INSTRUCTIONAL SCAFFOLDING IN INTERNSHIPS: SUPPORTING FUTURE PROFESSIONALS IN FAMILY SCIENCE

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INTRODUCTION: THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERNSHIPS IN FAMILY SCIENCE

Within the field of child development and family science,[1] most of the skills and knowledge gained within the university classroom are intended to support individuals and families in the community. Similar to teacher education, nursing, or business, family science students are better prepared for professional careers if given the chance to practice their skills in a supervised environment such as practicum, service learning, or internship (Gonyea & Kozak, 2014). Within this field, the primary goal of internships is to provide an opportunity for the application of academic knowledge (Ballard & Carroll, 2005). Students in family science intern within various programs, such as child development programs, childcare technical assistance agencies, 4-H and cooperative extension, social services, non-profits, assisted living facilities, advocacy programs, and other related services. Universities use internships within their curriculum to ensure the marketability of students at graduation, as well as provide students with a point to assist them with maturing in their professional skills and applying classroom-learned principles (Ballard & Carroll, 2005).

Overall, students' internship experiences can greatly impact their perceptions about their career choices as well as their role in enacting change in the community (Gonyea & Kozak, 2014). Community-based learning is positively correlated with shifting students' perceptions of self-efficacy, capabilities, and attitude towards community involvement that may then facilitate their transition into careers beyond the university classroom (Celio, Durlak, & Dynmnicki, 2011). Additionally, community-based learning is recognized as an effective pedagogy that can work to better society (Zlotkowski & Duffy, 2010). Community agencies are well-positioned to benefit from internships as well. For example, having students intern provides a pathway to employment after graduation that is considered cost-effective to the business, as it reduces the costs and risks associated with the hiring of employees externally. Since students have already had experience within the organization, it also reduces the amount of time for training and adjustment often found within the learning curve of a new employee (Ballard & Taylor, 2012). Similarly, interns are useful for the site at which they are placed. Students can bring a fresh perspective with current theories, research, and methodologies learned within their coursework. Providing students with an outlet to use their knowledge can bring new energy to the work environment

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[1] For this article, we will use "family science" as the term to describe programs such as Child and Family Development, Human Development and Family Studies, Human Ecology, etc.

of the organization. Some interns also bring substantial knowledge specific to technology usage and implementation, including social media, mobile devices, and editing digital documents.

Information pertaining to which aspects of family science program coursework are most helpful to students during internships and upon entering the field is often scarce. While the general consensus is that internships are important components of undergraduate education, there is an ongoing debate regarding how internships should be implemented. As the student population continues to evolve, educators will need to adapt to changing needs and preferences related to learning processes. Notably, the demand for online learning from students continues to grow (Nguyen, 2015). Regardless of the mode of content delivery, maintaining and improving levels of student engagement with coursework are essential goals. Generally, internship programming tends to be less structured than other components of undergraduate curricula. As such, there is limited extant literature centered around different approaches to internships in family science. Furthermore, there is a dearth of research exploring more structured internship processes that employ instructional scaffolding at the undergraduate level. Scaffolded instruction involves, "the systematic sequencing of prompted content, materials, tasks, and teacher and peer support to optimize learning" (Dickson et al., 1993 as cited in Chu et al., 2019). More specifically, scaffolding involves individualized and graduated guidance, wherein students are given more support while they are learning new or difficult tasks and the assistance provided is gradually decreased as they increasingly demonstrate mastery of content and skills (Chu et al., 2019).

The sustained nature of the internship experience allows for the scaffolding of applied skills and learning at the site. As undergraduate programs consider their current and future internship programs, we posit the processes surrounding an intern securing and completing an internship can be a key piece to furthering their learning, promoting self-efficacy, and increasing their career marketability. The purpose of this paper is to introduce our specific hybrid internship approach. A primary goal of our effort is to disseminate an approach to internships that has broad applicability and adaptability, incorporates scaffolded learning, and supports the development of self-efficacy.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

