PSY 594: Psychology Internship

Internships are an excellent opportunity to see psychology in action in mental health, educational and research settings. All students must have 4 credits towards an internship, which is 160 hours at an internship site. For the internship, we expect you to work in a psychology-related field under the supervision of a person with at least a master’s degree in psychology or a related discipline. Regular contact with your Westminster College internship instructor is required.

Regardless of the internship experience you choose, by the end of the internship, students will be able:

1. To communicate effectively using appropriate psychological style in written reports of research and psychology applications. (PSY 5)
2. To link core scientific principles to areas of application. (PSY 6)
3. To use both convergent and divergent thinking in solving quantitative and applied problem solving tasks. (PSY 7)
4. To practice the ethics of psychology in professional and interpersonal settings. (PSY 8)
5. To establish creative linkages between psychology and other knowledge domains. (PSY 11)
6. To recognize competencies, seek opportunities for self-improvement, and actively engage in making strategic choices regarding academic and career goals. (PSY 12)

For a research internship, students will also be able:

1. To develop skills to find, evaluate and use psychological knowledge. (PSY 2)
2. To reason scientifically, applying appropriate research design and quantitative methods. (PSY 3)
3. To use technology appropriately and responsibly. (PSY 4)

These outcomes align with the psychology curricular outcomes, which can be found at [http://www.westminster.edu/acad/psych/psych_mission_outcomes.cfm](http://www.westminster.edu/acad/psych/psych_mission_outcomes.cfm).

**Within the first week of the internship, you need to send via email the following information:**

- **Description of work assignment**: After contacting your sponsoring agency, compose a brief description of your planned activities. "I will be assisting a school psychologist in evaluating learning disabled children", "I will be gathering data on children participating in an experiment on attentional deficits, etc."

- **Anticipated work schedule**: Of primary importance here is working an appropriate number of hours. Generally, students work 10 hours a week for a total of 160 hours/semester.

- **Goals**: The academic and personal benefits and the professional opportunities provided should be described.

- **Reading List**: You and I will determine your reading list together. Amounts and types of reading materials will vary depending on your internship experience and the source material we choose (i.e. books vs. published articles).
The Internship Experience

If appropriately planned, your internship experience should be both educational and worthy of college credit. Regard your internship as an apprenticeship. You should not be doing work which is primarily clerical. To guarantee things are going as they should, it is required that you contact by phone (or e-mail) your faculty instructor after the first week of your internship. Through your discussion, it can be determined if your activities are appropriate or some changes need to be made. If the internship appears unsatisfactory in any way let your Westminster instructor know. It may be more appropriate for us to attempt to rectify things for you.

On-site supervisors will vary quite a bit in how much time they are willing or able to spend with you directly. Sometimes they are concerned that they need to prepare special activities for you. You can assure them that they need not, although, many will voluntarily take special interest in you. However, it is your responsibility to arrange at least a small amount of time with the supervisor to ask questions relevant to his/her professional training and responsibilities.

Since the experience is an apprenticeship, it is essential that you understand "the psychology" of what you are doing. For example, in some cases you will be working on a day-in day-out basis with teaching staff or perhaps a lab technician. This is O.K., but such people may not be knowledgeable enough to teach you why they do what they do. It is your responsibility to seek out professional staff who can explain this to you. Such an understanding is an essential component of your internship.

As a way to help you understand what you are doing:

- You should be consulting material on your reading list. Attempting to integrate academic material with the practical experiences of the job can be a source of questions which you can bring to your on-site supervisor and other staff.
- In addition, you should request suggestions as to what else you might read.
- Many sites may have libraries which would permit access to materials that would otherwise be difficult to obtain.

Grading

Regular grading will be used for internships. Course requirements are as follows:

- **Journal (30%)**: A daily record should be kept of your on-site activities. It should include a description of how information from your college courses relates to your internship activities.
- **On-Site Evaluation (30%)**: Your on-site supervisor is responsible for writing a brief evaluation of your performance. The evaluations are sent to the Career Center who will send a copy to the faculty advisor and the student.
- **Paper (40%)**: A paper which integrates your practical experiences with academic psychology is required. It will require relating your activities to materials on your reading list (as amended during the semester). This paper will be due by the end of the last week of classes. Requirements for this paper will be provided.
Internship Survey

The Psychology Department monitors the quality of student internships. At the end of your internship experience, we will ask you to fill out a survey, which can be found at http://www.psych.westminster.edu/phpESP/public/survey.php?name=Internship_Survey_Final