



M.H.A. INTERNSHIP MANUAL

Department of Health Management and Policy

Master of Health Administration Internship Program

HMAP 5397: Master of Health Administration Internship



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PREFACE

All students pursuing a Master of Health Administration (MHA) degree at the University of North Texas School of Public Health are required to complete a professional internship prior to graduation. The MHA internship program is managed under the direction of the MHA Program Director in cooperation with program faculty, students and preceptors in the field. The purpose of this *MHA Internship Manual* is to provide students, preceptors, and program faculty with a common set of guidelines for the design and completion of each student's internship requirement within the overall Master of Health Administration curriculum. Accordingly, it contains four main sections:

- I. An overview of the purpose and content of the internship experience;
- II. An overview of the internship year and placement process;
- III. A delineation of the expectations and responsibilities of the student, preceptor, and HMAP program faculty participating in the internship program; and
- IV. An explanation of the internship program's other policies and procedures.

In addition, the student internship goals, the needs and preferences form, and an evaluation form are included in Appendices I and II.

I. GENERAL OVERVIEW

Internship Purpose and Objectives

Each student in the UNTHSC School of Public Health's Master of Health Administration Program is required to complete a 500 contact hour, 12-13-week, full-time internship in an approved health services organization under the guidance of a qualified preceptor. The purpose of this internship is to provide the student with a "real world" experience against which to compare the concepts and models learned in the classroom; enable an appreciation of the complexity of organizations and the individuals that comprise them; and to provide insights for further development of skills and knowledge during the student's remaining time in the program.

The MHA internship experience is intended to provide students with "hands on" training in health services management. The final decision regarding which type of internship would be most appropriate for individual students is made by the MHA Program Director in consultation with each student's faculty advisor.

All internships should be designed to enable students to accomplish the following objectives:

- to observe and understand the leadership and managerial style of the preceptor;
- to understand the overall design and interrelationships of the individual parts of the organization's structure;
- to contribute to the "real output" of the organization by participating in relevant projects;
- to practice serving as a "real healthcare manager" within the organization; and
- to understand the internal and external environment in which the organization functions.

MHA Curriculum Core Competencies

The Department of Health Management and Policy has identified competencies essential for successful healthcare management and leadership. The MHA internship is intended to develop and strengthen a variety of competencies listed below. The competencies in bold face type are the ones that students should develop most fully in the field. Students should also gain a basic understanding of the competencies in italics from observing their preceptors and others while they are in the field. The remainder includes those competencies developed elsewhere in the MHA curriculum that will be practiced and strengthened during the internship experience. Preceptors are asked to evaluate the student's competence in each of the areas at the end of the internship. Students are asked to self assess their mastery of these competencies as they move through the curriculum.

Domain 1: Leadership

1. **Articulate, model and reward professional values and ethics.**
2. Know the bases of power and be aware of political implications and effects of decisions.
3. **Work effectively with other professionals.**

Domain 2: Critical Thinking

4. Ask the right questions when making decisions.
5. Learn from mistakes.

Domain 3: Science/Analysis

6. Examine data both qualitatively (e.g., focus groups, case studies, participant observation and ethnographies) and quantitatively (e.g., descriptive statistics, descriptive epidemiology) to determine patterns and trends.

Domain 4: Management

7. **Work with and through people to achieve organizational goals.**
8. Understand, monitor and interpret the impact of legal, regulatory and political environments on an organization.

Domain 5: Political and Community Development

9. **Identify all the major stakeholders of an organization and understand their specific interests and historical relationships.**

Domain 6: Communication

10. Develop, organize, synthesize and articulate ideas and information.
11. Listen, hear and respond effectively to the ideas and thoughts of others.
12. Speak clearly and effectively before individuals and groups, in formal and informal settings.
13. Write clearly and effectively.
14. Identify and use appropriate communication strategies based on audience characteristics and goals.
15. Recognize and use non-verbal forms of communication.

Content of Internship

While each internship will have its own unique characteristics, all MHA internships should contain the following five major components designed to achieve the program's objectives and develop the curriculum's core competencies:

- (1) the opportunity for the student to work under the direction of a senior health services executive who serves as his/her MHA Internship Preceptor;

- (2) an orientation to the mission, vision, goals and objectives of the organization, including a period of time devoted to an organizational rotation;
- (3) the assignment of projects that meet both the student's training needs and the needs of the organization;
- (4) the opportunity for the student to practice serving as a health services leader within the organization by planning and directing at least one meeting and doing at least one oral presentation for the management team; and
- (5) ample exposure to the internal and external environment of the organization.