SELF-EFFICACY THEORY

Self-efficacy is a concept that emerged from the combined work of Rotter (1966) and Bandura (1977). Rotter (1966) suggested that people craft generalized expectations regarding their ability to control their environment. More specifically, that these expectations are situated on a continuum, with some individuals embodying a largely internal sense of control and others perceiving control of their environment as mostly external to themselves (Rotter, 1966). The extent to which an individual believes they can influence outcomes develops over time, and person-environment interactions in the present shape responses in the future. This perspective is relevant to understanding and structuring the internship experience for students. Students approach internships with trepidation as it is their first professional, full time work-like experience. Imposter syndrome sets in, leading to decreases in their self-efficacy to perform in this new environment (Ferguson, 2021). As Chu et al. (2019) noted:

> University students undertaking an internship might find themselves faced with a number of challenges in an unfamiliar workplace, with limited support from their supervisor at the workplace. In such cases, peer and teacher support would be essential to both as a support strategy and a scaffolding strategy. (p. 882)

The proposed hybrid internship approach supports learning through scaffolding by providing students with systematically sequenced opportunities to demonstrate their professional skills. This approach provides the necessary guidance as they encounter novel circumstances and demands during internship. Operating from a self-efficacy perspective, this student-centered approach motivates students' confidence and empowers them to effectively act in their environments but also allows room for questioning, reflecting, and discomfort.

The concept of self-efficacy is multifaceted in that it also takes into account social cognition and the understanding that certain behaviors generally lead to similar outcomes within prescribed environments (DiGregorio & Liston, 2018). For example, applied experiences such as internships will help students' respond appropriately in different settings in the future. Thus, fostering growth in students' self-confidence can help cultivate an understanding of their own ability to impact the social world around them; a specific goal of the reflection journals noted later in this paper. Concisely, self-efficacy refers to the beliefs an individual has about their own ability to perform in a particular setting (Bandura, 1993). Recent studies have suggested that a person's self-efficacy beliefs are more important predictors of performance and behavior than whether or not one's locus of control is internalized or externalized (Zee & Koomen, 2016, as cited in DiGregorio & Liston, 2018). This illustrates the importance of opportunities to increase students' perceived self-efficacy with respect to their competence in Family Science. Utilizing scaffolded instruction throughout the entire internship process, from the orientation meeting to the submission of the application with proposed internship sites to completion of their final internship project, encourages individualized support.

SCAFFOLDING THEORY

Similar to the outline described by Gonyea and Kozak (2014), students begin their journey into the internship selection process through a professional seminar course. The seminar addresses their professional dispositions, transferable skills, and workplace communication. The challenges students face while interning are analogous to those that exist in genuine professional scenarios thus the preparation must begin before their first day at their internship site. Then once on site, the scaffolding continues to support their perceived self-efficacy in the workforce. Research has supported the notion that students learn through addressing real-life problems (Harland, 2003; Wilson & Devereux, 2014) which is what application of knowledge in their internship relies upon.

Within the context of scaffolding, Vygotsky (1978) recognized the zone of current development as representing the degree that a student can achieve independently. While the zone of proximal development represents the potential level the student could achieve with graduated guidance. Wass, Harland, and Mercer (2011) furthered this work, noting that a student's "zone of capability" can be broadened with a specific kind of support and guidance encapsulated within scaffolding. Scaffolding theory posits that, "Support is valuable to students only when it leads to development, and ultimately, to student autonomy" (Wilson & Devereux, 2014, p.92). Thus, all support is not created equally. Research has illustrated that providing students with opportunities to work through tasks with peers and teachers fosters growth in their own ability to later undertake similar charges independently (Wilson & Devereux, 2014). Similarly, internships provide growth opportunities through interactions with both a field-based supervisor and a faculty supervisor, hopefully leading the student to a more successful entry into their field fostering increases in self-efficacy upon graduation.

Students have a unique opportunity while interning to build upon their independent learning skills, as well as expand upon their potential growth while working with faculty supervisors, site supervisors, and community members. Learning is a fundamentally different process in a designed environment (i.e., classroom setting) than in a natural setting (Pea, 2004; Wilson & Devereux, 2014). High challenge and

high support environments, such as internships, offer the kind of guided learning that is poised to benefit the student long after they have left the classroom. A symbiotic relationship exists between students, internship sites, institutions of higher education, and the broader community. Learning is a social process and social interaction, as provided by internships, is vital. This is the premise of Vygotsky's (1978) presentation of sociocultural theory through scaffolding by a more educated other.

