



Internship Policies & Procedures Manual

Psychological Science

Updated: Spring 2026

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General Information

Program Overview

The Psychological Science Department educates students in the scientific study of the mind and human behavior. Students learn theoretical explanations of human behavior as well as the methods employed in psychological research. They also develop skills in research methods, data analysis, scientific writing, and interpersonal communication. The knowledge and skills gained from this program prepare students for graduate study in related fields and/or careers in many areas including research, business, and social services.

Mission:

The Psychological Science department supports the mission of Fitchburg State University with our commitment to excellence in teaching, research, and individual student mentorship. Our program's emphasis on the scientific study of the mind and human behavior prepares students to understand the challenges and contributions of psychological inquiry and interdisciplinary collaboration in the pursuit of understanding human thoughts, behaviors, and emotions. Students develop the skills and dispositions necessary to become discerning, analytical thinkers who value the ethical, responsible, and inclusive application of scientific methodologies and findings to the investigation of human nature and the improvement of the human condition.

Vision:

The Psychological Science program at Fitchburg State University will be recognized at the local, state, and regional levels for its excellence in designing and delivering current, innovative curriculum and individualized learning experiences that optimize the preparation and competitiveness of our graduates for professional careers or graduate study. Students in our program will:

- develop a strong knowledge base in psychology;
- acquire the skills of scientific inquiry, critical thinking, and information literacy that are characteristic of scientists and scientist-practitioners;
- become ethically and socially responsible citizens of their professional, local, and global communities;
- cultivate strong written and oral communication skills;
- engage in self-reflective preparation for post-baccalaureate employment or graduate school.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is an internship?

A for-credit internship is a capstone experience in which students have the opportunity to apply their knowledge of psychological research, theories, and explanations for human behavior. Students will develop competence in the discipline of psychological science through a field placement, as well as a weekly seminar led by a faculty member.

What is a typical field placement?

Field placements are diverse, but frequently include schools, businesses, hospitals and other medical settings, research programs/facilities, mental health and social service agencies, and non-profit organizations.

What types of tasks will I be doing at internship?

Internship tasks will depend on the placement site. While there is not a set list of tasks each intern needs to do on-site, there are several tasks that would be considered inappropriate for an internship placement. Please review the following chart for examples.

Example of Acceptable Tasks	Examples of Inappropriate Tasks
Providing education and support services under the supervision	Restraints/holds (even if the intern is trained)
Attending meetings with supervisors, contributing when appropriate	Clerical work (making copies, filing, etc.) beyond what supervisors typically do
Completing project-based tasks such as literature reviews, participant recruitment, data collection, and analysis; database development and maintenance	Acting as an interpreter or translator (Students may use language skills; however, this may not be in the place of direct service learning experiences.)
Behavioral observations	Transporting clients in their personal vehicles

If you have questions about whether or not a task would be seen as appropriate, please ask the internship coordinator. Regardless of what tasks are assigned, we expect students to maintain the utmost professionalism throughout their internship experience. This includes skillfully and ethically working with the individuals served, interacting appropriately with colleagues and supervisors, dressing appropriately, and arriving on time and maintaining an agreed upon schedule.

What are the qualifications/requirements for doing an internship?

To be eligible for an internship, students should:

- generally, be in their final semester at the university
- Passed PSY2370: Psychology of interpersonal Relationships with a grade of 2.5 or better (effective Academic Year 2023-24)
- have a minimum of a 2.5 overall GPA and major GPA
- have made up any “0” grades within the major

How do I pursue an internship?

If you are interested in applying for an internship, the first step is to attend the mandatory internship planning meeting the semester before you intend to do an internship. At this meeting, the department’s internship coordinator and a representative from Career Services will review the process of pursuing an internship for credit. After this meeting, you will have two weeks to return the Internship Intent Form to the internship coordinator. You will also need to contact Career Services to begin working with them to locate potential internship placements. Once you have found a site that is willing to accept you as an intern, you must have the site complete the University’s Internship Contractual Agreement form and the Department’s Learning Agreement form. These forms – along with the University’s Special Studies form -- must be returned to the department’s internship coordinator **by no later** than the first Friday of December (for spring Internships) or May (for fall internships).

