
HLAD 8902 FIELD EXPERIENCE GUIDE
FOR
MASTER OF HEALTH ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

EFFECTIVE FALL 2018

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FIELD EXPERIENCE OBJECTIVES AND STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the MHA's field experience is to provide students with an opportunity to apply the concepts, strategies and tools learned throughout the coursework. The overall objectives of the field experience are to:

- Expand knowledge and skills in health care management
- Increase the professional awareness of the complexity of healthcare services industry, management and policy issues
- Increase appreciation of cultural differences in the populations and health services professionals
- Apply theories, concepts, and tools learned in coursework
- Enhance competencies required for an early healthcare administrator
- Prepare for healthcare management careers as a professional
- Develop opportunities for job placement, professional references, and contacts
- Strengthen ties between the academic program and the healthcare management practice

STUDENT PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

Students are responsible for the arrangement of activities of their field experience and the ultimate responsibility for finding a placement rests with the student. The Department has information to assist students in identifying Field Experience opportunities in appropriate organizations, given the student's professional interests. Students should browse the Field Experience list and of the past Field Experience sites.

The Field Experience may not duplicate current or previous work experiences. Students may complete the Field Experience at their current place of employment per Filed Experience Instructor's permission. The permission is given if working outside of a student's current scope of responsibilities while fulfilling all College and Department requirements and expectations.

Students must submit the Field Experience Application to the Field Experience Instructor that identifies the site, the preceptor's name and title, the goals and objectives of the project for approval.

When engaging in a field experience, a student is an official representative of the Program and the University. Each student is expected to conduct him/her self professionally at all times. This includes, but is not limited to, professional attire, demeanor, and behavior.

All field experience arrangements and activities are ultimately the responsibility of the student but are subject to approval by the Field Experience Instructor.

ELIGIBILITY AND REQUIREMENTS

Students pursuing the Master of Health Administration (MHA) are required to complete a minimum of 120 contact hours of field experience (e.g. 10 hours per week for 12 weeks) to receive 3 hours of

academic credit as part of their curriculum. To be eligible for field experience, students must be in good academic standing; have completed at least 48 credit hours of required coursework in the MHA program, and permission of the advisor and field experience instructor. At the conclusion of the field experience all students will be expected to complete and submit the following minimum requirements:

1. Field Experience Application
2. Field Experience Work Plan or Project Proposal
3. Field Experience Monthly or Periodic Reports
4. Field Experience Final Report
5. Field Experience Portfolio
6. Field Experience Preceptor Evaluation Form

FIELD EXPERIENCE WORK PLAN OR PROJECT AND FIELD EXPERIENCE APPLICATION

The Field Experience Work Plan or Project Proposal is the formal agreement between the student, Field Experience Preceptor, and Field Experience Instructor. At a minimum, the Project Proposal must identify the following:

- Field experience site, Preceptor's name and title
- The outline of the Project Proposal or Work Plan.
- The required number of competencies that will be attained by the field experience. Each competency that is identified must have specific objectives, proposed activities, and target products or materials that will demonstrate attainment. Please use the field experience learning questions and competencies at the end of this guide and the preceptor's evolution form to help you identify the competencies that will be attained by your field experience.
- Students should also include a summary of their competency development as tracked in The JAG highlighting both competency strengths and weaknesses. The Field Experience should include opportunities to enhance competency weaknesses

The field experience site Preceptor and the field experience Instructor must approve the field experience site and all field experience objectives, activities, and products. Signing of the Application by each party indicates approval and allows the student to begin the field experience. Field Experience Applications must be submitted to the Field Experience Instructor.

FIELD EXPERIENCE JOURNAL

Each student is required to make journal entries each time the field experience work is performed. Your journals entries should reflect on your goals and objectives, and how experiences help to enhance specific competencies. Write professionally using correct spelling and grammar. Be honest to yourself and express your thoughts clearly.