Collectively, these theoretical perspectives offer a more comprehensive framework from which to develop an intentionally scaffolded approach for internships. The proposed hybrid internship approach is rooted in foundational components of self-efficacy theory and scaffolding theory; systematically imploring students to apply content from their coursework, fostering skill development, and guiding them through applied experiences to promote self-efficacy, while capitalizing on the conceptual principles of the zone of proximal development.

REVIEW OF INTERNSHIP APPROACH

Since internships became a required component of our Child and Family Development program of study nearly 20 years ago, much has changed to ensure students are achieving success in their internships. Based on a push to see internship course sections increased and to "water down" the internship faculty supervisor role, we put forth that providing interns instructional scaffolding boosts their career self-efficacy making them more marketable and ready for their professional roles. To this end, we have made changes to develop an intentional process to move students from site selection and approval, to professional growth through reflections, to final projects that support their internship sites and embed program competencies. In our program, students complete a full semester 40-hour per week internship in a site vetted by the faculty supervisor. The importance of this rigorous internship structure provides them with a similar guided, hands-on learning experience akin to credentialing teacher education programs. The proposed internship approach provides for a consistent framework for students through individualized, graduated guidance, supported by instructional technologies, for support in making the transition from student to intern to new professional (Peterson at al., 2004).

INTERNSHIP COMMITTEE

Using faculty members representing each of the program's concentrations,[2] a committee was formed to oversee the internship application process of students. One of the primary duties of the internship committee was the creation and continual maintenance and updating of the internship manual. Using a structured manual, faculty from different program concentrations can supervise internships with the assurance that a foundational consistency is woven throughout each semester. Thus, scaffolding is present throughout the entire internship experience, including in the manual itself. Beginning the semester prior to their internship, the internship committee works with the students to assist them with locating potential sites. This process begins with an introductory orientation meeting attended by all students who are applying to intern the next semester.

A primary function of the internship committee is the review of the students' internship applications. As a group, the internship committee reviews each of the student's applications to determine if the student is able to complete an internship at the proposed site and if the site will be adequate to provide the student with an experience that will complement the student's concentration- specific coursework. For

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[2] Our program major has three concentrations, Child Development, Child Life, and Family Services. The upper level courses differ by concentration.

example, students in the family services track are required to intern at a site focused on working with families, such as shelters, cooperative extension agencies, and child and family welfare, while those in the child development concentration focus on working with children, such as child development centers, 4-H and youth programs, and applied behavioral therapy centers.

INTERNSHIP MANUAL

With the internship spanning 9-12 credit hours over 10-15 weeks for a total of 440-600 hours (variations based on summer versus fall or spring semester), a syllabus would not suffice to contain the documentation and information needed for students. Thus, we created the internship manual to house this information for students to reference both before and during their internship. The manual provides students with detailed information on the purpose of internships, the responsibilities of the faculty supervisor (course instructor), the site supervisor, and the student, the internship site application process, details on the process for writing their own learning objectives, as well as the forms required before and during their internship (complete internship manual available upon request from the first author). Our manual is reviewed at each semester's internship orientation meeting to guide the students on the first steps and to introduce subsequent sections. It is updated annually or more frequently to reflect changes as required.

