PROGRAM IN  
ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY  

INTERNSHIP HANDBOOK  

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Revised: Spring 2010
Internship Handbook

It is the intent of this manual to outline some basic guidelines in field experience in Orientation and Mobility, including responsibilities of the San Francisco State University Program in Orientation and Mobility, the intern, the site supervisor, and agency personnel. It is understood that there may be exceptions to these guidelines and that modifications may have to be made to fulfill the needs of a particular situation.

These guidelines are by no means complete, but are intended to enhance the communication between all parties involved in the internship experience.

Purpose of the Internship Experience

The purpose of the internship experience is to provide the intern with the opportunity to put theory into practice under the guidance of an experienced instructor. It is also an opportunity for the intern to assess his or her strengths, weaknesses and potential as an instructor; and to determine what further study and practice are needed for the continuing task of professional self-improvement.

Our concern in internship is that the level of instruction be such that the visually impaired students receive high quality instruction and that the intern has a meaningful teaching experience.

Scheduling and Length of Internship Experience

The internship is a minimum of 440 clock hours (including direct instruction, observations, travel time on job, report writing, staffing, meeting with site supervisor or agency administrator), but it is the quality of service that will be stressed, and not the quantity of service. The intern will follow the school/agency schedule of holidays. Holiday hours do not count toward the 420+ hour requirement.

The intern is typically assigned to one school and one agency with approximately 7-8 weeks at each site, or to one agency for a full 440 hours. Ideally, each site will be approximately 210 hours. However, some intern sites require a longer time commitment, and occasionally an intern is required to do additional hours at a particular site to meet the ACVREP and SFSU competencies. An extension at one site does not reduce the time requirements of the second site. Adjustments to this scheduling are possible if pre-approved by authorized school/agency personnel and the San Francisco State University internship supervisor.

The intern’s schedule will be determined by the internship facility. At the discretion of facility personnel, the schedule will be consistent with, and equivalent to, that of full-time O&M teaching staff including provisions for staffings, report writing and progress notes, planning, meetings with site supervisor and agency personnel, staff meetings (if appropriate), etc. Under some circumstances, however, it may be necessary for the facility to allow interns to arrange their schedule to permit them to leave in time to attend 4 P.M. classes at the university, which are a required part of their program.
At the beginning of the internship experience, it is requested that 1-2 days be allowed for briefing and orientation of interns to facility operational procedures, policies, facilities, services; to teaching areas; to lesson materials and resources; to students; to staff; etc.

**Teaching Experiences:**

The exact caseload assigned to an intern will, of course, be made in accordance with the school or agency priorities, program objectives, and should be appropriate to the background of the intern.

When possible, given facility caseloads and other considerations, it is desirable and preferred to have the teaching load consist as much as possible of a variety of visually impaired students. This variety may include the following student variables:
- Adolescent, young adult, adult, elderly, preschool, infant
- Totally blind, low vision
- Adventitiously visually impaired, congenitally visually impaired
- With or without multiple impairments

It is be helpful also to include "new" and continuing students and a variety of functioning levels/learning styles, etc.

**University Role**

A member of San Francisco State University O&M faculty will be designated as a University supervisor and will:
1. Provide the facility with background information including teaching experience for each intern.
2. Schedule at least 2 visits per semester (more when necessary) with ongoing written and/or telephone communication during the time frame of the internship experience.
3. Assist in the evaluation of each intern. Evaluation is mandatory at the end of the internship experience.
4. Assist the intern, site supervisor, or facility in dealing with any problems that may occur during the internship experience.

**Site Supervisor's Role**

1. In cooperation with school/agency administration and San Francisco State University faculty, develop a schedule for the intern that will promote a positive internship experience.

2. Observe each intern as often as deemed appropriate (at least once per week) and provide on-going guidance in planning, teaching, and evaluation of students. The exact amount and nature of supervision will, of course, be determined by the needs of the visually impaired students and of the intern, and by the nature of the placement (community vs. center-based).

