

Guidelines and authorization form for Family Services Internship

An internship in Family and Child Studies (FCST) is a wonderful way to create contacts and network in the field while gaining skills necessary for the work environment. Often internships can lead to permanent job placement after graduation.

General Job Description:

FCST interns should look for an opportunity to work in a professional setting in a community organization, agency, or a service organization in the field of Family and Child Services, or Aging/Gerontology.

The purpose of this internship is to provide supervised practical experience in the working world as a part of your professional education. Experiences might include working with children, adolescents, teens, young adults, families, aging populations programs in a variety of settings. For the minimum 8 credits required, **students must complete 400 hours over the course of the semester**. Students may complete up to 12 credits (600 hours).

As a Family and Child Studies (FCST) major, you are responsible for finding and establishing your own internship placement. **Your placement must be approved by the FCST Department**, and an internship description letter must be submitted from your placement or job supervisor to the FCST Department.

In addition, each student who does an internship must enroll in the support class, FCST 400, Senior Seminar. This is a hybrid course. There will be four to seven class meetings throughout the semester, typically scheduled in late afternoon or evening.

Checklist for establishing an internship:

1. Take FCST Professional Development Workshops, offered within the first half of every Fall and Spring. If you miss them, seek one-on-one help with resume writing and interview techniques. See Linda Flynn, Director of CEHS Career Services, or the FCST department for more information.
2. Find an agency or corporation willing to intern you.
3. Interview, set-up hours, and get a verbal commitment, as well as a brief job description of what you will be doing during your experience. **Use this information to fill out the authorization form.**
4. **Submit authorization form to the FCST Dept office for approval.** You will receive an e-mail regarding approval or rejection of the placement you submit, typically within a week of submission.
5. Check with internship site if you are required to have any of the following:
 - Background check/Fingerprints
 - Drug test or medical approval
 - Certificate of Liability Insurance
 - Affiliation Agreement/Contract (If this is required you must contact Sean Schofield schofields@mail.montclair.edu for further information).

Realize all of these things take time and may jeopardize your internship start date if incomplete.

6. Submit to the FCST internship coordinator, Sean Schofield, a formal letter on company letterhead with a description of your internship responsibilities. It must be signed by your site supervisor or Director of Program.
7. Enroll in FCST 409, Internship in Family and Child Studies and FCST 400, Senior Seminar.

Senior Seminar (FCST 400) is a 3 credit class. Internship (FCST 409) can vary from 8 credits (400 hours, or 50 hrs per credit) to 12 credits (600 hours) depending on how many hours you may want to conduct at your internship site or on your credit need.

Department permission to enroll in the courses will be fulfilled by your submission of the authorization form.

Timeline:

At least to 2 semesters prior:

Begin reviewing possible internship opportunities; establish contacts and inquire about possible internship opportunities; be aware of possible application deadlines established by the sites you're interested in, e.g., The Division of Youth and Family Services has their own application deadlines.

Take FCST 315 enrich and inform your professional goals and to make contacts in your field of interest. This course is a good way to find out if a site you have in mind will be a good fit for you.

Write your resume and have it reviewed by professional people in your field of interest, and/or work with Linda Flynn, Director of CEHS Career Services, or Sean Schofield, Family Services Internship Coordinator.

Attend **FCST professional development workshops** for resume writing, interview techniques, and professional dress and professional etiquette.

1 semester prior:

Set up interviews with prospective placements. Finalize and submit your authorization to the FCST internship coordinator, Sean Schofield.

Check with site if you are required to have any of the following:

- Background check/Fingerprints
- Certificate of Liability Insurance (If this is required, contact Sean Schofield for information. Allow 1-2 weeks to process.)
- Affiliation Agreement (If this is required, contact Sean Schofield for information. Allow 4-6 weeks to process.)

Secure a formal letter from your placement and drop it off in the FCST Office.

Authorization deadlines:

For Fall:	May 1
For Spring:	November 1
For Summer:	April 1

NO Internship Authorizations will be accepted after deadlines!!

