HEALTH EDUCATION INTERNSHIP PROGRAM MANUAL

A Guide for

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS, FACULTY and SUPERVISING AGENCIES

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This handbook is intended to provide students, faculty, and internship supervising agencies information relating to the Health and Human Performance –Health Division’s Internship Program.  None of the information contained herein shall be interpreted to create a contract.  The information included is up-to-date as of the time of printing.  The University reserves the right to make changes in policy, regulations, and fees, as circumstances dictate, subsequent to publication.

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HEALTH EDUCATION INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT/SUPERVISING AGENCY MANUAL

I. Introduction and Orientation

A. The Application Process Before you interview for the internship is to submit the following in order to get permission to set up an interview:

- The Internship Application must be submitted by SEPTEMBER 28 for the spring session, February 28 for the summer, and March 28 for the fall session. Late applications cannot be guaranteed an internship. It is optimal to contact the Internship Coordinator two (2) semesters prior to your planned registration for HLTH 4990. Deadlines must be met, so contact the Coordinator early.
- Prior to the above dates, the student will submit to the MTSU Internship Coordinator the application (Form A), the objectives and Career Center approved resume (Form B). After receiving this information the Coordinator will give the student permission to set up an interview.

At the interview:

- Explain the internship program to the site supervisor.
- Provide a copy of the Agency internship manual to the site supervisor.
- Ensure the agency will have a qualified health supervisor.
- Obtain examples of the activities and experiences that will be available for the intern.
- If an agreement is reached, the supervising agency completes and signs the Supervising Agency Interview Report (See Appendix C).
- The students signs and submits the Internship Agreement (See Appendix D).
- If for some reason, the first placement choice does not result in an internship, permission to interview at an alternate site will be given. It is extremely difficult to change internships after all arrangements are completed; therefore, you should spend considerable time before making your decision.
- Form C is then reviewed by the MTSU Internship Coordinator. If accepted, the student will be given the CRN to register for HLTH 4250.
- The Internship Coordinator sends an acknowledgement to the student and the supervising agency saying the internship is approved.
- Interns are expected to attend all class meetings at the MTSU campus, which will include:
  - A pre-internship orientation meeting with Internship Supervisor
  - Career development activities at the MTSU Career Development Center, to include resume writing, job opportunities in Health Education, and interview techniques
  - Orientation during the first week of the internship
  - Final class meeting to present to the class and to submit all required assignments

The Community and Public Health Education undergraduate program of the Health and Human Performance (HHP) Department at MTSU offers students the opportunity to prepare for careers as health professionals in communities, schools, industry, and allied areas.

HLTH 4250 is an internship course that provides concentrated and practical pre-professional experience with a health agency. This course is designed to provide an opportunity for students to apply the knowledge, theories, and experiences gained from their undergraduate program to real life situations. The internship is the culminating event of a student’s university experience. Thus, it is critical for the internship to be carefully planned and implemented. The Internship Manual contains guidelines to help ensure that the internship is a valuable and positive experience. As such, you will be required to fulfill the obligations outlined in this manual, as well as to perform the duties required by the supervising agency to which you are assigned. As you begin planning your internship, please keep in mind that the manual is designed to be used in conjunction with counsel from your academic advisor. Requirements for completing the internship will be given in the online d2l website.
The responsibility for obtaining an acceptable internship is the student’s. However, the MTSU coordinator should be consulted before beginning the process. You must receive approval by the internship coordinator before interviewing with the agency.

Students majoring in Community/Public Health with the Community Health concentration have an option to choose an internship. The student should choose the facility that best matches his/her future employment interests. A good internship experience can go a long way in helping the student find a post-collegiate professional position or in selecting an emphasis area for graduate study.

The first days at the site of the internship will be spent in orientation. The exchange of information should be beneficial to both you and your supervisor. You will be given an introduction to the overall goals and objectives and other aspects of the agency for which you will be working. This overview will include such things as becoming acquainted with agency personnel, equipment and facilities, work schedules, policies and procedures of the agency, administrative procedures, etc. You, in turn, will have the opportunity to provide your supervisor with background information relative to your capabilities and desires.

Students are encouraged to pursue certification as a Certified Health Education Specialist. Membership in a professional organization such as the SOPHE or APHA is also strongly encouraged.

B. Description of Internship Program
HLTH 4250 is a 360 clock-hour assignment in the health education field. It affords the student an opportunity to merge academic knowledge with practical job experiences. It is a win/win situation for both the intern and supervising agency. The student will receive twelve semester credit hours for the successful completion of the internship. No additional may be taken with the internship.

C. Internship Benefits
- **Student Intern** - The internship enriches education by adding the vital component of “work experience” for the student. The experience allows students to explore and clarify professional goals, establish post-graduation job contacts, and to acquire skills and experiences related to their career goals. He/she can determine areas of strength and work to improve on areas of weakness.
- **Supervising Agency** - The site supervisor has the opportunity to preview and assess the potential of the intern as a possible future employee. The internship program provides the added benefit of allowing the supervisor to have a trained intern with specific skills at no cost.

D. Program Goals and Objectives
The goals of the Community/Public Health Internship Program are to:
- Prepare the student for entry-level health education employment.
- Provide practical work experience for students who plan to pursue a health education career.
- Provide health educators who are prepared to practice health education in areas of medical, social, and economic change on a local, national and international level.

The intent for goals for the Intern is:
- Develop an understanding of the structure and function of the sponsoring organization.
- Develop skills and knowledge appropriate for an entry level health education professional.
- Made a meaningful contribution to the sponsoring organization.
II. Eligibility Requirements

General Criteria
In order to participate in the Community/Public Health Education Internship Program you must:

- Be a degree-seeking student in good standing
- Complete all required health classes before the internship semester
- Possess an overall minimum grade point average of 2.0 and a major GPA of 2.5 or above
- The internship work must be directly related to the health education field of study. The agency must have a health educator to supervise the internship. The student intern is normally not a paid internship. The intern must complete at least 360 clock hours of supervised work.
- Interns may be required to have a background check and/or liability insurance. Payment is the responsibility of the student.

III. Roles and Responsibilities

A. Supervising Agency

- The agency participates in an intern interview/meeting session and completes the supervising Agency Agreement (Appendix C) for submittal to the Internship Coordinator.
- The agency provides a safe environment for the student. All company policies and regulations, as well as conditions of health and safety, apply to the intern.
- The agency provides a supervisor or mentor under which the student may work. This supervisor should have a health education background.
- The agency accepts the student as a professional member of the staff and encourages professional growth.
- The agency provides the physical facilities and supplies necessary to accomplish the interns on site responsibilities (desk space, computer access, supplies, and other essential services).
- If a background check and/or liability insurance is/are needed, the agency informs the intern in the interview meeting.
- The agency provides the intern with an orientation at the beginning of the internship experience.
- The agency provides an opportunity for the intern to function as a full-time staff member. Weekly meetings between the intern and his/her supervisor provide greater opportunity to learn.
- The agency provides the intern with an opportunity for participation in a variety of tasks and relationships common to the activities of health education professionals at the internship site
- The agency completes the Midterm Supervising Agency Evaluation of Intern and the Final Supervising Agency Evaluation of Intern and submits each form to the Internship Coordinator by e-mail. These evaluations should also be in the final notebook.
- The agency should provide informal feedback on observations on a continuous basis.
- The agency implements Suggested Activities for Supervising Agencies as appropriate. Job rotation enhances the learning experience.
- By the second half of the internship, the agency in conjunction with the intern identifies a health education project to be planned, implemented, and evaluated by the student intern. The level of project is decided by the site supervisor in conjunction with the intern
- The agency notifies the Internship Coordinator of any problems or difficulties encountered during the internship period.

B. Suggested Internship Activities

Internship activities are usually mutually agreed upon by the intern and site supervisor. Possible ideas include, but are not limited to:

- Identification and diagnosis of a program need or problem.
- Fact finding as related to a program need or problem, e.g., conducting literature searches, writing reports, press releases, news articles, etc.
- Developing, coordinating, and administering a program activity.
• Attending professional and staff meetings.
• Assisting in the preparation of special reports, grant applications, and curricula.
• Presenting health related information
• Assisting with program evaluation.
• Working with the professional staff on an intra-agency basis.
• Visiting other health related agencies.

