
GERONTOLOGY PROGRAM

UNDERGRADUATE FIELD PLACEMENT HANDBOOK

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Gerontology Program Writing Policy:

Students in the Gerontology program are expected to write well. Good communication skills are at the core of what we do as gerontologists, and writing is a key form of communication, Gerontology faculty will help students learn to write clear, thoughtful, substantive, well-organized, scholarly papers and reports using APA format — as described in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association and on their website. It is our belief that clear writing reflects clear thinking, and that clear, organized writing is one way to demonstrate and refine good critical thinking skills.

Students are expected to enter the program with good writing skills, and to seek assistance from appropriate sources (e.g., the University Center for Academic Excellence Writing Resources Center or a tutor trained to teach writing skills) when helpful. Faculty, in general, tend to provide a great deal of feedback on written work and sometimes offer students an opportunity to rewrite certain assignments. It is our hope that students will become excellent writers by the time they graduate; writing assignments and feedback are designed, in part, to fulfill this goal. Capstone Seminar is Writing Intensive as a way to support this goal.

We recommend that all students assess their writing skills prior to entering the program, and take steps to improve their writing where necessary. In addition, all declared students should have access to appropriate APA guidelines: <https://apastyle.apa.org/>.

Artificial Intelligence is widely available. In no way should the use of AI tools substitute for your own critical thinking and reflective writing. Utilization of AI to stimulate ideas and find resources is appropriate. [Research](#) is beginning to show that overreliance on AI is dampening the ability to think and express one's self critically.

Prerequisites and Permitting Processes for Capstone Seminar:

Beyond the course prerequisites for GRNT 3600 (completion of GRNT 2100 and three gerontology electives), each student is required to attend a Capstone Seminar orientation meeting the semester before they plan to take the course. These meetings will be held with the Gerontology Field Placement Supervisor (hereafter referred to as “Faculty Supervisor”). You should come to the group meeting having thought about your needs, goals and career objectives and will be guided in selecting an appropriate field placement with whom we have an official Affiliation Agreement. You will then contact your possible site to discuss the placement with the Site Supervisor. After meeting with the potential Site Supervisor, the student will report back to the Faculty Supervisor. If the placement seems agreeable to all three (the student, the Site Supervisor, and the Faculty Supervisor), a permit for GRNT 3600 will be entered and the placement will be finalized with the student's development of their field placement contract (in conjunction with the site and faculty supervisors).

Statement of the Purpose of Capstone Seminar:

All students pursuing a Minor in Gerontology or the Gerontology Concentration in the Interdisciplinary Studies Major must complete an off-campus field placement as part of the requirements for GRNT 3600. This guidebook delineates the philosophy and objectives of UNC Charlotte's Gerontology Field Placement Program, the policies and procedures, and the forms, records, and reports to be submitted.

The central purpose of the field placement is to help the student make an effective transition from the classroom to a practical and professional situation while utilizing learned gerontological knowledge. The field placement should be a learning experience. This does not mean that students should never have any ideas of their own nor contribute their best thinking to that of the group, but the student should do this with tact and good judgment.

It is assumed that the knowledge obtained across previously taken gerontology courses, Capstone Seminar, and in the field placement will be synthesized during this course. The student, site, and the University all benefit from this experience. The field placement is one arena within which all cooperate to make a valuable contribution to the preparation of tomorrow's gerontologists.

Professionalism:

Students are expected to take this course and their field placement very seriously and approach it as they would approach a professional job. Attendance is expected, timely work is required, professional demeanor and excellent soft skills at the site are paramount, and in-class contributions are essential. This course is a seminar style course and all students are expected to be engaged, punctual, prepared, and committed. Students who start out less than so may be asked to drop the class and take it at a later date when they can commit to the expectations. Additionally, students should treat their site supervisor with the utmost of professional respect.

Objectives of the Field Placement:

1. To demonstrate an ability to develop an effective collaborative relationship with an organization, agency, or community (i.e., Site).
2. To apply academic education to a "real world" Site (as stipulated in the negotiated Field Placement Contract) through:
 - a. Observation of programs and activities;
 - b. Planning or assisting with programs;
 - c. Leading and directing activities;
 - d. Attending, observing, or participating as a group member in staff, board, team or department conferences and workshops; and/or
3. To develop and rehearse skills related to professional goals and objectives.
4. To develop skills that demonstrate a responsible, conscientious, and professional manner.