Direction by MHA Internship Preceptor

To ensure a successful internship experience for both the MHA student and the sponsoring organization, the assigned preceptor should understand and be committed to the internship relationship. Recognizing that MHA residents are actually "managers-in-training" and not merely temporary employees of the organization is key. By including the internship as a curriculum requirement, the MHA program faculty realizes that students greatly benefit in their professional growth from the guidance, instruction, support, constructive criticism and encouragement of a senior health services executive in the "real world" outside of their classroom experiences.

The complementarity between students' academic and "hands on" internship training strategically positions them for excelling as future health services managers. While leadership and managerial styles vary widely across different individuals, each preceptor is expected to assume the role of a professional mentor, by actively supervising his/her intern and sharing how his/her own approach to health services management has developed over the years and why.

In addition to the assigned preceptor, it is quite natural (and logical) in many organizations that the student will end up working more closely on a day-to-day basis with other members of the management team. Thus, the responsibility of mentoring the student is not necessarily that of the preceptor alone. Other organizational leaders and staff members will invariably serve as role models for the student over the course of the internship and contribute to his/her training. Yet, it is up to the MHA Internship Preceptor to direct the experiences the student undertakes during his/her time with the organization.

Orientation and Organizational Rotation

At the beginning of the internship, the student should receive a thorough orientation and introduction to the organization; be briefed on the organization's history, mission, vision, goals, and objectives; meet the key members of the staff; become acquainted with the environment in which the organization functions; have an opportunity to observe the chief executive officer; and be assigned one or more projects.

Where feasible, this orientation should include a brief organizational rotation. The depth of the rotation through various departments will depend on the student's previous experience, needs and interests, as well as time. When projects will bring the student back to a particular department, less time can be allocated to that department during the initial rotation. It is not necessary that the student spend a set amount of time in every department. Rather, adequate time in unique areas that provide good learning experiences should be selected. In organizations which are not departmentalized, the student should be allowed a wide range of exposure and experience in various aspects of the organization's operation.

Assignment of Projects

The main assignment of all MHA interns, especially at the start of their placements, should be to observe and learn from the experiences of practitioners in the field. Ideally, all internships should offer students the opportunity to directly observe the chief executive or director of the organization in action.

As with any learning experience, each assigned "observation" should be done with a purpose and with adequate advance explanation. The student should be briefed prior to the observation period as to the issues and the actors involved. The student in turn should observe these "organizational actors" to ascertain their managerial styles and the effectiveness of those styles in varying situations. A most valuable learning technique for the student is the "instant replay" or immediate situation review by the preceptor.

Specific assignments for the student should be selected for their educational value. Assignments will vary according to each student's experience. Students with an extensive health or managerial background will be able to handle more responsible assignments early in the internship, while students with more limited experience may need time to become acquainted with the setting before being given a project. There is no set number of tasks that a student is expected to accomplish. A resident's responsibilities may include one major project, a series of projects, or several tasks simultaneously. These can also include team efforts where the student is not exclusively responsible for the final product.

It is desirable, however, that the preceptor identifies appropriate projects for the student as early as is practical. Whenever possible, this should occur prior to the start of the internship, or at least by no later than the end of the student's second week on site. There should be enough flexibility in a student's internship plan, of course, so that new and/or more suitable projects that come up can be undertaken. Ideally, students should be able to work on at least one or two projects that can be completed before the end of the internship period. That way, preceptors should have ample time to offer the student constructive feedback on his/her performance.

Leading the Management Team

The core of the MHA Program's mission includes its dedication to training not simply able managers for health care organizations today, but individuals with the vision, initiative and ability to lead their organizations into the future. While competent leadership demands numerous

talents and skills, two essential activities all leaders must perform frequently and well include directing meetings and doing oral presentations for other members of the organization's management team. Each internship should offer the student the opportunity to develop and practice these important leadership skills in the "real world outside the protected environment of the classroom."

Thus, all preceptors are asked to ensure that their interns be given the responsibility of planning and directing at least one meeting while they are in the field. This includes identifying the need for the meeting, deciding who should attend, and scheduling its time and location. The student should also be responsible for planning the agenda, explaining the purpose, setting out the objectives, reporting the outcome, and ensuring that any needed follow-up occurs as a result of the meeting for all parties involved.

