

I. INTRODUCTION

The Department of Physical Education, Exercise Science and Human Performance (PESH) at Winthrop University requires that each Exercise Science major complete a 12-credit internship experience (EXSC495) as part of an agency in order to meet the requirements for the Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science. The internship is the culminating experience in the program and provides students the opportunity to acquire invaluable work experience in exercise science. Interns have the opportunity to apply the procedures, theories, techniques and skills they have mastered in the classroom to a work experience in the field of exercise science.

The internship requirement includes a minimum at least 560 hours with a University approved placement. If at all possible, the internship placement site will be decided during the term prior to the internship placement, so that both the placement site and the University have time to plan for the supervision of the intern.

Exercise Science interns have the opportunity to complete the internship in a clinical setting and interns are encouraged to seek a variety of administrative experiences to accompany this experience. The exercise science program at Winthrop University has been designed to provide interns with the knowledge of movement, responses and adaptations to exercise, theoretical background in areas pertaining to health and human behaviors, nutrition, diet and weight control, and health promotion. All interns take a wide variety of courses that address each of these specific areas and include anatomy, physiology, kinesiology, exercise and nutrition prescriptions, and strength and conditioning. Goals of the University are to produce students who will be: 1) computer literate in all types of technology; 2) flexible and adaptable in handling changing roles; 3) self-starters working within a strong ethical framework; 4) able to demonstrate global awareness; 5) able to demonstrate effective oral and written communication skills; 6) able to demonstrate the ability to function and work with diverse populations. Students should seek opportunities that will allow them to demonstrate their competency in each of the goal areas.

The internship experience provides the intern with practical experience needed for success in the competitive job market. Understanding the applications to exercise science professions, serving a variety of clients, and learning is enhanced by the opportunities for hands-on experience and maximized when qualified professionals provide supervision.

The internship experience is also designed to allow the intern to grow professionally, to identify strengths and weaknesses, to apply theory to practical situations, and to gain an appreciation of the role, duties, responsibilities, and nature of the work that has been chosen as a career.

Interns should seek organizations staffed by qualified professionals. Qualified staff professionals will allow interns to hone their professional skills in the workplace while providing much needed guidance and insight into the exercise science field. Some of the recommended qualities of such Exercise Science organizations should include:

1. Reputation – Choose organizations that have regional, national, or global reputations for excellence.
2. Qualified Personnel – Seek information about the professional background and education of the person for whom you will be working.
3. Goal Orientation – Seek information regarding the current and future goals of the placement site for which you are applying.

A. Mission Statement

The mission of the Exercise Science internship at Winthrop University is to provide students with opportunities to test classroom theories, concepts, methods and techniques in realistic situations. The internship experience is the culmination of the professional curriculum based on classroom lectures and exercises, on-site observations, and supervised leadership experiences.

B. Goals and Objectives

The primary goal of the internship is to provide for students a transitional work experience, from university training to a professional career, through field experiences gained in the exercise science setting. In addition, students will gain valuable experiences in management and administration.

The following objectives will be met through the internship experience:

1. Interns will be able to field test knowledge, skills, and leadership styles, as well as gain first-hand experience in supervision and administration.

2. Interns will be able to develop professional behaviors under the guidance of a professional.
3. Interns will reflect on strengths and weaknesses in their performances.
4. Interns will demonstrate computer literacy.
5. Interns will demonstrate effective verbal and written communication skills.
6. Interns will demonstrate ethical decision-making skills.
7. Interns will demonstrate flexibility and adaptability while performing their assigned duties.
8. Interns will complete assignments without supervision.
9. Interns will demonstrate their ability to work in various capacities with diverse populations.
10. Interns will determine their degree of commitment to the field, as well as their personal career planning skills.

II. INTERN CONSIDERATIONS

Every exercise science major will complete an internship in an area related to career goals. Explanations and examples of internship processes and procedures are provided in this handbook. It is important to recognize, however, that an internship is a privilege that carries distinct responsibilities. To begin, internships are available only to students carrying a minimum 2.50 grade point average (GPA). Secondly, students will only be placed in positions if they have demonstrated maturity, competence, and reliability, both in the classroom and in activity. Finally, because of the competitive selection process, students must realize that they may not secure their top choices of internships. **It is the student's responsibility to find available and appropriate internship sites. The student will not contact a perspective site until it has been approved by the university supervisor.** Sources of information are abundant. Students can investigate resources for internship settings by networking with professionals and fellow students, talking to faculty members, and contacting volunteer and community clinical setting programs. The time to begin exploring possible placements is the semester before, and in some cases one year before, the scheduled internship.

