

## Locating an Internship Experience: Step-by-Step Guidelines

1. **Let your faculty supervisor (Dr. Christine Olson [Christine.olson@smsu.edu](mailto:Christine.olson@smsu.edu)) know of your interest in enrolling in PSYC 400 Advanced Applied Psychology (Internship).**
  - Contact Dr. Olson via email and express your interest in enrolling in Advanced Applied Psychology. In your email, **please provide your 8-digit student ID so that a “permission to enroll” may be submitted to the Registration Office.** This will open up a slot for you to enroll. You will need to enroll yourself in this course (Section 01 for Psychology majors; Section 88 for CPHP majors).
  - **Review the Internship Handbook** and arrange to meet in person or correspond via phone/Zoom/email about your specific internship interests.
2. **Carefully consider what you would like to gain from the internship experience. Making use of these resources may be helpful.**
  - **O\*NET SUMMARY REPORTS:** It can be able to helpful to identify professions that relate to your long term career interests on O\*Net <https://www.onetonline.org/>. The Summary Report for a given profession (e.g., substance abuse counselor, public health educator, clinical psychologist, physical therapist) may be especially helpful because it provides a detailed list of skills and knowledge needed for that particular line of work. Highlighting skills/knowledge you would like to gain will help you to be specific about your interests as you approach potential site supervisors to express your interest in doing an internship.

EXAMPLE: Substance Abuse Counselor <https://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/21-1011.00>

- **RELEVANT PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.** Professional organizations can be very useful resources for a number of reasons. For example, they often provide the following: good overview of the nature of a given field; list of workshops, trainings, and conferences that you could take advantage of prior to and after graduation (often at a very affordable student rates); readily available network of professionals in a given line of work; lists of accredited graduate training programs; and access to job listings; and certification/licensure information. O\*Net lists relevant professional organizations at the end of their SUMMARY REPORTS. The *Occupational Outlook Handbook* <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/> can also be a useful resource for identifying relevant professional organizations. Finally, feel free to ask your site supervisor about what professional organizations you should be aware that would help you to progress in this field.

EXAMPLE: Health Educator - Here is a selecting listing or relevant professional organizations provided by O\*Net at the bottom of the Summary Report for the profession of **Health Educator** .

- [American College Health Association](#)
  - [American Nurses Association](#)
  - [American Public Health Association](#)
  - [American School Health Association](#)
- **DIVISIONS AND INTEREST GROUPS WITHIN A PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION.** Specific divisions and interest groups with a professional organization can be very useful with respect to learning about new research in a given field, upcoming training opportunities and conferences, graduate studies information, and much more!

EXAMPLE: The *American Psychological Association* (APA) currently has 54 Divisions (e.g., Health Psychology, Counseling Psychology, Community Research and Action-Community Psych, Trauma Psychology, and School Psychology <https://www.apa.org/about/division/>).

EXAMPLE: The *American Public Health Association* (APHA) has a comprehensive list of 32 “Member Sections” (e.g., mental health, maternal and child health, public health education and health promotion) <https://apha.org/apha-communities/member-sections>. Members of these sections can be excellent contacts to find out more about a given profession or learn more about possible internship experiences.

### 3. Use a variety of resources to locate a potential internship site.

It is your responsibility to locate an internship site. A number of resources may be helpful:

- SMSU Career Services Internship Resources**  
<https://www.smsu.edu/campuslife/careerservices/job-search/internship-links.html>
- SMSU Job and Internship Fairs** <https://www.smsu.edu/campuslife/careerservices/students-alumni/job-fairs.html>
- SMSU Handshake** (replace Mustangs Volunteer as resource for locating volunteer and internship opportunities) [Handshake](#) is a resource that allows our area employers to post part-time jobs, full-time jobs and internships free of charge for SMSU students. Many of our non-profit partners post volunteer positions in addition to these types of opportunities. Once your registration is approved, you will be able to post volunteer opportunities, jobs, and internships on the platform. NOTE: *Mustangs Volunteer will become inactive on Thursday, August 27, 2020*. Feel free to reach out to Melissa Scholten with any questions about this resource. at 507-537-6017 or [melissa.scholten@smsu.edu](mailto:melissa.scholten@smsu.edu).
- AmeriCorps VISTA SUMMER ASSOCIATE Program**  
<https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameri-corps/ameri-corps-programs/ameri-corps-vista>
- Forbes Top 10 Websites for Locating an Internship**  
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/susanadams/2015/01/30/the-10-best-websites-for-finding-an-internship/#1f89f811b440>
- Minnesota Psychology Association Internships** <https://www.mnpsych.org/internships>
- National Alliance for Mental Illness Internships – Minnesota** <https://namimn.org/internships/>
- State of Minnesota Internships** <https://mn.gov/mmb/careers/search-for-jobs/interns-and-student-workers/>
- 2020 Public Health Internships in Minnesota** <https://www.internships.com/public-health/minnesota>
- Selected list of sites at which psychology majors have recently attained internships** (listed alphabetically):
  - Avera Marshall Regional Medical Center** <https://www.avera.org/careers/internships/>
  - Greater Minnesota Family Services** <http://www.greatermnnesota.org/>
  - Hope Harbor** <https://hopeharbormn.org/>
  - HyVee (Human Resources)** <https://www.hy-vee.com/stores/store-management/Default.aspx?s=7>