Preceptors are also asked to have their interns do at least one formal oral presentation before the organization's management team or other appropriate constituency. The presentation can be based on the findings and recommendations of one or more of the student's assigned projects, special assignments, team meetings the student has participated in or led, or other appropriate activities (e.g., a research paper the student has written that is of interest to the organization). The timing, setting, length and nature of the presentation should be based on the needs and interests of the organization, as well as the abilities and interests of the student.

Interns should consult with their preceptors when preparing these two activities. They should also schedule a post-hoc debriefing session after each one with their preceptors to receive constructive feedback regarding where and how their leadership skills in these key areas can be improved.

Exposure to Internal and External Environment

The internship should also provide opportunities to experience both the internal and external environments of the organization. At the outset, the internship should focus on the internal environment with an introduction to the organization's purpose, technologies, task environments, people and structure. This involves becoming acquainted with the physical aspects of the setting and receiving an introduction to the key people, including board members, department heads, and, as appropriate, physicians and other health professional staff.

The resident should also be exposed to those factors imposed upon the organization by the external environment. These technological, economic, political/legal and social/cultural settings may suggest visits to or with other agencies and institutions to ensure an appreciation of the forces impacting upon the organization (e.g., local councils, service clubs, governmental units, accrediting organizations, unions, etc.).

Prior to their field placements, many students have had only limited contact with physicians and/or other professional health service providers. If possible and appropriate, these students should spend several days with such individuals (e.g., physicians, psychologists, social workers, etc.) to get a better understanding of their roles and functions as they relate to the organization's delivery of services. As a result, students should come to appreciate what is involved in a health

service provider's day and his or her attitudes toward the health care delivery system, health legislation, and other factors affecting his or her professional practice.

Much of this exposure should take place during the student's initial orientation to the organization, or at least early in the internship placement. It is expected, however, that a deeper understanding of the nuances of the organization's internal environment and the pressures of its external environment will develop over the full internship period. By the end of the internship, the student should have a good grasp of the problems and challenges the organization is facing, why these issues have arisen, how these are being handled and resolved, who is taking the lead in resolving them, and where the organization is headed as a result.

II. OVERVIEW OF INTERNSHIP PERIOD AND PLACEMENT PROCESS

The MHA internship period corresponds to about sixteen calendar months beginning at the start of the program (the beginning of the first fall semester) and concluding at the end of the fall semester the following academic year. The placement of student interns at sponsoring sites is the joint responsibility of the HMAP program advisors and the MHA Program Director. The *placement process* is a coordinated effort requiring the input and cooperation of prospective student interns, returning student interns, prospective sponsoring preceptors and organizations, and the HMAP program faculty, guided by the MHA Program Director.

Student Input

UNTHSC's MHA internship period officially begins in early September when the MHA Program hosts an *Internship Orientation Meeting* for all students who need to complete their internship requirement in the upcoming year. During this meeting, the purpose, structure and requirements of the internship program are explained and students' questions are answered.

All prospective residents are required to attend the *Professional Skills Development Series* presentations sponsored by the School of Public Health during the fall semester on professional communication, career planning, resume preparation, and interviewing skills. They are also required to submit copies of their current resumes and sample cover letters to the MHA Program Director for evaluation.

In the meantime, the returning class of residents meet and is given the schedule for the program's annual *Intern Public Debriefings*. Preceptors are invited and all prospective interns are required to attend these oral debriefing sessions, as well as the fall's annual Internship Preceptor Round Table. These sessions provide both prospective interns and preceptors with up-to-date information about the range of opportunities and responsibilities offered by the MHA Internship Program.

Throughout the fall, all prospective interns are required to schedule at least one *Faculty Advisor Meeting* and one meeting with the **MHA Program Director** to discuss their overall career interests and preliminary internship goals, needs and preferences. Then in late early October, students are required to submit copies of their revised resumes, cover letters and completed *Goals, Needs and Preferences (GNP)*(Appendix I) forms to the MHA Program Director. These

documents are shared with the MHA program faculty to assist them in recommending which type of internship placement might best suit the career needs and interests of individual students.