Such guidance may include, but is not limited to the following:
- Offering suggestions to the intern regarding varied teaching methodology, different approaches, levels of supervision, etc.
- Assisting the intern in developing purposeful and realistic objectives for visually impaired students.
- Aiding the intern in planning instruction as appropriate.
- Aiding the intern to search of materials as appropriate.
- Demonstrating teaching as necessary.
- Providing guidance in evaluation of visually impaired students as appropriate.
- Provide guidance to the intern in self-evaluation.
- Providing experience in record keeping as appropriate (e.g. referral reports, assessment reports, IEP reports, mileage forms, lesson plan books, scheduling forms).
- When possible, provide opportunities for the intern to work with families.
- Serve as a sounding board for ideas from the intern.
3. Keep the San Francisco State University O&M Program abreast of the intern’s progress through in-person, telephone, or written correspondence.

4. Complete an evaluation of each intern at the end of each intern’s experience. Evaluation forms can be found at the back of this handbook. Please also note that there are two evaluation forms – one entitled, “ACVREP Clinical Competency Evaluation Form for Certified Orientation & Mobility Specialists (COMS)” and one entitled, “California Standards for the Teaching Profession”. Please complete them both and review them with the intern before turning them in to the university at the end of the intern’s experience. We have to turn them in to different accreditation agencies.

**Agency Responsibilities**

School or agency administrative personnel will have primary responsibility with regard to administrative and policy matters. This includes responsibility regarding accident/injury to visually impaired students while in training except for gross negligence on the part of the intern.

**Intern Responsibilities**

1. Observe all rules and procedures of the internship facility
   a. Permission to view files and use materials must be obtained from the site supervisor prior to their use. Files should be returned promptly after reviewing them.
   b. **For liability purposes, interns should not transport visually impaired students in their private automobiles.** Use of a facility car during the internship experience is completely at the discretion of the internship facility.
   c. Policies and procedures regarding necessary record keeping - lesson plans, mileage forms, etc.
   d. Other rules and procedures as designated by facility

2. Complete all tasks required by the site supervisor and facility

3. Maintain highest standards of professionalism

4. Complete and submit on time, all reports, evaluations, etc. to the site supervisor and San Francisco State University

5. Constantly strive for self-improvement through observation, interaction, and conferences with the site supervisor and school/agency personnel

6. Develop meaningful objectives for visually impaired students through proper planning and preparation

7. Participate willingly in school/agency activities

8. **Absences/Tardiness:**
   a. The intern is responsible for notifying his/her San Francisco State University supervisor and the site supervisor of absences at least 5 days in advance for absences other than for illness. The intern must notify the site supervisor of absence for illness as soon as possible (arrangements for dealing with absences to be determined by the site supervisor)

   b. All missed time will be made up either by extending the actual internship period beyond the required number of weeks or by extending the daily hours within the internship period. This is to be determined jointly by the site supervisor, the intern, and the university supervisor.

   c. Any request for “time off” other than excused absences, must be approved by the site supervisor, internship facility administration (if appropriate) and the University supervisor
d. Tardiness without a valid excuse is not acceptable. The validity of the excuse will be determined by the site supervisor. If tardiness is a chronic problem, the site supervisor and university supervisor will discuss the matter and agree on steps to be taken.

9. **Dress Code:**
The dress code will be specified by each internship facility. Interns will adhere strictly to the dress code for the facility at which they are assigned.

10. **Evaluation:**
Evaluation is essentially an on-going process during the internship experience. However, periodically the San Francisco State University and school/agency site supervisor will complete forms for this purpose. The reports are looked upon as an opportunity for a learning experience. The intern will meet periodically with the site supervisor and university supervisor to discuss the evaluation results.
INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE
Written Requirements

The following written products will be turned in to the university supervisor.

