

# **Human Development and Family Studies**

## **HDFS 450 Practicum Course**

University of Illinois

Web: [publish.illinois.edu/hdfs-internship/](http://publish.illinois.edu/hdfs-internship/)

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# HDFS 450: Practicum in HDFS

## Course Information

<http://publish.illinois.edu/hdfs-internship>

HDFS 450 is a supervised learning experience that places students in community agencies or institutions where they can work with children, adolescents, adults, or families. HDFS 450 is designed to provide:

- Professional-level experience in an agency or organization that corresponds with a student's career interest;
- An opportunity for students to apply the theory, content and skills they have learned in their coursework to "real world" situations;
- An opportunity for students to develop new knowledge, attitudes, and skills; and
- A system of support that facilitates successful and satisfying internship experiences and prepares students for the world of work or further education.

Students can choose from a catalog of placement sites that have previously hosted interns, or find their own potential site (which will need to be approved by the course instructor).

### Prerequisites

Students must be HDFS majors in good standing who are at the junior or senior level. HDFS 450 is not available to students on probation. Consent from the HDFS 450 instructor must be obtained. Some practicum placements may require specific course work or practical experience.

### Credit Hours

Flexible registration, 4-6 credit hours. The amount of credit to be received is negotiated with a student's advisor and the course instructor. Students work at a placement site between 10 and 20 hours per week. In addition, there is a mandatory weekly seminar (1.75 hrs/week) where students will be responsible for completing readings and assignments, as well as a semester project.

- The *minimum* number of work hours per week at a placement site is 10 hours (for 4 credits), and the *maximum* number of work hours is 20 hours (for 6 credits).

4 credits: 10-12 hours/week for 15 weeks = 150 - 180 hours total

5 credits: 13-15 hours/week for 15 weeks = 195 - 225 hours total

6 credits: 18-20 hours/week for 15 weeks = 240 - 270 hours total

- At the undergraduate level, up to 6 hours of HDFS 450 credit may be applied to the total of HDFS course credits required for graduation. Only 4 credit hours of HDFS 450 may be applied to the total required for a graduate degree.

### Course Requirements and Grading

1. Students will fulfill the obligations specified in the Learning Contract, which includes working at the placement site for the designated number of hours determined by the number of credits registered. Students will also be required to complete a semester project that will be developed by the student and site supervisor, and approved by the course instructor.

2. Students must participate in weekly seminars held on Wednesdays 4:00-5:50 p.m. Students will complete readings, short journal reflections, a class presentation on their practicum site and a final poster and presentation. Details will be listed in the course syllabus and discussed in class.
3. Students will be assigned a grade by the course instructor who takes into consideration the site supervisor's evaluation comments and recommendation for grade, seminar participation, and completion of assignments. The course syllabus will describe the specific course requirements and grading policies.

### Securing a Site Placement

1. A student initiates being placed at a site by talking with his or her advisor and the HDFS 450 course instructor/TA about interest in HDFS 450 and about possible placements. This initial discussion should take place before pre-registration time for the semester a student wants to take HDFS 450.
2. Attend the HDFS Information Night and schedule an interview with the HDFS 450 instructor. Submit your resume, and a cover letter with career goals, and two possible placement sites via email to the course instructor at least one day in advance of your appointment.
3. During the interview, the student will discuss their interests and career goals, the possible placements, and get feedback on their cover letter and resume. The student will then get permission to contact the agency to find out more details about the placement and schedule a formal interview with site supervisor(s) where he or she is interested in working.
4. After scheduling an interview with the site supervisor, the student should submit a cover letter and resume in advance of the interview and be prepared to describe the skills and knowledge that make him or her a suitable practicum student for the agency. Students will inform the instructor of the date they are interviewing before the interview takes place, and will meet with the course instructor after the interview to discuss placement.
5. If the student is accepted at the placement site and the student accepts the placement, the student, site supervisor, and course instructor will sign a Placement Interview Form. The Form outlines a basic agreement on the types of duties or responsibilities the student can expect, start and end dates, and the number of hours they will be working at the site. A more detailed Learning Contract will be completed and approved by the site supervisor and course instructor before the end of the second week of the placement. This would specify the goals students have for their placement, the responsibilities they will have, and what their semester project will be at the placement.

### Timeline

March:	Attend mandatory informational meeting
April:	Explore internship options, apply for specific placements
May:	Finalize placement, potential days/hours of work, etc
August:	Contact placement site to confirm start date and hours
Fall start:	Work at placement and attend class

### For More Information:

Dr. Aaron Ebata  
ebata@illinois.edu  
(217)333-2912

**HDFS 450**  
**Checklist for Preparing for Your Interview**

There are four steps in the practicum interview and selection process that are outlined below. Use this checklist as a guide in preparing for your interviews and securing your placement. Note that this is an *instructor approved course* - you will not be able to add it to your course schedule until you have complete steps 1-3 below.

