

Health Care Management Internship Manual

- A Guide for Students -

Labovitz School of Business & Economics

University of Minnesota Duluth

Introduction

It is highly recommended that all students majoring in Health Care Management in the Labovitz School of Business & Economics at the University of Minnesota Duluth, complete an internship in an area related to their interests in the health care industry. Students are expected to initiate the internship process by meeting with the Director of the Health Care Management Program, Dr. Jennifer Schultz, at least 2 semesters before they begin an internship. Internships are considered an integral part of the student's academic program. Students are expected to: (a) keep a weekly journal documenting activities and progress toward meeting objectives; (b) complete written assignments that are structured to provide an understanding of the organization with which the student is doing the internship; and (c) meet the expectations of the organization.

Program Objectives

A student's practical experience, under supervision in a well-administered organization, should be commensurate with his or her level of education and future career goals. While the evaluation of the student's performance in the internship is based primarily on academic criteria, the practical experience the student gains is important in terms of sampling prospective career fields, and learning about her or his ability to function in a given occupational environment.

The selection of the internship organization should be based on the student's interest in the placement and placement availability. The final decision on internship placement requires a joint effort of the student, the Director of the HCM Program and the member of the internship organization. The primary program objectives are to provide students with the opportunity to:

1. reflect on the applicability of concepts, principles, and best practices presented in previous course work;
2. develop insight into professional demands and required competencies;
3. assess the appropriateness of career choices and the developmental maturity which the choice demands; and
4. evaluate their academic preparation in relation to their goals, aspirations, and personal qualities.

Selection and Application Procedures

The applications for an internship should be started as early as a student's Junior year. If students desire a summer internship it is feasible to do one after one's Junior or Senior year. Current UMD policy allows degree candidates to attend commencement if the student needs only a few credits to graduate, and is registered for the required number of credits in the academic session immediately following commencement.

Note: Students are advised not to attempt to make arrangements for an internship without prior discussion with and approval of the HCM Director.

Application Process

After successfully completing a few HCM courses, students should proceed with the following steps:

STEP ONE

Complete the online Student Information Form to submit the names of two organizations that represent your first and second choices for an internship placement. Complete a resume and a sample cover letter. Send the completed form, resume and sample cover letter to the HCM Director, Prof. Schultz, by email (jschultz@d.umn.edu). Get the form via the following URL: <http://www.d.umn.edu/~jschultz/Internships.htm>

STEP TWO

Schedule an appointment with the HCM Director, Prof. Schultz (LSBE 330F), by email (jschultz@d.umn.edu) or by phone (218-726-6695) to review the internship process and your interests.

STEP THREE

Apply for internship positions or contact a representative of the organization to inquire about internship availability. Make an appointment for an interview with a representative of the organization.

STEP FOUR

As soon as you know the result of the interview, please pass that information on to the HCM Director. A permission number to register for HCM 4597 will be granted only after you have signed and returned the Placement Agreement and the Learning Objectives Statement. These forms are available online at <http://www.d.umn.edu/~jschultz/Internships.htm>

STEP FIVE

You may now register for HCM 4597 for 3 credits. If you are registering for only HCM 4597 credits (i.e., are not taking any other courses) during the summer session, you may request a waiver of the Student Service Fees. This waiver request is to be obtained by downloading from: <http://www.d.umn.edu/fareg/forms/requestforwaiverofstudentservicefee.pdf>
The form is to be completed and submitted to the HCM Director. It is the ***student's responsibility*** to obtain the waiver form and follow through with submitting it.

WEEKLY JOURNAL

Interns are expected to keep a weekly journal that will provide them, the organization and the HCM Director with an accounting of the intern's activities. The journal will also provide the basis for keeping track of the intern's time, the progress toward meeting the learning objectives, and as a reference for some of the course assignments. The weekly entries should describe activities and the student's reflections concerning those activities and the experiences.

The journal can be kept as an electronic document. Each entry should contain:

- the **date**;
- **hours worked that week**;
- a description of that week's **activities**; and
- **reflections** about how that week's activities connect with/contribute to meeting one's learning objectives.