Site Recruitment and Input

Beginning in November, the MHA Program Director actively recruits previous successful and promising new internship organizational and preceptor sponsors as participants in the new year's internship program. Letters of invitation are mailed out and follow-up phone calls are made to health services organizations that have expressed an interest in sponsoring an MHA intern from UNTHSC. Although internship site recruitment and development is primarily the responsibility of the MHA Program Director in consultation with the HMAP program faculty, students and other program contacts may suggest the names of qualified potential preceptors to MHA Program Director at any time. All preceptors and sites invited to participate in the current year's MHA Internship Program are asked to let the MHA Program Director know if they will be able to sponsor a student as soon as they can. Ideally, this should occur by no later than early December. Once a preceptor and site agree to participate in the year's MHA Internship Program, they are sent copies of the current MHA Internship Manual and Preceptor Calendar.

Matching Process

In January, MHA program faculty and the MHA Program Director hold their **Preliminary Internship Matching Meeting** where they match, to the best of their ability, students to sites. This matching process aims to produce the best match possible, based on an assessment of (1) each prospective resident's accumulated training, experience and expressed internship goals, needs and preferences and (2) each prospective sponsoring preceptor and organization's characteristics, needs and preferences. Students are informed of their recommended internship assignments in January. They then have until the end of January to meet with their faculty advisors to discuss and accept these assignments.

Prospective preceptors at these sites are then notified which student(s) the faculty would like them to consider sponsoring as their upcoming interns. At this stage, preceptors may either accept the recommendation they have received or request an interview with one or more prospective interns.

The overall goal of the matching process is to make the assignment of students to appropriate sites as uncomplicated as possible, while offering students and preceptors some "voice" in the final matches that are made. Thus, to allow for some flexibility in the process, the finalization of internship site assignments can take several weeks. Ideally, the MHA Program's aim is to have all internship assignments arranged and approved by late February and by no later than the start of Spring break in early March each year.

Internship Planning Meetings

Once internship assignments are finalized, students are asked to set up an **Internship Planning Meeting** with their preceptors to discuss their internship goals, needs and interests and map out their **internship work plan**. These meetings should occur by mid-April and by no less than two

weeks prior to the start of each student's internship experience. During the meeting, the preceptor should be prepared to suggest possible projects that the student might be assigned. At the end of the meeting (and no later than first week of internship experience) student and preceptor should be able to complete the **internship work plan form (Appendix II)** and submit it to the MHA Program Director. By the start of the internship, then, an internship schedule that meets the needs and objectives of both the preceptor and student should be in place. A copy of this internship schedule should be kept for future reference by the student and the preceptor, and this document becomes the basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the internship experience.

About three weeks before the Spring semester ends, the MHA Program hosts its **MHA Internship Planning Session** for students in the new internship class. During this time, the purpose, roles and responsibilities of the internship program are reviewed, tips for guaranteeing a successful internship experience are shared and students' questions are answered.

Field Placements

Most MHA students who complete their 12- 13-week, full-time internships during the summer months begin in May after spring semester classes have ended and finish in early August before the fall semester begins.

About two-thirds into the internship (generally the third week in July for full-time summer placements), the MHA Program Director will mail students its **Mid-Summer Information Packet** with information about their upcoming evaluations, public debriefings and other outstanding requirements that need to be completed when they return to campus in the fall. **Preceptor Reminder Letters** are also sent at this time to thank preceptors for their participation in the internship program, remind them about the due date for their evaluations of their interns' performance, and include the preceptor post-test competency survey for each intern.

Internship Preceptor Round Table and Reception

The culminating event for the internship year is the **MHA** program's annual **Internship Preceptor Round Table and Appreciation Reception**. This twin-event is typically held in mid-October-early November and provides an opportunity for all the members of the outgoing internship class -- including students, preceptors and faculty alike -- to come together for a final celebration. The round table includes a discussion of the elements of a successful internship from the point-of-view of three to four experienced preceptors and is facilitated by the MHA Program Director. A team of student volunteers from the outgoing and incoming internship classes is responsible for planning this event under the guidance of the MHA Program Director.

The afternoon concludes with a reception to recognize the contribution of the program's preceptors to a successful internship year. All incoming and outgoing student interns, participating preceptors, and HMAP program faculty are invited to attend both the round table and reception.

Post-Internship Evaluation

The internship year for any particular internship class officially concludes at the end of the fall semester following the summer internship placements once all faculty site visit reports and student and preceptor evaluations have been received by the MHA Program Director; all intern public debriefings have taken place; and all members of the internship class have completed the forms and requirements for the program. At this time, the MHA Program Director and the MHA program faculty together assess the internship program outcomes and make recommendations regarding how the program might be improved in future years.

III. EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Student

As explained above, final placement of each student with a specific preceptor and site is a joint decision of the student, preceptor, advisor, and MHA Program Director. The decision is based upon a number of criteria, including the career training objectives, needs and interests of the student; the type, location, size and organizational structure of the internship site; the managerial specialty, experience base and leadership style of the preceptor; and other relevant factors.

Expectations

During the September MHA Internship Orientation Meeting, all students planning to do their internship during the current academic year are briefed by the MHA Program Director regarding what they can expect from their internship experiences, their preceptors, the MHA program faculty, as well as their own responsibilities. These include:

- first-hand knowledge of how the organization really works;
- work experience at a professional level;
- exposure to the environment within which a health care organization must function;
- mentoring by an experienced health service manager, exposure to the organization's chief executive officer, and the opportunity to observe and learn from their managerial styles and those of others in the organization;
- a better understanding of possible career options in the health services management field.

Responsibilities

Students should approach their participation in the MHA Internship Program as a tremendous learning opportunity. They need to appreciate that professional training requires time, earnest effort, flexibility, consistent cooperation, integrity, maturity, an openness to new experiences,

patience, a positive attitude and a pro-active commitment to developing one's own career. Each student is responsible for understanding and complying with the requirements of the internship program explained in this manual.

In preparation for their field placements, all students are required to:

- attend all scheduled internship meetings; participate in all required Professional Skills Development Series sessions in both the fall and spring semesters;
- attend of the MHA Public Debriefings offered by the returning internship class;
- attend the fall's Internship Preceptor Round Table;
- arrange to meet with their faculty advisors and MHA Program Director to discuss the various career options in the health services management field and what type of internship setting might best serve their individual career goals, needs and interests; and submit copies of their resume, a job application letter, their completed Goals, Needs and Preferences (GNP) form, and all other requested information to the MHA Program Director by the stated deadlines.

The goals of the internship should focus on realistic student aspirations and be achievable and measurable. All resumes should summarize each student's educational background; experience (work and relevant volunteer); honors and awards; extracurricular activities; and special skills or training (foreign language, computer, special licenses, etc.). These documents will be shared with each student's faculty advisor, internship preceptor, and the HMAP program faculty as a whole to assist them in the internship matching process.

The student and the preceptor, with guidance from the advisors, share the responsibility for scheduling the student's activities during the internship. The mixture of departmental rotation, project assignments and observation of the chief executive officer should be developed for the individual student based upon past student experience and present needs. All students are expected to adhere to the highest professional standards of conduct, speech, dress, discretion, punctuality, conscientiousness and performance while they are in the field.

During the final week or two of the internship, the student should set up a time for an exit interview with his/her preceptor. Prior to this meeting, each student must complete a formal evaluation of his/her internship experience. This document should be used as a basis for discussing how effectively the internship fulfilled the student's expectations and career goals with his/her preceptor during the exit interview. This evaluation should be used in the student's joint debriefing with his/her faculty advisor (see below). Finally, the HMAP program faculty actively considers these student evaluations in their periodic review of all active internship sites and preceptors. Evaluation is included in Appendix III.

Upon returning to the UNTHSC campus, all interns are required to:

- attend the fall's Internship Welcome Back Meeting and Internship Round Table and Preceptor Appreciation Reception;
- schedule a "joint debriefing session" with their faculty advisor and MHA Program Director;
- submit all other reports, completed forms and materials as explained in the MHA internship program documents and correspondence from the MHA Program Director; and
- present a formal "public debriefing" of their internship experience for the incoming internship class, the HMAP program faculty and the program's preceptors.

Each student's public debriefing should focus on sharing with the audience the value of his/her internship as a professional and personal learning experience. These debriefings should identify the student's site and preceptor; state his/her prior expectations and goals; explain the projects he/she was assigned; and reflect on the "lessons learned" from the internship experience. Full guidelines for the residents' public debriefings are distributed by the MHA Program Director in her mid-summer information packet.

The Preceptor

Once a senior health services executive has agreed to serve as a particular student's MHA Internship Preceptor, he/she is appointed by the MHA Program Director to supervise the field experience phase of the internship program. The preceptor and the MHA Program Director share the responsibility for ensuring an educational environment during the internship period. The preceptor should always feel free to consult with the MHA Program Director and student's advisor regarding questions, issues or concerns that may arise during any phase of the internship program.