PREPARING FOR THE INTERNSHIP

In preparation for the internship, the faculty committee walks the students through a series of steps, from introduction to the application submission to the completion of paperwork. Figure 1 includes details of these steps.
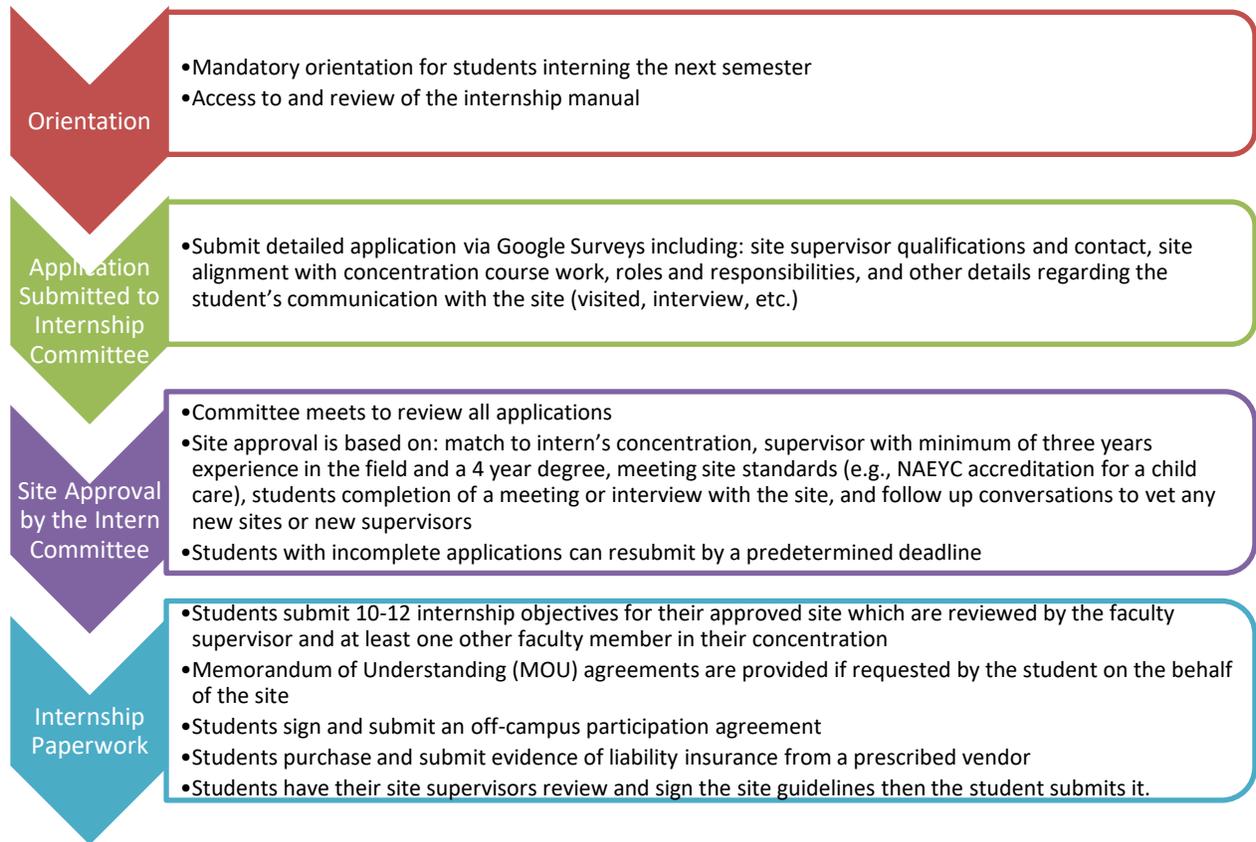
ORIENTATION MEETING

As previously noted, each semester the internship committee leads an orientation meeting for students who will be applying to intern the following semester. This formalized meeting helps to put internships on students' radars earlier, so they have adequate time to prepare. During this meeting, we walk the students through the internship manual focusing on the internal application process, paperwork deadlines, requirements of the internship, and answer student questions. This meeting is also used as a gateway to access the online applications; after attending, students are emailed the survey link used to collect application information. This personable introduction into what many students believe to be an overwhelming and daunting process helps ease concerns in real-time. This meeting is typically face-to-face, however, it is easily adaptable to a virtual meeting platform.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Prior to completing the application, students are expected to interview or have in-depth conversations with a minimum of two potential internship sites. Not only does this provide students the learning experience of being on the job market in their desired career field, but it also provides them with a backup site, in the event that issues arise at their primary site or it falls through prior to the start date. Using the online application, students provide the committee with detailed information on their top sites such as the site's address, supervisor contact information, the site mission, their specific responsibilities at the site, and other site-specific information such as accreditation status if required. Students are required to justify the match between the site and their upper-level course work (concentration course work). This reflection not only prepares students for the assignments to come within the internship course requirements but also gives them a chance to begin making connections that will assist them as they begin their careers. Students must also upload their informal transcript and

evidence that they have completed their advisement meeting. This is to confirm that the student has the required coursework to prepare them for the site and that they have no other courses to complete beside the internship course.