Assignments/Tasks:

The student must:

1. Attend a pre-registration orientation with the Faculty Supervisor
 2. Contact and visit the potential Site, following orientation, to determine if the site is a good fit
 3. Develop a Field Placement Contract following the format in this handbook in consultation with site and faculty supervisor. *Students should understand that several drafts of this contract are required and expected. Faculty feedback will be suggestions for improvement (not technical editing). It is up to the student to produce an excellent contract acceptable to all parties.*
 4. Provide the Site Supervisor with (all found in this handbook):
 - Statement of Contractual Provisions
 - Cover sheet for signing when contract is agreed upon - due with final contract
 - Provision for Termination of Field Placement
 - Mid-Field Placement Performance Evaluation form
 - Final Field Placement Performance Evaluation form
 4. Complete & submit to Faculty Supervisor the Student Evaluation of Field Placement Site
- *NOTE: Refer to syllabus for all required course components

FIELD PLACEMENT EVALUATION EXPLANATION:

Successful completion of the field placement will be determined by:

1. The timely completion of a field placement contract and cover sheet
2. The timely fulfillment of the goals and steps of the Field Placement Contract
3. Completion of a minimum of 90 documented hours at the field placement site
4. Completed Mid-Field Placement and Final Field Placement Evaluation Forms
5. Completed Student Evaluation of Field Placement Site Form

Mid-Field Placement Performance Evaluation:

The Mid-Field Placement Evaluation should be based on a review of the initial Field Placement Contract by the Site Supervisor. The student's progress toward meeting the goals outlined in the Field Placement Contract should be assessed. The Mid-Field Placement Evaluation is due when the syllabus states. Students are responsible for making site supervisors aware of the due date. *Approximately half of the student's field placement hours should be completed by this time.*

Final Field Placement Performance Evaluation:

The final evaluation should, again, address the student's progress in meeting the goals stated in the Field Placement Contract. This evaluation should compare the student's beginning level of skills and performance at the Site with his/her skills and performance at the end of the field placement period. The Final Field Placement Evaluation is due when the syllabus states. Students are responsible for making site supervisors aware of the due date. * Students should bring any concerns to the Faculty Supervisor.

FIELD PLACEMENT CONTRACT

**STATEMENT OF CONTRACTUAL PROVISIONS BETWEEN
GERONTOLOGY PROGRAM AND FIELD PLACEMENT SITE**

**Field Placement Agreement Between The University of North Carolina at Charlotte Gerontology
Program and Site Providing Field Placement**

The Gerontology Program agrees to the following provisions:

1. To provide the field placement Site with students who have met the pre-requisites necessary for entry into this experiential learning course (see p. 4 for pre-requisites).
2. To provide the field placement Site with a clear understanding of the school's expectations of the field placement student and Site Supervisor ("Statement of Contractual Provisions" to be provided to the Site Supervisor by the student).
3. To assist students in developing a Field Placement Contract, in consultation with the site supervisor, that will specify student goals and steps to complete these goals for the field placement.
4. For the Faculty Supervisor to be available during the field placement period to discuss any concerns that the Site or Site Supervisor may have regarding the student and the student's field placement experience.
5. To grade the student's field placement experience considering carefully the recommendations of the Site Supervisor.

The field placement Site agrees to the following provisions:

1. To designate a Supervisor who will oversee the student's work and guide the student's learning and growth. This supervisor will document the student's total hours at the close of the semester.
2. To provide the student with an orientation to the placement Site and to related service systems.
3. To provide the student with ongoing constructive supervision and to meet with the student.
4. To provide the school with evaluations of the student's performance and professional development. (Mid-Field and Final-Field Placement Evaluations, including total hours completed, are due when the syllabus states. Students are responsible for making site supervisors aware of the due dates and providing plenty of time for site supervisor completion.)

GUIDE TO CONTRACT ELEMENTS

The first draft of the contract will be developed by the student prior to beginning the field placement. This draft must be reviewed by both the Faculty and Site Supervisors before the field placement begins. The full contract in final form will be signed by the student, Faculty Supervisor, and Site Supervisor and is due according to the due date in the syllabus. The contract will be used as a supervisory tool and will be a key component for evaluations. *Students may complete no more than 10% (9 hours) of their 90 hour placement before the final contract is approved by all parties.*

Parts of the Contract

- I. **Field Placement Contract Cover Sheet** (found in handbook page 12)
- II. **General Description of the Field Placement** (In your own words - one paragraph.)
- III. **Table of Contract Elements** which includes three types of goals. *You should have at least 2 but no more than 3 of each type of goal.* Each student's contract will be unique.

