***James Madison University***

**NPS 400 – Internship in Nonprofit Studies**

***Spring 2022***

***Course Info:***

Meet as needed, individually

***Instructor:***

Terry Fernsler, MNPL, PhD

[fernslts@jmu.edu](mailto:fernslts@jmu.edu)

(540) 568-5257

***Office Hours:***

By appointment (use email to schedule)

HBS 2071 or Zoom

Please note that I frequently do not answer the phone and let it go to voice mail, which in turn goes directly to email, so if you expect an immediate response you may be out of luck. Try to plan ahead. The preferred method of contact is email to which I nearly always respond within 24 hours.

***Course Description:***

This course is a supervised internship/practicum experience in a nonprofit organization setting that allows experiential learning and practice. The student selects the organization and meets with the instructor for approval of the project. Academic products include a board analysis, an agency analysis, a research or applied paper, learning journal, and presentation based on the experience. The student should be responsible for at least one project (which may be supervised) during the internship.

***Course Objectives:***

The internship is designed to:

* Connect classroom learning to experience in the nonprofit sector
* Connect major and minor fields of study
* Enhance and develop abilities to work in the nonprofit sector
* Gain first-hand knowledge of an aspect of the nonprofit sector
* Improve critical thinking and problem-solving skills
* Explore career options in the nonprofit sector.

***Learning Objectives:***

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

* Demonstrate the connection between the classroom and work in a nonprofit organization
* Demonstrate the connection between the major field of study and the nonprofit minor
* Conduct an agency and board analysis
* Demonstrate knowledge of nonprofit management issues
* Demonstrate critical thinking and problem-solving skills in an applied setting
* Identify and discuss nonprofit effectiveness at various levels
* Discover career options in the nonprofit sector

***Requirements***

***Basic requirements:***

1. Students are allowed to enroll in NPS 400 only after they have completed NPS 300. Completing NPS 320 and an approved major elective are strongly recommended.

2. To earn four credits, 160 hours of work over the semester is required. Preparation of academic assignments may be included in the required hours.

***Prior to beginning an internship:***

1. Students must submit their draft work plan or job description, worked out with site organization, to include at a minimum the guidelines found in the Internship Work Program Outline (see page 8 of this syllabus if guidance is needed), to the course instructor prior to the beginning of the internship unless a later due date is approved by the instructor. (Work Program Outlines will be accepted up to 3:00 p.m. on Friday, May 20; late acceptance to an internship should be submitted no later than 11:59 p.m. on Thursday, May 27).

2. Students must secure written approval for their internship. Therefore, the sooner the student sets up this meeting, the quicker the internship can begin.

***During the internship:***

1. Students are required to keep a journal discussing *what they expect to learn*, their *internship duties*, *what they are learning and observing*, and how it is *relevant to what was learned* in the Nonprofit Studies Minor and their major. There are six required entries and one final summary entry, totaling seven (7). Each entry should be submitted via Canvas upon completion, not all at once. While the journal entries are based on learning, it is recommended that entries be submitted approximately every two weeks.

2. The Community Agency Analysis paper is due before 80 hours are completed unless otherwise negotiated with the instructor. Regardless of hours completed, this paper is due no later than July 29 (unless the instructor agrees to special arrangements). This assignment combines an *analysis of the internship setting* and the *organization’s mission* and the *target community (from a service or geographic perspective) it serves*. The goal of this assignment is to demonstrate an understanding of the nonprofit management aspects applied in the internship and how they interrelate.

3. The Board of Directors or Committee Analysis Paper is due before 120 hours are completed (unless the instructor agrees to special arrangements). Different students have different access to board officers and members. It is the student’s responsibility to let the instructor know whether a board of directors or committee can be observed. If not, other arrangements will be worked out with the instructor. The student will gather information and gain insights about how the board or committee operates and impacts the work of the organization.

4. Students and the site supervisor must meet with the instructor about mid-internship to discuss progress and any questions about the internship.

***After the internship:***

1. Students are required to submit a 10-15 page (double-spaced) Applied or Research Project Report using the format outlined in these guidelines (see pages 9-10 of this syllabus). This report must be submitted no later than August 24 and prior to the final presentation assignment in order to receive credit for the internship. This paper requires dialogue with your internship site supervisor or assigned contact person in your internship organization. A research topic or applied project should address the organization directly while drawing on the NPS curriculum (e.g., academic materials, theoretical perspectives, and/or managerial aspects). Outside citation is expected. Agency documents or materials should be utilized.

If selecting to do a research paper, the topic must be discussed with the instructor and agreed to by both the student and instructor no later than June 1.