FIGURE 1: PREPARING FOR THE INTERNSHIP

Orientation
- Mandatory orientation for students interning the next semester
- Access to and review of the internship manual

Application Submitted to Internship Committee
- Submit detailed application via Google Surveys including: site supervisor qualifications and contact, site alignment with concentration course work, roles and responsibilities, and other details regarding the student's communication with the site (visited, interview, etc.)

Site Approval by the Intern Committee
- Committee meets to review all applications
- Site approval is based on: match to intern's concentration, supervisor with minimum of three years experience in the field and a 4 year degree, meeting site standards (e.g., NAEYC accreditation for a child care), students completion of a meeting or interview with the site, and follow up conversations to vet any new sites or new supervisors
- Students with incomplete applications can resubmit by a predetermined deadline

Internship Paperwork
- Students submit 10-12 internship objectives for their approved site which are reviewed by the faculty supervisor and at least one other faculty member in their concentration
- Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreements are provided if requested by the student on the behalf of the site
- Students sign and submit an off-campus participation agreement
- Students purchase and submit evidence of liability insurance from a prescribed vendor
- Students have their site supervisors review and sign the site guidelines then the student submits it.

SITE APPROVAL

The application provides the internship committee the chance to ensure students fully understand what their role will be within the organization. When the committee meets to approve sites, we discuss if the site is a good fit for the student's concentration. Students with questions regarding the site-concentration match are strongly encouraged to meet with one of the committee members beforehand to discuss the fit of the site. Students must request information about the potential site supervisors (minimum of three years of experience in the field and a bachelor's degree) and confirm the site meets the needs of our program's internship such as offering 36-40 hours per week, abide by professional codes of ethics for the field, and verify the intern's responsibilities are professional in nature. Sites are provided with an information guide and site guidelines that must eventually be signed and returned before the student begins their internship.

Students are required to rank order their sites. The committee considers approval of their first choice then moves to the second to ensure the student has completed all the required information in case a backup is necessary. Finally, students are either approved, conditionally approved (based on a conversation with site supervisors), or asked to resubmit their application. Those asked to resubmit are provided with specific feedback on what is needed. For example, a student may have an inappropriate site based on program guidelines and thus must resubmit a new site. Another student may not have fully responded to the question regarding responsibilities at the site. They would be required to gather

more information and resubmit. While the process of site approval does take time, we want to ensure students have the best placements for their course knowledge.

INTERNSHIP LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Once students have an approved internship site, they are required to write learning objectives, which must be site-specific and focused on course content specific to their concentration. The learning objectives provide students with the opportunity to personalize the internship experience that will best fit within their coursework, while simultaneously creating individualized course objectives to best match their experiences at the site. When crafting objectives, we encourage students to brainstorm with their site supervisor first to gain ideas of what they will be doing and goals the site has for them. We also require students to review standards related to their site's specific field. For example, students interning with a child development center are required to embed the National Association for the Education of Young Children personnel preparation standards. An intern with a state cooperative extension agency engaging in parent education would incorporate the Family Life Education content areas. A latent function of having the students create their own learning objectives is to foster growth in perceived self-efficacy. Students' learning objectives are then reviewed by the faculty supervisor and the site supervisor; an additional faculty member may also provide feedback based on areas of expertise and relevance. This process provides students with feedback from multiple faculty members and serves to make the internship course a collaborative process among the faculty.

SCAFFOLDING LEARNING DURING INTERNSHIP

During the internship, learning is scaffolding through a series of modules and assignments. Figure 2 delineates this process.

CONTENT MODULES

Before students begin their internship, they are given access to an online classroom platform, such as Desire2Learn or Blackboard. We developed content modules following the Quality Matters rubric for developing an online course (see Standards from the Quality Matters Higher Education Rubric, 6th Edition). Within that online classroom are content modules that guide them through several aspects of the course, including weekly discussion board posts, regular reflection journals, project requirements, and final presentation information. The first of the interns'[3] modules reviews discussion posts and reflection journals. The second module focuses on research, planning, and proposing a special project. The third, fourth, and fifth modules focus on additional details to fine-tuning and submitting their project proposals. These include finding research and using APA formatting, writing project goals, how to submit their materials, and how to use instructor feedback to make improvements. The sixth and seventh modules focus on the final details to complete the special project submission materials and final paperwork for the end of the internship.

