



PhD in Health Sciences Research Internship Information Handbook

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PHD IN HEALTH SCIENCES

The PhD in Health Sciences is designed to be a research-intensive program emphasizing the development of research skills with a particular focus on vulnerable populations. It is a high-quality graduate program in which students, faculty, and staff will be engaged together in intense research and scholarly work, including creative and innovative endeavours.

The PhD program is housed in the Department of Health Sciences, whose **mission** is to create and mobilize knowledge, to protect and promote health, and to reduce health inequities. Through applied research, community engagement, and provision of diverse learning opportunities, we help to build capacity to understand and address the complexities of both current and emerging health issues. Our **vision** is to be a leader in applied health research and comprehensive health education that enables and supports individuals and communities to achieve optimal health.

The objectives of the PhD in Health Sciences program are to prepare graduates who are able to:

- Discuss and critique current and emerging issues and trends in the field of health sciences;
- Design, carry out, and defend research at an advanced level to create knowledge relevant to the field of health sciences;
- Conduct research and scholarly activities in a way that is consistent with expected guidelines, processes, and procedures in the field of health sciences.



RESEARCH INTERNSHIP

Applied health research is an integral part of the PhD in Health Sciences program. The Research Internship is intended to provide the student with a real-world experience in an applied health research setting in which to incorporate learnings from program courses.

The Research Internship involves the development of a project plan by the student (approved by the Field Supervisor and Academic Advisor), including timelines and deliverables. It is expected that student projects will involve development or contribution to a research grant proposal, production of original research, and/or production of other advanced scholarship based on the project.

As such, the Research Internship provides an opportunity for students to:

- integrate, synthesize, and apply knowledge and skills to a real-world research setting;
- enhance and develop skills needed to function in an applied health setting, including:
 - Problem identification, analysis, and solving
 - Interpersonal skills, including working as a part of an interdisciplinary research team
 - Oral and written communication
 - Understanding the mission, structure, and functioning of the health organization;
- work on a substantive problem or issue relevant to the host organization; and
- engage in professional self-assessment and critical reflection

Duration

Students will complete a 400-hour internship in an applied health setting. Normally, hours will be fulfilled based on a Monday-Friday work week, although there is flexibility to arrange an alternate schedule subject to the mutual agreement of the host organization and student.

- **Standard Full-time** students must complete the Research Internship within one term - for example 25 hours per week over the 16-week term.
- **Flexible Full-time students** may complete the Research Internship over more than one term, but only to a maximum of three terms - for example 8 hours (1 day) per week over 3 terms (i.e. 12 months).

Setting/Host Organization

The host organization is an environment in which the student is able to apply health research knowledge and skills.

Student stipend

The primary purpose of the Research Internship is to develop applied health research skills and competencies. Over their 400-hour placement, the Research Internship student is expected to contribute to the operation of the host organization. Hosting students is also a key recruitment strategy for organizations. Providing a financial stipend to students is permitted, **but it is not required or expected**. It is recognized that not all organizations have the capacity to offer a stipend.



RESPONSIBILITIES

Students complete their Research Internship under the supervision of an Academic Advisor and a Field Supervisor. The responsibilities of each party are described in this section.

Student

The student is expected to:

- Work with the Administrative Coordinator in a professional and timely manner so that the Research Internship arrangements move ahead without undue delay;
- Work with the Field Supervisor and Academic Advisor as necessary to establish a Project Plan, Deliverables, and Timelines;
- Conduct activities to meet learning objectives, service expectations, and other deliverables;
- If applicable, identify to the Academic Advisor, in a timely manner, where the Research Internship is not meeting learning needs;
- Meet responsible and professional standards of conduct, including:
 - respecting the confidentiality of information of individuals and of the organization;
 - showing initiative and self-direction in preparing for, carrying out, and evaluating success and progress in relation to the Program Plan, Deliverables, and Timelines;
 - communicating effectively and appropriately;
 - demonstrating ethical behaviour and accountability;
 - recognizing one's own limitations in knowledge/ability and being prepared to communicate these to the Field Supervisor and Academic Advisor as needed;
 - behaving in a professional, courteous, and respectful fashion; and
 - showing interest in the organization's activities
- Comply with all rules, regulations, policies and procedures of the organization, including adherence to behavioural and dress codes;
- Participate in the Interim and Final Evaluation interviews with the Field Supervisor

Note: If students are conducting a research project for their internship, the placement host may require approval for the project through the internship site's research ethics board. The Lakehead University Research Ethics Board doesn't require ethics approval for work that students are doing on behalf/for an organization during their placement. The ethics approval should come from the internship site institution/organization's Research Ethics Board.