VERY IMPORTANT: All interns are subject to the confidentiality laws that apply to the organization at which they are interning. To comply with these laws, when completing your journal, never use any personal identifying information in your descriptions.

The journal entries will be due after the completion of 200 hours.

WRITTEN REPORTS

Reports should be word-processed and edited for style and content (including spell checking). You should submit a copy of the reports to the HCM Director. If you wish to have a copy of the papers, please make a copy **before** you submit the reports.

Communicating your internship experiences effectively is an important part of your task. Your reports must reflect how seriously you probed for information and detail and how well you understand the structure, the functions and the problems of your internship site.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES STATEMENT (due before you begin your internship)

This is a statement of your learning objectives for the internship. The objectives should include reference to the:

- Application of academic knowledge**;
- Skills you expect to develop** (e.g., learn about: staff roles, rules and regulations, working in project teams, etc.); and
- Personal development** (e.g., develop an understanding of: your level of comfort with leadership, work hours, and managing your time.)

REPORT #1: ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION (due upon logging 100 hours at the internship)

For this assignment, describe the following:

I. Description of the firm or employment site

- A. Brief history of the firm
- B. Organization of the firm
 - i. Legal status (corporation, partnership, sole proprietor, government agency, non-profit)
 - ii. Number of employees
- C. Lines of authority
 - i. Who assigns your internship responsibilities?
 - ii. Where do you fit in the organization?
- D. Trade area served (geographic area)
- E. Nature of services and products offered.
 - i. Profile of the customers/clients who use them.
- F. Physical description of firm
- G. Future growth and expansion plans

II. Description of Work Assignments

- A. What are your daily duties, responsibilities and tasks?
- B. What specialized tools, office equipment, or procedures do you use?
- C. What decisions have you been involved with or had input on? Provide examples.
- D. Do you believe you have been given sufficient responsibility?

III. Your Understanding of the Total Business Operation to Date

- A. How is your employer helping you to learn about the business?
 - i. Do you attend departmental or project meetings?
 - ii. Have you reviewed annual reports or other historical information about the firm?
 - iii. Have you visited with coworkers or management personnel regarding their contributions to the success of the organization?
- B. Outline job responsibilities held by other people you work with.
- C. How does your employer stay current with changing technologies, government regulations, compliance issues, business trends or other knowledge?
- D. Which of your internship assignments require a team approach?

IV. Requirements for the Internship

- A. Knowledge required
 - i. What subject matter areas are relevant to your tasks?
 - ii. What facts, information, or principles must you understand or know in order to do your tasks?

- B. Skills and abilities required
 - i. Nature and level of written and oral communication required
 - ii. Use of quantitative skills and computing skills
 - iii. Level of reasoning and problem solving abilities required
 - iv. Other necessary skills
 - v. What prior experience and training, if any, is needed for this internship?

REPORT #2: PROJECT SUMMARY (due upon logging 200 hours at the internship)

Prepare a paper which describes your internship experience and summarizes the projects you were involved with. This paper should address each of the points below and may be expanded to include other comments you believe are relevant.

- I. Evaluate how successful you were in accomplishing the student learning objectives you wrote for your internship experience. For this section, divide your report into three parts corresponding with the three categories on the Learning Objectives document. Under each heading write a short summary of the goals you identified and to what extent you accomplished each.
- II. Summarize the projects you worked on during your internship. What were your responsibilities? What challenges did you face? How did you overcome these challenges?
- III. Identify positive and negative aspects of your internship experience and some of the most important things you learned from the experience.
- IV. Generally assess the value of this internship experience to you. Consider current as well as long-term benefits.
- V. Complete and submit the Internship Evaluation form. Your responses on this form will be confidential and will only be reviewed by the faculty member directing your internship. The Evaluation Form for Students is online at <http://www.d.umn.edu/~jschultz/Internships.htm>
- VI. Thank you letters. At the conclusion of your internship, write thank you letters to: the person who was your immediate supervisor and others you worked with at the internship site.

CONTACT INFORMATION

HCM Director: The faculty member in the Health Care Management Program who is in charge of the HCM internship program:

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