THE
HUMAN SERVICES
INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE
Helping Students Find Their Way

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Defining the Internship

Reading this chapter will help you do the following:

- List the purposes of this textbook, *The Human Service Internship Experience: Helping Students Find Their Way*.
- Describe the primary participants in the human service internship experience.
- Define the terms that relate to the internship.
- Describe the context of the internship from the perspectives of three human service-focused professional organizations.
- Describe the internship experience for the human service academic program’s description, program handbook and course description, and faculty-developed syllabus.
- Define the term *collaboration*. 
Welcome to the world of human services and, specifically, the internship experience! Preparing for and beginning this experience marks an important point in your journey toward becoming a human service professional. By now, you have completed much of your coursework and you are ready to assume, under supervision, responsibilities within a human service organization or agency setting. This textbook assists you as an intern to (a) develop a strong professional identity; (b) work within an agency environment; (c) use ethical and multicultural perspectives in human service delivery; (d) use supervision effectively; (e) develop your knowledge, skills, and values to effectively perform the multiple roles of the human service professional; (f) successfully conclude your internship; and (g) transition from intern to human service professional.

The primary purpose of this chapter, Chapter 1, helps you understand the internship and your place in it. We begin this chapter with a brief introduction to three of your peers, Alicia, Lucas, and Tamika. These three students are studying to become human service professionals, and more important, they are getting ready to begin their internship experiences. Throughout this text, they will serve as one of the many guides you will have during internship. After your brief introduction to Alicia, Lucas, and Tamika, we present to you the primary perspectives in the internship experience. First, we introduce the participants in the internship, and then we define the common terms you will encounter as an intern. Next, we provide other perspectives of the internship, including how professional organization and human service programs describe it. In addition we look at academic program documents such as the human services program handbook or the internship handbook, the course description, and a course syllabus that detail what the specific intern experience should be. Each of these sources of information helps you identify the goals and functions of the internship. We then explore the collaborative nature of human services and the internship learning environment. As we discuss the importance of collaboration, we also introduce Sue, an internship student, and describe her experiences related to collaboration.

At the conclusion of the chapter, you meet Alicia, Lucas, and Tamika again. They share with you thoughts about their motivation to study human services and their personal readiness for the experience. You also meet Dr. Bianca, a human service faculty member, and Ms. Bellewa, a site supervisor. We end the chapter by introducing Gwen, a human service professional who will share with you tips on how to collaborate in your internship setting.

Now let's meet Alicia, Lucas, and Tamika.
As we stated earlier, Alicia, Lucas, and Tamika are also human service students beginning their internship experiences. We asked them to briefly introduce themselves by providing information about their family backgrounds.

Meeting Alicia, Lucas, and Tamika

Alicia

Hello! My name is Alicia, and I am the single mother of a little boy called Thomas. I am excited to share my story with you. I am going to begin with a brief introduction and then later in the chapter, I will tell you more about myself, and my motivation to study human services. I was born and raised in a small town in Colorado, called Glenwood Springs. My family is of English and German descent. I was raised in a rather large family. My family is the core of who I am and how I relate to the world; they are foundational to many of my choices and experiences and have influenced the way I come to view and understand life.

I was raised by my mother and stepfather, who married when I was very young. I am the youngest of five siblings. Both my parents worked long and hard hours in order to support my siblings and me, providing us with everything we needed. Although my stepbrother and stepsister primarily lived with their mother, they were regularly included in the family life my brother, sister, and I experienced. My parents raised my siblings and me with values that were woven into our everyday lives.

Written by Allie Rhinehart and Dareen Basma, 2015. Used with permission.
Hello! I hope you are having a blessed day! My name is Lucas, and I want to give you an overview of who I am and a little of my background such as where I came from. I am a Hispanic male, or to be more specific, I am a Puerto Rican. I have an older stepbrother and stepsister and a younger brother. In my family system, I am a first-generation college student because my parents and siblings neither attended a university nor obtained a degree beyond high school. Even though my parents lacked an advanced education, they taught my siblings and me the principles of Christian beliefs as a method of teaching and education.

Written by Jorge Roman, 2015. Used with permission.
Tamika

Hi there! It’s nice to meet you! My name is Tamika, and I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. I am African American and come from a very small family; I am an only child and my parents divorced when I was 9 years old. I come from an interesting family system; my parents remained best friends after splitting up, and so my nuclear family is still intact in its own unique way. I am extremely close to both of my parents, and they have been among my greatest supporters!