<p><b>STEP 1</b> Schedule by April 7th</p>	<p><b>Initial Interview Meeting with Dr. Ebata</b> (see the website for the link to the appointment calendar)</p> <p>Date &amp; Time: _____ (allow 15-30 min)</p>
	<p>Review the practicum catalog and select 2-3 sites you would like to consider for your placement. If there are no sites that fit your interests, email Dr. Ebata and describe the kind of placement you hope to find ASAP.</p>
	<p>Prepare a copy of your cover letter and résumé. Your cover letter should be in draft form and targeted toward your “top-choice site.” Once your site is selected, you can adjust the letter accordingly. We recommend having your resume and cover letter reviewed by the Career Center (<a href="http://careercenter.illinois.edu">http://careercenter.illinois.edu</a>) or ACES Career Services (<a href="http://academics.aces.illinois.edu/career-services">http://academics.aces.illinois.edu/career-services</a>).</p>
	<p>Email your cover letter with education/career goals and résumé <b>at least 1 day in advance</b> of your scheduled appointment with Dr. Ebata. <i>If you arrive at your interview without having sent your cover letter and résumé 1 day in advance, you will have to reschedule your interview.</i></p>
	<p>During the interview Dr. Ebata will give you feedback on your letter and resume and give you approval to contact a placement site to schedule an interview.</p>
<p><b>STEP 2</b> Schedule by April 21st</p>	<p><b>Interview with Site Supervisor</b></p>
	<p>Call or email the Site Supervisor to schedule an interview within 24 hours of receiving approval from Dr. Ebata. Find out if you should send your cover letter and resume by email or regular mail (be sure to get or confirm an email or mailing address). Find out if you need to complete a separate application form for the agency. Notify Dr. Ebata of the appointment date.</p> <p><i>It may take time and persistence to schedule an interview. If you have</i></p>

	<i>trouble receiving a return phone call, try email or check with administrative staff about the best way to contact the supervisor. If after a week you continue to have difficulty scheduling an appointment, please contact Dr. Ebata.</i>
	Email (or mail) your cover letter and résumé to the person who will be interviewing you immediately after scheduling the interview
	Prepare a list of questions to cover in the interview. Questions should include (but are not limited to): agency mission, typical intern activities and potential activities you would be able to do this semester, potential work hours and schedule, start date and expectations about working during holidays and spring break. You should also inquire if there is anything you must do in advance of your placement such as training, fingerprinting, medical exams, etc.
	<p>Prepare for your interview. Know what the agency does by checking out the agency website, plan what you will wear (dress should be business casual; avoid wearing jeans, low cut blouses, tank or halter tops, sandals or tennis shoes to the interview. Jewelry, make up and perfume should not be excessive). Be sure to turn off or silence your cell phone when you arrive at the agency. You may also schedule a mock interview with the Career Service Center as part of your preparation.</p> <p>If you are accepted for the position, complete the <u>Placement Interview Form</u> at the meeting with the site supervisor and get their signature.</p> <p>If a decision is to be made sometime <i>after</i> the interview, you would need to return to the agency to complete the <u>Placement Interview Form</u>.</p>
<b>STEP 3</b> Schedule by May 5th	<p><b>Schedule Second Meeting Dr. Ebata</b></p> <p>Date &amp; Time: _____ (allow 15-30 min)</p>
	Bring the completed <b><i>and signed</i></b> <u>Placement Interview Form</u> to the meeting.
<b>STEP 4</b>	<b>Approval and Course Registration</b>
	Barbara Anderson or Dr. Ebata will notify you when you are approved to complete enrollment in the course.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
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**STUDENT INTERN RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Responsibilities to the agency:
  - a. Providing own transportation to and from the agency;
  - b. Being at the agency for assigned hours (10-15 hours/week) on time; notifying the supervisor in advance of any absences; and arranging for make-up of any missed time;
  - c. Respecting the rules, policies and codes of the agency;
  - d. Becoming familiar with the agency's setting, function, operation and channels of communication and authority.
  - e. Attending agency staff meetings when appropriate;
  - f. Attending agency mandated or optional training when appropriate.
2. Responsibilities to clients:
  - a. Respecting the individuality, dignity and worth of individual clients;
  - b. Respecting the confidentiality of all information.
3. Educational responsibilities:
  - a. Completing assignments on time;
  - b. Integrating theory and content of HDFS courses with placement experience;
  - c. Attending all seminars provided by the University Faculty Coordinator;
  - d. Completing a semester project approved by the Site Supervisor and University Faculty Coordinator.
4. Evaluation responsibilities:
  - a. Arranging for completion of the Learning Contract;
  - b. Participating in a midterm review with the Site Supervisor and University Faculty Coordinator;
  - c. Completing a final evaluation form.