MONTHLY OR PERIODIC REPORTS

Students are required to submit written monthly or periodic reports to the Field Experience Instructor throughout the field experience. The monthly or periodic reports should address the following:

- Activities:
 1. Describe most important activities of the period.
 2. Describe interesting meetings, including group meetings or individual meetings
 3. Describe duties assigned, other organizations or facilities visited, training completed, projects worked on, and other significant activities.
 4. Do not submit a log of all activities. Describe in narrative form (not bullet points) selected activities and why they are important.
- Learning experiences:
 1. Write one or two paragraphs about the key learning experience of the period. Describe how the experience has expanded your knowledge base, and relate it to your coursework or to your responsibility.
 2. Link the activities to specific competencies and how the activity helped you develop the competencies. This will help you when writing their final report.
 3. Describe how the key experience relate to the objectives in your Project Proposal.

Unless stated, the frequency for the reports is monthly and the due date is on the last day of each month. Each report should be submitted on the Blackboard. The length of the report may vary from one to two pages (single-spaced). The journal entries can be a good source for your monthly or periodic reports.

FINAL REPORT

All students are required to submit a Final Report at the conclusion of the field experience. Consistent with University policy, each Final Report must be approved by three faculty members. The final report should include:

- A summary of major projects and activities engaged in the course of the field experience.
- An assessment addressing how competencies selected for the field experience were met through the established objective, activities and deliverables. (This aspect of the final report is the most important and should thoroughly address each of the competencies identified).
- Emphasize insights and lessons learned through the field experience
- Evaluative comments about the Field Experience Preceptor and the site.
- A thoughtful reflection on how the field experience contributed to your overall educational experience and professional development.

The Final Report should be no more than 5 pages, single spaced. According to University's Policy, the final field experience "report must be approved by three faculty members. (See Field Experience Approval Form)

FIELD EXPERIENCE PORTFOLIO

All students are required to submit electronically a Field Experience Portfolio that contains their Field Experience Application, Project Proposal or Work Plan, Field Experience Journals, Monthly or Periodic Reports, and Final Report on Blackboard. Make sure your Portfolio is in one file with a table of contents. A poorly organized portfolio will result in an unfavorable evaluation with the grade being lowered by one letter.

The content of the portfolio may vary depending on the organization and the project. The Final Report is the major part of your Field Experience Portfolio. The additional required components of the Portfolio can be found on the Blackboard (See Portfolio Table of Contents)

PRECEPTOR EVALUATION FORM

Students will be evaluated by their Field Experience Preceptor at the conclusion of the practicum (Preceptor Evaluation Form). The Preceptor's evaluation of the student will be considered in determining the student's term grade for the field experience. Please see the Field Experience Preceptor Evaluation Form.

GRADING

Upon completion of the field experience, the Instructor will award a letter grade for a student based on completion of the requirements outlined above and any additional requirements outlined in department and college policy, including:

1. Completed required hours
2. Monthly or Periodic Reports
3. Final Report
4. Portfolio
5. Field Experience Preceptor's evaluation
6. Fulfillment of the Project Proposal (or Work Plan) Objectives

If a student defaults on the terms of the Project Proposal or Work Plan, the student may receive a failing grade.

During the course of the field experience, if the Preceptor or the Instructor determines a student is having difficulty functioning in a particular setting, the student may be reassigned or asked to withdraw and retake the field experience during a future semester. If the student's behavior is determined to be unprofessional, unethical, or outside the rules of the field site or university, the student may be given a failing grade and thus no academic credit will be received for the field experience, and/or may be removed from the degree program depending upon individual circumstances.

RESPONSIBILITIES

In the effort to plan, organize and execute a successful field experience, the student is expected to take a primary role and can be assisted by the Field Experience Instructor and Field Experience Preceptor.

STUDENT

- Before the Field Experience

The responsibility for making all field experience arrangements including securing a placement ultimately rests with the student and subject to Instructor and Preceptor approval. The student is primarily responsible for sending out inquiries, setting up meetings, ensuring communications among those involved, and making preliminary arrangements. The student is encouraged to seek information and advice from former students, current students who have completed their practicum experience, their faculty advisor, other faculty, and the Field Experience Instructor.

