it. I will read the

report, make any comments and return it to you. DO NOT submit a report each week. Also send me a final report once you have completed the internship.

3. Supervisor Evaluation

Upon completion of your internship, I will send your supervisor an evaluation form. Your supervisor will mail the form back to me. This evaluation will comprise 25% of your final grade for the course.

4. Final Paper

The final paper is due within two weeks of completion of your internship hours. The paper should be double spaced, follow APA style, and contain the following sections. Include a heading for each section in your paper.

Section I: Your activities & contribution (1-2 pages)

- a. Please summarize the duties & responsibilities of your internship
- b. How did the agency benefit from your internship, as you see it?

Section II: Organizational Analysis (4-5 pages)

*Discuss your perspective on **one (and only one)** of the questions below. Your response must incorporate (a) appropriate references to your PA coursework, and (b) relevant PA literature. You should cite appropriate books and journal articles. Websites are not books or journal articles. A strong paper will cite at least 6-8 sources.*

- **Administrative processes**
Would you say there is a set of best practices in effect in this agency, such that you can delineate them? Assess them: what is the agency doing right, and what could it do better?
- **Mission & stakeholders**
What role does the agency's mission play in this agency's day-to-day operations, e.g., explicit, unclear, or MIA entirely? How well or poorly does the organization integrate the interests of its core stakeholders around that mission? Can you recommend improvement(s)?
- **Analysis & decision making**
Did you witness a significant decision making situation during your internship? Describe the issue, the decision, the process, & the evidence used to reach it. Did the agency do the right thing, or not?
- **Public service perspective**
Describe a situation you observed in which efficiency, effectiveness, and/or equity was in play (or at stake), or did you witness a situation in which ethical standards were applied? Was a successful outcome achieved?

Section III: Cultural competence & diversity (2-4 pages)

To what extent does the organization seek to be culturally inclusive and/or integrate a diversity of experience into its operation in an active and systematic way? If so, how? If not, what obstacles to doing so did you observe?

Section IV: Your career plans (1-2 pages)

Please describe your professional goals. How has this internship experience shaped or reinforced your career ambitions?

Relating your internship experience to your coursework and to the public administration literature is a significant portion of your paper. The internship is designed to integrate your coursework both in your work at the internship and in your final paper. Apply your research skills to identify scholarly literature that is applicable to your specific internship. This is an important skill beyond graduation; in your career you will need to be able to research best practices for organizational management and for specific projects. As you identify relevant literature for your final paper, think about both the theoretical foundations and current best practices for achieving the organization's mission and day to day operations.

Course Grading

Grades will be determined as follows:

Internship Reports: 25%

Supervisor Evaluation: 25%

Final Paper: 50%

Grading will use the following scale:

Grade	Point Scale
A	4.0
A-	3.7
B+	3.3
B	3.0
B-	2.7
C+	2.3
C	2.0
C-	1.7
D+	1.3
D	1.0
F	0.0

Late work may be penalized 10% for the first day and 5% for each additional day. The grade of "incomplete" is typically not given in this course. Under unusual circumstances (severe illness, accident, etc.) an incomplete may be granted if approval is obtained in advance.

Communicating Course Announcements

I will use your Oakland University e-mail account to communicate with you. If you do not regularly check your university e-mail, you can log into webmail.oakland.edu and set your account to forward all incoming e-mails to an account that you do check regularly.

Academic Honesty

The university Academic Conduct Policy is stated in the Academic Policies and Procedures section of the catalog. Cheating on examinations, unauthorized collaboration, and plagiarism are considered serious breaches of the Academic Conduct Policy. Students determined to be in violation of the policy will be given a grade of 0.0 for the assignment.

Special Considerations

Students with disabilities who may require special considerations should make an appointment with the Office of Disability Support Services. Also, please inform me of any specific needs as close to the beginning of the semester as possible.