Updated 3/17

*Adapted from Purdue University, Department of Sociology/ Anthropology Field Placement Handbook.*

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**SITE SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

The main responsibility of the Site Supervisor is to teach the student through a process of observation, participation, supervision and evaluation. The Supervisor duties include:

1. Conducting an orientation for the student that will describe:
  - a. The purpose of the agency;
  - b. The historical background of the agency;
  - c. The services the agency renders to the community;
  - d. The channels of communication and authority within the agency;
  - e. Policies and procedures within the agency.
2. Supervising the involvement of the student intern in agency programs.
3. Meeting with the student at least once a week for feedback and direction.
4. Assisting the student in preparing a Learning Contract (like a Memorandum of Agreement) for the placement experience.
5. Assisting the student in developing a Semester Project that will enhance the agency's ability to achieve its goals.
6. Assigning the student tasks and responsibilities similar to those of agency employees.
7. Providing the student with opportunities to participate in meetings, conferences, or trainings as appropriate.
8. Sharing the student intern's progress with the University Faculty Coordinator by:
  - d. Maintaining open communication with the University Faculty Coordinator as needed;
  - e. Identifying the students' strengths and weaknesses;
  - f. Suggesting strategies to help the student improve in areas where skills could be improved;
  - g. Participating in a mid-semester evaluation meeting with the student and University Faculty Coordinator; and
  - h. Completing a final evaluation form for the University Faculty Coordinator.

Updated 3/17

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**FACULTY COORDINATOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

The main responsibility of the Faculty Coordinator is to facilitate and monitor the placement and oversight of the practicum between the University and the participating community practicum field sites.

1. Maintain an updated directory of potential practicum sites.
2. Facilitate placement process at an appropriate practicum site.
3. Provide orientation and updated materials to site supervisors on roles and responsibilities of the students, Site Supervisors and the Faculty Coordinator.
4. Review and approve the Learning Contract for students' educational goals.
5. Review and approve the Semester Project designed by students in consultation with Site Supervisors.
6. Conduct a weekly seminar during the semester of the practicum to assist with the professional development of the students.
7. Monitor the student's progress on learning goals and projects at the practicum site through in-class assignments and midterm and final evaluations. The midterm evaluation will occur at the practicum site and involve the student, Site Supervisor, and Faculty Coordinator in evaluating progress and providing feedback for continuing development.
8. Maintain open communication and be available for consultation with students or Site Supervisors as needed.

Updated 3/17



## Sample Interview Questions

Below is a list of questions we will discuss with you when you come in for your appointment with Dr. Ebata. **Please review this list and be prepared** to respond to these questions during the interview.

1. What were some of the reasons you decided to major in HDFS?
2. What are some of your future plans or goals?
3. What attracted you to consider enrollment in HDFS 450?
4. How would you describe yourself to a prospective internship supervisor?
5. What do you hope to gain from the practicum experience?
6. What motivates you to do your best on a project?
7. What are some of your strengths you can put to use during the practicum experience? What are some of your challenges that might impact your work at the practicum placement?
8. How many credit hours do you intend to enroll for the fall semester?
9. What other obligations do you have including employment, extracurricular activities, and sorority/fraternity/family commitments?
10. What agencies are you most drawn to for your placement? Why?
11. Are you available to attend weekly seminars on Wed. 4-5:30 p.m.?
12. The class portion (24 hours) is in addition to the placement time and includes weekly assignments, written reports and a presentation. Do you have the time to devote to the class portion as well as the practicum placement of between 10 minimum to 15 hours maximum per week?
13. What questions do you have for Dr. Ebata?
14. During the interview we will review your resume, cover letter and potential placement options and procedure with you.

## HDFS 450 Placement Interview Form

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's UIN: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Proposed Practicum Activities:**

**Proposed Schedule:**

**Start:** \_\_\_\_\_ **End:** \_\_\_\_\_

*The Fall 2017 semester runs from Monday August 28<sup>nd</sup> - Friday, Dec. 15<sup>th</sup>, with a break the week of November 18-25. Placements should start the week of August 28, but could begin earlier with the approval of the instructor and site supervisor.*

**Number of Hours at Placement Site:** (check number of credits student plans to registered for)

\_\_\_ 4 credits: 10-12 hours/week for 15 weeks = **150 - 180 hours total**

\_\_\_ 5 credits: 13-15 hours/week for 15 weeks = **195 - 225 hours total**

\_\_\_ 6 credits: 18-20 hours/week for 15 weeks = **240 - 270 hours total**

**Proposed Weekly Schedule** (*The course seminar is on Wednesdays 4:00-5:50 pm*):

**Approval for Proposed Practicum:**

**Site Supervisor:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_