

HEALTH PROMOTION AND FITNESS  
MANAGEMENT

*FIELD EXPERIENCE GUIDELINES*

***Rowan University***

*Department of Health and Exercise Science  
Esbjornson Gymnasium*

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## The Field Experience Process/Student Checklist

Check off the following steps as you complete them. Note any due dates and make sure that you observe them.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Eligibility. Only students in good academic standing who have completed the bulk of their coursework may register for field experience. If you have less than a “C” in any course in your major, you will not be able to do the internship. You must: a) meet with Mr. Pinckney to review eligibility status and b) complete the “Letter of Intent to Complete the Field Experience in HPFM”. This must be completed and submitted to Dr. Pagell by the dates below:

<u>Intended Field Experience Semester</u>	<u>Due Date*</u>
Fall	June 1
Spring	October 1
Summer	February 1

\* If date falls on a weekend, it is due the next school day (Monday)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Meet with the Field Experience Coordinator (Dr. Pagell). You must meet with Dr. Pagell to discuss your plans and obtain site approval before making any verbal or written commitments to a site.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Develop a Resume and Cover Letter. Some of you will have begun to develop your resume in other classes and can simply update it. If you have not had this opportunity, you need to create one. Drs. Pagell and Spencer are both available to help you. Also remember that the University CAP (Career and Academic Placement) Center provides help with resumes. The CAP Center may be reached at 256-4339.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Obtain/Renew Certification. All sites will require current CPR/First Aid certification, so be sure to update yours. You may also consider obtaining an additional certification in a particular area of interest, such as personal training, aerobic class instruction or in a behavior modification program. While they are not required, they will make you more marketable. The HPFM specialization now offers its own training in blood pressure and cholesterol measurement. Talk to either Dr. Pagell or Dr. Spencer if you would like more information about this.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Identify Potential Sites. Using the Guidelines for Site Selection sheet, choose 2 or 3 sites that are of interest to you. Contact them and schedule a meeting with the person who would supervise you. Offer to mail your resume and cover letter to them in advance (also take a copy with you to the interview). At the meeting, share with them the requirements for your field experience (you might want to take this packet along) and find out if they can provide a suitable experience. Ask them what they require of interns to make sure you know what will be expected of you.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Once Dr. Pagell has approved your site, present your site supervisor with the Rowan University Field Experience Contract attached at the end of this packet. have the supervisor sign the contract and then return it to Dr. Pagell. **THE CONTRACT MUST BE SIGNED BEFORE YOU BEGIN THE FIELD EXPERIENCE** and turned in four weeks prior to your start date. Rowan now offers liability insurance for its student interns, however your site may also want you to obtain additional insurance. If you are working in a clinical setting, such as cardiac/pulmonary rehab, you will need additional insurance. See the attached sheet on liability insurance for more information.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Turn in a COMPLETED Site Information Sheet to Dr. Pagell three weeks before Your start date.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Maintain Daily Logs of your activities and hours. Mail or email them to Dr. Pagell at the end of each week. Her address is Dr. Francie Pagell, HES Dept., Rowan University, 201 Mullica Hill Rd., Glassboro, NJ 08028.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Attend the Field Experience Group Meetings. During your field experience you are required to attend three meetings with Dr. Pagell and the other interns. The meetings will be held at Rowan and you will be notified of the dates and times. The first meeting will occur just before the field experience starts, the second will occur three weeks into the internship and the third will occur at the end. You will prepare a presentation of your experience to share with your classmates for the third meeting.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. With you site supervisor, identify a major project for the semester. In addition to the ongoing, daily duties of your field experience, you will also complete a major project (described later in this packet). You should identify this within the first two weeks of the internship and share it with Dr. Pagell for her approval.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Schedule the Midterm and Final Evaluations with your Site Supervisor. At the appropriate time, have your site supervisor complete the evaluation, discuss it with you, then mail it to Dr. Pagell.

## GUIDELINES FOR SITE SELECTION

Dr. Pagell maintains a current file of potential internship sites which you may look at for ideas. You are also encouraged to submit a site that hasn't been used before. If you do this, make sure you allow an extra month or two for Dr. Pagell to contact the site and interview or visit them in order to approve them.