How do I find an internship?

Ultimately, it is your responsibility to locate a site that is willing to take you on as an intern, although you will have support doing so. You should start by going to Career Services to begin the process. They will help you look for potential sites (for example, by using Handshake) and prepare for an internship (for example, by updating your resume and practicing mock interviews).

Once a student has found a site that is willing to take them on as an intern, they should obtain a copy of the University’s Internship Contract and Learning Goals from the Internship Coordinator. These forms must be completed, signed (by the student’s site supervisor and the site’s director), and returned to the Internship Coordinator by no later than the first Friday in December (for a Spring internship) or May (for a Fall internship).

What is the approval process like for an internship?

Once your materials have been received, faculty will review them and determine if the internship placement is appropriate for receiving academic credit. The internship coordinator will inform the student of the faculty’s decision. If not approved for credit, the student may still opt to complete the internship on a volunteer basis.

How much time should be spent at a student’s internship site?

Students are required to spend ***approximately 7.5 hours per week at their internship sites for every 3 credits they are registered for***. Internship placements are expected to

last an entire semester. The student is required to spend the corresponding number of average hours per week in placement for each credit load:

- 3 credits: approx. 7.5 hrs/wk, totaling 112.5 hours for the semester
- 6 credits: approx. 15 hrs/wk, totaling 225 hours for the semester
- 9 credits: approx. 22.5 hrs/wk, totaling 337.5 hours for the semester
- 12 credits: approx. 30 hours/wk, totaling 450 hours for the semester

How will I be supervised?

Students will receive individual supervision from a supervisor at their internship site. Students must receive a minimum of 15 minutes of individual, face-to-face supervision per week for every 3 credits of internship that they are registered for.

Students will also receive supervision from a faculty member in Psychological Science. During semesters when there are enough students, students will be placed into a section of an Internship Seminar; if there are not enough students to run the seminar, students will be assigned (by the department chairperson) to a faculty member for individual supervision.

How is the internship seminar structured?

Interns attend ten, 2-hour seminars on campus during the semester. The seminar provides an opportunity for students to integrate their academic work with field experience through various assignments and discussions. The focus of the seminar will be on five different areas: 1) Professional & ethical Issues, 2) Evidence-based practice, 3) Career development, 4) Connection of psychological theory to practice, and 5) Interpersonal and professional skills. In addition, students will receive supervision from their faculty instructor and group supervision from their peers. Seminar attendance is mandatory.

What are the faculty supervisor's responsibilities?

Faculty supervisors are expected to provide individual and/or group supervision to interns and are responsible for developing relevant assignments for the internship experience. They must maintain open communication with the internship sites and conduct at least two visits with students' internship sites, one of which must be on-site. Faculty supervisors are also responsible for helping students problem-solve any difficulties they may be experiencing at their internship site, and may intervene/advocate on a student's behalf when indicated.

What is expected of on-site supervisors?

Supervisors serve as mentors to our students; therefore, we require that they have the educational and experiential background that brings such expertise. Ideally, supervisors should hold at least a Master's degree in a related field, an appropriate professional license (if applicable), and 5+ years of relevant work experience, although exceptions will be considered by the internship committee.

On-site supervisors must provide students with a minimum of 15 minutes of face-to-face supervision per week for every 7.5 hours worked (i.e., 15 min/wk for a 3-credit internship, 30 min/wk for a 6-credit internship, 45 min/wk for a 9-credit internship, and 60 min/wk for a 12-credit internship). The schedule and format of supervision is flexible to the particulars of the placement site. Supervision should focus on providing direct, constructive, and timely feedback regarding the student's work performance, interpersonal behaviors, work habits and planning, and areas of strength/improvement. Supervisors will be asked to complete a student evaluation at the end of the internship placement; this feedback will be used by the faculty supervisor in determining a final grade for the internship.

How are schedules determined?