Preceptors will work closely with MHA Program Director based upon the goals, needs and preferences of the students' who will be doing their internships in the coming year and those senior health care executives who have indicated their willingness to participate with the program in this educational endeavor. This commitment includes certain preceptor expectations and assumed responsibilities.

Expectations

Individuals agreeing to serve as preceptors can expect to benefit from the following features of the MHA internship program:

- the opportunity to mentor "young" health services managers-in-training;

- fresh insights into managerial activities through a student's new perspectives;
- exposure to the current "thinking" in health services management education;
- interaction with the School of Public Health faculty and their teaching, research and service activities;
- service to the profession; and
- the ability to "try out" potential future employees.

Responsibilities

The preceptor is responsible for directing his/her resident's educational experience in the field. This responsibility may require some delegation to other administrators. It should include ample time for preceptor-student dialogue that is thoughtful, candid, guiding and meaningful. The preceptor is expected to take the student to staff meetings, board meetings, negotiating meetings, and expose him or her to various elements of the executive function.

It is also recommended that the student have access to incoming and outgoing mail. Indeed, the student should have as much access to what goes on in the organization as is feasible simply because he or she is a student and not committed to specific outputs each day. The preceptor, in turn, should be available for teaching and be prepared to produce assignments, give reviews and offer mini-lectures when necessary.

The preceptor shares with the student the responsibility for scheduling the student's activities. The preceptor is a necessary part of this process to better guide the student to an understanding of the organization and its environment. Through this involvement, the preceptor will also gain a better understanding of the student's total internship activities, and a greater awareness of what the student is involved with at any time.

Regular, scheduled contact between the preceptor and student is essential for ensuring a successful internship. While circumstances may vary, in most cases the preceptor should set aside at least one hour per week to meet with the student one-on-one to debrief on the prior week's events and discuss the student's schedule for the week ahead. Past experience has demonstrated that when the preceptor and student meet only infrequently or on a "catch as catch can" basis, neither the preceptor nor the student is able to fully benefit from the potential of the mutually-educational internship mentoring relationship.

The preceptor is responsible for reviewing and evaluating the student's performance of all assigned tasks throughout the placement period. This ongoing evaluation should consider:

- How well has the student defined the problem? How does he or she understand the dimensions of the tasks to be accomplished?

- Has the student considered alternatives that are realistic, creative, and comprehensive?
- Has the student fully utilized the resources available?
- Is the student consistently asking the "right questions?"
- Is the student's final product (if applicable) usable? Is it well written?

Each preceptor is also expected to keep in touch with the MHA Program Director throughout the internship year. In particular, the preceptor should contact the MHA Program Director immediately if a student is not performing at the desired level.

All preceptors are asked to conduct an exit interview with their students during the final two weeks of the internship. This interview should be viewed as an opportunity for a mutual exchange of views between the student and the preceptor. Both parties are encouraged to express their views on the quality of the internship, possible improvements in the organization, directions for future study, and career possibilities.

Once the internship is completed, the preceptor is asked to submit a written evaluation of the student's internship performance by the requested due date to the MHA Program Director. This evaluation should assess the student's strengths and weaknesses, career potential, and recommend to the faculty for the internship. Grades of A, B, C, F or I (Incomplete) may be assigned.

MHA Program Faculty

The MHA program faculty benefit from participation in the annual internship program in several ways, as well. As "faculty mentors" for their students, their role in helping their advisees to prepare for, succeed in, and fully "digest" their internship experiences is critical.

Expectations

The MHA program faculty can expect that the internship experience for their students will:

- expose them to a wide range of administrative and planning activities;
- provide them with supervision by a senior-level health service administrator;
- cultivate mutually beneficial professional relationships between the MHA program and the community of "real world" health service management practitioners; and

- provide channels for feedback on the relationship between the theory of the program's curriculum and current, as well as changing realities of practice world.

Responsibilities

The personal interchanges among the preceptor, student, and faculty are important contributions to the internship experience. Faculty members are expected to:

- maintain an active mentoring relationship with each of their advisees throughout the internship year;
- be available to their advisees' preceptors as a resource on the MHA program's activities, policies and procedures throughout the placement period; and
- fully inform the MHA Program Director of any problems that should arise relating to the internship program.