- Background Check
- Students are responsible for their background check for the field experience. The host site may require professional liability insurance. Students are responsible for obtaining a copy of the liability insurance certificate that covers them during the field experience.
- Field Experience Application and Project Proposal

Students are responsible to submit the Field Experience Application and the Project Proposal that are used to ensure explicit communication of field experience arrangements and expectations. The student, Field Experience Preceptor, and Instructor will determine the nature of the field experience commitment (i.e., start and completion dates, total number of weeks, or number of days worked per week, or hours per day, etc.). The field experience Instructor has final approval of field experience placement, competencies, objectives, and activities. Each student is personally liable for their own behavior and performance during their field experience.

- Affiliation Agreements

Some organizations and agencies may require an Affiliation Agreement be in place prior to students engaging in a field experience. All Affiliation Agreements for field experiences are managed by the Dean's Office. Affiliation Agreements are made between the College and the organization/agency and may only be signed by those with appropriate institutional authority. Students are responsible to discuss with the Field Experience Instructor whether or not an Affiliation Agreement exists prior to initiation of the field experience.

- During the Field Experience

The student is responsible for completing all assignments and components of the field experience in a timely manner. Written journals, reports, papers, and other products required (see syllabus) must be collected in student's portfolio. The portfolio may be developed in collaboration with field experience preceptor, but its timely completion and submission are solely the responsibility of the student.

- At the conclusion of the field experience

The student is responsible to sit with the field experience Preceptor to discuss the concluding performance and seek for advice for future improvement. The student is also responsible to submit all required documents of the field experience to the Field Experience Instructor.

- Ethical Guidelines for Students

- All information related to clients of the host organization or agency is to remain confidential.

- Students must follow standards of academic integrity as outlined in MHA student Handbook and University Policy. Any student identified as having engaged in any acts of academic dishonesty while engaged in field experience activities will be subject to the same standards and review process, including the possibility of dismissal.
- Students should be guided by the guidelines and expectations of their host organization or agency.
- Students are encouraged to discuss with the field experience Instructor any activities they believe may potentially compromise legal or ethical standards.
- Students may undertake only those program activities explicitly assigned or authorized by host site personnel, preceptor or the field experience Instructor.
- Students should immediately report any harassment of any form they might experience while participating in their field experience to the Preceptor, Instructor, and/or the Department Chairperson.
- Students may not visit clients socially during regular working hours without explicit approval of the Field Experience Preceptor.
- Students may not correspond with or for clients regarding matters of a professional nature without explicit approval of the Practicum Preceptor.

Field Experience Preceptor

All Preceptors are technically considered Clinical Adjunct Faculty of the University. As such, they must possess a master's degree or higher, or permission of the Field Experience Instructor. The student must submit the Preceptor's resume or curriculum vitae with their Field Experience application for approval by the Field Experience Instructor.

A role of a field experience Preceptor is to guide the student's experience in a supportive and professionally stimulating environment. During the field experience their role include:

- Serve as a professional role model and facilitate the student's identification with the profession.
- Serve as a work supervisor and employer with the addition of a strong educational focus.
- Serve as the point of contact for a student within field experience locations and functions as his/her immediate supervisor.
- Provide workplace guidance and knowledge.
- Work with the student and the Instructor to develop a Project Proposal prior to the initiation of the field experience.
- Assist the field experience Instructor in evaluating the student's performance by completing the Preceptor Evaluation Form at the completion of the field experience

Field Experience Instructor (Department Faculty)

The Field Experience Instructor maintains the records associated with each student's Field Experience and monitors the progress of each student during her/his field experience. The role of the field experience Instructor includes:

- Act as a resource for assisting the student in identifying possible field experience locations
- Assist the student in developing an appropriate Field Experience Project Proposal

- Approve student's Field Experience Application, and Project Proposal prior to the initiation of the field experience.
- Assign Periodic Report timeline and secure completed field experience evaluations
- Submit the final field experience grade

PROCEDURES

There are six steps for students to completing their Field Experience: 1) Understand; 2) Identify; 3) Apply; 4) Plan; 5) Do; and 6) Document

Step 1 Understand Field Experience Requirement

The first step to a successful field experience is understanding field experience requirements outlined in this document, HLAD 8902 syllabus, and completing the online required field experience training on Blackboard. Completion of the training on Blackboard will assure students have access to all required documentation.

The semester prior to planned completion of the field experience the student needs to complete the following steps 2 to 4.

Step 2 Identify Field Experience Placement

During the semester prior to the semester of the field experience the student should identify a placement for their field experience by doing the following:

- Schedule a meeting with HLAD 8102 Field Experience Instructor to discuss eligibility to complete a field experience.
- Have clear overall goals for field experience based on student experiences.
- Based on goals, the student should gather information on potential field experience opportunities and sites. There are numerous avenues to identify potential field experiences including websites, visiting speakers and adjunct professors, emailed announcements, current and former students, faculty, family and friends.
- Student should update resume.
- Once potential sites are identified the student moves to the application stage.

Step 3 Apply for Field Experience

At this step the student should have narrowed the search, contacted potential sites and begun the application process or negotiations for conducting a field experience. The student may be submitting applications for field experiences and participating in interviews. Please make sure the following document to be submitted with the application form:

Application Form

Resume

Proof of Liability Insurance: Students must obtain insurance and submit proof to the Field Experience Instructor with the application. This can be done at but not limited to:

H.P.S.O. Service: Marsh Affinity Group, a service of Seabury & Smith

Phone: 1-800-928-9491

1440, Renaissance Dr. Park Ridge, IL 60068

www.hpsos.com

Phone: 1-800-503-9230

www.proliability.com

- Criminal Background check: To be completed at: <https://www.castlebranch.com/> use CODE: Go15 (as in the word go". Choose "Community Health Worker" option when prompt.

As the student applies for the field experience or makes contact regarding potential field experiences the student needs to ensure the opportunity will fulfill requirements and meet the goals desired. Once the student receives an offer or secures a field experience opportunity he or she moves to the formal planning process.

Step 4 Plan for Field Experience

Once a field experience site and opportunity are secured, the student must complete the formal application and Project Proposal. Through discussions with their Field Experience Preceptor and the Instructor the student should create the Project Proposal or Work Plan including objectives aligned to competencies, activities and deliverables. Once the student and Field Experience Preceptor agree and approve the finalized Proposal the document is submitted to the field experience Instructor for final approval.

The student cannot begin or register for field experience until all paper work is signed and approved. Registration blocks are in place for all students. The Instructor will remove the registration block allowing the student to register for HLAD 8902 Field Experience.

Step 5 Do Field Experience

Once students begin the field experience during the planned semester, they are required to submit Monthly or Periodic Reports to Field Experience Instructor. The student should continue to review their Project Proposal throughout the field experience to ensure that competencies, objectives, and deliverables are being met.

Step 6 Document Field Experience

At the completion of the field experience, the student is required to complete several tasks to receive field experience grade.

- Submit a Final Report to the Field Experience Instructor
- Compile and submit Field Experience Portfolio to the Field Experience Instructor
- All required documentation including Field Experience Preceptors evaluation form and Field Experience Completion Approval Form must be submitted by the end of the semester. Failure to

do so by the deadline can impact the ability of a student to receive academic credit for field experience.

- Complete the final competency self-assessment and include a completed copy of The JAG

MHA FIELD EXPERIENCE LEARNING QUESTIONS

The following questions are design to help you intentionally learn from your field experience. You can use these questions to help you know what to learn, write your Final Report, and compile your Field Experience Portfolio.