C. The Intern Responsibilities:
• Keep the Internship Coordinator informed of all problems, difficulties, or delays encountered during the internship.
• Read MTSU e-mail regularly.
• Submit 30-hr. reports promptly.
• Ensure that your site supervisor has submitted your evaluations to your university supervisor.
• Work the hours agreed on with the agency, arriving on time and not leaving early for appointments, classes, etc.

D. Internship Major Project
• All Interns are responsible for a project during their internship. A project provides many benefits and opportunities for personal growth and individual skill development in your area of interest. Project Focus: The project should demonstrate your competency as a pre-professional health educator. The nature of the project will be determined collaboratively by the intern and the intern site supervisor.
• Internship Focus: Developing a project enables you to work on a specific goal. Identifying, designing and completing projects provide evidence of your effectiveness as a health education professional.
• Internship Site Enhancement: While you will receive education, training and an excellent experience, your internship should also serve to benefit the participating organization. The projects you develop, (especially the Major Project) should help the sponsoring organization attain its institutional goals.
• Evaluation of Student Internship: Your performance relative to working on projects provides the Health & Human Performance faculty with a means of evaluating the quality of the internship site as well as the intern's professional skills. The evaluation of your project will be by the Intern Site Supervisor and University Internship Coordinator.

IV. Health Education Division
The MTSU Internship Coordinator will:
• Be informed of the professional qualifications of the agency supervisor to ensure proper health education support is provided to student intern.
• Conduct pre-internship orientation meeting with the prospective agency supervisor, if needed.
• Make contact with each agency supervisor during the first four weeks of the semester to confirm that the student has started the internship and provide an opportunity for the supervisor to ask any questions about the internship process.
• Visit the supervising agency as necessary during the semester. In most cases, the visits will be made at or after midterm. The meeting should be a visit with both the supervisor and the student intern. At the discretion of the Internship Coordinator, separate meetings may be held with the supervisor and the student intern in addition to the joint meeting.
• Ensure the Intern 30-hr. Reports are completed.
• Ensure all final evaluations are received.
• Determine, with significant input from the site supervisor, the final grade earned by the intern.
• Provide additional supervision via telephone, e-mail and other appropriate means.
v. **General Policies**

A. **Attendance**

Student interns are required to work 360 clock hours during the internship period. The specific number of hours/week will be coordinated with the agency. Tardiness is not permitted. Absences are also not permitted unless preapproved, or in the case of an emergency. Work or family/personal responsibilities cannot be excuses for failing to meet the commitments of the internship. Student interns will not be excused from any student intern responsibilities in order to work, participate in a class, or take part in University activities. For holidays and vacations student interns must follow the schedule of the supervising agency.

B. **Conduct**

Student interns must conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with the professional, ethical, and moral standards outlined by the Association for the Advancement of Health Education (AAHE).

C. **Dress Code**

The attire and grooming of student interns while at the supervising agency should conform to the accepted good practices at the agency.

D. **Background Checks/Insurance**

Background and drug checks may be a requirement at some internship sites. Payment for these will be the responsibility of the student. Insurance may also be required by the agency. As a student health education professional, you will be exposed to a variety of clinical settings while engaged in your Health Education Student Internship Program, thus you may be required to obtain Professional Liability Insurance, as a protective measure. You may wish to consult with your existing family/individual insurance agent or go online to find a reliable company to administer your professional insurance plan. The Marsh Affinity Group Services at www.proliability.com is a possible online source, but is in no way affiliated with MTSU. Copy of proof of professional liability insurance must be filed with your internship agency supervisor if required.

- Internship Final Summary
- Your special project assignment
- Attendance at the orientation and the final class session
Appendix A

Internship Application – HLTH 4250 and HLTH 4990

DIRECTIONS: The completed application is due **SEPTEMBER 28** for the spring session; **February 28** for the summer session; and **March 28** for the fall session. Late applications are not guaranteed an internship. Complete this form with two internship options (in order of preference) you wish to pursue.