You MUST use the table below for your Contract Elements.

1. **Learning Goals:** Specify what you want to learn about through your field placement. The learning goals may include areas such as agency policies, understanding of the services provided by the agency, understanding the challenges of participants, etc.
2. **Skill Goals:** Specify skills you hope to gain through completion of the field placement. They should focus on skills in which you are weak.
3. **Task Goals:** Specify the agency requirements of tasks to be accomplished by the student. This part, in particular, should be completed in conjunction with the Site Supervisor.

And for each Goal listed students will write:

1. **Multiple Steps** that will be taken to achieve each particular goal
2. One **Evaluation Statement** for each individual goal - students cannot self evaluate.

Guidelines for Writing Goals (what you intend to accomplish)

- They should be simple, one-line statements indicating *what you intend to accomplish*.
- The list of Goals should be comprehensive, representing the full scope of desired field placement experiences.

Guidelines for Writing Steps (how you intend to accomplish each Goal)

- They should be simple, specific, one-line statements.
- There will be multiple steps for each individual goal
- They should be measurable – think of them as a “to do” list of sorts.
- The date of completion or allotted time should be indicated, where necessary.

Guidelines for Writing Evaluative Methods (how you will measure successful completion of goals)

- They should be specific, one-line statements.
- They should indicate how you plan to assess success at accomplishing each Goal.
- Methods of evaluation can include feedback from Site Supervisor, data supportive of Goal attainment, records of accomplishment, etc.

Goals	Steps to accomplish	Evaluative Method
Learning Goal 1: I will learn about...	To learn this I will... 1. 2. 3. Etc...	I will evaluate whether I have learned this by...
Learning Goal 2 I will learn about....	To learn this I will... 1. 2. 3. Etc...	I will evaluate whether I have learned this by...
Learning Goal 3 (optional) I will learn about...	To learn this I will... 1. 2. 3. Etc...	I will evaluate whether I have learned this by...
Skill Goal 1: I will learn how to...	To learn how to do this I will... 1. 2. 3. Etc...	I will evaluate whether I have developed this skill by...
Skill Goal 2 I will learn how to....	To learn how to do this I will... 1. 2. 3. Etc...	I will evaluate whether I have developed this skill by...
Skill Goal 3 (optional) I will learn how to...	To learn how to do this I will... 1. 2. 3. Etc...	I will evaluate whether I have developed this skill by...
Task Goal 1: I will plan/develop/complete etc...	To accomplish this I will... 1. 2. 3. Etc...	I will evaluate whether I have successfully completed this by...
Task Goal 2 I will plan/develop/complete etc...	To accomplish this I will... 1. 2. 3. Etc...	I will evaluate whether I have successfully completed this by...
Task Goal 3 (optional) I will plan/develop/complete etc...	To accomplish this I will... 1. 2. 3. Etc...	I will evaluate whether I have successfully completed this by...

** All elements are to be typed into this table clearly and completely. Other formats will not be reviewed or accepted for credit. You will upload this to Canvas weekly until approved by Faculty Supervisor. **

PROVISION FOR TERMINATION OF FIELD PLACEMENT

The Faculty Supervisor, the Site Supervisor, or the student has the option of terminating a field placement with due cause and notice to all other parties. Due cause will be considered a breach of the above provisions, a problem with the student's learning, a breakdown in the supervisory relationship that is hindering the student's learning, inadequate performances on the part of the student, or other problems that make it advisable for the student to discontinue his/her field placement. In the case of a field placement termination, all three parties (Site Supervisor, Faculty Supervisor, and student) will confer to discuss the termination. (See appropriate form in Appendix.). *Field placement termination is a last resort and students should not expect a new site assignment or substitute assignments for lost points.*

Appendices

Instructions for completing forms:

1. Following are all of the contract forms necessary for completing this field placement.
2. Some forms are to be completed by students, others by the site supervisor.
3. All except the form for terminating the field placement are required.
4. This handbook is a PDF document. You or your site supervisor will need to print hard copies for completion.
5. Once completed, scan the documents or use an app to upload a PDF version to the course management tool by the deadline stated on the syllabus.
6. Allow plenty of time for your site supervisor to complete their portion by the course deadline. Late work will not earn credit.