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[3] The reader will see a switch in language from "student" to "intern" in this section of the article. Referring to the students as interns in the course highlights the advancement on their college trajectory.

FIGURE 2: COMPONENTS OF SCAFFOLDING LEARNING DURING THE INTERNSHIP

Content Modules through an Online Platform
- Faculty designed the modules following the Quality Matters online course rubric
- Interns are provided with content modules on topics related to both internship protocol and assignment logistics

Periodic entries
- Interns use discussion boards private to them and the faculty supervisor to reflect each week
- Faculty supervisor provides quick feedback and reflective prompts as well as uses these posts as a check-in for any red flags during the intern's experience

Reflective Journals
- Interns submit reflective journals based on 1. two-three questions that change each journaling period and 2. a series of unchanging questions which includes reflecting on at least 4 objectives each journal

Final Internship Project
- Interns complete a final internship project which is scaffolded – project consultation with faculty supervisor, project proposal pitched at the midterm check in meeting, updated project proposal after the meeting where they receive in-depth feedback, and a final project submission
- Projects must tie in research, course content, and be useful to site
- Interns present their project outcomes at a final internship meeting attended by program faculty

DISCUSSION POSTS AND REFLECTIVE JOURNALS

For the discussion board posts, interns are asked to write 250-500 words describing their days or week. This helps the faculty supervisor gain an understanding of a typical day at their site and provide support and encouragement when needed. Another advantage is that interns have the documentation to look back across their semester. Providing them an open forum to review their progress has enabled interns to better see their personal growth and the depth of their experiences that may have otherwise gotten lost in the day-to-day schedule. Keeping in touch with the interns through discussion posts allows for a level of personalization that students often find beneficial as both successes and struggles arise. Having a trusting faculty member to share experiences with allows for additional mentorship that is harder to cultivate with less frequent communication.

Reflective journals are more focused and intentionally scaffold interns' reflections. The journals begin with two-three prompts that change with each submission, then include follow up questions that repeat. One of these repeated prompts directs the interns to record and reflect on four of their objectives indicating how they met these objectives during that reporting (journaling) period (see Figure 3 for an example of changing prompts).

FIGURE 3. SAMPLE OF PROMPTS FOR REFLECTIVE JOURNALS

FINAL INTERNSHIP PROJECT

As previously mentioned, the online modules support the interns through their capstone project, which we refer to as the final project. The modules scaffold the interns through a multi-step process of proposing then completing the project. This provides faculty supervisors the chance to guide interns to use best practices learned in their course work, narrow or broaden the focus of the project, and sharpen their skills in proposal writing needed in many of their careers (see a sample of the Final Project Module in Figure 4). As faculty supervisors, we have used different approaches to fit the needs of the interns when advising them about projects to take on. For example, instructors may require face to face meetings in person (for local interns) or via an online video conference. Others have phone conversations or even scheduled on-site visits with interns when time allowed. Formal group check-in meetings are another strategy which provides an opportunity to review requirements of the project and hear feedback for other intern's projects which often helps others. All faculty supervisors provide in-depth feedback and approval on a detailed proposal before the intern can start implementing the project on site. This proposal is delineated into sections that will mimic the final paper; thus, scaffolding their research and writing skill sets.

This project is worth a significant portion of the intern's grade and has multiple pieces to complete and submit. First, the project must meet a need at the site, thus each project is unique in nature. Second, the interns must utilize course content and best practices in the project. Third, the interns must use recent research in the planning and/or execution of their project, which is also discussed in a later module. Fourth, they must implement and assess the project. Finally, the interns present the project at a final meeting. The final project is their capstone assignment for their program of study. While at one point, we collected the final products as binders (or project notebooks), we have more recently created a template so that interns can submit their final project documentation as a Google Drive folder. Not only

do many of these projects continue to be used and implemented after students complete their internships, some projects have been implemented through a regional or office beyond the intern's site.

