

**Department of Health and Exercise Science**  
**Guidelines for the Exercise Science Internship**

**HES 00484**

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## Overview of the Senior Internship Course -- HES00484

You will soon shed your status as an HES *student* to begin your career as a health *professional*. Many of you have tasted work, at least part-time or during the summer, so you have some experience in a work environment. But this work has been temporary, often unrelated to the livelihood you aim to pursue. As your final Exercise Science course, the Senior Internship serves to transition you from an *aspiring* health professional to a *practicing* one. The Senior Internship course caps off your Rowan University education, providing you with experience in a professional setting and enabling you to practice and extend the knowledge and skills you've accumulated throughout your undergraduate education. It also fosters the development of your professional network that will facilitate your advancement throughout your career. Thus, you should seriously aim to secure an internship placement needed for a successful first entry into the particular area of public health and wellness you wish to pursue. This will take careful thought and advanced planning on your part.

The Senior Internship course is **worth 6 credits** and is **required** for HES students. Students will spend 250 hours at the site and routinely engaging with their Faculty Instructor to earn these 6 credits. What follows identifies key features of the Senior Internship course and the planning process.

To learn more about and prepare for your internship, we highly recommend that you review the provided Internship information and resources found in the Exercise Science major's Canvas shell.

## The Players in the Internship process

**Student.** The semester prior to the Senior Internship course, the student is responsible for identifying potential internship sites of interest, for securing an Agreement with a Site Supervisor, and for registering for the course itself. During the internship semester, the student is expected to practice professionalism, represent themselves and Rowan University favorably, learn as much as possible from the experience at their site. They must also communicate routinely with the Faculty Instructor.

**Internship Coordinator.** Prior to the Internship course, the Internship Coordinator facilitates the process of securing an internship and relevant paperwork with the student. During the internship semester, the Assistant Coordinator (Sarah Skidmore) and Internship Coordinator will monitor and track the internship once it is secured.

**Site Supervisor.** The Site Supervisor offers students an opportunity to gain a meaningful, instructive, practical experience, providing the student with tasks appropriate to their level of experience and education, and which further the productivity of the site itself. The Site Supervisor will also offer periodic feedback on the student's performance.

**Faculty Instructor.** The Faculty Instructor provides a syllabus and assignments that Internship students must follow and submit. The Instructor also monitors the student's performance at the site, and ultimately provides a grade for the course. This is an online course format.

## Planning for your Internship

To secure the type of internship best suited to your values and interests begin planning for your internship *one year before* you actually register for the Senior Internship course. The Internship Coordinator is available to meet with you, answer questions, and facilitate the process, but *you are principally responsible for securing your internship* placement.

The **semester before** you begin your internship, you must:

- (1) **Fulfill course pre-requisites.** That is, you must a) pass all major courses with a C- or better and b) and complete 40 Professional Development Hours (PDHs). This is non-negotiable.
- (2) **Identify your personal and career goals.** You are not “placed” in a site by the Internship Coordinator or the Department of Health and Exercise Science. The Coordinator and others mainly facilitate the process by which *you* identify a site where you wish to undertake your internship. Since there are a wide range of sites where you may intern, choose wisely. Carefully consider your personal and career goals and do your best to identify sites that might best serve those goals. A list of former sites where prior students have interned is supplied in your Exercise Science Majors Canvas course shell.

**Ask yourself:** What would I love to do *after* I graduate from Rowan University? Where would I want my future to begin? What type of internship will position me to take the next step on my career path? What do I want to accomplish during my internship? What specific internships promise to meet your goals?

- **NOTE:** There is no assurance that any of the former sites listed will be able to receive additional interns. Sites NOT listed, however, typically do qualify as legitimate sites for an internship, so do not be shy about exploring a range of unlisted sites. If you are seriously considering an unlisted site for your internship, however, please speak with the Internship Coordinator to confirm that it will qualify.
- (3) **Identify possible sites suited to meet your goals.** You can identify sites through (1) personal or professional contacts, (2) the list of approved sites, and (3) your own search of sites not yet approved.
    - **Personal or professional contacts:** Your existing network of family, friends, and professionals may help you identify promising sites. Activate this network.
    - **Approved sites:** For most at the early career stage, the network may be limited. Instead, you may examine the *list of approved sites* where past HES students have interned. This list is available on the HES Major's Canvas page. Review the list to identify a subset of possible sites to examine closely (see the Appendix for a link to the list). Check the vision, mission, and values of the site on the web to identify those that appear to align with your goals and interests.
    - **Unlisted sites:** You may explore *unlisted sites* as well to see if they align with your interests. To properly mentor you, the site supervisor should hold a minimum of a bachelor's degree in a related health, fitness or exercise science area and he or she should have at least two years of post-college work experience. **You must contact**

*the Internship Coordinator to verify that the sites offer a sufficient and suitable internship experience.*

- (4) **Contact those sites.** Once you identify potential sites, contact them and ask to speak with someone about the possibility of interning there. Any email or cover letter should be well-crafted, with an updated resume attached.

**Ask Yourself:** Will the site offer a variety of experiences and enable me to apply what I've learned during my coursework? Do your values align with those of the sites? Will I gain valuable professional experience and develop existing skills, knowledge and dispositions? And, of course, there are practical considerations -- is the site reasonably convenient and close to where you are situated?

- (5) **Submit the Internship Student Site Agreement (SSA) form.** The SSA is a simple, one-page agreement between you and the Site Supervisor to indicate that you will intern at the site and the Site Supervisor will supervise your activities there. Scanned or photographed versions are accepted. Once the form is completed and signed, send it to the Assistant Coordinator (Sara Skidmore, preferably via email).

- **NOTE:** The Department must complete additional paperwork with the site. Typically, this is not a lengthy process, but sometimes it is, so the sooner the SSA is submitted, the better. **You may NOT start your internship until ALL paperwork is completed.**

- (6) **Register for the Course.** You must register for the Senior Internship course (HES00484), and this requires a meeting with your advisor to review your academic record and assure that course prerequisites have been met. You may register for the course prior to having secured and submitted Internship Site Agreement.

**NOTE:** Information is available on the HES Canvas shell and explains this process in greater detail.

**Liability and Health Coverage.** Rowan covers liability insurance for each student intern; however students should have their own health insurance. Rowan University provides \$1 million in commercial liability insurance for each intern for each occurrence. The liability covers you in the event that you damage property at the site. It does not insure you against a professional judgment error or a similar mistake. A Certificate of Liability is sent to the site supervisor via email from the insurance company if the site requests a copy or if the current Affiliation Agreement requires a copy of the certificate.

### **The Senior Internship course itself (HES00484)**

A complete and detailed syllabus will be provided when you enter the course, but here are the major activities you will undertake for your Senior Internship course:

- 1) **Regular reports.** Submitted each week, these reports will identify the number of hours completed, a description of activities engaged in, followed with a brief reflection.
- 2) **Interviews.** Students will develop an interview schedule and will interview two people who occupy two different roles at the site.
- 3) **Project Proposal.** Design a site-specific, feasible project that highlights your capacity as a program planner. The design should include discussion of: planning, resources and

budgeting, working with stakeholders, marketing, and evaluation. You will not need to actually implement the project.

4) **Case Studies**

5) **Discussion Board and Questions**

## The Senior Internship Course

During the Senior Internship course you mainly interact with two parties – the **Site Supervisor** and a **Faculty Advisor**. The *Site Supervisor* identifies your on-site activities, and guides you throughout the 250 hours you will spend at the site. The *Faculty Advisor* oversees the academic components of the course itself. Academic components include: weekly reflections, discussion board posts, project proposals, a final student survey. You will communicate with the *Faculty Advisor* on a weekly basis, via email and in your Senior Internship online course shell.

**Be strategic in identify in and selecting your internship site.** Since the Internship is designed to provide students with a valuable opportunity to gain experience, develop knowledge and skills, and explore an area of work they are passionate about. Be strategic in identifying and selecting where you might wish to be placed. These internships roughly fall into one of five categories:

### TYPE OF SITE

<b><i>Clinical Settings</i></b>	Sites include clinical settings involving hospitals, health centers & facilities involved in cardiovascular or pulmonary rehabilitation, sports medicine.
<b><i>PT,OT,Chiropractic</i></b>	Sites include settings involving physical or occupational therapy, chiropractic, or sports medicine.
<b><i>Corporate Wellness and Personal Training</i></b>	Sites include fitness and wellness centers offering fitness or nutrition programs, fitness activities, training, or employee health promotion to improve health and productivity.
<b><i>Strength and Conditioning</i></b>	Sites include those that offer private or group training to advance fitness, nutrition, strength, stress management for both athletes and general population.
<b><i>Research</i></b>	Sites (often but not exclusively universities) that focus on the theory and application of health and exercise research, that engage in research to collect and analyze health-related data.

## **APPENDIX A: Roles and Responsibilities during the Senior Internship**

### **1. STUDENT Responsibilities**

At the site, you serve at the behest of the *Site Supervisor* and the *Faculty Advisor*. You are expected to be prompt, polite, professional, work well with others, and enhance the quality and operation of the site you serve. Your performance and demeanor may be your ticket to a strong recommendation letter and a desirable position. You also represent Rowan University and as a Rowan graduate to be, its favorable reputation in the community will shine a more positive light back on you.

As a student registered for the Senior Internship course, you continue to occupy the familiar role of student, which requires that you keep up with and submit class assignments in a timely manner and of sufficient quality. This is an online course, so your communications occur electronically, via email and the course Blackboard site.

### **2. SITE SUPERVISOR (SS) Responsibilities**

The role of the *Site Supervisor* (SS) is to introduce the student to the scope of the profession and help them gain an understanding of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to be an effective professional. The SS also completes the ***Internship Student Site Agreement Form*** which the student submits to the Internship Coordinator before the internship begins. If necessary, the SS may also assist in completing an Affiliation Agreement between Rowan University and the site (this is required for new sites).

The SS completes a midterm evaluation (when approximately 100 hours are completed) and a final evaluation at the conclusion of the 250 hours. Both evaluations are reviewed by the student and SS and submitted through an online evaluation form (the intern will send a link to the survey). In addition, the SS signs a form that verifies the completion of the 250 hours. The SS should have a Bachelor's Degree (or equivalent professional experience or certification) and experience in their field of work.

### **3. FACULTY ADVISOR (FA) Responsibilities**

Each student is assigned a *Faculty Advisor* (FA). The FA communicates weekly with students regarding their activities, and grades all project reports, interviews, and other related assignments. Midterm and final evaluations are reviewed by the FA and the Internship Coordinator. The FA submits the student's grade. As needed, FAs may maintain contact with the *Site Supervisors* during the semester.

### **4. SENIOR INTERNSHIP COORDINATOR (SIC) Responsibilities**

The Senior Internship Coordinator (SIC) approves new sites, coordinates the completion of a formal Affiliation Agreement between sites if necessary. The SIC communicates with the site supervisor to describe his or her responsibilities and is available throughout the internship, if needed, to discuss the student's progress. Midterm and final evaluations are kept on file by the Coordinator.