RPSE Internship (RPSE 630)

Internship Goals

- Gain Experience in Community Agencies Serving and Advocating for Individuals with Disabilities
- Explore Career Interests
- Develop Professionalism and Communication Skills

Application Process

1. You must be admitted to the Rehabilitation Psychology program to register for RPSE 630

2. Register for RPSE 630 (and 501 if it is your first internship).

3. About 3-4 months prior to the start of the internship semester, begin setting up the internship. Follow these steps:
   - Identify 4-5 placements that interest you
   - Make contact by phone or email as noted on the internship list (you may need to follow up emails with phone contact).
   - Follow the application and/or interview process of the site.

4. In late November/early December (for spring internship) or late April/early May (for summer or fall internship), you will receive an email from the course instructor with instructions and required paperwork to secure your internship.

Key Points:

- YOU are in charge of setting up an internship. INIATIVE and FOLLOW THROUGH are important.
Your internship must be secured 3 weeks prior to the beginning of the internship semester or you may need to drop the course.

**Getting the Internship You Want**

1. Start seeking your internship **early**!
2. Prepare for your **interview**! Be ready to discuss why you are interested in the site, what you want to learn and what you hope to contribute.
3. Have a **resume** ready and take it to your interview! Contact the Career Center for help preparing a resume.

**Internships that are Not on the List**

If you are interested in an internship that is not on the list, contact internship coordinator, Dr. Susan Wiegmann at wiegmann@wisc.edu to have it reviewed and approved.

**Communicating With Your Potential Internship Site**

- Make sure that you can and want to meet the needs that the site has i.e. hours/duties.
- Make sure that your duties will involve direct interaction with individuals with disabilities.
- Make sure that there is a supervisor willing to provide you with feedback and communicate once or twice during the semester with your course instructor.
- Let your potential supervisor know that you will be filling out a contract listing your expected schedule, duties, and your learning goals for the internship

**Credits and Hours**

- You can take 2-6 credits of 630 per semester.
- Credits are related to hours at your field placement site: **One credit = 40 hours over the course of the semester.**
- Example: 3 credits of 630 means: 3 x 40 = 120 hours/spring or fall semester; this works out to 8 hours per week for the 15 week semester.
- **Changing the number of credits:**
  You may change the number of credits for 630 within the first three weeks of the semester (fall/spring). Do not “Drop” and re-add the class. Go to Student Center, select semester, and “Edit”. Select RPSE 630 and use the pull down tab to change the number of “Units” for the course.
- **YOU MAY NOT CHANGE CREDITS AFTER THE FINAL CREDIT CHANGE DATE IN YOUR STUDENT CENTER.**
- **Beginning the internship before the first day of the semester:**
  You may not begin counting hours toward the internship until the first day of the semester.

**The Contract**
The contract is your commitment to the site and includes:

- Credits, Hours and Schedule
- Duties and Activities of the Internship
- Learning Goals that you have for your Internship

You cannot change the number of credits/hours at the end of the course. It is a contract you enter into at the beginning of the semester and you are expected to honor the contract.

The instructor will assist students in developing the contract.

**Paid Internships**

It is possible to have a job and also count the job toward internship hours; however, you MUST:

- Contact the instructor for approval, and if approved, the contract MUST reflect an additional project, focus, or learning goal/s that goes beyond current job duties.
- Have approval from the employer.

The internship is an opportunity to get experience in a NEW setting, so students are encouraged to consider new sites for internships.

**Evaluation**

Students will receive two evaluations from the supervisor during the internship. Evaluation will include:

- Knowledge of agency roles, functions, and operating procedures
- Knowledge of cooperating agencies and programs
- Knowledge of client/consumer needs/problems
- Skill in relating to clients/consumers
- Skill in client/consumer assessment
- Skill in counseling/interviewing
- Skill in professional relationships
- Responsiveness to supervision
- Growth in knowledge and skill
- Professional and ethical behavior

**Need Help? Have Questions?**

Virginia Waddick [vwaddick@education.wisc.edu](mailto:vwaddick@education.wisc.edu) or 608-263-4608 – General questions, planning for the internship
Dr. Susan Wiegmann wiegmann@wisc.edu – Difficulty securing internship, questions about whether an internship will count, specific internship questions.