FIGURE 4. EXAMPLE OF INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PROJECT PROPOSAL EMBEDDED IN AN ONLINE MODULE

PERIODIC AND PROJECT MEETINGS

Prior to the early shut down of campus during the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the interns returned to campus twice each semester for face-to-face project meetings and presentations. These meetings are still required as part of project development but have been moved to synchronous, video meetings using Zoom. The first is just before the mid-point of the semester where interns share a summary of "how it is going" and pitch their project proposal. This time also allows them to reconnect with the faculty as well as with each other. Interns are split into intentional groups based on similarity of internship site and respond to questions including summarizing what has gone well at their site and what has been challenging. At least one faculty member sits in with each group to guide the conversation. Then the interns come back together in one or two large groups to "pitch" their project proposal and receive feedback. Often interns realize that their peers are at a similar site and use this time to gain both social support and ways to improve their project ideas. Many of our interns are accustomed to the traditional classroom and thus, within the internship, many begin to feel isolated. This midterm meeting, along with access to the online platform, helps assuage these concerns.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic and adjusting internship sites as needed, more interns have voiced concerns of isolation thus scheduled, periodic meetings have been added to the course schedule. Not only do these check-in meetings promote questions about assignments and procedures but provide the connection with others in a similar position reminding interns of the support network in place.

For the final meeting, interns (prior to the COIVD-19 pandemic) returned to campus to present a review and outcomes of their projects. During the pandemic, these meetings have been moved to synchronous, video presentations. Program faculty are invited to attend and to provide written feedback on the presentations. Additionally, interns submit documentation of their planning and the execution of their projects as well as a final applied research paper (see Figure 5). Due to the variety of projects that interns submit, instead of a traditional rubric, a grading outline is provided to clarify components of the project to be graded and to assist in consistency across the course instructors (see Figure 6). This approach allows for flexibility in terms of how interns approach their projects.

FIGURE 5. EXCERPT FROM THE FINAL PROJECT PAPER OUTLINE

Project Description
Start with a brief overview of your site to provide context for your project. Describe the project steps as if this is a professional report you would submit as a professional working in the field.

Purpose of the Project and Project Goals
These should match the format from your draft but include recommended updates.

Review of Research
Summarize how the research ties to your project plans. How does research back up the techniques and practices you utilized? What research demonstrates the need for this project?

Connection to Specific CHFD Knowledge: Courses and Content
Courses can be listed but you must use paragraphs to describe how the course materials were used in your project development.

Contributions to Internship Site
Be sure to consider children, staff, families, policy, practices, etc. Consider using parts of the proposal prompts not yet utilized in your paper (hopes for site, how it is current, relevant, etc.)

Description and Reflection of Outcomes
*Summarize your results in **both narrative** (paragraphs) and a table as in the proposal, but with an additional 3rd column: Outcome. Report on each goals' assessment technique and the outcomes collected. Be sure to summarize your findings explaining the outcomes and reflecting on which were met and what you would do differently for those that were not.*

Project Goals	Goals Assessments	Outcome
1.		

FIGURE 6. EXCERPT FROM FINAL PROJECT EVALUATION FORM

Category	Points
General Project Requirements and Documentation	
Professional Format: Writing conforms to academic conventions (spelling, grammar, organization, APA format, etc.) and all deadlines were met.	
Project Proposals & Updates: Included two versions of the Internship Project Proposal; (1) the draft signed by CHFD course instructor and included the document with the course instructor's feedback and (2) an updated Project Proposal with integrated corrections based on the feedback from CHFD course instructor, signed by site supervisor.	
Project Planning Artifacts: Documented project planning and progress; this may include, but is not limited to, items such as meeting notes, emails with colleagues about project, calendar or timeline of project, materials lists, budget drafts, photos*, site supervisor feedback, etc.	
Completed Project Artifacts: Documented completed project and corresponding components; this may include, but is not limited to, items such as lesson plans, logic models, presentations, photos* with descriptions, flyers, surveys and survey data, etc.	
Components of Project Paper (See paper outline)	
Project Description: Clearly described the project and project steps including explicitly listing the project purpose and project goals.	
Integration of Research: Provided evidence of a research-based project; Described how evidence-based practices, techniques, and needs using recent peer-reviewed research were applied to the project. Included both in-text citations and a reference list consisting of at least 5 scholarly, peer-reviewed articles with APA-style formatting, including the link or DOI to the article. Upload the entire printed articles in final project submission if direct links are not available.	
Linkages CHFD Content: Clearly linked and applied CHFD content, concepts, courses, and best practices to preparation and execution of the project.	