PROVISION FOR TERMINATION OF FIELD PLACEMENT

ONLY USED IN EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES

The Faculty Supervisor, the Site Supervisor, or the student has the option of terminating a field placement with due cause and notice to all three parties.

Due cause will be considered a breach of the above provisions, a problem with the student's learning, a breakdown in the Supervisory relationship that is hindering the student's learning, inadequate performance on the part of the student, or other problems that make it advisable for the student to discontinue his/her field placement.

In the case of a field placement termination, all three parties (Site Supervisor, Faculty Supervisor, and student) will confer to discuss the termination.

Field placement termination is a last resort and students should not expect a new site assignment or substitute assignments for lost points.

Field Placement Site: _____

Site Supervisor Name: _____

Site Supervisor Signature: _____ Date _____

Student Signature: _____ Date _____

Faculty Supervisor Signature: _____ Date _____

Reason for Termination:

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FIELD PLACEMENT CONTRACT COVER SHEET
(ATTACH TO FINAL VERSION of CONTRACT ELEMENT TABLE – see pp 8-9)

Name of student: _____ Phone: _____

Address during placement: _____

Student emergency contact during placement (name & number): _____



Site name: _____ Site phone: _____

Site Address: _____

Site Supervisor Name: _____ Title: _____

Site Supervisor phone if different from Site phone (or extension): _____

Is the Site providing professional liability insurance for the field placement?

Yes . . . No . . .

Name(s) of other Site staff who will assist with supervision: _____

Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Cynthia Hancock, Sociology & Gerontology, chancock@charlotte.edu, Phone: 704-687-7807



Signatures:

* Faculty Supervisor Signature: _____ Date: _____

* Site Supervisor Signature: _____ Date: _____

* Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

** Your signature indicates your understanding and acceptance of the entirety of the Field Placement Handbook as well as the specific contract elements for this particular student and site.*



Your Field Placement Schedule:

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GERONTOLOGY PROGRAM

***MID-FIELD PLACEMENT PERFORMANCE
EVALUATION***

Name of student: _____

Name of Site: _____

Site Supervisor: _____

Supervisor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Total hours to date completed by student _____

SCORING: For each item, circle the number which best represents your evaluation of student performance in this activity and in your "Overall Comments" discuss the student's strengths and weaknesses for each area. Please use the following scale: 1 = needs improvement; 2 = satisfactory; 3 = above average; 4 = excellent; 9 = does not apply.

Attitude

understands and accepts responsibility	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
observes employer's rules	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
shows interest and enthusiasm	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
courteous and cooperative	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
team worker	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
shows good judgment	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
shows poise/self-confidence	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 9

Learning Process

uses initiative, seeks opportunities to learn	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
shows growth in knowledge during placement	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
quality of work on assigned projects	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
asks questions of appropriate person(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
uses resources at field placement Site effectively	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 9

Performance

begins assigned tasks promptly	<input type="checkbox"/>				
seeks feedback regarding performance	<input type="checkbox"/>				
uses feedback constructively	<input type="checkbox"/>				
completes assigned tasks in a timely manner	<input type="checkbox"/>				
progressively requires less supervision	<input type="checkbox"/>				
able to apply knowledge of aging to work	<input type="checkbox"/>				
problem-solving skills appropriate to assignments	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Progress (Analyze and review the student’s progress based on the goals and steps stated in the student’s Field Placement Contract.)

Overall Comments

Additional Comments (if necessary please use additional sheet)

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***FINAL FIELD PLACEMENT PERFORMANCE
EVALUATION***

Name of student: _____

Name of Site: _____

Site Supervisor: _____

Supervisor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Total hours completed by student _____

SCORING: For each item, circle the number which best represents your evaluation of student performance in this activity. Please use the following scale: 1 = needs improvement; 2 = satisfactory; 3 = above average; 4 = excellent; 9 = does not apply.

Attitude

understood and accepted responsibility	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
observed employer's rules	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
showed interest and enthusiasm	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
courteous and cooperative	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
team worker	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
showed good judgment	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
showed poise/self-confidence	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 9

Learning Process

used initiative, sought opportunities to learn	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
showed growth in knowledge during placement	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
quality of work on assigned projects	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
asked questions of appropriate person(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
used resources at field placement site effectively	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 9

