

FIELD EXPERIENCE IN SOCIOLOGY

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Please read this booklet over carefully if you are planning to enroll in the Sociology Field Experience course.

I have listed some examples of placements in this booklet. Please know that placements change every year and the ones I have listed may not be available for some reason. Every time we offer the field experience course new placements are added so do not feel limited by this list. The placements that are listed are where students have been placed before. You may suggest your own placement but I have to approve the placement before it becomes your official field experience. Placement sponsors or program staff can contact me at 856-256-4586 or Myersj@rowan.edu. There is usually no problem with placement, but it is my job to either place you or approve your placement. It must be a learning experience.

Good luck!

Dr. Myers

Field Experience in Sociology

Who Should Take the Course? Many students ask what the field experience course in sociology is all about. This will provide some of the answers.

Number of Credits and Number of Hours in the Field? This course is a senior level seminar in sociology. It is designed for sociology majors or those who have taken several sociology courses. It presumes that the student in the seminar has a working knowledge of sociological methods and theory. It requires each student to secure a field placement--with the help of the instructor--for the duration of the semester. The field placement must be mutually agreed upon by the student, the instructor, and the sponsor. The student is expected to work in the field placement as described below and attend the seminar. The sponsor is expected to provide a field experience for the student and to cooperate with the instructor in the supervision of the student.

Requirements You may take this course for either three or six credits. If you take it for six credits you spend twelve hours in the field placement per week for a total of about 180 hours. If you take the course for three credits you spend six hours in the field placement per week for a total of about 90 hours. That is the only difference between the six and the three credit courses.

The main requirements for the course are a research paper which relies upon data provided by your field experience placement and the completion of your field placement hours. In addition to writing the research paper, you will present your findings to the class and share your progress with others in the seminar. You also will be required to become familiar with your fellow students' projects and be able to ask questions of other's projects. In this way, you not only will experience your activity on a firsthand basis, but you will learn from others' experiences as well.

Why Take This Course? This course is an opportunity for consolidating, testing, and expanding some of what you have learned in your undergraduate education. At the same time, it is a valuable tool for preparing for postgraduate education and/or career. You will be asked to tap into many of the things you have learned: methods, theory, and course content. You will be employing your undergraduate knowledge in a research paper/presentation and at the field placement. You will be seeing some of the social dynamics in action which you studied in the classroom. Your field and seminar experiences will prepare you for post-Rowan experiences by adding to your academic knowledge and your vocational awareness and skills. You will make "contacts" in the outside world, learn "how to do" certain tasks, and learn how learning takes place in the field. This process hopefully will add to your ability to take control of your future.

Goals and Objectives of the Course?

The goal of the course is to have the student successfully integrate student involvement in field experience into a sociological perspective. Many sociology courses include some field experience, but an intensified, limited classroom, seminar permits the type of in-depth concentration that is necessary for the blending of theoretical concepts with practical experience.

The course is primarily aimed at an academic objective: applying sociological theory to experience. This is accomplished by having each student conduct a research exercise in a selected theoretical area, and by having students react to fellow student's research projects in the seminar setting.

There are also vocational "spin-offs" which result from this course. Students have very close and enduring contact with practitioners. They gain firsthand knowledge of an occupation. Students also gain indirectly by listening and reacting to the descriptions of others students' experiences. Lasting relationships with employing sponsors, which many times develop into networks, also result from the field experience in sociology.

After successfully completing this course, the student should 1) be able to design and carry out a research project, 2) have firsthand experience in a career area related to sociology, 3) have demonstrated the ability to successfully interact with others in a career setting outside the college classroom, 4) be able to transmit clearly to others the career, theoretical, and methodological information with which he/she has firsthand knowledge, 5) be able to isolate and describe the skills obtained or improved upon as a result of completing the field experience and the seminar, 6) master one or more area or subarea of sociological theory as a result of his/her study, and 7) become more skilled in the use of one or more sociological method of gathering data as a result of his/her study.

The required readings for the course are determined by you in consultation with me.