Due to the competitive nature of the industry, prospective interns must recognize that the pool of candidates for various internships will be highly competitive. Candidates

will come from the growing number of exercise science programs throughout the country (and the world) and will also come from other disciplines such as business administration, public policy, mass communications, journalism, and other established professions. Therefore, it is extremely important that you represent Winthrop University, the Exercise Science program, and yourself in the most positive and professional manner when seeking a placement.

Students completing internships must remember that performance on the job can either enhance or hinder their career objectives. Eagerness, reliability, positive attitude, and responsibility will always be in demand. An internship presents the student with the opportunity to establish a reputation for these qualities. Students who carefully plan and successfully complete meaningful internships will have a better chance of launching a successful career in the Exercise Science industry.

Success depends on the intern's appropriate and efficient completion of assigned duties. Internship sites have a regular job to perform and must maintain their reputation for professional services. Sites cannot tolerate inefficiency, irresponsibility, or actions that might impact the public/client's confidence in their ability. During the internship, the intern is a functional part of the organization. What the intern does reflects the policies and standards of both the site and the University. The intern must be committed to professional conduct in all phases of her/his internship assignment.

A. Financial Consideration

Students need to plan ahead financially as well as academically. Some internships may provide a salary or an hourly wage, but many of the best internship opportunities provide no compensation whatsoever. Internships need to be considered on the merits and opportunities for potential learning experiences. More important than the immediate financial rewards, an internship is an investment in the future of the student. The skills learned, contacts made, and references obtained should be the prime consideration in the selection of the internship. For these reasons, financial planning is very important before a student selects a placement.

B. Eligibility

Students normally do an internship after all coursework has been completed. In addition, the following criteria must be met:

1. The student must have completed 110 credit hours of coursework with a minimum of a 2.50 GPA in all required exercise science coursework.
2. Successful completion of BIOL307/308 with minimum C- in courses.
3. Advisor and faculty approval.
4. The student will complete the Internship Application (Appendix B), provide a signed copy of the Insurance Acknowledgement Form (Appendix A), and the Internship Contract (Appendix C). All forms must be submitted prior to beginning the internship experience and submitted to the university supervisor.

C. Intern Responsibilities

The student will:

1. Contact your placement site supervisor after the site has accepted you as an intern.
2. Attend all individual and group meetings called by the university supervisor.
3. File all forms and reports on time with the proper recipients.
4. Report to the placement and site supervisor on the date specified by the site. Students may begin the internship on whatever date is most appropriate for the effective training and initiation for the placement site. The intern must be in continual contact with the university supervisor. If the intern fails to report on a weekly basis, hours completed during the week will not count towards the 560 required hours.
5. Meet with the site supervisor weekly to discuss and document progress or problems.
6. Become thoroughly acquainted with the structure, operation, functions, and policies of the site, and abide by all regulations of the site.
7. Notify your site supervisor and university supervisor as soon as it becomes evident that you will be unable to report to work.
8. Support the site and its staff in any contacts with the public and/or client groups.
9. Be properly groomed and appropriately dressed on all occasions. When in doubt, ask the site supervisor.
10. Conduct all actions, both on and off the job, in a professional manner.

11. Plan assignments and presentations well in advance.
12. Promptly seek help from your site supervisor or university supervisor if problems arise.
13. Write a “Thank You” letter at the completion of your internship, and submit a copy to the university supervisor.
14. The intern should obtain appropriate permission for spending any agency funds or any personal monies for which reimbursement is expected.
15. The intern must report to the university supervisor any circumstance or situation that may be perceived by the intern to display unfair treatment, including sexual harassment, on the part of any agency staff member or patron.

D. Intern Assignments

1. Submit the Insurance Acknowledgment Form (Appendix A), Internship Experience Application (Appendix B), and Internship Contract (Appendix C).
2. Keep a Bi-Weekly Log (Appendix E) of activities and duties performed at the internship site and submit the log to the University Internship Supervisor every two weeks. Failure to submit this weekly report will result in the loss of hours completed during the unreported time period.
3. Write weekly reflections on your perceptions of the various experiences during the week. These reflections should go beyond the reporting of your duties and center on your feelings about the experience, how the experience is or is not meeting your expectations, and provide evidence of insightful and thoughtful thinking about your internship. See Appendix F in the back of this handbook for a description of the contents of a reflection. These reflections are to be submitted with your Bi-Weekly Logs.
4. Submit a midterm (due date: _____) and final evaluation (due date: _____) of your performance, signed by the site supervisor (Appendix G). This evaluation is shared between the university supervisor, the site supervisor, and the intern.
5. Submit a Mid-Semester Internship Evaluation (Appendix H) of your progress and experience. (due date: _____)
6. Arrange meetings between the University and site supervisors.