Academic Advisor

The Academic Advisor is normally a full-time faculty member of the Department of Health Sciences. The Academic Advisor has responsibility for overseeing the academic aspects of the student's Research Internship to ensure that it will meet the learning needs of the student and the academic requirements of the PhD in Health Sciences program. The Academic Advisor is expected to:

- Assist the student, as needed, to identify realistic goals and specific learning objectives for the Research Internship in conjunction with the Field Supervisor;
 - Advise, as needed, on the development of the Project Plan, Deliverables, and Timelines;
 - Review and approve the Project Plan, Deliverables, and Timelines, ensuring that they meet both academic and organizational expectations;
 - Be available to address any concerns or difficulties identified during the Research Internship;
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- Meet with the student regularly in person, by teleconference, or by other electronic means to review progress and to provide feedback and direction;
- At the request of the student or Field Supervisor, attend in person, by teleconference, or by other electronic means, the Interim and Final Evaluations;
- Review and sign off on the Field Supervisor's Interim and Final Evaluations of the student; and
- Review, evaluate, and provide feedback on the Internship Report

Field Supervisor

The Field Supervisor must have a completed graduate degree, experience and status within the host organization, and an interest and competence in supervising and mentoring at the PhD level. To avoid conflict of interest, it is expected that the Field Supervisor has an arm's length relationship with the student and their PhD Supervisor.

The Field Supervisor ensures the necessary practice and learning environment for the student and provides ongoing guidance, support, and supervision.



The Field Supervisor is expected to:

- Identify potential projects and/or learning experiences in his/her organization;
- Assist the student, as needed, to identify realistic goals and specific learning objectives for the Research Internship in conjunction with the Academic Advisor;
- Negotiate with the student the details of the Project Plan, Deliverables, and Timelines in conjunction with the Academic Advisor. Ideally, this should be done in person with the student, as this will provide an opportunity to discuss the educational and practice needs of the student, along with the expectations and requirements of the host organization. It will also provide an occasion to address expected activities, responsibilities, project deliverables, and any relevant policies or procedures related to the Research Internship site;
- Make necessary arrangements to provide for space, computer, phone, supplies, etc.;
- Provide orientation to the workplace, organizational structure, and functions. Provide access to individuals and work teams, and support opportunities for exposure to ongoing activities (e.g., Board and other relevant meetings, field visits, investigations, seminars, etc.), as well as identifying additional learning opportunities;
- Meet with the student regularly (e.g., weekly) to review progress and provide feedback and direction. Ideally this would be in person, but interaction by teleconference or other electronic means can be used in those instances when it is not logistically feasible to meet in person;
- Suggest supplementary readings or projects to enhance the experience;
- Discuss student needs with the Academic Advisor as necessary;
- Prepare and discuss an Interim Evaluation with the student and Academic Advisor mid-way through the Research Internship; and
- Prepare and discuss a Final Evaluation with the student and Academic Advisor



Addressing Difficult Situations

Difficulties arising between students and Field Supervisors should first be addressed, and hopefully resolved, by the parties involved. Field supervisors and students are urged to discuss perceived problems early and to communicate any major problems to the Academic Advisor. The Academic Advisor will attempt to help resolve the issue. If a resolution is not achieved, the matter will be referred to the Department Chair, through the Academic Advisor.

LABOUR DISRUPTION POLICY

In the case of a labour disruption (e.g., dispute, strike, emergency outbreak, environmental disaster, pandemic, lock-out) at a host organization, the Academic Advisor, Field Supervisor and student will discuss the opportunities and options for continuation of meaningful learning experiences.