How Does the Course Work?

Before the class begins, or very soon after it begins, you should sit down with the instructor and discuss exactly what you are interested in and why. You should be thinking in the long term. Questions you need to consider:

- * Which area of sociology interests me the most?
- * What kind of career do I want?
- * How can the field experience in sociology help me reach my post-graduate goals?
- * What kind of experience would I like to have?
- * What have I done in the past--both in class and outside of class--that will help prepare me for the field experience?

You should view the field experience as part of your past and future academic and vocational careers. What have you done so far? What kind of field experience does your previous experience direct you toward? How can this complement your future plans?

This course will really be what you make it. The instructor and the student decide on the field experience together, but most of the other decisions are made in large part by you, the student. You must decide on what area your study/paper will focus; you must decide on what to read; you must decide on your hypothesis; you must decide on your methodology, etc. The instructor, and other sociology faculty, are willing to work with you, suggest readings, react to hypotheses, criticize methodologies and so on. You must take some of the initial steps.

First Steps? The most difficult thing for most students in this course is deciding upon a relevant area of sociological theory and developing a hypothesis. It is usually so difficult because there are so many areas you could study. But, for your paper, you must pick an area on which to write, and limit your study by constructing hypotheses.

The first thing to do is fill out an application and return it to the instructor, Dr. Myers. An application is attached to this booklet (*Student Fact Sheet*, last page of booklet).

Next, talk to the instructor about your future, your goals, and possible placements.

After this, you need to get a placement. This is not difficult. Field experience sponsors will be glad to have you. They need your services. How do you get a field experience placement? Talk to the instructor. Sponsors will be suggested to you. You may suggest possible sponsors. The instructor will contact an agreed upon sponsor. An interview will be set up. You will go and interview the sponsor and the sponsor will interview you. If all parties concerned are happy with the proposed arrangements, you are placed! If not, the process is started over.

Examples of Placements?

Where can you be placed? Your interests will determine your placement. Every year we develop new placements. Examples of placements:

Adoption

GOLDEN CRADLE: Students have worked with this agency helping to arrange adoptions.

DYFS: Students have worked with this agency helping to arrange adoptions.

Abused Children

DIVISION OF YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES (DYFS): Students have worked with the DYFS workers who deal with abused children and in other areas.

GLASSBORO HOUSING AUTHORITY: Students have worked with the social worker assisting with the elderly and child abuse cases.

Battered Women

SOLACE: Solace is a group home for battered women and their children. Students have assisted the social workers in many areas in this program.

ELEANOR CORBETT HOUSE: This residential facility houses abused women and their children and is part of Volunteers of America.

Business

Over the years, I have had various students in business settings, although no one recently. If you are interested in this area let's talk.

Children

SALEM COUNTY SPECIAL SERVICES: Students have worked directly with special needs children at various age and grade levels.

BIG BROTHERS AND SISTERS: Students have worked in matching big's with little's and other activities.

HOLLY SHORES GIRL SCOUT COUNCIL: Students have worked with this agency in administration as well as direct services.

Delinquency and Crime

GLOUCESTER COUNTY PROBATION - SPECIAL SERVICES: This unit works with juvenile probation. Students have assisted in group counseling, participated in presentations to juveniles, and attended court hearings.

CAMDEN COUNTY YOUTH SHELTER: Students have worked in both the educational and recreational aspects.

GLOUCESTER COUNTY DETENTION CENTER: Students have done many things: assisted social workers, gone to court with juveniles, assisted teachers, assisted recreation supervisors, done counseling.

VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA: Students worked at half-way house for men recently released from prison.

Drug and Alcohol Abuse

SALEM COUNTY ALCOHOL ABUSE/PREVENTION PROGRAM: Student worked with social worker in prevention and treatment programs.

TOGETHER: This program has several components: the hotline, women's drug program, and the youth services program. Most of the students have worked in the youth service program which deals with runaway youth.

Education

YALE ACADEMY: This is a school for classified children. Students have assisted the social workers and teachers.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS: Many students have used their elementary school practice teaching for their field experience.

Elderly

GREENBRIAR NURSING HOME (and other nursing homes): Students have done intakes, updated charts, assisted the social worker, and assisted in recreation.

GLASSBORO HOUSING AUTHORITY: Students have worked with the social worker assisting with the elderly and child abuse cases.

JFK HOSPITAL - WASHINGTON TWP.: Although students have worked with the medical social worker, the bulk of their duties have been to work with the elderly patients.

Family

THE CENTER FOR FAMILY SERVICES: The Center for Family Services, headquartered in Camden, coordinates and oversees many programs in Gloucester and Camden counties.

Family Crisis Intervention

GLOUCESTER COUNTY FAMILY CRISIS INTERVENTION UNIT: Student assisted in evaluation of the program.

Grant Writing

HOLLY SHORES GIRL SCOUT COUNCIL: Students have worked on grant writing at this agency.

Homeless

GLOUCESTER COUNTY BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES: Student worked with the staff on research and planning for county homeless.

Law

PRIVATE LAW OFFICE: Student worked in lawyer's office.

GLOUCESTER COUNTY PUBLIC DEFENDER: Student worked with public defenders and investigators doing many of the required tasks in the process and defending clients who had retained the public defender.

Medical/Psychiatric

UNDERWOOD HOSPITAL'S DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES: Students assisted the social workers in helping patients deal with non-medical problems.

SALEM COUNTY HOSPITAL - PERSONNEL: Student worked in personnel office.

ANCORA PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL: Student worked at hospital assisting social workers and treatment personnel.

UNDERWOOD MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - PSYCHIATRIC WARD: Students have worked with the recreational therapist and assisted in group sessions.

OUR LADY OF LOURDES HOSPITAL - PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT: Students worked in the personnel department assisting where needed.

KENNEDY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT: Students worked with the hospital's social worker on many different types of issues related to patient placement and other social problems faced by patients.

Personnel

OUR LADY OF LOURDES HOSPITAL - PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT: Students worked in the personnel department assisting where needed.

ROWAN UNIVERSITY - PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT: Students worked in the personnel department assisting where needed.

Police

NEW JERSEY STATE POLICE – Students work in internship program at state police headquarters in Hamilton, NJ.

Political Opportunity

CONGRESSIONAL FIELD OFFICE: Students work with the staff at solving the various problems constituents present.

Pregnancy and Birth Control

PLANNED PARENTHOOD: One student was a counselor at this agency.

CERRY HILL WOMEN'S CENTER: Students worked at abortion clinic assisting staff.

Rape

WOMEN AGAINST RAPE: Students did presentations at local high schools, assisted in proposal writing, and program evaluation.

Research

RESEARCH ASSISTANTS: Students have worked as research assistants for Rowan sociology faculty who have research projects which are related to student's interests.

Social Work

CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES: Student had small caseload under the direction of a social worker.

KENNEDY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT: Student worked with the hospital's social worker on many different types of issues related to patient placement and other social problems faced by patients.

ROBIN'S NEST: Student worked at group home for young women, assisting social worker.

GLASSBORO HOUSING AUTHORITY: Students have worked with the social worker assisting with the elderly and child abuse cases.

SOLACE: Solace is a group home for battered women and their children. Students have assisted the social workers in many areas of this program.

YALE ACADEMY: This is a school for classified children. Students have assisted the social workers and teachers.

Women

ALTERNATIVES FOR WOMEN NOW: Students have worked with the program director.

Youth Worker

TOGETHER: This program has several components: the hotline, women's drug program, and the youth services program. Most of the students have worked in the youth service program which deals with runaway youth.

ROBIN'S NEST: Student worked at group home for young women, assisting social worker.

GLOUCESTER COUNTY DETENTION CENTER: Students have done many things: assisted social workers, gone to court with juveniles, assisted teachers, assisted recreation supervisor, done counseling.

If you don't see what you are looking for please ask. Every semester we have new placements and every semester some of the old ones are no longer available, so you need to be flexible.