As mentioned earlier, when students return to campus after completing their internships, they need to make an appointment for a debriefing with their faculty advisor. During these meetings, each faculty advisor will review individually with his/her advisees the preceptor's evaluation, the student's self-evaluation, and all faculty progress reports developed during the course of faculty visits and communications. Sharing of this information is intended to provide the student with deepening insights into his/her strengths and weaknesses, both as experienced during the internship and as anticipated in future career planning.

All faculty advisors are also asked to attend their students' internship public debriefing sessions during the fall semester. These provide faculty members with an additional observation for mentoring their advisees regarding their post-graduate plans, as well as suggesting ways their students' might improve their oral presentation skills.

IV. OTHER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Site Information

The decision by an individual organization or health services executive to sponsor a MHA resident from the UNTHSC School of Public Health is always voluntary. Therefore, the exact list of sites and preceptors participating in the MHA Internship Program varies from year to year. Generally speaking, the MHA Program does not know until December or even later where and with whom it will be able to place students the following summer. Furthermore, it is not at all unusual for one or two sponsors to be added to the list or for previously committed sponsors to drop out as late as March.

Students, then, should focus on identifying the type of health services setting they would like to be placed in (e.g., large or small hospital, managed care company, in-town or out-of-town

consulting firm, etc.), rather than requesting a specific site and preceptor. All this is explained in detail at the fall Orientation and Question and Answer Meetings by the MHA Program Director.

The two primary "in-person" sources of information about the type of sites and preceptors that have recently participated in UNTHSC's MHA Internship Program are the fall's public debriefing sessions by the outgoing internship class and MHA Internship Preceptor Round Table.

Students should take advantage of these resources to research the different types of options likely to be available in their internship year. They should especially use this information to prepare for their internship planning meetings with their preceptors once the final internship matches have been made.

Students are also encouraged to consult with members of the returning internship class and the School of Public Health faculty, as well as to use Internet and other sources to gather as much information as they can about their sponsoring sites before they begin their internship experiences.

Housing and Transportation

Arrangements for housing and transportation during the field placement phase of the internship program are the full responsibility of each student intern. Many active sites within the Dallas-Fort Worth area are reachable only by car. Students need to understand this and allow ample time to arrange for transportation if they do not have a car of their own.

Stipend

UNTHSC's MHA Internship Program asks participating sites to offer the residents they sponsor a modest stipend in recognition of the services that the students provide. These monies should be regarded as a "training wage" by students and are not expected to reflect salary levels they might earn in a full-time job. The HMAP Department states what the current recommended stipend range is when it invites prospective internship preceptors and organizations to participate in the new academic year's internship program.

This range is based on the calculated average of stipends earned by the outgoing internship class and those offered to students in other MHA programs. Preceptors are free to adjust the amount they offer their residents within or above the recommended stipend range according to their own organizational budget constraints, as well as the prior experience level of their individual student. It is never appropriate, however, for an individual student to ask his or her preceptor for a stipend greater than the amount recommended by the HMAP Department in any given year.

Grading

A grade of A, B, C, F or I is awarded to students when they complete all their internship requirements. Grades are based on the joint recommendation of each student's preceptor, faculty advisor, and the MHA Program Director.

Other

Students are also responsible for following all other internship program policies and guidelines (e.g., registration) that are explained in the current HMAP 5397: MHA Internship syllabus that is distributed to all prospective interns early in the internship year.

SUMMARY

The MHA program internship aims to provide students with an experience which will permit their maximum professional growth and development. While the preceptor and student are to tailor the internship to meet the specific needs of the student, the HMAP program faculty is available to guide and counsel each preceptor and student throughout the internship year. The proper internship format will vary considerably, but all students should have the opportunity to develop their management skills and decision-making abilities, acquire some technical knowledge of health services delivery, and build a foundation for their future career development during their field placement experiences.

Appendix I



University of North Texas Health Science Center

School of Public Health
Department of Health Management and Policy

MHA Internship Goals, Needs and Preferences Forms

Name: _____ Advisor: _____

- I. Please attach a current resume to this form.
- II. Describe briefly your past work experience.
- III. State 3 to 5 goals for your internship experience.
- IV. In the listing below, indicate the type of setting that you feel would be most advantageous for your internship. Indicate your preferences by marking the first preference “1”, the second “2”, and the third “3”.

Preference	Setting
	Consulting
	Group Practice (single or multi-specialty)
	Health Care System
	Hospital
	Long Term Care
	Managed Care/Insurance
	Local, State or Federal Government

- V. Describe any special interests that you have with regard to the activities that you might perform or participate in during your internship.
- VI. Describe the leadership style with which you work most comfortably.
- VII. Describe any personal circumstances that you wish the faculty to consider in assigning your internship, e.g. family responsibilities, medical issues, geographical location needs, etc.