Procedures to follow in the event of a potential or actual labour disruption:

1. Students should inform the Academic Advisor as soon as they are aware of the potential for labour disruption at the host organization site. It will be important to identify whether internships are automatically terminated with initiation of labour disruption, or if there is a possibility to return to the internship (depending on the length of the disruption).
2. The Academic Advisor, Field Supervisor and student will collaboratively determine the feasibility of working additional hours (i.e., “banking hours”). They will also discuss the feasibility of this work occurring off-site and outside of business hours (i.e., evenings, weekends).
3. The student will work with the Field Supervisor to ensure that an evaluation of his/her work to date is completed, if possible. The interim evaluation will be completed if not previously done; the final evaluation form will be used in instances where the interim evaluation has already been completed.
4. In the event of a strike, students are required to honor picket lines.
5. To ensure that student progress is not affected by a labour disruption during the internship, the Course Instructor may assign alternate work to be completed by the student within the original internship time frame.



ACADEMIC DELIVERABLES

Note: All forms which require completion will be provided to the Field Supervisor by the student and submitted to the Academic Advisor by the student. Samples of the forms are found in the Appendix.

Project Plan, Deliverables, and Timelines

Setting goals (i.e., deliverables and timelines) is important to assure that the expectations of the student and of the Field Supervisor are explicit, shared and agreed upon. Unclear expectations on the part of the stakeholders frequently lead to frustration, misunderstanding, and a less than optimal experience for all involved. The **Project Plan, Deliverables, and Timelines** document is an indispensable tool for communicating, monitoring, and evaluating the Research Internship.

Setting goals is important to ensure that the expectations of the student and of the Field Supervisor are explicit, shared and agreed upon. Unclear expectations on the part of the stakeholders frequently lead to frustration, misunderstanding, and a less than optimal experience for all involved. The Field Supervisor and the student work together to develop their own goals and objectives for the experience that are:

- *Appropriate and realistic* – considering the needs of the Field Supervisor/host organization, the student's learning needs, and the student's previous experience.
- *Specific* – specific deliverables and timelines ensure that the student knows what is expected and will facilitate the Field Supervisor's evaluation of student performance.
- *Flexible* - as the Research Internship proceeds, the deliverables and timelines may be changed or adjusted if necessary. (see: <http://www.stfm.org/Portals/49/Documents/FMPDF/FamilyMedicineVol32Issue3Stearns161.pdf>)

The student has the lead responsibility for developing the content of the Project Plan, Deliverables, and Timelines document **in collaboration with the Field Supervisor**; the Academic Advisor may be involved if needed. Both the student and Field Supervisor must sign off on the document. It is expected that projects will involve development or contribution to a research grant proposal, production of original research, and/or production of other advanced scholarship based on the project. The Academic Advisor reviews the document to ensure that proposed activities and deliverables are in sync with the academic goals of the Research Internship.

Field Supervisor Interim and Final Evaluations

The evaluation of the student in his/her Research Internship is based on the expectations set out in the Project Plan, Deliverables, and Timelines document. Evaluations take place mid-way through and at the end of the Research Internship.

- **The Interim Evaluation** formalizes the need to review the progress achieved to-date, assess whether there is any need to adjust overall plans or deliverables, and address any major performance concerns. The form is completed by the Field Supervisor and discussed with the student; the Academic Advisor may also be involved. It is the student's responsibility to submit the evaluation to the Academic Advisor.
- **The Final Evaluation** is more detailed than the interim evaluation and explicitly refers to the program learner outcomes and degree-level expectations for the Research Internship and the fulfillment of the deliverables identified in the Project Plan, Deliverables, and Timelines document. The form is completed by the Field Supervisor and discussed with the student; the Academic Advisor may also be involved.



