Health and Society:
A Guide to Internships and Field Experience

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I. What is an internship/field experience?

Health and Society requires a ½ credit internship in order to facilitate practical application of the theories and concepts learned in the major. Health and Society majors will graduate with:

- An understanding of health as a multi-dimensional concept
- The ability to integrate multiple disciplinary perspectives to understand critical issues
- An understanding of health in a global context
- Scientific literacy and effective communication of scientific research
- Ethical and methodological frameworks for advocacy, social change, and action.

The internship experience fosters the development of these core competencies.

“Internships are temporary work experiences outside the classroom that provide students with the opportunity to pursue career goals, explore careers and … expand upon their skills and classroom learning, [as well as] build on their classroom learning and life experience.” (Beloit College Career Services Internship Guide)

An internship is substantial and meaningful work in a field of interest. It requires academic consideration and reflection. An internship may be paid or unpaid, and must be registered through the college for academic credit. Some internships are obtained through formal application processes, and others are considerably less formal in nature.

**Important components of an Internship**

- **Paraprofessional**: must be supervised by or work along side a professional
- **Substantial Work**: the work must be both challenging and meaningful
- **Mutuality**: the internship site’s needs will be met through utilizing your skills as well as offering you supervision, training, and opportunities for growth.
- **Goal-Setting**: goals will be set before and during the internship with the help of a supervisor.
- **Ongoing Reflection**: reflection is a continuous process both during and after the internship. This will help to gauge how the internship is progressing and help integrate the experience into a cohesive academic career.

Additionally, Health and Society internships must be related to health in some way.

**Internship Opportunities for Health and Society**

The Health and Society program has identified several internship opportunities that are considered acceptable for majors to fulfill the requirement, in addition to the option of procuring one’s own internship.

**Duffy Community Partnerships**

Completed during the fall or spring, Duffy internships are coordinated through the Sociology department. Duffy internships provide logistical support and match individuals up with organizations in Beloit and surrounding communities. Applications are due during advising week.
Wisconsin Community Health Internship Program (CHIP)
CHIP internships are located throughout the state of Wisconsin and generally include work with local health departments and community organizations, although specific internships vary by location. Chip internships take place during the summer and offer a stipend. Applications are due in March.

Wisconsin Federation of Independent colleges (WFIC) College to Work Program
The College to Work program funds various internships located throughout the state of Wisconsin that are open only to student who attend Wisconsin private colleges. These internships are with non-profit organization, but vary by location. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis, with a final deadline in mid-March.

Study abroad Independent Study Projects (when the topic is relevant)
Many study abroad programs offer opportunities to pursue independent research or volunteer work with local organizations. If the topic is relevant these experiences can be used to fulfill the internship requirement.

Writing for Community Organizations/Advocacy Courses (WRIT 201, Beloit College)
Offered during the academic year, writing for community organizations classes will offer students the ability to interact with community stakeholders and partners. Topics vary, but students who enroll in these courses can expect to gain skills in communication and citizen advocacy. Sign up is during advising week.

Public Leadership (POLS 310, Beloit College)
This course, offered in the Political Science department, focuses on the role of public political leadership on various contemporary issues. The course requires a substantial practicum or research component. Sign up is during advising week.

In addition, Health and Society majors have interned at a variety of locations that you may choose to consider (pending approval from the department):
Health Care Consumers, Champaign, Il
Wisconsin Dept. of Health, Madison, WI
Winnebago County Health Department, Rockford, Il
Dept. of Health and Human Services- Office of Women's Health, Chicago, Il
(and various other health departments throughout the US)
National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association, Washington DC
Public Health Reports, Cincinnati, OH
University of Wisconsin, Madison, Nutrition Education Program, Madison, WI
Beloit Area Community Health Center, Beloit, WI
Summer Camps for children with Disabilities, Various Locations

Your options are not limited to those listed, and majors are encouraged to pursue internships with organizations that interest them. Furthermore, the majority of Health and Society students pursue at least 2 internships/experiential learning opportunities while at Beloit. However, you are only required to complete a ½ credit to graduate.
Health and Society majors are encouraged to first complete at least 2 core courses before completing and internship. This ensures that students have the academic context to frame experiential learning. Sophomore, junior, and senior years are all acceptable times to pursue an internship for major credit.

Sample HEAL timeline

**First Year:**
- 2 intro science courses
- 2 intro social science courses

**Second Year:**
- Statistics course
- 1-2 Core courses
  (additional intro science and social science courses as needed)

**Third Year:**
- Study Abroad
- 1-2 Core course
- 1 upper level science course
- Theme courses

**Summer:**
- Internship (best completed after you’ve taken HEAL core courses)

**Fourth Year:**
- Theme courses
- Senior Seminar/capstone

II. Strategies for Internship Searching

When searching for an internship, the most important thing is to plan ahead and be organized. If you are not pursuing an opportunity that is facilitated through Beloit College, this is especially important. Deadlines should be noted and all materials prepared well before the deadline in order to avoid last minute issues. You alone are responsible for turning in paperwork on time. If you fail to turn in paperwork to the registrar and your faculty advisor, you may not receive credit for your internship. **Registration of your internship with the registrar is required to receive credit for the major and retroactive credit will not be issued.**

Below is a brief outline of steps to finding and completing an internship. Refer to [Career Services](#) for more details.