You may choose from a wide variety of sites. Some of the more common ones include:

1. Corporate Wellness Center for employees, spouses and retirees
2. Hospital Wellness Center or program for community members, patients and/or hospital employees
3. Community Agency, such as the YMCA, American Heart Association, Dairy Council or American Lung Association.
4. Cardiac/Pulmonary Rehabilitation Center
5. Health Promotion Consulting Firm, such as Medifit or American Corporate Health Programs (ACHP), who provide services to client organizations

It's essential that the site be able to provide you with the quality experience. The following guidelines have been designed to ensure this.

1. The site must offer professional health-related services to clients or members. They should adhere to established professional guidelines for their specific discipline.
2. The site supervisor should have the necessary education and experience to effectively mentor you. They should hold a minimum of a bachelor's degree and have at least 2-3 years of post-college work experience.
3. The site should provide you with a variety of experiences to build your skills and knowledge. While all jobs include some mundane tasks, such as answering phones, folding towels and processing paperwork, this should not be the bulk of your experience. You should have daily opportunities to apply your professional skills and knowledge as you design programs, meet with clients, lead classes and perform screenings. You should have opportunities to learn new areas and develop new skills as well as practice things you already know how to do.
4. Provide enough productive work to keep you busy while you are there. You are required to work a minimum of 20 hours per week; some sites may require you to be there full-time (40 hours per week).

## REQUIREMENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THE HPFM FIELD EXPERIENCE

1. Follow the guidelines! Turn in your contract, evaluations and other forms when they are due. Make sure they are neat and complete.
2. Complete 400 verified hours at your site within one semester (fall, spring or summer). You must work a minimum of 20 hours per week, however some sites require you to be there full time (40 hours per week).
3. Maintain a Daily Log of your activities each day and thoughts/'impressions about the experience (1/2 – 1 page per day). You must also note the number of hours worked and at the end of each week have your site supervisor sign it. **Mail the Logs and Hours to Dr. Pagell each Friday.**
4. Within two weeks of starting, choose a major project for the semester. You should discuss this with your site supervisor and decide on it together. **Write a one-page description of the project and either mail or email it to Dr. Pagell.**
5. Halfway through the experience, ask your site supervisor to complete the Midterm Evaluation Form (attached to this packet). Have her/him review it with you, both of you sign it, and mail it to Dr. Pagell. Do the same thing with the Final Evaluation Form at the end of the experience. YOU are responsible for making sure this happens on time.
6. Attend the three meetings for interns conducted by Dr. Pagell at Rowan.
7. Prepare a portfolio of your experience to turn in to Dr. Pagell at the end. Throughout the semester, keep a file of your activities, logs and samples of your work to include in it. Specific instructions are given in this packet.
8. Conduct individual interviews with two executive officers or department heads in the organization to learn more about its' history, mission and expectations of health promotion. Specific instructions will follow a internship meetings.
9. Where appropriate, conduct two interviews of members/clients served by the program and two potential members who do not participate. Specific instructions are given in this packet.
10. Successfully complete your major project.

## WHAT THE STUDENT NEEDS TO TURN IN AND WHEN IT'S DUE

1. A signed Contract is due four weeks prior to the start date. If you need supplemental liability insurance, verification of this is also due with the contract. You may not begin working at the site until these are completed and turned in. Rowan provides commercial liability insurance for you at your site. To arrange for this Dr. Pagell will need to know who to send the certificate to and the precise address. Please keep Dr. Pagell informed if your agency doesn't receive the certificate which is sent directly from Rowan's insurance agent.
2. The Site Information Form is due three weeks prior to the beginning of the Field Experience.
3. Daily Logs with verified hours are mailed to Dr. Pagell each Friday.
4. A one-page description of your major project is due to Dr. Pagell as soon as you and your site supervisor select it (within two weeks of your start date).
5. The Mid-Term evaluation is due half-way through the experience (approximately the 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> Week).
6. The Final Evaluation is completed during the last week of the field experience and is due once it is completed.
7. The Final Portfolio is due at the last field experience meeting at the end of the semester.

## LIABILITY INSURANCE

Rowan University provides \$1 million in commercial liability insurance for each intern. Commercial liability covers you in the event that you damage property at the site. It does not insure you against a professional judgment error or similar mistake. You may want to purchase a professional liability insurance policy to cover this, particularly if you will be working in a clinical setting where you will be conducting screenings or assisting clients with exercise. Discuss this with your site supervisor to determine the types of coverage you need.