1. Describe the ownership and structure of the organization. If it is a subsidiary of a parent corporation or part of a larger system, include the description of the larger organization. Include an organizational chart and indicate where in the organization your component is located. Provide a brief history of the organization. Include a description of how your area/department contributes to the fulfillment of the mission, vision and values of the organization.
2. Look at the staffing of the department or organization in which you work. Identify the key personnel (in terms of their name and title) and look at their current functions in relationship to their training and experience. Interview them to identify how they got to the position they hold today. Did your direct supervisor/Preceptor have a mentor(s)? If so, describe how this supervisor/mentor helped your supervisor/Preceptor.
3. Identify and discuss the two most important external organizations to your organization. What impact do fulfilling these organizations' requirements have on your organization and its leaders? How do regulations, guidelines and/or requirements from the two external organizations affect the pursuit and delivery of quality healthcare services in your organization?
4. Describe the key competitors and collaborators of your organization. How has the leadership of your organization been able to work with competitors and collaborators? Identify the leadership skills required for building these collaborative partnerships.
5. Describe the progress you have made with your MHA competencies and skill sets. Mention and discuss at least three with specific attention to what you have undertaken in your field experience to this point in time. Refer back to The JAG and summarize your progress throughout the program.
6. Specific to what you are responsible for in your field experience, who are your customers? Describe both internal and external customers? Identify all of them and discuss what deliverables you provide to them.
7. Develop and answer a question you would like to discuss which adds to your reader's understanding of your experience and your responsibilities.
8. Describe a major project in which you have been involved. How did you contribute to the project? How did this project relate to the coursework you have already completed? How has this project contributed to your development as a soon-to-be early careerist in health administration?
9. Interview at least five first line staff, asking them: "If you could break or change any rule in service for a better care experience for patients or staff, which would it be?" What do you think of these ideas?
10. What did you learn about yourself during your practicum? How did this practicum improve your competencies and skill sets? Describe additional competencies, skills, or other elements you need to focus on and develop.

MHA FIELD EXPERIENCE COMPETENCIES

Domain 1: Knowledge of Healthcare System and Delivery: Students must demonstrate knowledge about general and evolving issues in healthcare and be prepared to apply this knowledge to diverse health care organizations.

- 1.1 **Healthcare Environment.** Ability to explain issues and advancements in the healthcare industry. An underlying curiosity and desire to know more about things, people, and issues, including the desire for knowledge and staying current with health, organizational, industry, and professional trends and developments. It includes pressing for more precise information; resolving discrepancies by asking a series of questions; and scanning for potential opportunities or information that may be of future use, as well as staying current and seeking best practices for adoption.
- 1.2 **Legal and Regulatory Application and Assessment.** Ability to understand and explain the regulatory and administrative environment in which the organization functions (e.g. antitrust; Stark, ACA). This includes the ability to understand and explain corporate compliance laws and regulations.
- 1.3 **Process & Quality Improvement.** The ability to analyze and design or improve an organizational process, including incorporating the principles of high reliability, continuous quality improvement, and user-centered design.

Domain 2: Business and Management Knowledge: Students must master core business and organizational management skills in a healthcare context.

- 3.1 **Human Resources Management.** The ability to implement staff development and other management practices that represent contemporary best practices, comply with legal and regulatory requirements, and optimize the performance of the workforce, including performance assessments, alternative compensation and benefit methods, and the alignment of human resource practices and processes to meet the strategic goals of the organization.
- 3.2 **Financial Skills.** The ability to understand and explain financial and accounting information, prepare and manage budgets, and make sound long-term investment decisions.
- 3.3 **Strategic Orientation.** The ability to consider the business, demographic, ethno-cultural, political, and regulatory implications of decisions and develop strategies that continually improve the long-term success and viability of the organization.
- 3.4 **Project Management.** The ability to plan, execute, and oversee a multi-year, large-scale project involving significant resources, scope, and impact.
- 3.5 **Information Technology Management.** The ability to see the potential for administrative and clinical technologies to support process and performance improvement. Actively sponsors the continuous seeking of enhanced technological capabilities.

Domain 3: Critical Thinking and Analysis: Students must demonstrate the ability to conceptualize, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information gathered from diverse sources.