Appendix II



University of North Texas Health Science Center

School of Public Health

Department of Health Management and Policy

Student Internship Work Plan

This work plan form needs to be completed and submitted after the first planning meeting with internship preceptor and no later than the first week of internship experience. Submit completed form to MHA Program Director, Dr. Trevino Dawson.

Student's Name _____ Semester/Year _____

Inclusive dates of MHA Internship _____

Address while on Internship: _____

Preceptor's Name & Title: _____

Organization: _____ Dept./Division: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____ E-Mail: _____

Date of Internship: Commencement: _____ Completion: _____

MHA Student's Internship Objectives:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

MHA Student Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Preceptor Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Appendix III



University of North Texas Health Science Center
School of Public Health
Department of Health Management and Policy

Student Evaluation of MHA Summer Internship

This evaluation form will be used for the purpose of evaluating and improving the MHA Summer Internship experience with regard to future student placements. Please answer honestly. This form will not be shared with the site supervisor after you have completed the internship.

Name _____ Semester/Year _____

Inclusive dates of your MHA Internship _____

Site Name and Address:

Site Preceptor: _____

Average number of hours you worked weekly _____

Please indicate your judgment of site and preceptor by circling the appropriate score for each performance measure dimension.

Performance Measure	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent	Not Applicable
1. Preceptor oriented student about the overall site environment.	1	2	3	4	5	0
2. Preceptor met at least weekly to discuss progress and/or problems.	1	2	3	4	5	0
3. Preceptor created an atmosphere of acceptance, friendliness and belonging.	1	2	3	4	5	0
4. Preceptor allowed initiative and creativity on part of the student.	1	2	3	4	5	0
5. Overall, how would you rate your site supervisor?	1	2	3	4	5	0
6. Overall, how would you rate the learning experience you received?	1	2	3	4	5	0

Student Evaluation of the Internship, Continued

Directions: On a separate sheet of paper, students should answer all of the following questions about their internship experience with full sentences (i.e., not just "yes" and "no" answers). All internship evaluations should be typewritten on clean, white, unstapled paper and have a cover sheet identifying (1)

the student's name, (2) degree program, (3) internship site and location, (4) preceptor's name and title, and (5) the start and end dates of the internship placement.

1. Did your organization's orientation fulfill your goals, needs and expectations? (Consider the amount of time devoted to the orientation period in light of your prior experience, the size and complexity of your sponsoring organization, etc.)
2. Was your internship schedule effective? (Consider the balance you had between your organizational rotation and completing projects; the time you had to simply observe and actively participate; the schedule's sequence of events and flexibility, etc.)
3. Were you able to establish good rapport with your preceptor? (Consider how much contact you had with your preceptor, the amount of time spent on "situation reviews;" how much exposure you were given to his/her administrative planning and functions; how much constructive feedback and mentoring you were offered, etc.)
4. Were the projects you were assigned beneficial to your professional development? (Consider how much time you were allotted for these assignments; their subject matter; any feedback you received from your preceptor or other staff members; the resources available, etc.) Please include a list of projects worked with and completed.
5. Were you given the opportunity to practice serving as a health services leader within your organization by planning and directing a meeting and doing an oral presentation for the management team? (Describe the meeting you led and presentation you did, explaining the objectives and outcomes of each.)
6. Were you given the opportunity to understand the "internal environment" of your organization, including: (a) what its mission, goals and objectives are; (b) how decisions are made; (c) how work gets done; and (d) how work is allocated among the staff?
7. Were you given the opportunity to explore your organization's "external environment?" (Consider the contacts you made, meetings attended, and assignments involving the external environment, etc.)
8. If a change in your current DFW living arrangements occurred, were your living arrangements satisfactory (i.e., convenient, affordable, suitable)?
9. How have you progressed in mastering the MHA curriculum's core competencies during your internship?
10. What was the most valuable aspect of your internship experience?
11. Please provide us with any other information that would help the HMAP Department understand your internship experience.

Please Return Completed Evaluation to:

Dr. Elizabeth Trevino Dawson

Assistant Dean for Curriculum, MHA Program Director

& Assistant Professor

Department of Health Management and Policy

3500 Camp Bowie Blvd. EAD 735

Tel: 817-735-2166