- **Lynd Public School** <http://www.lyndschoool.org/>
- **Marshall Area YMCA** <https://marshallareaymca.org/>
- **Project Turnabout-Granite Falls** <https://www.projectturnabout.org/>
- **SMSU Center for Civic and Community Engagement**  
<https://www.smsu.edu/campuslife/civicengagement/index.html>
- **SMSU Office of Diversity and Inclusion**  
<https://www.smsu.edu/administration/diversityinclusion/index.html>
- **Southwest Health and Human Services Internships** <http://swmhhs.com/about-us/internship-opportunities/>
- **Western Mental Health** <https://wmhcinc.org/>

4. **Contact potential site(s) and express your interest in doing an internship.**

- Review descriptive materials of the site(s) that you are considering so that you can get a better sense of what resources you are able to offer the site, what types of experiences you may have there, and what populations are served by the site.
- Update your resume and print a few copies so you have them on hand for in-person contacts.
- Call and/or email site staff to arrange for meeting with staff member(s) who assumes responsibility for supervising interns.
- It can be a good idea to include the following as you discuss your interest in doing an internship at a given site:
  - i. “I am \_\_\_\_\_, and I am currently majoring in \_\_\_\_\_.”
  - ii. “The Psychology Program requires that psychology majors complete a 120 hour internship (two for CPHP majors, total of 240 hrs).”
  - iii. “I understand that you may not have a specific office or staff member designated for interns, and that is okay. I am interested in speaking with someone who may be willing to explore the possibility of having me work here from \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_ (time frame) and serve as supervisor.”
  - iv. “I want to be a resource for you, while also gaining experience with \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, etc.”
  - v. “The SMSU Psychology Program has an Internship Handbook that provides an overview of requirements for majors within the Program, along with all necessary paperwork. It also includes a mid-evaluation and final evaluation that site supervisors are asked to complete.”
  - vi. “The Internship Handbook may be found on the SMSU Psychology Program website <https://www.smsu.edu/academics/programs/psychology/index.html>. Also, feel free to contact Dr. Olson with any questions you may have: [Christine.olson@smsu.edu](mailto:Christine.olson@smsu.edu); 507-530-0928.”
  - vii. “Thanks very much for your time. I can be reached at \_\_\_\_\_.”

5. **Internship sites are NOT limited to given organization or establishment.** It is important to note that internships are not limited to a given organization or establishment. For example, students may seek an internship with a community coalition focused on an area of interest to you e.g., Marshall, MN HEALTHY 56258 network. In other words, students may opt to work with a member/leader of a community coalition to identify a given concern and create an internship that would fit within the 120 hour time frame (for 3 credits) or 240 time frame (for 6 credits). If this option is pursued, an individual affiliated with the coalition or initiative would need to agree to serve as your primary supervisor.

6. **Volunteer/service databases can be great starting point for identifying internships opportunities!** Keep in mind that organizations that provide information about service/volunteer opportunities through regional, state, and/or national databases are often quite responsive to students expressing an interest in adapting what is typically a service experience into an internship experience.

7. Once an internship opportunity has been located, complete the **Internship Contract** and the **Student Training Experience/Internship Agreement: Student Responsibilities and General Understandings**. Attain the necessary signatures and submit to submit it to Dr. Olson PRIOR to starting your internship.
- The **Internship Contract** and the **Student Training Experience/Internship Agreement: Student Responsibilities and General Understandings** may be found in the Appendix section of your Internship Handbook.
  - Be sure to attach a specific description of the internship experience. You will need to collaborate with the Site Supervisor while developing this contract.
  - Be sure that you have attained all necessary signatures prior to submitting forms to Dr. Olson.

## Community Psychology and Health Promotion Majors

### ADDITIONAL EXPECTATIONS FOR INTERNSHIP

Community Psychology and Health Promotion interns are required to complete the equivalent of two (2) internships. You may opt to complete two entirely separate internships, each requiring a 120 hour time commitment, or you may opt for doing an extensive internship for 240 hours at the same site or with the same group/community coalition. The guidelines and expectations described in this *SMSU Psychology Program Internship Handbook* all apply. **IN ADDITION, for at least one of your internship experiences, you will need to provide evidence of having engaged in at least 30 hours (i.e., one quarter of the 120 hours required) of one or more of the following applied learning experiences: needs assessment, program development, program evaluation, and/or grant writing.** Fulfilling this portion of the internship may take the form of becoming involved with some initiative already in progress (e.g., local YMCA is conducting a community needs assessment and you assist with this, Marshall Area HEALTHY 56258 health promotion coalition is in the process of writing a grant seeking federal funding and you assist with this). Alternately, you may initiate one or more of these community resource development/evaluation efforts (e.g., you develop a short structured questionnaire at a not-for-profit agency to assess how the agency might better meet the needs of clientele served) or you may start a new program and include a short evaluation of that program.