DISCUSSION

IMPLICATIONS & REPLICATION

Over the last few years, through conversations with site supervisors, one common thread has emerged: our internships are substantial. We understand that 40 hours per week can make it difficult for supervisors, who then have an additional person to train and monitor, as well as ensure that the intern has adequate and appropriate work to complete. However, overwhelmingly, site supervisors report that the length of time allows interns the chance to observe the inner workings of the organization, including, but not limited to, what a full day of work looks like in real-time. The considerable number of hours in the internship setting allows for a depth and breadth to their experience that an intern with fewer hours may not. As a result of the 40 hours per week requirement of this approach, the interns are part of nearly every aspect of service provision. Research indicates that students who participate in internships that have additional coursework required and a higher number of required internship hours are more likely to undergo increases in self-efficacy (Tang et al., 2004). Consequently, students are also afforded more opportunities for applying their knowledge and skills, directly or indirectly, while moving through an internship experience of this scope.

Collectively, the structured aspects of this approach create a foundation through which faculty effectively guide students through the internship experience. The online component of the internship approach features exclusive modules, which, in it of themselves, support professional development and are cost-effective (De la Varre, Keane, & Irvin, 2011). Nguyen (2015) noted, "The physical 'brick and mortar' classroom is starting to lose its monopoly as the place of learning" (p. 309). Increasingly, students are demanding online learning and the design of this internship approach lends itself to adaptability moving forward, with the capabilities of serving students from a distance. Additionally, this approach lends itself to replicability and transferability across semesters, instructors, programs, and institutions, as it can be tailored to meet the needs of other programs and disciplines and adapted to other online delivery platforms while still abiding by the principles of scaffolding theory and self-efficacy theory. The notion that information technology gives faculty adaptive tools to overcome geographical and time constraints that may arise during internships is well supported. More specifically, information technology provides students and instructors a shared platform, in lieu of a physical classroom (Chu et al., 2019). Throughout the internship experience, students have a central location to access content from online modules, feedback, interactions with their instructor and/or peers, and to seek out additional guidance when necessary. Taken together, the components of this internship approach create individualized contexts that can foster growth in perceived self-efficacy for each student, regardless of their specific internship site. We encourage other programs that offer capstone internships to consider applying this theory when assessing their current course structure. Faculty and internship supervisors may ask themselves what proponents of the course encourage students to intentionally connect course content, theory, and best practices to their internship site. Assuming students will make this jump without structured prompts and intentional faculty feedback limits the scope of the intern's learning experience.

This internship approach is unique, not only due to the intentionality behind the scaffolding of learning opportunities throughout, in an effort to transform students' self-efficacy beliefs, and thus, their ability to perform in the field, but also because of the nature of its hybrid format. Moving forward, programs that house internships will need to consider their level of supervision and involvement in these learning experiences.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

As we continue to improve our internship process, we are further exploring alumni perspectives of their internships. Anecdotally, we ask each intern "what is next" at the final meeting and often, the intern was offered a position at their site. Complementary, on the final internship survey, site supervisors overwhelmingly respond that they will hire the intern or would hire them if they had a position open. While we see the value of internships, as well as the personal growth that students experience, systematic research would provide an additional layer to understanding our internships. An ancillary route that may be worth exploring is adding a clinical faculty line whose role would include preparing the students and cultivating relationships with internship sites. In theory, this faculty member would also be able to provide even more in-depth support to both throughout the semester. While we understand the effectiveness of visiting internship sites, it is often not feasible to visit during the semester with additional teaching, research, and service responsibilities, particularly with no limitations to where interns live. Ultimately, the most influential method of cultivating student self-efficacy is through scaffolded, applied experiences that better prepare them for working in the field while applying the content knowledge they have acquired in their 4-plus years of college coursework.

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