FAQ:

- 1. Can I do my internship part time, i.e. less than 8 credits?**
 - a. No. At this time, doing a part time internship is not possible.
- 2. Is there someone who can help me write my resume?**
 - a. Yes. The CEHS Career Services Office, located in University Hall, will assist all FCST students with their resume through workshops, resume critiquing, and drop-in appointments. Students are strongly encouraged to attend career development workshops that are offered throughout the semester. Topics include: **Resume Writing, Interview Skills and Job Search Strategies.**
- 3. Is there help in finding a placement?**
 - a. Yes. FCST has an internship website of placements that have indicated their interest in having our interns: <http://cehs.montclair.edu/cehs/academic/fcs/internships.shtml>
 - b. In addition, most of these sites are listed in a physical book located in the FCST Department Office.
 - c. There is one-to-one help available, too. We will assist you in matching yourself to an internship, but you are ultimately responsible for finding and working out the details of your own placement. Contact the FCST Department of appointment hours.
- 4. Can I start my hours early?**
 - a. No. If you start your hours before the 1st day of the semester, we cannot properly supervise you.
- 5. What if I don't complete my hours during the semester?**
 - a. You will get an incomplete in which the hours and any outstanding assignments must be completed within 6 weeks of the semester's end, as per University policy.
- 6. What happens if the semester starts and I don't have a confirmed placement?**
 - a. Unfortunately, you will have to put off doing your internship for another semester. For us to run a coherent program, it is vital that students adhere to the deadlines stated above in the timeline.
- 7. Can I do the internship any time during my degree progress?**
 - a. No. Your internship must be in your Senior year.
- 8. Is the internship always my last semester at MSU?**
 - a. Typically. You may do your internship the first semester of your Senior year or your second to last semester here at MSU with permission of the FCST Department.
- 9. Can I get paid for the work I do during my internship?**
 - a. It's possible, but you must work that out with your potential placement. Bear in mind that paid internships do not offer you the best opportunities for professional experience.
- 10. My site requires an Affiliation Agreement/Contract. What do I do?**
 - a. Contact Sean Schofield schofields@mail.montclair.edu in the FCST Department.
- 11. My site requires me to have liability insurance. What do I do?**
 - a. You are required to pick up your own liability insurance if your site is asking for it. The student rate is about \$35/yr. Go to www.proliability.com. Many sites where you will work with minors will

ask for this. It's for your own protection in case of lawsuit, and strongly encouraged for all students.

12. Can I take classes during my internship?

- a. One additional course. Due to the extensive number of hours conducted at your chosen internship site, students can only take up to one class in addition to Senior Seminar and Internship.

13. Can I choose my Professor for Internship and Senior Seminar?

- a. No. Students are matched with Professors based on where their site is. Decisions are not made about which Professor will have which students until just before registration.

14. How many credits will I have for the semester if I conduct 400 hours at my site along with senior seminar?

- a. 11. A 400 hour internship (FCST 409) is 8 credits along with 3 credits for FCST 400, Senior Seminar. If you need 12 credits for full time status, request a 9 credit or 450 hr internship.

15. Are there workshops to prepare me for conducting internships?

- a. The FCST department provides an internship conference in the Spring, with guest speakers from sites and former students. Also professional development workshops are available. To find out more information about this workshops please visit FCST department or call 973-655-4171.

16. Can I volunteer at internship sites before beginning my internship?

- a. YES!! Volunteering is an excellent way to network and gain exposure in your potential career field. Remember that any volunteering you do (that is not part of a supervised FCST Class) you do independently of Montclair State University and the FCST Department. Therefore, these hours will not count toward your internship hours.

17. How do I register for FCST 409 and FCST 400?

- a. Once you turn in your authorization form, and your site has been approved, you will be given a permit to register along with an e-mail containing detailed instructions regarding the registration process.

18. I am interested in a site that is not on the list, can I intern there?

- a. YES. Simply because a site is not on our list does not mean that it is not a potentially viable location for an internship. If you know of a site that we have not used before, we encourage students to explore it as a potential site. If you have any questions or need assistance with this please contact Sean Schofield, Internship Coordinator. Final approval will still need to be given by the FCST Department.
- b. Please remember picking a site we are not familiar with may prolong the approval process. You will still be responsible for meeting the deadlines and if you do not you will not be able to intern in the semester that you had originally planned.

Contact information:

FCST Department

Dr. Katia Goldfarb, Chair

Ms. Shannon Bellum, Department Administrator

Mr. Christopher Cottle, Department Advisor

Mr. Sean Schofield, Internship Coordinator

University Hall # 4144, 973-655-4171