**PhD in Health Sciences
HESC 6040: Research Internship**

Project Plan, Deliverables, and Timelines Form

Student	
Field Supervisor	
Host Organization	
Start and End dates	
Hours of Work (e.g., schedule)	
Stipend	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

Description of Overall Project/Focus of the Research Internship (max 500 words)



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HESC 6040: Research Internship

Project Plan, Deliverables, and Timelines Form (continued)

Deliverables		Activities & tasks	Timeline	Degree-level expectations
<i>What will you produce?</i>		<i>What are the related tasks and activities?</i>	<i>By when? Specify the timelines for the various tasks, activities, and final deliverable</i>	<i>How do deliverables, tasks, and activities contribute to degree-level expectations?</i>
1				
2				
3				
4				

Signatures

Student	Signature:	Date:
Field Supervisor	Signature:	Date:
Academic Advisor	Signature:	Date:



PhD in Health Sciences
HESC 6040: Research Internship

Field Supervisor Interim Evaluation Form

Please complete this document to describe and explain any changes in the goals, deliverables, tasks, activities, or timelines of the Research Internship, and to describe how the Research Internship has progressed to date. This form must be signed by all parties in order for the student to pass.

Student	
Field Supervisor	
Host Organization	

Describe and explain changes in the goals, deliverables, tasks, activities, or timelines, if any.

Describe how the Research Internship has progressed to date, including any problems not mentioned above.

Any other comments?

Signatures

Student	Signature:	Date:
Field Supervisor	Signature:	Date:
Academic Advisor	Signature:	Date:



**PhD in Health Sciences
HESC 6040: Research Internship**

Field Supervisor Final Evaluation Form

Student	
Field Supervisor	
Host Organization	

Describe the major areas of experience during the Research Internship

Describe the student's overall strengths and weaknesses.

Other comments?

Please rate the student's aptitude in each of the categories below.

Contributions to the Host Organization		Poor	Average	Excellent
1	Understand the mission and priorities of the organization, and apply them in practice.			
2	Contribute to maintaining organizational performance standards.			
3	Demonstrate an ability to build community capacity by sharing knowledge, tools, expertise and experience.			
Diversity and Inclusiveness		Poor	Average	Excellent
1	Recognize how the determinants of health (biological, social, cultural, economic and physical) influence the health and well-being of specific population groups.			
2	Address population diversity in research goals, methods, and interpretation of findings.			
3	Apply culturally-relevant and appropriate approaches with people from diverse cultural, socioeconomic and educational backgrounds, and persons of all ages, genders, health status, sexual orientations and abilities.			
Depth and Breadth of Knowledge		Poor	Average	Excellent
1	A thorough understanding of a substantial body of knowledge that is at the forefront of their academic discipline or area of professional practice.			
Research Scholarship		Poor	Average	Excellent
2	The ability to conceptualize, design, and implement research for the generation of new knowledge, applications, or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the research design or methodology in the light of unforeseen problems.			
3	The ability to make informed judgement on complex issues in specialist fields, sometimes requiring new methods.			
4	The ability to produce original research, or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, and to merit publication.			
Level of Application of Knowledge		Poor	Average	Excellent
1	Undertake pure and/or applied research at an advanced level.			
2	Contribute to the development of academic or professional skills, techniques, tools, practices ideas, theories, approaches and/or materials.			
Professional Capacity/Autonomy		Poor	Average	Excellent
1	The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex situations.			
2	The intellectual independence to be academically and professionally engaged and current.			
3	The ethical behaviour consistent with academic integrity and the use of appropriate guidelines and procedures for responsible conduct of research.			
4	The ability to evaluate the broader implications of applying knowledge to particular contexts.			
Level of Communication Skills		Poor	Average	Excellent
1	The ability to communicate complex and/or ambiguous ideas, issues and conclusions clearly and effectively.			
Awareness of Limits of Knowledge		Poor	Average	Excellent
1	An appreciation of the limitations to one's own work and discipline, of the complexity of knowledge, and of the potential contributions of other interpretations, methods and disciplines.			

Recommendation:

- The student has satisfactorily performed and has demonstrated appropriate knowledge and skill.
- The student has not performed satisfactorily, nor demonstrated knowledge and skill appropriate to level of training.

Signatures

Student	Signature:	Date:
Field Supervisor	Signature:	Date:
Academic Advisor	Signature:	Date: