

**Youth and Family
Internship
Manual
AHSC 436**

**Applied Human Sciences
Concordia University
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Introduction to the Specialization in Human Relations BA Program

Program Overview

The Human Relations program is housed in the Department of Applied Human Sciences at Concordia University. Students who study human relations are provided with an opportunity to develop their leadership, teamwork, intervention, and community organization skills through applied experiential learning approaches. Graduates hold positions in helping professions, human resources, organizational or community development, and public or business administration. Skills in empowering others, self-management, organizational change, and group or teamwork are developed over 3 or 4 full-time years of study.

The Specialization in human relations provides students with an opportunity to enhance their human relations and small group leadership skills. The concentration entitled Family Science and Youth prepares graduates to work with families and youth in a variety of settings. There are two pathways that students can take within this concentration. Family Science is a discipline that emphasizes the scientific study of families, and attracts practitioners, educators, and researchers who focus on different aspects of family life—such as work-life balance, parenting, and aging family issues—at different stages of family development. This concentration allows students to acquire fundamental knowledge and skills with the overall goal of strengthening and empowering families. The Youth pathway draws upon themes from the youth work and child and youth care literature to support the professional development of students as entry-level youth workers in intervention settings with families and young people.

Students' Preparation for the Internship Experience

Students complete a total of 60 university credits prior to beginning their internship experience in the fall term. Courses are primarily designed to engage students in experiential learning opportunities including observational exercises in the community, role-plays to enhance practical skills, and group work to develop facilitation and intervention expertise. Knowledgeable faculty, teaching in the program, draw on their practical experience and research endeavors to inform the design of the curriculum and provide an innovative learning experience for students.

Perspectives on Youth and Family Work

The undergraduate internship in youth and family work highlights two main approaches to supporting and working with youth and families: prevention and intervention. The prevention approach focuses on equipping and empowering family members to develop knowledge and skills that enhance well-being and strengthen interpersonal relationships through an educational, preventive, and strengths-based approach. The intervention approach focuses on working with youth in more clinical settings.

The Internship

Students complete a total of 360-hours between September and April at their respective internship setting.

Internship Course Description

AHSC 436 Internship in Youth Work (6 credits)

This course is one of two internship options for students enrolled in the Specialization in Human Relations. This 360-hour internship provides students with a supervised opportunity to apply learning from the BA Specialization in Human Relations to work with youth and families in a range of settings such as child welfare, schools, non-profit organizations, residential care, or outreach. The specific objectives are to teach about planning, education, and intervention in human service work, to promote self-reflection as a critical component of ethical practice, and to provide a basis for further career planning and/or graduate work in youth and family practice.

Internship Learning Objectives

The course learning objectives for AHSC 436 are to develop the ability of the student to:

- Effectively apply interpersonal communication skills in all professional settings in which they interact with children, youth, families, and community partners, professional colleagues, mentors and supervisors.
- Demonstrate knowledge, skills and attitudes that reflect effective and collaborative relational practice with children, youth, and families.
- Engage in ongoing critical self-reflection and identify how personal awareness, insights and development connect to, and influence professional practice.
- Develop programs based on family development models that strengthen and empower families and family members.
- Articulate a plan for future career development in youth work.

Site Selection Process

Students must attend an information session during the winter term preceding their internship year. Students will be required submit the Youth and Family Internship Application Form following that meeting, as well as an up-to-date CV identifying an area of practice they are interested in (e.g., prevention programs, residential care, school-based, family support work).

International students must contact ISO before being placed, to get visa permission, even for non-paid internships.

Please note that the professor for the following year matches students to internship sites and manages the application process. In consultation with the internship professor, students may do their internship at their place of employment. Students may or may not be paid for their internship.

The internship professor will identify and establish a collaborative working relationship with appropriate family and youth work sites that would provide the requisite learning

opportunities for students for the following year. After the application deadline, the professor will forward each student's CV to a site that is aligned with the student's interest and experience level. The site will arrange an interview with the student directly. It is the site's responsibility to determine if the student is suitable for the internship placement and notify the student and internship professor accordingly. **Students are encouraged to give careful consideration to the site selection process as it is an 8-month commitment.**

The internship start-date is during the first week of the fall term. **It is the student's responsibility to ensure all documentation and pre-internship requirements are completed prior to the internship start date.**

This includes provision of an updated CV, an internship application form, and an application for a police check when required by the prospective site. In addition, each student must complete a CNESST form in English or French (available on the internship page of the department website), and a Learning Contract, which is to be filled out in the initial weeks of the placement with the on-site supervisor (also available on the department website).

Lastly, each student will be required to sign the Youth and Family Internship code of ethics at the first day of class (included in Appendix 1 of this document).

Seminar Participation

As part of the internship course, students enrolled in AHSC 436 will meet throughout the semester on a regular basis for a 2.75-hour seminar, **which may be in-person.** Students will be informed of the seminar dates at the beginning of the course. The purpose of the seminar is to support the integration and application of the curriculum provided in the Human Relations Specialization to the real-world experience. Readings may be assigned if relevant to the issues discussed and students are expected to demonstrate reflexivity in seminar discussions. **Participation in the scheduled seminars is mandatory.**

The Role of the Internship Professor

The internship professor facilitates the monthly seminar, designs learning activities to meet the course objectives, evaluates students' learning, collaborates with the student and site supervisors in identifying and confirming potential internship sites, facilitates meetings with the student and site supervisor, and responds to any disciplinary or professionalism concerns with the student and site supervisor.

Supervision

Identifying who will supervise the student will be primarily the responsibility of the site. To ensure the student has the support required, it is expected that the site supervisor will be an experienced, qualified mentor with a family or youth work orientation to practice and have availability in his/her schedule to **meet regularly in a one-on-one face to face supervision session** with the student. In some cases, supervisors may hold teaching or leadership roles within the setting. The role of the site supervisor is to provide regular supervision and mentorship to the student and provide on-the-job training. While observation or shadowing the supervisor in his/her role may occur in the initial 1-2

months of the internship, it is expected that students step into the role with appropriate support and mentorship provided. **By the second semester, it is assumed that all students will have taken on the responsibilities that are comparable to those of an entry level worker at their site.** Experience is essential for the students' learning and growth as a family and youth work professional.

“One of the most important characteristics of a successful supervisor [in family-serving settings] is to act as a mentor. A mentor is a friend, role model, adviser, committed listener, confidante, teacher, enlightener, tipster, orienteer, encourager, defender, advocate, guide and inspirer” (p. E-9)¹

“Youth work supervisors play a critical role in supporting staff, enhancing their ownership and loyalty, and ensuring that their work has an impact” (p. 35).²

Lewis, Packard, and Lewis³ suggest, “the nature of the supervisory relationship depends on the supervisor’s leadership style, the supervisee’s motivation, and the organization’s needs” (p. 11). As such, there are many contextualized elements incorporated into the supervisee-supervisor relationship that need to be considered and discussed as the student embarks on their internship journey. It is important to discuss how the supervisor and youth work intern are conceptualizing the role of the supervisor. For example, youth work supervisors in Herman’s study⁴ identified as coaches and mentors with the goal of developing youth work practitioner’s strengths through a collaborative supervisory process. Practitioner reflexivity supports the youth worker’s development.

Human Relations incorporates the principle of reflexivity in curriculum, and as such, site supervision should involve supporting students to reflect and explore the challenges of practice in order to develop a deeper understanding and expand their repertoire of options.⁴ Reflexivity in youth work practice has been defined as “an intentional act where a supervisor actively listens and provides thoughtful questions that allow staff to analyze and evaluate their own work as well as identify areas or ideas for improved practice” (p. 110)⁵. Further, Herman² suggests tools of action research may be applied in youth work supervision. Questions such as “What am I doing? What do I need to improve? How do I improve it?” (p. 7)⁶ in supervision sessions support a context of reflective inquiry and develop informed practitioners. Several strategies for supervisors encouraging reflexivity include the following:

1. Create and dedicate time to the process.
2. Be reliable, trustworthy, and genuine.
3. Listen and don’t focus on creating or providing the answers.
4. Focus on coaching for staff to create their own solutions and provide support

¹ O’Malley, A., & Wilson, J. (Eds.). (n.d.). *Pathways to practice: A family life education internship/practicum Handbook*. NCFR. https://www.ncfr.org/sites/default/files/fle_intership_practicum_handbook_complete.pdf

² Herman, M. (2012). Empowering youth work supervisors with action research strategies. *Afterschool Matters*, 32-37.

³ Lewis, J. A., Packard, T. R., & Lewis, M. D. (2012). *Management of human service programs*. Brooks/Cole.

⁴ Herman, M. (2012). Reflective practice meets youth work supervision. *Youth & Policy*, 109, 118-128.

⁵ Wiedow, J. (2014). Redefining supervision in the field of youth work. In NorthStar Youth Work Fellowship (Ed.), *Moving youth work practice forward: Reflections on autonomy and authority* (pp. 107-119). <http://web.augsburg.edu/sabo/NorthStarWorkingpapers2013-2014.pdf>

⁶ McNiff, J., & Whitehead, J. (2006). *All you need to know about action research*. Sage.

- accordingly.
5. Don't judge ideas, encourage staff to be critical thinkers in their own right.
 6. Avoid one right answer, encourage many possibilities of action.^{7 8}

The student-site supervisory relationship is central to the internship experience, and it is expected that students establish with the supervisor a regular and frequent time for supervision. For example, one-hour bi-weekly should be set aside as a meeting time with the student for supervision. Team supervision – when there are more than one student at a particular placement – may be an excellent opportunity to enhance students' learning.

Scheduling and Tracking of Internship Hours

Students are responsible for the scheduling and recording of their internship hours in consultation with their site-supervisor. Students enrolled in AHSC 436 attend their internship for approximately 13 hours per week for approximately 28 weeks. Travel time to attend the internship (or seminar) is **not** to be included in the calculation of internship hours. Travel time to-and-from client's homes or professional meetings within the scheduled internship day **may be included** in the calculation of internship hours. Supervision time between student and site-supervisor, and evaluation meetings with the internship professor, **are included** in the calculation of internship hours. Scheduling for internship hours may include days, evenings and/or weekends.

Students are **not** expected to work overtime at the internship site and students are not expected to be on-call for shifts at the site. Students are not expected to be at their internship site during university closures (e.g., Mid-term Break). In-service professional development training can be included in internship hours.

Absences from Internship

Students are required to make up any absences. The missed time must be made up within a timeframe agreed upon by the student, site supervisor and internship Professor. A physician's note may be requested for prolonged illnesses. Students are not required to make up days missed due to statutory holidays.

Evaluation of Students' Learning

The internship professor has the responsibility for evaluating students' learning during the internship. Central to the students' evaluation is the feedback provided by the site supervisor, reflective logs, and a final paper. While the deadlines, specific guidelines and final weight of these assignments will be determined by the individual course instructor, these assignments will consist of **at least** the following:

- 1) Evaluations by site supervisor will be completed at the end of each semester. The course instructor will provide a standard form for this purpose and will meet with the supervisor and the student to review the first assessment in December with the

⁷ Knowles, M. S., Holton, E. F., & Swanson, R. A. (2005). *The adult learner: The definitive classic in adult education and human resource development*. Elsevier.

⁸ National Helpers Network, Inc. (Ed.). (1998). *Reflection: The key to service learning* (2nd ed.). National Helpers Network.

- goal of establishing areas of improvement to be worked on in the winter term.
- 2) Reflective logs will be handed in regularly by the student, either on Moodle or via email. The purpose of these logs is to encourage ongoing consideration by the student of their feelings, thoughts and learnings at the internship site, and to keep the instructor informed about how the internship is going.
 - 3) A final paper will be required that requires students to review: what they have learned, how this learning relates to their overall experiences in the program, and how their internship experiences will impact on their future planning as a professional.

Code of Ethics for Family and Youth Work Professionals

Internship students in the Human Relations Specialization are expected to abide by codes of ethics that govern the youth work profession. The internship experience is expected to provide students with an opportunity for real world application of their learning. As such, students are required to be familiar with the code of ethics in their site, as well as following codes of ethics that impact professional youth work practice:

Ethics of Child and Youth Care Professionals

<http://www.pitt.edu/~mattgly/CYCethics.html>

Youth Work Code of Ethics

[http://www.youthcoalition.net/documents/sector%20development/Code%20of%20Ethics/Youth%20Work%20Code%20of%20Ethics%20\(ACT\).pdf](http://www.youthcoalition.net/documents/sector%20development/Code%20of%20Ethics/Youth%20Work%20Code%20of%20Ethics%20(ACT).pdf)

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

http://www.canadiancrc.com/PDFs/UN_Convention_on_the_Rights_of_the_Child_en.pdf

Ethics for Family Science Professionals

Principles and Guidelines <https://www.ncfr.org/board-and-governance/governance/ncfr-ethical-principles-guidelines-family-scientists>

Code of Conduct <https://www.ncfr.org/cfle-certification/cfle-code-ethics>

In addition, there is a specific code of ethics for student interns in the Family Science and Youth Work Internship. This code takes the form of a contract that will be signed by all students at the first seminar class, and is included in this manual as Appendix 1.

Challenges Encountered in the Internship

The internship experience is designed to challenge and promote students' professional development as practitioners in the family and youth work field. Challenges are viewed as learning opportunities for students to stretch and grow in the context of the supervisory relationship and collegial support provided during the internship seminars. Codes of ethics may also be consulted to provide guidance in addressing challenges.

As the internship is an intense experience, there is potential for challenges that students are unable to manage in consultation with their supervisor. In such circumstances, students are strongly encouraged to engage in a self-reflexive process to identify the ways in which they have co-constructed the challenging situation. Students are invited to seek out their site supervisor, the internship professor, and use the seminar discussions to process the challenges they are struggling with. The internship professor, in consultation with the site supervisor and student, may decide to intervene in situations that go beyond the scope of what the student can manage on their own.

Professionalism and Site Expectations

Students are expected to embrace fully a professional family and youth work role and presentation during the internship experience. Each site will have specific expectations based on the area of practice and population they work with with regards to appearance (e.g., appropriate attire), language, structure of work time (e.g., breaks), etc. **Students are expected to work according to the procedures and rules of the internship site at all times, and are expected to enforce any rules in place for youth and families participating at the site.** Students should prepare to meet the site's expectations by asking questions during the initial interview about the expectations required.

Terminating the Placement

The internship experience can be very challenging. Students are viewed as family or youth work professionals and are expected to draw on their skills in interpersonal communication, building relationships, and managing conflict to resolve disputes in the workplace. Some students may express a desire to change placements, as the internship experience may not meet their expectations. Students will be encouraged to view challenges as learning opportunities while receiving support from the internship professor, his/her classmates, and the internship site.

When enrolling in the internship course, students are making a commitment to the site, the families and young people served, his/her classmates, and the professor that they will be available for the duration of the course and the hours outlined. Unforeseen circumstances such as relocation or illness that impede the ability for the student to complete the internship during the academic year will be addressed with the internship professor.

In rare circumstances, students or site supervisors may wish to end the placement due to unforeseen challenges that cannot be resolved. As this situation is deemed very serious, students and site supervisors cannot independently initiate ending the placement. A meeting with the internship professor, student and site supervisor *must* occur prior to any termination of the placement.

- 4) Should the existing placement end, securing an alternate internship site for the student will be dependent on timing of the termination, alternate site and supervisor availability, and the issues that led to the ending of the initial placement. The internship professor will determine with the student the best course of action.
Students who are removed or fired from their internship placement and who

cannot be placed in another setting , will not pass the course.

Payment and Hiring of Internship Students

In most cases, the family and youth work internship is an unpaid practicum experience that prepares students for entering professional youth work roles after the program. **Students may, in consultation with the instructor, complete their internship at their place of work.** Because of this, and under exceptional circumstances the internship may be paid.

Students will incur the costs of transportation to and from the internship site. It is expected that students will be reimbursed for costs incurred for operational purposes (e.g., travelling to clients' homes, costs for running programs).

APPENDIX 1

CODE OF PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL CONDUCT FOR STUDENT INTERNS

As An intern in the Family Science and Youth Work Internship, you are representing not just yourself, but the university and your fellow students, both current and future. As a student intern you are expected to adhere to the internship site's policies, practices, procedures, dress code, and/or standards of conduct. To avoid any misunderstanding, it is recommended that you obtain clarification regarding such matters from your site supervisor when you begin your internship. During your internship experience, your performance while on assignment as an intern will be evaluated by your site supervisor and your course instructor. Upon completion, you will receive a letter grade for the course.

You are required to maintain the established work schedule and meet internship obligations. Absences, excused or not, do not absolve a student from the responsibility of completing all assigned work promptly. Students who miss assignments or deadlines due to excused absences will be allowed to make up the work in a manner deemed appropriate by the Internship instructor.

During your internship you are expected to conduct yourself in a professional manner at all times. This includes, but is not limited to:

- 1) Reporting for the internship on-time. Maintaining required work schedule. Completing the hours required for the internship
- 2) Following all rules and policies as required by the internship site.
- 3) Maintaining strict confidentiality regarding information obtained on any clients, members, or employees associated with the internship site.
- 4) Using appropriate written and oral communication in all interactions with all supervisors, employees, clients and university staff.
- 5) Demonstrating honesty, cooperation, integrity, courtesy, and a willingness to learn.
- 6) Engaging in positive, ethical, and legal behavior.
- 7) Accepting responsibility and accountability for decisions and actions taken while at the internship site.
- 8) Treating all clients, supervisors, and fellow employees with dignity and respect.
- 9) Managing boundaries in keeping with the policy of the

I understand and agree with the professional standards of the internship program as listed in the preceding statements. I understand if any facet of the code of conduct is not adhered to, I may be at risk of losing academic credit or in some other way may be penalized.

Name (print):

Signature:

Date: