

Ryerson University
Master of Arts in Public Policy and Administration
FIELD PLACEMENT OUTLINE

PA8213 Field Placement (1 credit) (minimum of 180 hours of field work)

Field Placements allow students to earn academic credit for relevant work experience (paid or unpaid), normally outside the university. They must be related to public policy and administration and to the student's learning objectives in the program. Field Placements offer students the opportunity to link theory with practice, to conduct empirical research, to learn about professional practices in organizations in the field of public policy and administration, and to gain appropriate work experience. The Placement is a Pass/Fail credit.

The Field Placement is normally completed during one term with the Field Placement Report deadline on or before the last day of classes for that term. The student is responsible for arranging with a faculty member to supervise the Field Placement and to submit a written proposal for the Field Placement for approval by that faculty member (the Faculty Supervisor) and the Graduate Program Director in Public Policy and Administration. The Faculty Supervisor, a member of the Public Policy and Administration program, is the Instructor for the course for that student and assigns the pass/fail grade for the work. The Field Supervisor is the on-site person who is in charge of the student's activities and obligations in the Field Placement. Students are advised to begin their arrangements and proposal well before the start of the term in which they will be registered in the Field Placement. The signed approval forms and proposal must be in the Program office by the "Add Course" deadline.

Limitations

- Field Placements are not permitted in the first term of study.
- Field Placements are restricted to non-practitioner students (generally full-time students).
- Only one Field Placement course credit is permitted.

Detailed Guidelines for Field Placement

1. The Nature and Objectives of Field Placements

These are set out in the course overview above.

2. Guidelines for Project Formulation by the Student

- a. The student is expected to seek an employment opportunity or a voluntary position in an organization related to the study of public policy and administration. Whether a paid or unpaid placement is being sought, it is important to begin the search early. **Given the competition for jobs in the public, para-public and nonprofit sectors, even for voluntary internships, the Program is not in a position to guarantee that placements will be available.**
- b. The student should work with the Faculty Supervisor and the Field Supervisor to develop a work plan that will contribute to the student's learning objectives.
- c. The Proposal must contain Learning objectives – 3-5 clearly written learning objectives that link theory to practice and can be accomplished in the timeframe for the placement. Please remember that you may need to insert several graduate level activities (research, study, analysis, comparisons, applications of theories, etc) into the position which may be outside what the employer is expecting from the existing position.

3. Sequence of Field Placement Activities

- a. Formulation of the placement and approvals.
- b. Periodic communication (meetings or other forms) with the Faculty Supervisor and the Field Supervisor.
- c. Preparation and submission of the Field Placement Report to the Faculty Supervisor.

- d. Submission of a written evaluation and grade (pass/fail) by the Faculty Supervisor (in consultation with the Field Supervisor).

4. Guidelines for Preparation of the Field Placement Report

Each student enrolled in a Field Placement must prepare a formal Field Placement Report. Although the report may take a variety of forms, there are four fundamental questions that must be addressed:

- a. What did you do? Activities must be described in some detail.
- b. What did you learn? Describe and evaluate the learning experience, particularly in terms of substantive knowledge gained and skills acquired, and the Learning Objectives.
- c. How did the experience contribute to your understanding of your areas of interest within public policy and administration? The report should include reflections informed by relevant theoretical materials, where appropriate.
- d. What changes, if any, will you make in your academic work — course work, research plans, etc. — as a result of the Field Placement?

Append, where appropriate, any materials, reports or case studies researched or prepared by you (in whole or in part) which may help to illustrate the nature of the Field Placement. (Confidential materials will held in confidence by the Program upon request, subject to School of Graduate Studies policies on the matter.)

Example for Outline of Field Placement Report

- I. Introduction
 - a. describe briefly your employment / research position, including your job title.
 - b. describe the organizational setting and / or context of the Field Placement.
 - c. describe the actual tasks and activities for which you were responsible.
 - d. identify the learning objectives
- II. The Experience
 - a. discuss and evaluate the organizational context in which you worked and your linkages with other departments, agencies and institutions.
 - b. describe the best and worst features of the experience.
 - c. discuss, on reflection, how you might have carried out your tasks and responsibilities to greater benefit.
- III. The Learning Objectives
 - a. address each Learning Objective or provide a summary if any or all Learning Objectives were addressed in previous assignments during this Placement.
- IV. Consequences
 - a. discuss in some detail the contribution of the placement to your academic and/or professional objectives, including (i) the substantive knowledge relating to public policy and administration that you gained or strengthened during your placement and (ii) the specific skills, methods, and techniques which you used or acquired.
 - b. discuss the influence, if any, of the placement on you personally, including your academic and professional goals, course selection, research plans, etc.
- V. Appendixes: Materials which illustrate the nature of the Field Placement.

Submitting the Report

There is no minimum or maximum length for Field Placement Reports, but a sensible guideline would be 12-15 pages. These reports are to be submitted to the Faculty Supervisor who will be responsible for evaluating these reports. The Faculty Supervisor will also be responsible for consulting with the Field Supervisor regarding the work related aspects of the placement.

5. Responsibilities of the Faculty Supervisor

- a. To consult with the student during project formulation and preparation of the terms of reference for the Field Placement. This should include a discussion of ways to ensure the learning value of the placement.
- b. To undertake the role of Faculty Supervisor only for placements where he or she has expertise.
- c. To maintain regular contact with the student during the Field Placement.
- d. To maintain contact with the Field Placement Supervisor, as necessary.
- e. To submit a pass/fail grade and written evaluation of the student's performance in the Field Placement to the appropriate Program Office.

6. Responsibilities of the Field Supervisor

- a. In agreeing to accept the Field Placement, the Field Supervisor must agree to provide a modest degree of academic supervision for the student. This involves developing appropriate Learning Objectives and ensuring that the Field Placement provides a useful and relevant experience for the student.
- b. The Field Supervisor agrees to communicate with the Faculty Supervisor and offer an assessment of the student's placement performs which will be shared with the Faculty Supervisor

7. Responsibilities of the Student

- a. To formulate, in consultation with the Faculty Supervisor and Field Supervisor, an appropriate work Program related to the student's learning objectives.
- b. To maintain contact with the Faculty Supervisor and Field Supervisor.
- c. To prepare the Field Placement Report in accordance with the guidelines set out above.
- d. To submit the Field Placement Report to the Faculty Advisor by the established deadline for the term of the placement.

Administrative Information for Public Policy and Administration students:

Field Placement student must follow the academic dates of the School of Graduate Studies (<http://www.ryerson.ca/graduate/dates/>).

- The end date of a Field Placement and the Field Placement Report submission deadline are subject to negotiation between the student, the Field Supervisor and the Faculty Supervisor. These dates must be finalized in the beginning of the placement or before it commences. Normally, the last day of classes for the term is used as the Field Placement Report submission deadline.
- The Field Placement final grade must be submitted by the Faculty Supervisor on or before the grade deadline established by the Registrar's Office. To give the Field Supervisor and the Faculty Supervisor sufficient time to evaluate the student's work, the Field Placement Report submission deadline should be well before the final grade submission deadline.
- If a student fails to fulfill the Field Placement requirements on-time, he/she may be given an F grade (failure) or an INC grade (Incomplete) at the discretion of the Faculty Supervisor.