HUMN 490: Humanitarian Affairs Field Experience

GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS

To qualify for a field experience, you must meet the following requirements:

1. Be enrolled in the Humanitarian Affairs Minor;
2. Have completed the required course prerequisite HUMN 201;
3. Have no less than a 2.0 GPA;
4. Have junior or senior standing; and,
5. Have obtained permission of your Humanitarian Affairs adviser.

To complete this Field Experience, the student must enroll for the 3-credit field experience HUMN 490 course and complete a minimum of 120 work hours (voluntary or paid) with the approved Field Experience organization. A student should not attempt to carry more than 16 credit hours of coursework when enrolled in the HUMN 490 during a regular semester. The Field Experience is offered as a course so you must register and pay tuition to receive credit.

Before registering for HUMN 490 it is necessary to complete steps 1-5 of the following list. The remaining course obligations are listed below on page 3 under “Field Experience Requirements.”

**Recommended Process for Arranging a Field Experience**

1. Visit your Humanitarian Affairs adviser to discuss your interests and possible field experience positions. The purpose of the field experience is to provide students with experiential learning; therefore, positions that involve purely routine, low-skill clerical work are not acceptable. Field experience positions are seldom paying positions; students trade their labor for the opportunity to learn.
2. Contact a potential field experience provider and express an interest in arranging such a position. When it is feasible, make an appointment for an interview.
3. If necessary, prepare a resume. See the suggestions below. Take it and a writing sample to the interview. Also, take a copy of your proposed class schedule, if applicable.
4. At the interview, offer the interviewer your resume, discuss the nature of the field experience being offered, and attempt to ascertain if it is the type if experience you want to have. Be sure to ask questions about the tasks you will be expected to do and express an interest in getting involved in specific activities which will expand your knowledge and skills. Be sure that the field experience will be substantive enough to meet the course expectations as described to you by your adviser. If the opportunity appears satisfactory, make a tentative, verbal agreement with the provider.
5. Create the *FIELD EXPERIENCE TRAINING AGREEMENT* form with the provider. Return it to your Humanitarian Affairs adviser no later than the first work week.

**On Preparing a Brief Resume**

The field experience provider will want to know if you have a background compatible with the work you are about to undertake. He/she will need to judge whether you have some potential for learning from them and will need some assurance that you will be a responsible, willing worker. A brief resume helps them make these assessments. The Career Planning and Placement Office provides advice on how to construct a resume.

Your resume should be carefully typed and include the following:

* A statement of a career and field experience objectives;
* Personal data such as name, age, address (school and permanent), telephone number, class, and major(s);
* Work experience, even if it seems irrelevant to the field experience (providers like to know if you are industrious and have shown initiative in the job market);
* Academic preparation (major/minor courses by name, other courses that may be relevant, foreign language skills, and your GPA if you think it is high and will improve your chances of being accepted for the position); and,
* Extracurricular/organizational activities.

**What Providers Expect**

Field experience providers expect you to display a high level of interest and initiative, just as you would be expected to display on a new job. They expect an acceptance of the nature of the work situation, whatever if may be. They DO NOT like students who treat the experience as just so many hours a day to complete.

You will have established a schedule with the provider; he/she will expect you to report to work promptly. You should take care to meet your scheduled commitment. Strictly avoid changing your field experience schedule to meet other obligations. If it becomes essential that you alter your regular schedule, DO NOT wait until the last minute to inform the field experience provider.

Providers of the field experience expect your dress, appearance, and behavior on the job to be consistent with the standards (expectations) of the work place. They, their clients and your co-workers, will base much of their opinion of you on these things. In the “work world”, appearances are important. Failure to appreciate this fact will give the impression that you are immature and irresponsible.

**Field Experience Requirements**

To avoid grade penalties, all of the following must be met:

1. Complete the 120 of work hours required.
2. Keep a daily log that reports the days and hours worked as well as comments about each day’s activities. Submit this to your Humanitarian Affairs adviser at the end of the field experience.
3. Write an eight-to-ten page paper analyzing this endeavor as a learning experience. Submit your paper to your adviser at the end of the field experience. In the paper, be sure to stress this experience as it that relates to the Humanitarian Affairs minor.
4. Have your provider mail a completed EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE FORM assessing your work to your Humanitarian Affairs adviser. Provide him or her with the name and address of your adviser.

Near the end of the semester/summer session in which you have enrolled, you must begin to concentrate on completing the field experience requirements so a grade can be submitted. If you want to avoid a grade of incomplete (I) for the experience, you must submit your log and paper to your adviser *ONE WEEK BEFORE THE END OF THE SESSION.* You must complete your work obligation with the assigned organization by the end of the semester or summer session.