7. Complete a Final Intern Evaluation (Appendix I). Comments made will not be communicated to the site without your permission. The information provided on the form will be used to guide the placement of future interns at the site. (due date:_____)
8. Submit the Exercise Science University Supervisor Evaluation (Appendix J) during the last week of the internship. This evaluation form will not be shared with the university supervisor until the end of the academic year. No evaluation will be shared with the university supervisor until the supervisor has at least five returned evaluations from interns. At no time will the University supervisor see the original evaluation from the student. All information will appear in aggregate format based on at least five evaluations. All evaluation feedback is completely confidential and the university supervisor will not be able to identify the source of any comment. (due date:_____)
9. Submit an indexed notebook detailing the organization and operation of the site at the completion of the internship. Included will be a detailed list of suggestions for possible future interns to use. An outline for the notebook is included in Appendix K and L. (due date: _____).
10. Interns should complete a letter of appreciation to the site supervisor no more than one week after completing the internship. Provide a duplicate copy to the University Internship Supervisor.

E. Grading

Grading will be on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. The university supervisor will assign the grade. Site evaluations as well as the quality and promptness of the various assignments will be considered in the final grade. Communication is a key component in the internship program. The caliber and promptness of the various assignments will be a key component of the final grade evaluation.

III. AGENCY CONSIDERATIONS

In accepting an intern, the placement site is helping to prepare future professionals in the field of Exercise Science. The internship experience is a joint project of the University and the site. The site supervisor must be willing to participate in an

educational process and be vested in the learning experience of the intern. The site supervisor will be the role model for the intern and can be a major influence on the intern's professional development.

A. Benefits of the Internship Program to the Profession

1. Provides the graduates of professional curricula with a better insight into the operations of Exercise Science organizations and prepares them to be more effective professionals.
2. Compares the site's practices with what interns have learned in the classroom.
3. Provides a mechanism whereby the profession can screen future members prior to their full-time employment.

B. Benefits of the Internship Program to the Site

1. Contributes to the education and preparation of future professionals.
2. Allows the site to broaden its base of service by utilizing the intern and University resources.
3. Interns bring new information to the site.
4. Stimulates the site's professional staff and strengthens the in-service development program.
5. Provides the site with an opportunity to evaluate prospective staff candidates for potential employment.

C. Agency Selection and Intern Placement

The University is responsible for the review and selection of sites, and ultimately the approval of interns to the sites. When feasible, the University encourages a site representative to visit the campus and interview prospective internship program candidates as part of the placement process. Funds used in the University representative's visit to sites with interns are derived from University resources.

In order to live within these financial limitations, the University endeavors to place its interns with sites in geographic proximity to the University, if the standards of quality are not contravened. Distant locations are considered if they represent outstanding programs or if cooperative agreements can be established with faculty from

nearby University. Supervisory visits by University personnel will be infrequent at distant locations, but frequent discussions via phone calls or emails will occur.

D. Financial Considerations

Two financial factors will be considered before a site decides to join the internship program.

1. The University encourages the site to pay the intern a salary or wage sufficient to cover modest living expenses in the area. This may be expressed in dollars per week or per month. It may include lodging with a stipend to cover food, travel, and uniforms where necessary. In short, the intern should at least meet expenses for the term in which s/he is employed. (The intern is normally expected to pay all tuition and fees, transportation to and from the site, and for materials required by the University.)
2. The site must be prepared to absorb any of the costs incurred by the site supervisor of the intern.

E. Agency Intern Supervision

It is requested that the site supervisor or a designated representative have weekly conferences with the intern to discuss definite means to help the intern gain desirable experiences. This part of the internship should also help the intern understand the total concept of the site through the discussion of actual problems and situations in as many areas of operation as possible. During these meetings, assistance may also be given in helping the intern prepare the notebook that the University requires.