- 3.1 **Performance Measurement.** The ability to understand and use statistical and financial metrics and methods to set goals and measure clinical as well as organizational performance; commits to and deploys evidence-based techniques.
- 3.2 **Innovation.** The ability to approach one's work and the organization in new and breakthrough ways, including applying complex concepts, developing creative new solutions, or adapting previous solutions in promising new ways.

3.3 Analytical Thinking. Developing a deeper understanding of a situation, issue, or problem by breaking it down or tracing its implications step-by-step. It includes organizing the parts of a situation, issue, or problem systematically; making systematic comparisons of different features or aspects; setting priorities on a rational basis; and identifying time sequences, causal relationships, or if-then relationships.

3.4 Organizational Awareness. The ability to understand and learn the formal and informal decision-making structures and power relationships in an organization or industry (e.g., stakeholders, suppliers). This includes the ability to identify who the real decision makers are and the individuals who can influence them, and to predict how new events will affect individuals and groups within the organization.

Domain 4: Policy and Community Engagement: Students must demonstrate knowledge of the policy process at various levels of government, as well as the processes and methods required to change and evaluate organizational policy, and strategies to engage the community in multiple types of policy change.

4.1 Policy and Advocacy. Ability to effectively participate in discussions relating to health policy at the local, state, and federal levels.

4.2 Community Collaboration. The ability to align one's own and the organization's priorities with the needs and values of the community, including its cultural and ethnocentric values, and to move health forward in line with population-based wellness needs and national health agenda.

Domain 5: Communication: Students must apply interpersonal and communication skills in valuable information exchanges with faculty, peers, and preceptors. This includes abilities such as listening and communicating clearly using nonverbal, verbal, and writing skills.

5.1 Communication Skills. Ability to facilitate a group; speak and write in a clear, logical, and grammatical manner in formal and informal situations to prepare cogent business presentations.

5.2 Interpersonal Understanding. The ability to accurately hear and understand the unspoken or partly expressed thoughts, feelings, and concerns of others, especially those who may represent diverse backgrounds and very different worldviews. Levels of proficiency relate to the increasing complexity and depth of understanding, as well as openness to perspectives very different from one's own.

Domain 6: Professionalism and Leadership: Students must demonstrate professionalism and leadership indicative of characteristics and abilities to influence others.

6.1 Professional & Social Responsibility. The demonstration of ethics, sound professional practices, social accountability, and community stewardship. Acting in ways that are consistent with one's values and what one says is important.

6.2 Collaboration. The ability to work cooperatively and inclusively with other individuals and/or teams they do not formally lead; working together, as opposed to working separately or competitively.

6.3 Team Leadership. The ability to lead groups of people toward shared visions and goals, from forming a team that possesses balanced capabilities, to setting its mission, values, and norms, and holding team members accountable individually and as a group for results.

6.4 Change Leadership. The ability to energize stakeholders and sustain their commitment to changes in approaches, processes, and strategies.

6.5 Achievement Orientation. Concern for surpassing standards of excellence. Standards may involve past performance (striving for improvement); objective measures (results orientation); outperforming

others (competitiveness); challenging goals, or redefining the nature of the standards themselves (innovation).

6.6 **Self-Awareness.** The ability to have an accurate view of one's own strengths and development needs, including the impact that one has on others. A willingness to address development needs through reflective, self-directed learning, and by trying new approaches.

FIELD EXPERIENCE PORTFOLIO CONTENTS

THE PORTFOLIO MUST CONTAIN AT LEAST THE FOLLOWING

1. FIELD EXPERIENCE OBJECTIVES
2. INTRODCUTION TO HOST ORGNIZATION
3. FIELD EXPERIENCE FINAL REPORT
4. FIELD EXPERIENCE COMPETENCIES
5. FIELD EXPERIENCE JOURNAL ENTRIES
6. MONTHLY OR PERIODIC REPORTS
7. FIELD EXPERIENCE PRECEPTOR EVALUTON
8. FIELD EXPEREINCE COMPLETION APPROVAL FORM
9. Self-assessment of competencies
10. The JAG
11. APPENDICES
 - MHA Field Experience Application Form
 - Field Experience Journal Entries
 - Student Resume