1. An assessment of 1 student. If the internship experience is split between 2 sites, one student will be assessed at either site.
   a. A typewritten copy of the assessment is to be turned in to the university supervisor at the end of the internship experience.

2. An example of charting used with a visually impaired student.

3. Daily Notebook

4. Log

Format for Assessment Report, Charting, Notebook, & Log

The assessment should include:
1. Student's name (fictitious)
2. Student's date of birth
3. Student's grade (if in school)
4. Medical information:
   a. Cause and age on onset of visual impairment
   b. Visual acuity
   c. Visual fields
   d. Use of low vision aids (incl. any previous training)
   e. Date of last visual exam
   f. Additional disabilities or chronic medical conditions
   g. Medication currently being taken
   h. Pertinent medical history
5. Historical information - taken from school/agency records or teacher report. This is to provide a synopsis of any formal or informal testing that has been done including related services such as audiology, speech, PT, OT, psychology. Also include pertinent family, attitudinal, motivational information, previous O&M instruction, special services currently being received (or received in the past)
6. Present Level of Functioning - Assessment areas, instruments, and Results
   a. List the areas that are appropriate to assess for your specific student. You may want to subordinate this section into appropriate sections such as concepts, motor, basic skills, cane travel, residential/small business, business travel, or any other categories which you feel are appropriate. If it is not possible to perform a complete assessment of those areas, pertinent information can be taken from the student's file (with permission of the site supervisor).
   b. Briefly describe any assessment instruments or procedures used (i.e. observation, teacher-made checklist, published criterion referenced test or norm referenced test).
   c. Report the finding of the assessment area by area, being specific and descriptive, include observations about the process and the response.
7. Recommendations for service (goals and objectives, frequency and length of instruction)
8. Special Comments (if any)

Charting:
Select a student and chart his or her development/performance of a particular skill (e.g., street crossings, cane technique) over the course of several lessons. You can use a chart from the reader or develop your own.
Notebook:
The notebook will include the following information:

1. Introduction:
   a. List of goals and objectives for each student for entire internship experience (this may be only a guestimate, but it will provide a framework for writing daily lesson plans)
   b. Special techniques or methods to be used with each student (e.g. manual communication, behavior modification, etc.)
   c. Special information about the student (e.g. multiple disabilities, learning style, chronic medical problems)

2. Daily lesson plans:
   Daily lesson plans are to be written for each student. (You can photocopy the attached outline or develop your own format to include the same information.)

3. Log:
   The log is a summary sheet outlining direct and indirect service hours. This must be turned in to the University upon completion of internship experience to document hours for certification. You can use the format on the following page for writing your log.
Duplicate additional copies of this blank form before using it!

Name of Intern ___________________________

### Log of Service Hours

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* If an intern’s schedule does not vary from day to day, these dates can be filled in for a full week at a time

Direct Service Hours: __________  Indirect Service Hours: __________  Total Hours: __________

Signature of site supervisor: __________________________  Date: __________
Daily Lesson Plan
(sample format)*

Student's Name: _________________________
Date: ______________

Daily Goal(s) and Objectives (incl. prerequisites needed to complete lesson, special teaching materials or methods, teaching environment):

Evaluation of student's performance (be specific. Also, include information on fatigue, motivation, etc.):

Recommendations for next lesson:

Time spent: Direct service _______________ Indirect service _____________

* The student may use this format or any format recommended by the site supervisor. Lesson plans should be written on a daily or weekly basis in keeping with practices at the assigned internship site.
Midpoint Evaluation of Intern

Date: ___________________________

Intern's name: _______________________

Site Supervisor’s Name: ________________

Would you please react briefly to the overall performance of the internship student?

Strengths:

Weaknesses and areas which need improvement:

Comments:

Please Return Form To:
Ms. Faith Dunham-Sims, Internship Supervisor
Department of Special Education
San Francisco State University
1600 Holloway Ave.
San Francisco, CA 94132