**Field experience Paper**

Your paper should be carefully written since it tells your adviser (who assigns your grade) not only what you have accomplished through the field experience but also your appreciation for the experience. The report should be eight to ten pages typed, double-spaced, in length, with normal fonts and margins. Pay attention to content, organization, spelling and grammar.

Your report *SHOULD NOT* be simply a description of your on-the-job activities. Rather, it should report the basic facts of your work situation and then proceed to analyze your

experience both in professional and personal terms always keeping in mind the objectives of the Humanitarian Affairs minor. Attach appendices of any studies, reports, or projects which you have prepared or helped to prepare. Professionally pull together all documents (e.g. your work log, your paper, and other evidence of your experience) and submit to your adviser.

Here are some questions that can help you generate ideas for your paper:

1. Can you give an overview of your experience as it relates to the Humanitarian Affairs minor and your potential career interest in humanitarian work?
2. Are there specific events in which you participated, or were there particular problems that you observed, from which lessons can be learned especially as related to humanitarianism? If so, explain.
3. Are there things that you have studied as theory in your coursework that you found confirmed or not confirmed by reality as a result of your field experience?
4. How was the experience valuable to you? How could it have been made more valuable?
5. Are there any types of political and/or other influences that affect the efforts of the organization for which you worked?
6. From your observation of the organization, can you think of any measures that would improve the organization’s effectiveness?

**FINAL GRADE**

Your final grade in the course is based on your field experience provider’s evaluation of your performance (45 percent), your paper (45 percent), and your meeting various administrative requirements (e.g., deadlines, required forms and information).

**James Madison University   
Humanitarian Affairs Program**

**FIELD EXPERIENCE TRAINING AGREEMENT**

DIRECTIONS: The student should fill in the following blanks with complete and accurate information. The Work Schedule on page two should be completed in consultation with the field experience provider. This agreement must be signed by the student, the field provider, and your Humanitarian Affairs adviser at the beginning of the experience.

STUDENT’S NAME \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Student ID # \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT’S ADDRESS

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

PHONE

NAME AND ADDRESS OF THE ORGANIZATION PROVIDING THE EXPERIENCE\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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PROVIDER’S ADDRESS

IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR PHONE

**AGREEMENT**

THE STUDENT AGREES TO THE FOLLOWING:

1. He/she must report to work on the assigned days and hours.
2. He/she understands that the field experience provider must profit from the student’s assignment in order to justify working with him/her and providing him/her with this valuable experience.
3. He/she must perform all assigned tasks to the best of his/her ability.
4. He/she must be available for consultation with his/her Humanitarian Affairs adviser to discuss the status of the experience.

THE FIELD EXPERIENCE PROVIDER AGREES TO THE FOLLOWING:

1. He/she will provide the student with practical work experience of professional relevance.
2. He/she will assign work to the student in accordance with courses studied for the Humanitarian Affairs minor at James Madison University.
3. He/she will provide a mutually agreed time for the Humanitarian Affairs adviser to meet with the student intern and the field experience provider, if possible.
4. He/she will discuss with the field experience provider any misunderstandings or termination of the position before taking action.
5. He/she will prepare an appraisal of the student’s performance once the student has completed his field experience.

THE HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS ADVISER AGREES TO THE FOLLOWING:

1. He/she will be available for consultation at mutually agreed times, with the other signatories of this agreement.
2. He/she will make every effort to visit, by mutually agreed appointment, the student and the field experience provider at the work place, if it is feasible.
3. He/she will meet and/or talk with the field experience provider to evaluate the student’s performance.

**WORK SCHEDULE**

Field experience begins: \_\_\_\_\_\_ ends: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated Work Days (PLEASE CIRCLE):

Monday Anticipated Work Hours: From: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_AM/PM To:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

AM/PM

Tuesday Anticipated Work Hours: From: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_AM/PM To: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ AM/PM

Wednesday Anticipated Work Hours: From: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_AM/PM To: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

AM/PM

Thursday Anticipated Work Hours: From: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_AM/PM To: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

AM/PM

Friday Anticipated Work Hours: From: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_AM/PM To: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

AM/PM

CONDITIONS OR COMMENTS ON WORK SCHEDULE (PLEASE NOTE ANY ANTICIPATED IRREGULARITIES IN THIS SCHEDULE)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Signatures**

STUDENT\_\_\_\_ DATE

SUPERVISOR\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ DATE

HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS ADVISER DATE