Interns work with their site supervisor to create a schedule. Students are expected to maintain that schedule, unless prior arrangements have been made with the site supervisor.

What if Fitchburg State University has a day off, but the internship site does not?

Interns adhere to the schedule of the placement site. For example, when the agency is closed, the intern is not expected to make up the hours; these are excused hours. However, even if the college has no classes (e.g. snow day, holiday) and the agency is open, the intern is expected to be on site. The maximum number of excused hours is based on the number of credits you are registered for:

- 3 credits: 6 hours
- 6 credits: 12 hours
- 9 credits: 18 hours
- 12 credits: 24 hours

Any hours that would qualify as excused hours beyond the maximum MUST be made up.

How does spring break work?

Interns do not get a semester break unless they (1) request and receive permission from the site supervisor, (2) request and receive permission from the supervising professor, and (3) develop a contract with both the site supervisor and the supervising professor stating a plan for how to make up the hours.

How does a student in a school placement make up for time lost due to school breaks and closings?

Interns in school settings are required to collect hours during school vacations on pre-arranged projects. These projects or activities need to be discussed and agreed upon at the time that the Learning Agreement is negotiated. If projects are not possible, then the hours in placement need to be expanded to make up hours lost due to school vacations.

Can I have a paid internship?

The Psychological Science department may approve paid internships if it can be shown that the internship is an appropriate educational/learning experience and not an employment experience. If a student is compensated for an internship, they must be held to the standards of a trainee and not those of a paid employee. The site must clearly understand that the internship is a learning opportunity rather than a paid work experience. By signing off on the University's contract, a site is accepting this and that they have a teaching responsibility to the student. A student's faculty supervisor and/or the department's internship coordinator will intervene if this is not the case.

You may also apply for one of the University's internship scholarships. The **Internship Scholarship** is a state and university funded program that provides financial support to students participating in internships. Qualifying internships can range from 3 to 12 credits per semester. Students must have a completed Free Application for Federal Student Aid or Massachusetts Application for State Financial Aid on file with the Financial Aid office. Scholarship amounts vary and are intended to cover tuition, fees, and internship-related expenses.

If you are completing an internship for-credit you can apply for a scholarship through the [Internship Scholarship Application](#)

Eligibility Criteria:

- Full-time undergraduate day student
- Enrolled in 3-12 internship credits
- Making Satisfactory Academic Progress
- FAFSA Completion and Eligible for Federal Aid

Contact Financial Aid for questions at 978.665.3156 or finaid@fitchburgstate.edu

There may be a conflict of interest between the site and the student. What should I do?

Students are not allowed to intern at sites in which there may be a conflict of interest. Examples include: sites in which relatives or close friends may work or have an influential role in their placement; agencies in which they or close relatives are receiving services; situations in which the student and supervisor have a dual relationship or the supervisor has a dual relationship with the college. If there is any doubt of a conflict of interest, please contact the internship coordinator.

What do I do if I am having problems at my internship site?

If you are having any concerns about your internship site (large or small), please speak up right away! You will want to tell your seminar instructor of any concerns you may have. Your instructor can help provide you with strategies for addressing your concerns with your site supervisor. If necessary, your faculty supervisor may discuss the issue(s) with

you and your site supervisor directly to help resolve the issue. For ongoing, severe, or emergency problems, the internship coordinator may also step in to help with problem resolution. Additionally, the internship coordinator communicates regularly with seminar instructors regarding both large and small-scale concerns. Depending on the nature and severity of the problems, the Psychological Science Department has the right to remove a student from an internship placement.

Contracts and Forms

Contracts and Site Supervisor Forms

A set of contracts and forms between the student, the college and the organization helps coordinate and validate the student's training experience.

Contractual Agreement

The Site Supervisor is expected, when interviewing the student, to discuss the general expectations of placement. If the student's and organization's goals are compatible, a contractual agreement is negotiated. This contract is agreed upon and signed by the student and the site supervisor; it describes in general terms the responsibilities of the intern. The internship coordinator will sign off on the contractual agreement once it has been completed. The Contractual Agreement includes a place for the supervisor to list any safeguards that may be necessary to prevent risks to the student.