You can purchase reasonably-priced insurance through these agencies:

American College of Sports Medicine	(317) 637-9200
Maginnis & Associates	(800) 621-3008 ext. 105
National Strength & Conditioning Assoc.	(719) 632-6722
IDEA	(800) 999-4332

## THE FINAL PORTFOLIO

Your final portfolio is a typed, neat, and organized visual representation of your field experience. Bring it with you to the final meeting at school to turn in to Dr. Pagell. It should include the following:

1. A description of the site. You may include flyers, brochures or other materials that describe the site, its' clients and services. Include the mission statement of the organization, if possible.
2. Results of the interviews you conducted. You are required to conduct, if possible, two different types of interviews. First, you should interview separately two executive officers or department heads within the organization. The purpose is to learn more about the organization's history, significant issues it is facing, its future direction and how health promotion fits into its overall mission. Second, you should interview two health promotion members/clients and two potential members/clients who do not participate. For the members/clients, the purpose of the interview is to determine the impact that health promotion has had on the individual's life and how satisfied they are with the health promotion program. For non-participants, the purpose is to understand why they do not participate and what might motivate them to do so in the future.

The portfolio should include the questions you developed and reviewed with your site supervisor beforehand, as well as the results of each interview.

3. Description of your Major Project. You should provide a thorough discussion of your project from start to finish and include as many samples of your work on it as are feasible.

### Guidelines for the Project:

- a) It should be something that you will work on throughout the course of the semester in addition to your daily activities.
- b) It should be something for which you assume primary responsibility (with the guidance of your site supervisor) for all aspects of it from start to finish.
- c) It should be broad enough in scope to require several skills, which may include: planning, finding resources, budgeting, working with a group or committee, marketing, evaluation, computer skills, public speaking or individual counseling.

## THE FINAL PORTFOLIO continued

4. Description of Major Project continued.

- d) It should be “hands-on”. While library research may be involved, this alone does not constitute an acceptable project.

Project Examples

- a) Planning, promoting and implementing a health fair
- b) Developing a system for monitoring high-risk clients
- c) Conducting a campaign for a health observance, such as “Heart Month” or the “Great American Smoke-Out”
- d) Creating or revising an administrative system for budgeting, equipment management or member tracking
- e) Planning, promoting and leading a group educational program

5. Copies of your Midterm and Final Evaluations.

6. Copies of your Daily Logs and Hours

**7. A written reflection on the experience. Write a 2-4 page response to the field experience. Discuss what you learned, your strengths and weaknesses as a health promotion professional, what you thought of the site, things that surprised you and anything else you wish to share.**

**8. Students are also responsible for creating a PowerPoint presentation about their internship site. It should describe the facility and give a brief critique of your experience there. Also provide contact information that can be used by future interns in selecting their internship site.**

## COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID

It is possible to receive less than a “C” for the internship and have to repeat it! We don’t want this to happen to anyone, so here’s a list of potential pitfalls to avoid.

1. ***Not maintaining contact with Dr. Pagell during the internship.*** Even if your site supervisor loves your work, you won’t pass if you fail to turn in your paperwork to Dr. Pagell. Don’t become so involved with your site that you forget what is due at school.
2. ***Turning in your Contract or Liability Insurance forms late.*** Sometimes there are problems with contracts, particularly if the site has special requirements of interns. This could delay your start date. Don’t assume that a contract can be signed by all parties within a few days. Occasionally, it takes weeks or even months to iron out an agreement, particularly if it is a new site.
3. ***Not obtaining approval for your site.*** Don’t wait until a week before your desired start date to discuss your site with Dr. Pagell. If there is a problem with it, you will have to choose a new site and this could delay the internship.
4. ***Choosing a site that cannot offer you a quality experience.*** Don’t allow the site to “over-represent” itself in order to get you as an intern. Ask questions of them and clearly express your expectations. Avoid choosing a site simply because it is convenient – you will be disappointed in the long run. If there is a problem with your experience, talk to Dr. Pagell immediately.
5. ***Putting Dr. Pagell in the position of having to nag you for your paperwork.*** If you must be repeatedly reminded to turn in things, it will lower your grade. Take initiative to complete your work on time and communicate with Dr. Pagell if there are extenuating circumstances.
6. ***Putting everything off until the last minute.*** Expect delays in gaining approval, renewing certifications, finding insurance or even finding a site. Begin the process ONE YEAR before you plan to do your experience. That way, a temporary delay will not become a stressor for you.
7. ***Not doing your best work for your site.*** If your site is unhappy with your performance, they can let you go! Your site supervisor will hopefully become an important reference and resource for you as you look for a job. Make your BEST impression on them from the start.