Gerontology MA Internship Guidelines

Purpose
The purpose of the internship is to provide students with applied training and skills that will assist them to reach their employment and career goals. Students lacking relevant work experience will supplement their MA program training with an internship by working in a position of responsibility for a maximum of one semester.

Procedure
Around the middle to end of the second semester, students email the Graduate Program Assistant (Roslyn McKoen) and ask for an appointment to meet with the Internship Committee (IC). The IC is comprised of the Department Chair (Habib Chaudhury) and the Senior Supervisor. Students should provide at least two weeks’ notice and attach a current CV to the email request as it is important that the committee be able to determine the type, level, and duration of past work experience. The IC will determine whether the student is to complete a full internship (300 – 350 hours), a partial internship (150 – 200 hours) or if a waiver is to be granted.

Internship Criteria
The internship is a paid or unpaid position in which the individual learns the skills related to a position of responsibility related to their gerontology program concentration. A position of responsibility is one in which the individual is in a supervisory, managerial, or other key role. Examples include: interning with a manager of health region; working with a director of a seniors centre to learn all aspects of their job; or learning the job of a VP in charge of developing senior’s complexes.

BE PROACTIVE! It is expected that the student play an active role in finding a suitable placement, which may include contacting agencies recommended by the IC. The IC will provide suggestions and networking support. There are also appropriate internship opportunities that arise periodically, especially in the spring and summer, that are circulated to the graduate student email list-serve by the department. The internship does not need to be a paid position, but an hourly wage is common.

Research Internships
Under special circumstances, students may be allowed to meet their internship requirements by leading a research project that involves connections with one or more community agencies. This work will typically be a position of responsibility beyond a Research Assistant position, in which the student is working on a large research project; is in a supervisory role; learns all phases of research (i.e., the Research Coordinator’s position); and is involved in working with community agencies working in the area of gerontology or aging.
**Approval of Site and Site Supervisor**
An Internship Approval Form can be found in your orientation binder or can be obtained from the Graduate Program Assistant. The Approval Form is to be completed by the site supervisor and the student and signed by the student’s senior supervisor before the internship begins. The form is then returned to the Graduate Program Assistant.

**Evaluation**
Students must submit a work log signed by the site supervisor. The work log should indicate the dates and hours worked and the total number of hours completed. The student and the site supervisor are each required to complete two evaluation reports, an interim evaluation a few weeks after the internship is started and a final evaluation near the end of the internship. There is no grade or course credit assigned to the internship, however students may wish to obtain a letter of reference from the site supervisor.

**Responsibilities of Student During Internship**
The student is responsible for researching and locating an internship site and site supervisor and for completing the duties outlined on the internship approval form. Students will behave in a professional manner and will comply with agency policies regarding conduct, respect of client and agency confidentiality and any relevant policies as outlined by the internship site supervisor.

The student will maintain regular contact with the internship site supervisor and will advise the site supervisor of any difficulties, questions or if further instruction or assistance is required. The student may also contact their senior supervisor should the need arise.

**Academic Integrity**
It is also expected that students adhere to SFU university regulations on academic honesty/integrity with regard to any written work (e.g., reports, literature reviews, etc.) that is produced and/or submitted to that organization as part of the internship requirements (refer to: http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/student/s10-01.html).

**Responsibilities of the Internship Supervisor**
The internship supervisor (the student’s senior supervisor) is responsible for completing the internship approval form and providing assistance and supervision to the student as required. The internship supervisor will maintain regular contact with the student and will ensure that the work log is completed and submitted to the student advisor, along with the interim and final evaluations.

**Completion of the Internship**
The internship requirement must be fulfilled prior to graduation. The internship requirement will be considered complete when the number of specified hours have been worked and work logs and evaluations have been submitted to the student advisor. The student and the internship site supervisor will receive written confirmation that the internship has been completed.

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