Learning Agreement

The Learning Agreement is completed within the first two weeks of the placement, and identifies specific learning goals for the internship experience.

Evaluation of the Student in the Field Experience

The on-site supervisor's feedback regarding the student's progress and suggestions for further professional development is essential to us. Therefore, before the final site visit, on-site supervisors should fill out the "Evaluation of Field Experience" form and discuss it with the student before submitting it to the supervising professor.

Compensation for Supervision

While we are unable to pay internship supervisors for their service, a tuition voucher will be sent to supervisors for up to 3 credits to take a class at Fitchburg State University.

**Fitchburg State University
Psychological Science Department
Internship Program**

Academic Program: _____

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1. Provide orientation of the student to the physical facilities, policies, and procedures of the site.
2. Provide an experience under the supervision of qualified personnel that meets the stated objectives of the educational program (as agreed to by both parties). In essence, this means that the student will observe and participate in the Field Placement Site (to the extent allowed by licensing and liability requirements) in accordance with the Internship Manual and as outlined herein;
 - a. Provide a description of Student Responsibilities:
 - i. Hours Per Week _____;
 - ii. Total Hours/Semester _____;
 - iii. Describe scope of tasks and activities in which the student will be involved over the course of the field placement experience:

- b. If the student is employed within the field placement agency, attach a copy of her/his job description. In addition, indicate whether the following conditions are met:

_____ Separate supervisors are assigned to oversee the student's field work experience and the student's employment.

_____ The job description for the field placement includes new responsibilities and does not simply mirror those for paid employment. If the job is sufficiently new, this provision may not apply.

_____ Care will be taken by the Field Placement Supervisor to ensure that the student is not permitted to work more than 40 hours of paid employment per week (i.e., no overtime or double shifts) during the span of the field placement.
 - c. Describe the agency's support system, in particular the safeguards taken to minimize risks to students in situations that may require expertise beyond their current capabilities (e.g., assaultive clients, emergency situations requiring clinical experience, including medical emergencies, suicidal or psychotic behavior, etc.):

3. Expect the student to perform only those tasks commensurate with his/her level of education and experience and furnish direct supervision to provide for the safety and welfare of both client and student.
4. Provide a specific person to oversee the internship agency/department educational program and act as liaison between the Field Placement Site and University.
5. Provide cooperation, when asked, in formal evaluation of students, consonant with educational objectives jointly agreed to by both parties (see Internship Manual).
6. Provide and maintain the records and reports required by the University for conducting the educational program (see Internship Manual).

RESPONSIBILITIES OF BOTH PARTIES:

1. No individual participating in this program shall be discriminated against because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, marital status, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law.
2. The Field Placement Supervisor and the University's Faculty Supervisor will ensure that student interns do not work more than 40 internship hours per week at the Field Placement Site.
3. To meet as outlined in the Field Placement Guide and review the program.

INDEMNIFICATION AGREEMENT:

1. To the extent permitted by law, the University agrees to indemnify and hold harmless Field Placement Site, its respective Trustees, officers, directors, agents and its employees and all professional and administrative staff working for or at Field Placement Site from any actions, proceedings, claims, liabilities, losses, damages, costs and expenses of any nature including personal injury, death or property damage (including without limitation Field Placement Site's reasonable attorney's fees and costs) arising out of, resulting from or relating to **1)** Field Placement Site's participation in the program (including but not limited to participation in any evaluation of students); **2)** the acts or omissions of any student, instructor, or person affiliated with the University including its employees, servants, agents or; **3)** breach of any of the terms hereof by the University, except to the extent such claims, liabilities, damages, costs and expenses are determined to be the result of the negligence of the Field Placement Site, its Trustees, officers, directors, agents and employees.
2. Notwithstanding the foregoing, because the University is a public institution of higher education in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts ("public University"), no Board of Trustees, or agents thereof, of any public University has the authority, statutory or otherwise, to enter into an indemnification or hold harmless agreement on behalf of a public University of the Commonwealth. Further, pursuant to amended Article 62, §1, of the Massachusetts Constitution, and applicable Massachusetts case law, the Commonwealth and public University are prohibited from indemnifying or holding harmless, in any manner, any individual or any private association, or any corporation which is privately owned and managed. Where the party to a contract with the Commonwealth or public University is not an individual private association, or a corporation which is privately owned and managed, the Commonwealth or public University can indemnify or hold harmless such party only upon a two-thirds vote of each House of the Massachusetts Legislature.
3. In the event of that repeal of amended Article 62, §1, AND the enactment of statutory authority authorizing a Board of Trustees, or agents thereof, of a public University of this Commonwealth, to enter into an indemnification or hold harmless agreement on behalf of a public University of this Commonwealth, the parties agree to the terms of the preceding paragraph, to the extent that these terms are consistent with such statutory authority.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STUDENT:

1. **Student Health** - A student who becomes ill or injured while performing the educational experience may: report to the University Health Service for treatment; seek treatment with his or her own physicians; and/or report to the emergency room/outpatient clinic of the Field Placement Site, if applicable. In all instances, student is ultimately responsible for payment of fees related to illness or injury.
2. **Salary and Time Commitment** - For six (6) credit hours, the student will spend a minimum of 225 hours, for nine (9) credit hours, a minimum of 337.5 hours, and for twelve (12) credit hours, it would be a minimum of 450 hours at the Field Placement Site. Time credit can be given for work done away from the workplace if agreed to by the faculty of the University and Field Placement Site. The student will keep a log of the hours spent at the site, and the type of activity/work performed (see Manual).
3. **Student Goals and Objectives** – The student requests work experience defined in the *Learning Agreement*.
4. **Evaluation Procedures** – The student will meet for 10 seminar classes during the semester and be responsible for written work as outlined in the student's syllabus.
5. The student will be evaluated by his/her supervisor at the Field Placement Site. This evaluation will constitute 60% of the student's grade.

This agreement is for the duration of the student Internship, and may be terminated by either party upon written notice. The duration of the Internship will be from _____ to _____.

Student Name (please print): _____

Student ID Number: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ **Cell Phone:** _____

Email: _____

Internship Location Name (please print): _____

Field Placement Site Supervisor Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ **Cell Phone:** _____

Email: _____

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

(Student)

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

(University Faculty Supervisor)

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

(Field Placement Site Supervisor)

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

(Executive Director or Designee)

Send completed and signed contract to:

Christopher Adams, PhD

Fitchburg State University

160 Pearl Street

Fitchburg, MA 01420

(978) 665-3027; cadams15@fitchburgstate.edu

**Fitchburg State University Department of
Psychological Science**

Internship Learning Agreement

This form should be completed, signed (by student and site supervisor), and returned to the faculty supervisor by no later than the 2nd week of the internship placement.

STUDENT: _____

INTERNSHIP SITE: _____

SUPERVISOR: _____

TITLE/POSITION: _____

SUPERVISOR EMAIL: _____

SUPERVISOR TELEPHONE #: _____

INTERNSHIP SITE ADDRESS: _____

In my role as a Site Supervisor, I will work with the above-named student to identify at least one measurable short-term/immediate, intermediate, and long-term learning goal for their internship experience. The student and I will identify these goals on the following page (after having reviewed the guidance provided in the internship manual regarding appropriate student internship activities).

I also agree to provide a minimum of 15 minutes of individual, face-to-face supervision per week for every 3 credits of internship that the student is registered for (i.e., 15 minutes/wk for a 3-credit placement, 30 minutes/wk for a 6-credit placement, 45 minutes/wk for a 9-credit placement, or 1 hour/wk for a 12-credit placement).

Supervision should be focused on the professional growth of the student and should attend to the following: work habits, interpersonal skills, professionalism, and achievement of learning goals (outlined on the following page).

I. Short-term/immediate goal (achievable approx. within the first month of the internship)

Target Date: _____

II. Intermediate goal (achievable approx. by the middle of the semester)

Target Date: _____

III. Long-term goal (achievable by the end of the internship)

Target Date: _____

IV. Other goals (if applicable)

a. _____

Target Date: _____

b. _____

Target Date: _____

SIGNED: _____ Date: _____

Site Supervisor

SIGNED: _____ Date: _____

Student

SIGNED: _____ Date: _____

Supervising Professor

FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY
PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT
 Site Supervisor's Evaluation of Student

Student Name:

Semester/Year:

Supervisor Name:

Agency Name:

Street Address:

City/State/Zip:

Email:

Phone:

Please describe student's primary responsibilities:

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Please evaluate the student's performance using the following scale:

P = poor, **F** = fair, **G** = good, **V** = very good, **E** = excellent, **N/A** = not applicable

	P	F	G	V	E	N/A
1. Showed understanding of organization's mission and goals						
2. Worked within the structure and the system of the internship site						
3. Was punctual and reliable						
4. Dressed Appropriately						
5. Followed through consistently and thoroughly on tasks						
6. Engaged in clear and open communication with supervisor						
7. Used supervision/feedback effectively to improve skills						
8. Sought direction/supervision as appropriate						
9. Practiced agency standards of client confidentiality						
10. Showed initiative (e.g., asked probing questions, volunteered assistance)						
11. Invested in creating an internship that maximized learning potential						
12. Communicated effectively with agency personnel, including support staff						
13. Communicated effectively with outside professionals						
14. Demonstrated awareness of contemporary issues and trends in the field						
15. Effectively negotiated ethical dilemmas						
16. Maintained appropriate boundaries in interpersonal relationships						
17. Worked within the level of personal competencies						
18. Worked as a team player, when appropriate						
19. Established rapport with clients of varying needs and perspectives						
20. Focused on client's needs effectively						
21. Established goals with clients						
22. Completed all required paperwork up to agency standards						
23. Demonstrated level of confidence appropriate for student at this point						

In the spaces below, please note the goals established in the Learning Agreement at the beginning of the semester and assess the student's competency using the evaluation scale outlined above. In collaboration with the student, you may identify additional competencies specific to the work of this internship experience.

	P	F	G	V	E
1.					
2.					

3.					
4.					
5.					

Please describe any other activities in which the student performed well.

List areas in which the student should continue to grow.

How has the student grown over the course of the internship?

What are your recommendations for the student in terms of a career in the field?

Do you have any concerns about the student in terms of a career in the field?

SIGNED: _____ Date: _____

Site Supervisor

Interview Guide for Faculty Site Visits

Student: _____
Organization: _____
Site Supervisor: _____

Program: _____
Instructor: _____
Date of Visit: _____

Initial Site Visit

Date: _____

☐ In-person ☐ Telephone ☐ Video conference

1. What tasks and/or responsibilities have been assigned to the intern?

2. Has the internship proceeded as planned (refer to the responsibilities outlined in the Contractual Agreement and the Learning Agreement)?
 - a. If not, what changes have been made to those responsibilities originally assigned?

 - b. Why were these changes to the original plan necessary? (If necessary, this is where the Faculty Supervisor might have to take the opportunity to problem-solve with the Site Supervisor.)

3. In what area(s) does the student excel?
 - a. How might the internship site capitalize on the strengths of the intern?

 - b. How might the internship site assist the intern to expand his or her repertoire of skills?

4. Was the student adequately prepared for the internship? If not, what else could Fitchburg State University do to prepare him or her better?

5. How might this internship change during the semester, i.e., has the intern not yet done something that the supervisor had planned for the intern or that the intern wanted to do?

6. What is the structure for supervision of the intern? (i.e., is there one supervisor, more than one supervisor, how is the interns time split between the different supervisors?)

7. As a mentor, do you have any advice for the intern to succeed in the field?

8. Do you have any additional comments or suggestions about the intern or internship program?

Final Interview with Supervisor

Date: _____

☐ In-person ☐ Telephone ☐ Video conference

Please describe the student's progress since we last spoke.

4. If you could, would you hire the student?