Name: ___________________________ Date: ___________ Internship semester: ______________

M#: ______________ MTSU Email: ___________________________ Phone: _______________________

Address________________________________________________________

The degree you are in requires HLTH 4250 Health Internship____ or HLTH 4990 Health Internship_____.

Semester & Year of Internship: ____________ Date of graduation: ________________

Sign here stating that you will have completed all required health courses before your internship. You also acknowledge that you may not take more than 4 hours in addition to the internship.

____________________________________________________________________________________

Overall GPA: ______ Major GPA: ______ (get this when you run a degree evaluation audit in pipeline)

**INCLUDE A COPY OF YOUR MOST RECENT RESUME (send this to the career center to be reviewed before giving to the Health Internship coordinator) AND A LIST OF INTERNSHIP OBJECTIVES (form B) WITH THIS APPLICATION.**

**STUDENT INTERN EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

Emergency contact name and phone number during internship:

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

Preferred Agencies for Internship

1) Agency or Business Name: _____________________________

2) Agency or Business Name: _____________________________

You do not contact these agencies until after you have submitted Form A and Form B (including resume critiqued by the career center) to Dr. Neal and then been given approval to contact an agency for an interview.
Appendix B

Sample Internship Objectives

DIRECTIONS:  Attach your own personal internship objectives to your resume and submit with the Internship Application. Use the following objectives as a guide:

1. To gain experience in the diverse aspects of Health Education.
2. To increase skills regarding health education program design, development, implementation, and evaluation.
3. To gain more experience in health education leadership.
4. To improve written and oral communication skills.
5. To assist in the assessment of individual and community needs for health education.
6. To develop a plan for coordinating health education services.
7. To act as a resource person in health education.
8. To communicate health and health education needs, concerns, and resources.
9. To effectively complete a special health education project as assigned by the supervising agency.

You must also have a resume that has been submitted to the career center (You can do this online at their MTSU career development center site or go to their center). They will correct it and you make the changes and submit a copy to the MTSU supervisor to use at your interview.
Appendix C
Internship Agreement

Complete, sign, and submit to the MTSU Internship Coordinator

This “Letter of Agreement” (Agreement) is designed to provide the student with assurance from the Health Education area and the agency that this agency is willing to provide a professional, instructive, and organized health education experience for the student. This Agreement is not designed to be a legally binding document, but it does provide the Health Education Department with a record that the student has successfully located a supervising agency that is willing to provide an appropriate health education internship experience for the student.

DIRECTIONS: The student should return this completed form to the Internship Coordinator before the internship begins.

I, ________________________________, (Student Name) am agree to complete an internship with ________________________ (Agency Name). I agree to abide by the rules and regulations of this company and expect to be treated like other employees in the organization. I agree to conduct myself professionally and to perform my obligations to the best of my ability.

Date: ______________________

I, _______________________________, (Health agency supervisor), as a representative of ____________________________ (agency/company) am willing to provide a health education internship experience for the student named above. I agree to provide a professional learning experience for this student. I realize that if this student conducts herself/himself in an inappropriate manner, I may contact the Internship Coordinator and/or terminate the internship with this student.

Date: ______________________

The period of internship employment is to begin on ______________________ and will terminate on ______________________.

Agency comments: _______________________________________________________________

Site supervisor: _______________________________________________________________
E-mail _______________________________________________________________
Phone number _______________________________________________________________
Address: _______________________________________________________________
Appendix D
Intern Waiver

WAIVER BY STUDENT ENROLLED IN HLTH 4250,
HEALTH EDUCATION INTERNSHIP

DIRECTIONS: Submit the completed form to the Internship Coordinator (sandy.neal@mtsu.edu) or AMG 208

I understand that as a student in the Health Education Internship Program conducted by the Health Education Division of the HHP Department of Middle Tennessee State University and ________________________________ (supervising agency), I waive any claim or cause of action against the aforementioned agency, or their respective officers, employees, or agents thereof, for any illness or personal injury, regardless of cause, which arises out of or is in any way connected with my participation in the internship program. I agree to abide by the rules set by the Health Education area at Middle Tennessee State University concerning eligibility for Internship and requirements for completing the internship.

____________________________________
Student Signature

____________________________________
Date

____________________________________
Health Education Faculty Signature

____________________________________
Date