- Reflect—What do you want out of this experience?
- Research/Network—Are there potential organizations that interest you?
- Prepare application materials
- Apply
- Register your internship for credit through the registrar
- To receive credit—Be sure all paperwork and assignments are completed and turned in
**Internship Timeline**

Ideally, you will begin the internship search 6-8 months prior to when you would like to begin. For a summer internship, students should begin thinking about their internship in October or November.

**Sample timeline**

**October/November:** Begin thinking about internships and what kind of internship is ideal for your interests and skills. Discuss your ideas with your advisor and/or career services. Begin to research programs you are interested in. Create a flexible resume that can be targeted to different organizations. Begin to think about ways to market yourself and your experiences.

**December/Winter Break:** Start to compile a list of organizations that you will apply to. If you are home for winter break and you plan to complete an internship there, meet with organizations that you have an interest in working with. Remember that application deadlines are generally between January and March, but some are earlier.

**January:** Decide on between 2 and 6 internships that you will apply for. Target your application materials/resume to the specific organization and have at least 3 people look over the materials to make sure they are free of errors. Be sure to make an appointment at Career Services for additional assistance and resources and continue a dialogue with your advisor about your plans.

**Three weeks before deadline:** Request letters of recommendation from professors/previous employers, if the application requires them. Remember to give them all the necessary information and resources, such as your resume and a brief description of the internship, to help your recommender write the best possible letter. Be sure to send weekly gentle reminders and a thank you note when it is completed.

*This is based on a 6-8 month search time; if you start later it can be condensed to fit your time constraints.

**Packaging yourself as a candidate**

As a Health and Society major, you have multiple skills and competencies that are highly valued in the workforce. It is important to learn how to discuss the Health and Society major both verbally and on paper in order to help others understand your academic qualifications. Consider these questions:

- Why did you choose the Health and Society major?
- What have you gained from interdisciplinary frameworks?
- What academic and practical skills do you have?

Some skills that make you competitive: language skills, special computer skills (especially web design and statistical and database software), volunteer experience in your field of interest, campus leadership activities, independent research projects, and international experience.
III. Campus Resources

There are many campus resources available to you when searching for internship opportunities.

Your professors and advisors
Professors may be a good source of information about career and internship opportunities in their field and have alumni connections.

The Liberal Arts in Practice Center (LAPC), careerservices@beloit.edu, x2673
The LAPC is located on the corner of Emerson and College streets and houses both the office of Career Services and the office of Community Based Learning. The office of Career Services is available to help with: resume and cover letter writing, internship and job searches, facilitating and interpreting various career and interest inventories, interviewing skills, and more. The office also can help you gain access to a variety of online resources to assist with your internship search, including My Turtle Search, which hosts thousands of jobs and is managed by the office. In addition, Career Services keeps the Beloit Career Network (BCN), a database of alumni by career field, which is compiled of individuals who have agreed to assist current students with all aspects of career development. There is also a database of past internship sites. These databases can be accessed through webadvisor.

The office of Community Based Learning maintains connections with a wide variety of local organizations and potential internship opportunities.

Other Health and Society majors
Health and Society majors who have already completed internships can provide insight into the searching and application process, and provide ideas of how to integrate experiential learning into the major as a whole.

IV. Funding

Although some internships are paid, many are not. Internships, however, provide valuable experience for students and can be instrumental in enhancing competitiveness in job and graduate school applications post-graduation. For those who need funding to make an internship opportunity possibly, there are multiple resources available:

LAPC Internships Fellowships:
   Bacon Super-Vision Fellowships
   Class of 1986 Field Experience Fellowship
   Class of 1996 Service Learning Fellowship

*Fellowship applications are generally due in mid-March and more information can be obtained through the LAPC. www.Beloit.edu/lapc

Community Based Learning Grants:
   The Mikva-Cohen Endowed Internship
The Martha and Alan Stutz Grant fund
The Society for Learning Unlimited Grant

*Applications are due at the end of March. More information can be obtained through the office of Community Based Learning. www.Beloit.edu/cbl

For international internships, the **Office of International Education** offers a variety of opportunities for funding.

- International Education Grants
- Weissberg Student Research Grant in International Human Rights
- Asian Studies Grants for Research and Internships

Applications are generally due in March and more information is available through the OIE. www.Beloit.edu/oie

Additionally, many departments offer grants and scholarships of varying amounts to students engaging in experiential opportunities.

**Appendix:**

*Web Resources—*

The Liberal Arts in Practice Center: [http://www.beloit.edu/lapc/](http://www.beloit.edu/lapc/)
The Office of Career Services: [http://www.beloit.edu/careerservices/](http://www.beloit.edu/careerservices/)
My Turtle Search: [www.beloit.edu/careerservices/students/myturtlesearch/](http://www.beloit.edu/careerservices/students/myturtlesearch/)
The Duffy Program: [http://www.beloit.edu/duffy/](http://www.beloit.edu/duffy/)
Wisconsin Area Health Education Center (CHIP): [http://www.ahec.wisc.edu/public_intern.html](http://www.ahec.wisc.edu/public_intern.html)
Non-profit internship/job/volunteer Search Engine: [http://www.idealist.org](http://www.idealist.org)
US Department of Labor O*Net: [http://www.onetcenter.org](http://www.onetcenter.org)
Wisconsin Department of Health: [http://dhs.wi.gov/](http://dhs.wi.gov/)

(Other state and city health departments can be found by searching in google)