2. An in-person meeting must be scheduled with the instructor for a presentation (to the instructor) of the experience and to go over the major points that are documented in the Research or Applied Project Report. This meeting must occur before August 24 (unless arrangements are agreed to by the course instructor) in order to receive credit for the internship.

***Course Requirements:***

Grading for the internship will be administered on a letter grade basis with each requirement having the following weight toward the final grade. Questions regarding grades should be addressed in conference with the instructor

***Assignments and percentages of total grade***

* Learning journal 20%
* Agency analysis 20%
* Board analysis 20%
* In-person meeting with instructor near mid-point of internship (completed)
* Research or applied project report 25%
* In-person meeting with instructor and faculty evaluation 15%

***Grading:***

**Social Work/ NPS Minor Departmental Grading Scale and G.P.A. Equivalent**

**A** 97-100 4.0 **A-** 94 3.7

96 3.9 93 3.6

95 3.8 92 3.5

**B+** 91 3.4 **B** 88 3.1 **B-** 85 2.8

90 3.3 87 3.0 84 2.7

89 3.2 86 2.9 83 2.6

**C+** 82 2.5 **C** 79 2.2 **C-** 76 1.9

81 2.4 78 2.1 75 1.8

80 2.3 77 2.0 74 1.7

**D+** 73 1.6 **D** 69 1.2 **D-** 66 0.9

72 1.5 68 1.1 65 0.8

71 1.4 67 1.0

70 1.3

**FYI….My view of grades…**

A - Excellent mastery of material; outstanding scholarship; excellence in critical thinking & assessment; excellence in presentation of material.

B - Good mastery of material; you're able to look at the question from different perspectives; above average in critical thinking & assessment.

C - Basic understanding of the content; not much depth in your answer; average in assessment.

D - Borderline understanding of the material and/or answers are incomplete; below average in critical thinking & self-assessment.

F - Failure to understand the material; unsatisfactory skill performance, did not meet goals/objectives

**Academic Honesty**: Any incidence of academic dishonesty will result in a minimum of a zero for the assignment, and may result in the student failing the course. All work must be your own unless properly cited. APA formatting is required of all formal papers in this course. See <https://www.amamanualofstyle.com/> for style guidelines. [Purdue OWL](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html) is also a useful source.

**Honor Code**

By accepting admission to JMU, you make a commitment to understand, support, and abide by the University's honor system without compromise or exception. This class will be conducted in strict observance of the JMU Honor System. Please refer to the Student Handbook and the James Madison University Honor Code for more information. Information on the JMU Honor Code can be found at <http://www.jmu.edu/honor/code.shtml>.

**Adding/dropping classes**

The deadline for adding a Summer 2022 semester class through MyMadison without academic unit permission is May 27, 2022. Note that academic unit permission is required for any student taking NPS 400, so allow time before the Registrar’s deadline. Between May 27 and June 3, 2022, academic unit permission is required to add a class for the Summer session 2022. The last day to withdraw from a course and receive a "W" grade is June 28, 2022.

**The student must register on MyMadison after the internship is approved.**

***Professional Communication***

As students in preparation for professional practice, this course requires all assignments, both verbal and written, be *presented in a professional manner*. Professional dress is required when making presentations in class (apparel bearing the name and logo of the internship organization is acceptable). All assignments should follow the APA style guidelines for citations (see above).

***Email/Canvas Message Guidelines***

All emails or messages through Canvas to the instructor shall include your last name, the course name and subject of the email in the subject line (e.g.: [myname] NPS 400 Agency Analysis Assignment Question), a greeting, and a signature that includes your name. Please do your best to continue existing email threads between you and the instructor, rather than beginning new ones.

***Assignment Deadlines***

All assignments will be due on the date stated in the syllabus unless an alternative is negotiated with the instructor. Assignments turned in late will be penalized 5% per day. I am much more likely to be flexible if knowing about the possibility that an assignment will be late beforehand than finding out afterward, so be sure to communicate*.*

***Written Work Back-up – A Very Good Idea***

Keep a second copy of any written work submitted. If for any reason work submitted is lost/misplaced/not available, the instructor cannot assume that work was submitted and was of acceptable merit. Likewise, keep exams and papers returned with a grade or comments should grade lists be lost or inadvertently deleted from a faculty computer. In the event of the above, it would be your responsibility to submit the material in question.

***Student Conferences***

The minimum number of conferences with the instructor is three: once before beginning the internship (via email or Zoom is sufficient), one in person or via Zoom (if distant) near the middle of the semester, and a presentation and conference at the end of the internship. Additional student conferences with the instructor are strongly encouraged if necessary. The student must keep the instructor informed of progress and/or problems at the work site through the Journal Entries and conferences if necessary. The student is also responsible for meeting the work program requirements agreed upon with the site supervisor. Students should treat the internship, whether paid or unpaid, like a regular job where they are responsible to show up on time, call their site supervisor if running late or an emergency arises, and working their scheduled hours.

***Instructor’s Responsibilities***

The instructor should assist the student in outlining his/her work and learning objectives; review and make recommendations regarding his/her work program; and determine the academic requirements of the internship experience with the student’s input.

The instructor is responsible for monitoring the student’s internship experience through the journal entries. The instructor will also counsel the student regarding his/her internship experience as necessary or appropriate; evaluate the student’s academic requirements; and submit grades in a timely manner.

***Start-up procedures (suggested)***

Because the process of securing an internship takes time and clearances with faculty are also required in advance, students may need to initiate the process approximately six weeks (or more) before the term in which they plan to begin their internship.

**STEP 1.** The student is responsible for finding her/his own internship work site.

**STEP 2.** After identifying a prospective internship site, the student should arrange a meeting with that organization’s director or individual responsible for supervising the intern. The student’s initial contact with the organization should focus on learning the nature of potential work opportunities, the organization’s expectations, and its willingness to participate in an internship arrangement.

**STEP 3.** The student will prepare a preliminary work program with learning objectives and submit to the course instructor for approval. Following instructor clearance, the student may need to arrange a meeting with the site supervisor to discuss a work schedule, job description, and other employment details.

**NPS Internship Work Program Outline**

The following items should be covered in the intern’s work program outline.

***OBJECTIVES***

The student’s work-study objectives for this particular internship work site - e.g. the concepts and skills the student expects to apply; what he/she hopes to learn; what he/she expects to contribute to the organization. This objectives statement should also include a description of why this internship is relevant to Nonprofit Studies and how it will advance the student’s understanding of the nonprofit sector.

***JOB DESCRIPTION***

A description of the kind of activities or tasks the student is expected to undertake and complete during the internship, and the expected outcome(s) of these activities.

***TERMS***

Identification of supervisor(s), working hours, start and stop dates of internship, etc.

***SCHEDULE***

Either a week-by-week or a task-by-task outline for the internship period showing some sequence of activities, deadlines, or timeframe(s).

**NPS 400 APPLIED PROJECT REPORT**

(If you elect to do a research paper, see the instructor for a separate set of guidelines)

A report of approximately 10 to 15 pages is due to the INSTRUCTOR prior to the final presentation. Students should follow the report guidelines listed below. If students want to deviate from this report format, they must first secure permission from the instructor.

**A. General Impressions of the Internship Experience**

1. Overall, do you feel this internship was successful or unsuccessful? Why?

2. Have your own professional goals changed as a result of your internship experience, and if so, how so?

3. Would you recommend that other NPS students undertake an internship with this organization? Why?

**B. Analysis of Work Program**

1. Re-examine the “Work Program” you submitted at the beginning of the internship. How well did you follow the planned schedule? Where did significant variations occur? What were the reasons for the variations?

2. Reflecting on the activities or tasks you performed for the organization, how well do you feel you accomplished them?

3. Attach a copy of a written product(s), or appropriate excerpts that you produced for the organization, if any.

**C. Assessment of Organizational Relationships**

1. Identify the dominant organizational relationships involved in your internship (e.g., between supervisors, peers, support staff, clients). How do you feel the relationship(s) contributed to or interfered with your performance and/or satisfaction as an intern? Which relationships were most helpful and which were not?

**D. Evaluation of Professional Skills**

1. Identify the professional skills involved in various activities you performed (e.g. organizing, research, analysis, problem solving, written/oral communication, supervising, etc.) How might these skills have enhanced your existing skills and in what way(s)?

2. Identify and discuss the major knowledge, skills, and abilities you learned in this experience.

3. Comment on other elements of the internship experience that contributed to your professional development (e.g. opportunities to participate in planning or decision making or observation of same; degree of autonomy granted in performing work assignments, etc.)

**E. Application of Administrative Concepts**

1. What general concepts learned in your NPS courses (including your major elective) did you find applicable to your internship experience? Please explain.

2. Which courses or what course content contributed most to your performance and/or understanding of organizational behavior and administration during the internship experience? Please explain.

**F. Proofread before submission**

1. Check for sentence syntax, correct grammar, punctuation, etc.

2. Use proper APA style, including formatting, title page, in-text citations and reference list.