Agency areas of operation (where appropriate) include the following:

1. Administration – The intern should study and observe in action the policies and practices of the site. This would include the legal status of the site, board-staff relations, budgeting and record-keeping procedures, personnel and supervisory practices, and general staff relations.
2. Program Services – The intern should help plan a broad program of activities, events, and/or services characteristic of the site involved, and be involved in helping to carry out those programs and services.

3. Planning and Facilities – The intern should gain practical experience in facility planning and operation. This would include experiences in long range planning as well as the layout and operation of facilities and areas used in on-going programs or events.
4. Maintenance – The intern should be scheduled and assigned to various operations to provide a number of learning experiences in the area of maintenance management and operations.
5. General Experiences – The intern should gain experience in dealing with public relations problems, attend board and/or other community meetings, and work with committees during the internship experience.

F. Agency Responsibilities

The site responsibilities are to:

1. Appoint a site supervisor to work with the intern(s).
2. Complete and return all reports on the intern to the University. The site supervisor will complete an Agency Placement Confirmation (Appendix D) and a midterm and final evaluation of the intern's performance (Appendix G). A constructive evaluation of the intern as if s/he were employed by the site is desired. All evaluations are confidential among the agency, the intern, and the university supervisor. Often, it will be necessary to complete a final evaluation prior to the official termination of the internship experience, so that students can be provided a grade for the academic term. Completion of an evaluation form on the supervision provided by the university supervisor (Appendix M) is also requested. A self-addressed envelope will be provided for your convenience. The evaluation is returned to the Department Chair and will be kept confidential.
3. Orient the site staff to the objectives of the internship. Provide staff members guidance regarding her/his role in the internship experience.
4. Present the intern to the site staff in such a manner as to ensure high professional status.
5. Orient the intern to the site and the surrounding community.

6. Provide for meetings between the site supervisor and the intern at which time the intern and the supervisor will have an opportunity to discuss any issues regarding the intern's performance.
7. Provide a variety of experiences for the intern as appropriate for the site. Also, provide access to various forms and information that the intern will use to build a comprehensive knowledge of the organizational function of the site. The information will also be used to complete the Internship Notebook that will be submitted to the University.
8. Notify the University immediately when situations occur that would warrant intervention by the University.
9. Notify the University when an intern needs to be removed when her/his performance or behavior is unsatisfactory and/or detrimental to the site, and remedial alternatives have been exhausted.
10. Notify the University supervisor immediately if the intern is experiencing difficulty with the internship. If an internship is discontinued or significantly interrupted, a record of this action must be recorded as an addendum in the internship contract. The addendum must be signed and dated by both the University supervisor and the site supervisor.

IV. UNIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

A. Responsibilities to the Agency:

1. Meet or correspond with the site supervisor to clarify the expectations of the University for participating agencies. Provide advice and guidance for mentoring and assessing the intern's performance.
2. Interpret the internship program to new agencies and clarify their roles and responsibilities.
3. Regularly meet and correspond with the site supervisor to discuss the intern's performance and agency's satisfaction with the intern. If an internship is discontinued or significantly interrupted, a record of this action must be recorded as an addendum on the internship contract. The addendum must be signed and dated by both the university supervisor and the site supervisor.

B. Responsibilities to the Intern:

1. Meet with students enrolled in EXSC 495 to introduce the Internship Program and review the Internship Handbook.
2. Conduct conferences with student for the purpose of determining student eligibility and readiness for undertaking the internship assignment. Advise and direct the student's selection process based upon the agency and assignment best suited to the needs and interests of the intern.
3. Approve the selection of an agency as an internship location based upon discussion with the intern and site supervisor. Insure that the Insurance Acknowledgement Form (Appendix A), Internship Application (Appendix B), Internship Contract (Appendix C), and Agency Placement Confirmation (Appendix D) are in intern's file.
4. Regularly meet with the intern, on and off-site, to review the intern's journal and discuss issues regarding performance of the assignments.
5. Receive and review intern's Bi-Weekly Logs and reflective narratives.
6. Receive the Midterm and Final Performance Evaluations (Appendix G) from the site supervisor.
7. Receive from the intern his/her completed Mid-Semester Internship Evaluation (Appendix H)
8. Receive from the intern, notification as to the final date of the internship and arrange a final visit or contact with both the intern and the site supervisor.
9. Receive from the intern a completed Final Internship Evaluation (Appendix I) and the intern's final report, placing both in the intern's file.
10. Advise the intern on the assembly and organization of the final project materials (Appendix K and L)
11. Maintain Assignment Checklist (Appendix N) detailing the intern's completed assignments.