Feel free to contact the Faculty Internship Supervisor, Dr. Christine Olson ([christine.olson@smsu.edu](mailto:christine.olson@smsu.edu)), to further clarify how this requirement may be met. Evidence of having completed this requirement should be included in your Portfolio.

Resources below may be helpful for you as you plan for meeting this requirement.

#### Community-Based Prevention and Program Evaluation Resources

<https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/toolkits/health-promotion/4/types-of-evaluation>

#### Corporation for National and Community Services (variety of community development resources)

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources>

#### Needs Assessment

Community Action Partnership – Needs Assessment Resources

[https://communityactionpartnership.com/publication\\_toolkit/community-needs-assessment-resource-guide/](https://communityactionpartnership.com/publication_toolkit/community-needs-assessment-resource-guide/)

**The Community Toolbox** – Wide variety of grant writing, needs assessment, and program evaluation resources (very accessible!) <https://ctb.ku.edu/en> <https://ctb.ku.edu/en/applying-for-grants>

## CORONAVIRUS CONSIDERATIONS

### Updated Fall 2020

During this pandemic time, arranging for an internship experience will likely take more creativity and require more latitude with respect to what counts as an internship for liberal arts based majors, such as psychology and community psychology/health promotion majors. Thankfully, we are typically able to consider a wider range of alternatives than professional training programs such as social work and education. With this in mind, please review the following means by which an internship can be set up. Feel free to contact me, Dr. Christine Olson, to talk through any of these options.

- 1) **Traditional site-based approach:** Student approaches given site (e.g., Project Turnabout, Western Mental Health) and expresses interest in doing an internship at that site. Sites may be local and require on-site work OR they may be virtual. Each site will vary with respect to availability of internships that allow one to work remotely.
- 2) **Service/Volunteer Opportunity Adapted to Internship Experiences.** Student locates site for which there are service/volunteer opportunities (e.g., Marshall Area YMCA), and asks if it might be possible to work out a 120 internship experience. See previous section on Locating an Internship Experience:

**Volunteer/service databases can be great starting point for identifying internships opportunities!** Keep in mind that organization that provide information about service/volunteer opportunities through regional, state, and/or national databases are often quite responsive to students expressing an interest in adapting what is typically a service experience into an internship experience (pg. 12 of this *Handbook*)

Links for volunteer service databases that may be helpful:

### VOLUNTEER DATABASES: Regional and National

- **SMSU Center for Civic and Community Engagement – Volunteering**  
<https://www.smsu.edu/campuslife/civicingagement/types/volunteering.html>
- **SMSU Center for Civic and Community Engagement – Career Resources for Making a Difference** <https://www.smsu.edu/campuslife/civicingagement/career-resources.html>
- **Sioux Falls and greater South Dakota Resource/Volunteer link – HELPLINE CENTER**  
<https://www.helplinecenter.org/when-disaster-strikes/>
- **Twin Cities, Minnesota – HANDS ON Volunteer link** <https://www.handsontwincities.org/>
- **Corporation for National and Community Service NATIONALSERVE.GOV – Ten Ways to Safely Serve Your Community During COVID-19** <https://www.nationalservice.gov/serve>
- **Idealist -** <https://www.idealists.org/en/careers/help-others-coronavirus>
  - **How to Get Involved with Virtual Volunteering** <https://www.idealists.org/en/careers/how-to-virtual-volunteering>
  - **Nine Ways to Help Others During the Coronavirus Pandemic**  
<https://www.idealists.org/en/careers/help-others-coronavirus>
- **Points of Light -** <https://www.pointsoflight.org/virtual-volunteering-opportunities/>
- **VolunteerMatch -** Matches volunteers with service needs in one's region; coronavirus service opportunities (includes virtual service opportunities) <https://www.volunteermatch.org/covid19>

- 3) **Community Development/Community Coalition Based Internship.** Student approaches community coalition working on a social issue important to you (e.g., Marshall Healthy 56258) and expresses interest in assisting coalition through arranging for an internship experience with the coalition. In this case, students will need to identify one individual involved with the coalition to serve as supervisor. See previous section on Locating an Internship Experience:

**Internship sites are NOT limited to given organization or establishment.** It is important to note that internships are not limited to a given organization or establishment. For example, students may seek an internship with a community coalition focused on an area of interest to you e.g., Marshall, MN HEALTHY 56258 network. In other words, students may opt to work with a member/leader of a community coalition to identify a given concern and create an internship that would fit within the 120-hour time frame (for 3 credits) or 240 time frame (for 6 credits). If this option is pursued, an individual affiliated with the coalition or initiative would need to agree to serve as your primary supervisor. (pg. 13 of this *Handbook*)

- 4) **Creating Option for Program Evaluation/Research/Literature Review, in Collaboration with Site Supervisor and Faculty Supervisor.** Internship descriptions may be created/adapted to include responsibilities that could be done remotely. For example, an intern working with Western Mental Health could suggest expanding resource list for clients experiencing eating disorder related problems, or an intern working at the YMCA could suggest collecting data about the YMCA Child Care Center from parents, with intent of enhancing delivery of childcare services. Whatever is worked out, all parties (intern, site supervisor and faculty supervisor would need agree to arrangement).