

Gerontology 798 Internship in Gerontology

Course Syllabus

Goals of the Course. The course provides students with an opportunity for a guided practical experience in conducting policy research or policy analysis in one of a variety of possible settings. The aim is to strengthen the student's knowledge and skills that have been acquired through formal instruction.

Approach. Students may enroll for one to three credits in any term. While there is no limit to the number of semesters in which students may enroll in the course, only three internship credits may be applied to the Ph.D. degree requirements. Internships typically will be 14 weeks in duration. The number of credits associated with a particular internship will be based upon the scope of both the work experience and the student learning plan. In individual cases, the determination of the number of credits to be awarded for a particular assistantship will be judged by the course instructor in consultation with the Graduate Program Director. Internships may be either paid or unpaid.

Students will be placed by matching the analytic needs of host organizations with student skills and interests. Students will be placed only in settings in which an on-site supervisor is present who is qualified to participate in the development, monitoring, and assessment of the student learning plan. The instructor, on-site supervisor, and student will develop a work plan that will include the aim of the project proposed for the student, the methods to be employed, the effort expected, the product anticipated, and the time frame for project completion. The plan will also include the educational aims for the student, the means through which the work experience is expected to lead to achievement of the educational aims, and the method through which the achievement of educational aims will be measured. The instructor, on-site supervisor, and student will all be expected to assent to the work plan.

Students will communicate with the instructor regularly during the semester according to a schedule established by the instructor. In addition, the instructor will communicate intermittently with the on-site supervisor to assure that the work and educational plans are being faithfully implemented.

Academic Credit. The contact hours expected required for each credit will vary according to the intensity of the analytic activity involved. Internship assignments requiring more highly intense, more highly demanding analytic activity will merit academic credit with fewer contact hours than assignments in which the analytic work is less demanding. Determination of the number of academic credits achieved through a particular internship assignment will be made by the Graduate Program Director based upon evidence provided by the student, agency supervisors, and the supervising faculty member. Within this framework, the following guidelines will be used to determine the number of credits which are to be awarded for internships with average analytic demands:

50 contact hours	1 credit
100 contact hours	2 credits
150 contact hours	3 credits

Approval by GPD. Proposed internships will be subject to the approval of the Graduate Program Director. The GPD will evaluate the potential learning experience for students, the adequacy of arrangements for on-site supervision, the adequacy of proposed faculty supervision, and the student's potential to complete the required work.

Assessment. Completed internships will be evaluated upon the following criteria:

1. Completion by the student of assignments expected by the host organization. (The on-site supervisor will certify completion of expected tasks.)
2. Completion of the expected contact hours. (The on-site supervisor will report on the number of contact hours spent at the host organization; the faculty supervisor will evaluate the intensity of the effort required to complete the assigned tasks.)
3. Completion of a paper concerned with the internship experience. The paper will summarize the substantive work accomplished through the internship and the knowledge gained by the student through the internship about policy research or policy analysis. (The paper will be evaluated by the faculty supervisor.)

The faculty supervisor will have final responsibility for evaluation of the student's work. If there is a question about the adequacy of the student's work, the faculty supervisor may consult with the GPD.

Students will receive credit only when all three of the conditions specified above have been satisfied.

The SATISFACTORY grade will be used in this course when student performance meets expectations.