

## Bemidji State University

# Criminal Justice Internship CRJS 4970

Credits: 12

Contact Hours: 400

Internship Coordinator: Dr. Michael Herbert

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Supervisor for Spring Semester 2007:

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### Course Description

Students are placed in Criminal Justice Agencies which apply the methods and content of Criminal Justice for the purpose of gaining insight into the connection between academic study and work experience. The intern will complete 400 hours with the agency and participate in as many of the agency functions as is permitted. Internships may be paid or unpaid. It is up to the student to seek out the agency that they are most interested in interning with.

### Course Goals

The goals of this course are consistent with the departmental objectives: To encourage an awareness of the connections between personal experiences and the social forces which shapes the operation of the Criminal Justice System, to encourage students to practice their skills by participating in broader community activities, to give students experience with the analysis of problems and the development of solutions, and to prepare for jobs which include the skills associated with the internship placement. Students will learn to be responsible and accountable for their actions in an agency placement setting.

**Accommodations:** If you have a documented disability and wish accommodations for this course please contact Kathryn Hagen at the Student Services office in Sanford Hall, room 202, 755-3883. This course is available in an alternative format. I encourage you to make any needs known to me as soon as possible so that you may find this course a positive experience.

## **Internship Requirements**

- The internship is graded on a pass/no pass basis. The course grade is recorded as satisfactory/unsatisfactory (S/U). Evaluation for the purpose of assigning a passing grade will be made according to the following criteria:
  - Internships **must** be approved by the Internship Coordinator.
  - All forms completed and submitted prior to starting your internship.
  - The journaling paper satisfactorily completed and submitted within the required time frame (prior to the end of the semester).
  - I expect at least one contact per week (preferably by email) from the intern to keep me apprised of the intern's progress.
  - The satisfactory completion of 400 hours with the intern agency.
  - Submission of an agency evaluation of your work.
  - The completed written assignment turned in prior to the end of the semester.
  - Internships are offered ONLY spring and summers semesters!

## **Journal Paper Format**

The internship journaling paper is an academic paper in which you discuss your internship experience in detail. The paper is to be typed and be a minimum of twenty (20) pages in length. The paper should follow APA format in regards to standard academic structure. References to the literature are encouraged. Papers not meeting these requirements will be returned. The content and outline of the journaling project is indicated below.

1. Title Page
2. Introduction
  - a. Brief Overview of the agency, including:
    1. Type of Agency (local, state, federal, law enforcement, courts, corrections or other relevant descriptive information).
    2. Demographic information such as size of the department, population served, geographical area served, other descriptive information.
    3. Agency History
3. Organizational culture and structure:
  - a. Expected employee behavior:
    1. Mission Statement
    2. Official Goals statement.
    3. Official Values Statement
    4. Code of Ethics/conduct
  - b. Organizational Structure
    1. Agency organizational chart
    2. Agency Relationship to other elements of the criminal justice system. (You may use a flow chart to help illustrate this).

4. Agency Placement: observations and findings
  - a. What are the most important staff functions in the unit to which you are assigned?
  - b. Which of these functions are you allowed to perform?
  - c. Describe your typical day.
  - d. Which functions/duties are most interesting to you? Why?
  - e. Which functions/duties are least interesting to you? Why?
  
5. Personal Development
  - a. What impact has the internship had on your ability to relate to a diverse group of people?
  - b. What have you learned about your personal strengths and weaknesses?
  - c. What actions will you take to correct personal weaknesses?
  
6. Summary and discussion on integration of University coursework and internship.
  - a. Based on your coursework, discuss the issues and challenges most relevant to your agency (examples: budget constraints, increasing or decreasing crime rates, media perception of the agency, political impact on policy, department policy and assessment).
  - b. According to the agency, which of these issues and challenges has the greatest impact on the ability of the agency to accomplish its mission?
  - c. How does the agency address these issues and challenges?
  - d. What criminal justice themes/topics developed in your courses were verified by your internship? What themes were not?
  - e. In view of your agency experience, what works in the criminal justice system? What does not work? Is this what you expected to find? Why or why not?
  - f. What impact has this internship had on your career goals?
  - g. How can the internship experience be improved for future students?
  - h. What can the B.S.U. Criminal Justice Department do to better prepare students for both the internship and future criminal justice employment?
  
7. Weekly Experiences. At the end of each week write a brief summary of those experiences that you found particularly interesting, enlightening, or alarming. Include:
  - a. How did it affect you personally?
  - b. Would you have done anything differently?
  - c. What impact did the experience have on you?

8. Assorted Questions. During this assignment answer these questions.
- a. How would you describe the “culture” of the agency, its employees and the people it serves?
  - b. What values seem important to the people who work in your agency, and how do these values differ from those of the agency itself?
  - c. Analyze the role of your agency in promoting social change in the community and explain why you think it will or will not be successful in achieving its goals.
  - d. Describe an incident or situation in which you were not sure what to do or say.
    - What was the first thing you thought to do (or say)?
    - List three other actions you might have taken (or things you might have said).
    - Which of the above seems best to you now? Why?
    - What do you think is the real problem in the above situation? Why do you think it came up?
  - e. How have your attitudes/beliefs about offenders changed during your internship?
  - f. Are your attitudes and beliefs similar to those of others working in your agency?
  - g. How well has the B.S.U. Criminal Justice Department prepared you for this internship?
  - h. Are there courses or theoretical approaches which have been especially beneficial during this internship?
  - i. Do you have ideas/suggestions about our curriculum which might better prepare you?
  - j. Write a “tip sheet” for future students interning with this agency.
    - a. What preparation for the internship is necessary?
    - b. What to look forward to and what to avoid?
    - c. Any particular problems facing this agency?

## Reminders

1. Make sure you are properly registered for the internship.
2. Keep a log of the dates/times that you worked.
3. You must complete the 400 hours required for the internship prior to the end of the semester you have registered, or you will receive an “incomplete” (I).
4. Have all Internship forms completed and returned to the Internship Coordinator prior to starting your internship.
5. Expect to keep in contact with the Internship Supervisor via on-site visits, e-mail or telephone calls. At least one email per week is expected to keep the supervisor apprised of your progress.
6. Make sure that your internship supervisor has completed the Intern Evaluation Form and has returned it prior to the end of the semester.
7. If you have any questions or problems please contact the Internship Coordinator as soon as practicable.
8. Internships are not offered fall semester.
9. **Be aware that almost all criminal justice agencies require criminal history and background checks. A student’s ability to be accepted for certain agency internships may be affected by violations of the law or other past behaviors.**