I have lived in several places throughout my life, which I think has contributed to my value of independence and my desire to experience new cultures. Here in the U.S., I have lived in Illinois, Arkansas, Michigan, New York, and now Tennessee. For several months during my junior year of college, I studied abroad in London, which was a fabulous multicultural experience! I spent most of my childhood in a small town in western Michigan, which is where I call home. My family lived about 15 minutes from Lake Michigan, which was great in the summer, but not so pleasant in the winter!

As I mentioned, I have a great relationship with each of my parents and have been close to them all of my life. I think that, as an only child, I spent more time with my parents than most kids do, and I grew up valuing their opinions above those of most other people I encountered. As a result, I was probably somewhat sheltered, but I also think it contributed greatly to my ability to withstand peer pressure. I never felt much of a need to conform to my peers or to base my self-worth on their opinions, which has allowed me to maintain a fairly healthy self-image (most of the time, anyway; I am still human, after all).

Written by Brittany Pollard, 2015. Used with permission.

Alicia, Lucas, and Tamika shared information about their families; this is an important consideration for how we think about others and how we help them. It is also one of the reasons that the human service internship is a different experience for each student enrolled. In this text, you will write a story about your internship that is uniquely yours. In Exercise 1.1, you can begin this story by writing about yourself, a brief summary of who you are. You can use the summaries written by Alicia, Lucas, and Tamika as models.

Exercise 1.1 A Brief Description of You: Writing Your Own Story, Entry 1

You just read short summaries about Alicia, Lucas, and Tamika. Now it is your turn!

Step 1

Provide basic information about yourself, including your name, age, gender, nationality, and ethnicity and family.

Step 2

Begin to describe how each of these demographics helps define who you are.
Now it is time to think about the world of the human service internship. We begin by describing the primary perspectives of the internship. Box 1.1 describes the organizational framework of this next section.

**Box 1.1 Studying the Text: Primary Perspectives of the Internship**

Studying the Text: The following outline will help you read and study the text material in this next section.

**Primary Perspectives of the Internship**

1. Participants in internship
2. Important terms and definitions
   a. Internship experience
   b. Intern
   c. Placement or internship site
   d. Faculty supervisor
   e. Site supervisor
   f. Supervision
   g. Midterm evaluation
   h. Final evaluation
3. Defining the internship
   a. Perspectives of professional organizations
   b. Human service program descriptions
      Course description
   d. Internship syllabus

The perspectives of the internship experience reflect its many participants: students, faculty, agencies or site supervisors, and clients. First, from the student perspective, the internship affords an opportunity to learn about various human service settings and populations and to identify or confirm natural helping strengths and values, to hone skills, and to develop and assess fitness and commitment for this type of professional work (Diambra, Cole-Zakrzewski, & Zakrzewski, 2004). Second, from the faculty perspective, the purpose of a field-based experience for students is to help them integrate classroom knowledge with real world professional experience. In addition, the internship allows faculty to assess intern readiness to assume professional responsibilities and to promote continued professional growth. During this time, faculty also identify any deficiencies that the interns need to address prior to successfully completing their internship. Finally, faculty responsibility includes gatekeeping. Simply stated, this means evaluating intern performance (satisfactory or unsatisfactory) that allows them to advance or not to the next level of education or employment.
Chapter 1: Defining the Internship

Figure 1.1 Multiple Perspectives of the Internship

From the third perspective, the site supervisor, a seasoned professional, introduces interns to the world of service delivery. Site supervisors structure the internship, making available learning opportunities, providing critical feedback, and overseeing the welfare of the clients the intern serves. Supervisors indicate they appreciate having an “extra pair of hands” to help with the agency work. They also learn from their interns about the latest trends and advances in the field. Finally, clients represent the fourth perspective. Clients often respond well to interns. In some instances, interns provide more time and attention and bring an enthusiasm and eagerness to help. Interns listen with a fresh perspective and a “can do” attitude. Of course, interns do not always have a complete understanding of agency policy or available resources; clients must wait until the intern searches for answers to their questions or seeks resources to meet their needs. Figure 1.1 illustrates these primary perspectives of the internship and the two worlds represented, the college or academic world and the organization or agency world.

Now that you understand the primary perspectives of the human service internship experience, let’s look at important terms and their definitions. Knowledge of these terms helps you understand more fully this experience.

Important Terms and Definitions

As you read your text and begin to understand your internship, you will become familiar with the eight terms defined below. Each of these terms represents an important aspect of the experience.

Internship Experience

In many human service programs, students assume the roles and responsibilities of a human service professional under the supervision of a seasoned professional. Most often, this experience occurs in an organization, agency, or school setting. Internship students work in various settings, serving children, youth, adults, and families. This experience may also be described as practicum experience.

Intern

This is the term used to describe the student enrolled in and participating in the internship. The intern assumes a variety of roles and responsibilities, usually defined by both the educational institution setting up the internship experience and the agency in which the intern works.
Placement or Internship Site

This term describes the location of the internship experience. Educational institutions work with organizations and agencies in the community to develop placements for their interns. When organizations or agencies agree to be a placement site, they provide interns with an orientation to, and overview of, the agency, supervision, an increasing amount of responsibility over time, and feedback and evaluation. Interns usually assume a client load and perform other administrative and outreach tasks.

Faculty Supervisor

When students participate in the internship, they have responsibilities to the educational institution and to their placement site. Most often, interns maintain a regular schedule at their placement and attend an internship seminar on campus. The faculty supervisor teaches this seminar. The faculty supervisor’s responsibilities may include developing a syllabus for the internship, meeting the weekly seminar, helping interns negotiate their placement site, facilitating the supervision process, and evaluating intern performance.

Site Supervisor

This individual assumes the responsibility for the intern’s performance at the placement site. Typically, the site supervisor is an experienced human service professional with an established career in human services and experience working at the placement site. The site supervisor helps the intern define his or her role as an intern, meets the obligations of the placement to the intern, structures the placement, meets regularly with the intern to answer questions and provide feedback, and assesses the intern’s performance. The site supervisor communicates during the term with the faculty supervisor.

Supervision

Both faculty and site supervisors provide observation, education, and support to the intern during the internship experience. This more experienced professional serves as a mentor to a less experienced intern. Responsibilities of supervision include helping the intern grow and develop as a professional, assuming responsibility for the care of clients the intern serves, and providing direct and honest feedback about intern’s performance.

Midterm Evaluation

Feedback and evaluation are important to the intern. During the first few weeks of the internship, faculty and site supervisors regularly share comments about how the intern performs his or her responsibilities. At times, these comments are supportive and sometimes they are critical. Many views shared during supervision represent an informal assessment. Usually the midterm evaluation, occurring midway during the term, is the first formal evaluation conducted with the intern. It is a time when the intern and
supervisors reflect on the growth and development of the intern. The mid-term evaluation usually concludes with areas of growth and areas of focus for the remainder of the term.

Final Evaluation
At the conclusion of the internship, faculty and site supervisors conduct a formal final evaluation. This evaluation becomes an important factor in the final assessment of internship performance and grade. A final evaluation of the intern includes specific personal dispositions (e.g., self-awareness, commitment), skills (e.g., attending behavior, goal setting), and professional behaviors (e.g., punctuality, maturity). The intern and the supervisors suggest specific examples to illustrate each specific area assessed. A final evaluation ends with a professional development plan that guides future intern responsibility and professional growth.

Exercise 1.2 Assessing Your Current Knowledge About Your Internship

If you are reading this chapter, you are preparing to begin your human service internship.

Step 1
As a way to assess your current knowledge of the experience, describe what you know about each of the terms as they relate to your own human service program.

1. Internship experience

2. Intern

3. Placement or internship site

4. Faculty supervisor

5. Site supervisor

6. Supervision

7. Midterm evaluation

8. Final evaluation
Defining the Internship Experience

As you begin to build your definition of the internship experience, it is important to seek various sources of information (see Figure 1.2). Each of these sources reflects the various aspects of your identity as a human service professional, specifically from the professional or work-related context. They provide organizational definitions from professional organizations and regulatory bodies, academic programs, and faculty syllabi.

A first approach is to see how professional organizations and regulatory bodies describe the nature, structure, and requirements of an internship in human services. A second is to learn how human service programs describe it. These programs usually have program handbooks, internship handbooks, and course descriptions available to the public, prospective students, and current students; each of these three documents relates the academic program experience to the internship. A third directly relates to your own student experience. Each faculty member directing the human service internship provides students a syllabus or road map that describes course requirements and course content. This syllabus becomes a key to defining the context of the internship.

Perspectives of Professional Organizations and Regulatory Bodies

As stated earlier, professional organizations and regulatory bodies describe the nature, structure, and requirements of an internship in human services. This is the first context in which you can consider the internship. The National Organization for Human Services and the Council for Standards in Human Service Education suggest standards for academic programs that educate students for the helping professions. In addition, the Community Support Skill Standards (Taylor, Bradley, & Warren, n.d.) delineate the roles performed and skills required for human service work and the Human Services-Board Certified Practitioner credential offers individuals a certification that establishes their professional status.

Figure 1.2  Defining the Internship

Source: Created by Gwen Ruttencutter, 2015. Used with permission.
National Organization for Human Services

The National Organization for Human Services (NOHS) (formerly known as National Organization for Human Service Educators) describes the purpose of human services as fourfold (NOHS, n.d.; Woodside & McClam, 2013). The first commitment is to assess and address human needs. The second is to meet human needs using quality interventions. A third commitment is to make services more accessible and accountable. Finally, a fourth commitment suggests that human service professionals are to treat those in need from a holistic perspective. This requires a coordination of the human service delivery system to address multiple needs.

NOHS provides human service professionals with a definition of human service practice. Relevant to our topic, the human service internship, NOHS outlines the knowledge, skills, and values of human service work (NOHS, n.d.). Most relevant to you as an intern are four NOHS statements listed in Box 1.2. They focus on behaviors and skills you will need to complete your internship effectively.

Box 1.2 NOHS Statements Relevant to the Human Service Internship

We list the four NOHS statements most relevant to you as an intern.

- Skill in identifying and selecting interventions which promote growth and goal attainment...
- Skill in planning, implementing, and evaluating interventions...
- Consistent behavior in selecting interventions which are congruent with the values...
- Process skills which are required to plan and implement services...

(NOHS, n.d.)

Council for Standards in Human Service Education

The Council for Standards in Human Service Education (CSHSE) provides guidance and consultation to human service programs in the United States and internationally. Established in 1979, this organization oversees human service program accreditation and quality improvement. Through the accreditation process, CSHSE offers a vision for human service programs in its Member Handbook (2012). Relevant to our discussion of the internship is the “Section III: The Self Study Process.” Within that section, the members of CSHSE describe curricula and standards for human service accredited programs. More specifically a curriculum divided into two components represents the academic and field learning. The academic focus incorporates history, human systems, human service delivery systems, planning and evaluation, information management, interventions, interpersonal communication, administrative, client-related values, and self-development.
The field learning represents the second component. CSHSE presents both associate and baccalaureate national standards for the field component (CSHSE, 2013a, 2013b). Those standards for the associate degree follow in Box 1.3. **Bold type** indicates additional requirements for field experience for CSHSE-accredited baccalaureate degree programs.

**Box 1.3 CSHSE Curriculum Standards Related to the Human Service Internship**

CSHSE Curriculum Standards Related to the Human Service Internship

**B. Field Experience**

*Context:* Field experience such as a practicum or internship occurs in a human services setting. Fieldwork provides an environment . . . to integrate the knowledge, theory, skills, and professional behaviors . . .

*Standard Number 20 (21):* The program shall provide field experience that is integrated with the curriculum.

*Source:* CSHSE, 2013a, 2013b.

**Community Support Skill Standards**

Another source of information about human service practice is the Community Support Skill Standards. The Human Service Research Institute (Taylor et al., n.d.) developed these standards in 1993 to reflect community practice in the human services. Using a national occupational analysis of human service delivery, the researchers articulated 12 occupational functions or tasks performed by human service professionals. These include “Participant Empowerment; Communication; Assessment; Community and Service Networking; Facilitation of Services; Community Living Skills and Support; Education, Training and Self Development; Advocacy; Vocational, Educational and Career Support; Crisis Intervention; Organizational Participation; and Documentation” (Taylor et al., n.d.). These skills and knowledge reflect the field-based nature of human service practice.

**Human Services-Board Certified Practitioner**

The Human Services-Board Certified Practitioner (HSBCP) certification is a relatively new way in which human service students assume their place in the profession and advance their standing. Under the auspices of the Center for Credentialing and Education (CCE, 2015), human service students and practitioners may apply for this credential. Criteria for application include educational experience, professional work, and successful outcome on a national examination. The following areas represent the examination content: “assessment, treatment planning, and evaluation; theoretical orientation/interventions; case management, professional practice and ethics; administration, program development/evaluation and supervision” (CCE, 2015). The case study format used in this examination allows applicants to demonstrate skills, especially those working with clients. Since the case study is, in essence, field based, student work in internship allows students...
to prepare for the examination on a day-to-day basis. The following areas
covered on the examination demonstrate the tie between the internship and
the HSBCP credentiaing.

The application handbook describes the areas that are covered by the
examination:

- Ethics in helping relationships
- Interviewing and intervention skills
- Group work
- Case management
- Human development
- Social and cultural issues
- Social problems
- Assessment/treatment planning
- Intervention models/theories
- Human behavior
- Social welfare and public policy
- Research, program evaluation, and supervision (CCE, 2015)

As you look at the knowledge and skills listed here, you can see their
relevance to the internship. Students will engage in this type of direct client's
service.

The Human Service Program Documents

We now look at materials much more familiar to you, those of your own
human service program. Before we discuss these materials in more detail,
let's look at the many ways human services students just like you view
these documents. Their comments provide a snapshot into the experiences
of exploring what the human service internship is all about as shown in
Box 1.4.

Box 1.4 Students Reflect on Finding Out
About the Internship Experience

What do you know about your program's internship?
Steve: Help!!! Students who are currently in internships keep talking to
me about their experiences. I feel lost whenever I hear them talk.
Maria: You might call me a nervous wreck. I am supposed to begin my
internship next term. I looked on the program website and read
through the current syllabus. It looks like a lot of work. I am not
sure that I can get in all of the hours the syllabus describes.
Al: I work full-time and go to school full-time. I figure I can go to
the orientation at the end of this term and find out all I need
to know. I am just not worried about it. When I applied for the
program, it was the internship that sold me on the program.
Shasha: At our school we had a 3-week preinternship orientation.
I think that I am set. We looked at the internship handbook
and my faculty supervisor answered my questions.
As you can see by reading these brief statements from the human service students, their experiences vary related to what they know about the internship. To help you gain information about the internship, each academic program provides various sources of information. Each academic program has its own program description, internship handbook, and course description. These provide a public view of the program and how the internship fits into the academic experience.

**Human Services Program Description**

All academic programs, including those in the human services, provide public program descriptions of “the mission and objectives of the instructional program that includes the instructional activity or innovation being evaluated or assessed, a statement of need, the expected effects, available resources, the program’s stage of development, and the instructional context” (University of Texas, n.d.). First, we describe some of the commonalities that we found across human service program descriptions. These descriptions are usually available in an academic catalog and on the program website.

**Common Goals of Human Service Programs**

Most students enroll in the human service internship as a part of their education and training to work as a human service professional. Although human services programs vary in degrees offered (e.g., associate, baccalaureate, master’s, and doctoral) and specific areas of focus (e.g., criminal justice, children and youth, health, mental health), commonalities abound. Let’s look at several of the commonalities (knowledge, skills and experience, and professional values and behavior) within these programs (Bismarck State College—Human Services AAS, 2013; CSHSE, 2012; Woodside & McClam, 2013).

**Knowledge**

- Integrate knowledge from the social sciences, humanities, sciences, and the helping professions
- Understand various human service settings
- Appreciate the relevance of the history of human services
- Gain a theoretical understanding from the systems, families, and individual perspectives applied to the process of helping

**Skills and Experience**

- Work with individuals, families, groups, and communities
- Develop programming and intervention based on client, family, and community needs
- Develop assistance to clients using basic helping skills and an understanding of the helping process (planning, delivering, and evaluating)
- Use a multicultural perspective to deliver direct and indirect services to those in need
- Provide case management, needs assessment, advocacy, service delivery, crisis intervention, as well as program planning
- Work in a complex service delivery system (includes various sectors such as public, private, not-for-profit, and for-profit)
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Professional Values and Behavior

- Understand and identify legal and ethical dimensions of helping
- Integrate theory into professional practice
- Focus on self-development (includes openness, commitment, responsibility, integrity, and self-reflection)

Human service program descriptions also provide details of a program’s academic focus and its relationship to field-based learning. Because the internship experience is a critical component of human service education, many handbooks illustrate the connections between the internship and other aspects of the program. Sometimes they provide an introduction or information about the internship.

Exercise 1.3 Locating Your Human Services Program Description

Step 1

As you prepare for your human service internship experience, locate your human service program description on the Internet or in the curriculum catalog at your educational institution.

Step 2

1. Read through the program description and answer the following questions:
   a. What is the mission of your program?
   b. What are the goals of your program?
   c. Does the program description distinguish between educational and field-based experiences? If it does, how does it do so?
   d. What did you learn from this exercise?
   e. How does this new learning relate to the internship experience?

The internship becomes a way that students integrate their classroom experiences into a human service setting. Students move from an academic focus that may include activities and skills-based learning to a more applied focus. In an effort to help students better understand their educational experiences, human service programs develop support materials for their students. The next section introduces two important texts that guide your educational experience, the internship handbook and course description.

Written documents prepared by faculty and approved by the academic institution guide program development and academic practice. An internship handbook helps human service students better understand the field-based learning and its requirements. In addition, faculty write descriptions for each of their course offerings.

Internship Handbook

Most human service programs provide their students with a handbook to guide the internship experience. These internship handbooks may include topics related to (a) definitions and goals, (b) requirements and eligibility,
(c) responsibilities and expectations, (d) policies and procedures, (e) assignments and evaluations, and (f) professional development. Details of the content in these handbooks follow.

Definitions and Goals
- Description of the internship experience
- List of goals of the internship experience

Requirements and Eligibility
- Prerequisites or corequisites
- Eligibility for the internship experience

Responsibilities and Expectations
- Requirements of the internship experience
- Personal and professional dispositions
- Work-related obligations and responsibilities
- Ethical obligations and behaviors

Policies and Procedures
- Policies and procedures
- Establishing the internship
- Determining an internship work schedule

Assignments and Evaluations
- Internship class requirements and assignments
- Internship evaluations
- Terminating an internship
- Policies for student evaluation, retention, remediation, and dismissal
- College policies regarding academic honesty and academic appeal

Professional Development
- Endorsement policy for certification or licensure
- Letters of recommendation
- Professional organizations
- Continuing education

Exercise 1.4 Reviewing the Internship Handbook

Reviewing the internship handbook will help you gather information about your own program’s internship experience.

Step 1
Locate your human service program’s internship handbook. Read it carefully.

Step 2
Make a list of the information you believe is most important for you to know to begin your internship experience.
**Course Description**

Educational institutions approve course offerings and course descriptions for each of their programs and majors. The purpose of a course description is to summarize relevant information about a specific course. This includes a course prefix, number, title, brief description, number of credit hours, grading options, and prerequisites or corequisites. A human service internship course description provides us a brief and distinctive perspective of this field-based learning opportunity. Each institution’s course description differs and reflects the way in which the institution and the human service program view the role of the internship course. For example, several institutions refer to the integrated experience as *practicum*, while others refer to the experience as the *field* or *internship*. Commonalities of the examples presented include the focus of the experience, number of hours in the field required, classroom hour requirements, and references to supervision.

**The Internship Syllabus**

The final document we review, the *internship syllabus*, establishes the context of the internship. Faculty prepare a syllabus to explain in detail the focus of a course, its goals and objectives, assignments, evaluation, calendar of topics, and due dates. In most cases, faculty use the internship handbook as a foundation for the contents. Because of the academic freedom involved with course construction, many syllabi integrate standard guidelines, policies, and procedures from the program handbook, the internship handbook, and the course description with individual faculty teaching styles and preferences.

The following syllabus outline suggests the components interns find in the internship syllabus:

- **Course information** (number, prefix, name, semester, meeting time and location)
- **Instructor information** (name, rank, department, contact information)
- **University policies** (civility, honor code, academic policies, appeals, services)
- **Program dispositions** (values and behavioral expectations)
- **Text and readings**
- **Course (catalog) description and goals**
- **Course outcomes** (often linked to competencies)
- **Grades and evaluations**
- **Assignments**
- **Course calendar** (course content by date, topic, and assignment)
Exercise 1.5 Reviewing Your Internship Course Description and Internship Syllabus

As a way of learning more about your program’s internship experience, review its course description and internship syllabus.

Step 1
Look up the internship course description and describe the information below.
___________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________

Step 2
Obtain the syllabus for your internship and read it thoroughly.

Step 3
1. Describe what in the syllabus you consider the most important elements.
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

2. What new information did you gain?
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

3. What questions remain for you about the internship?
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

This section reviewed ways to define the internship, by reviewing professional organizations, human service program documents, and the internship syllabus. We now describe the concept and activity of collaboration that supports the internship experience in Box 1.5.

Box 1.5 Collaboration: A Model of Human Service Practice

Collaboration: A Model for Human Service Practice

1. Definition
2. Introducing Sue
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As you are no doubt aware by your study of human services, the nature of work in human services is substantially collaborative. The simple definition of collaboration is “working jointly with others” (“Collaboration,” 2015). First, in the process of human service delivery, working with others includes interacting with clients and others in the client network (such as family and friends) to address the problems in living that these clients experience. Second, collaboration occurs as professionals work side by side with colleagues in their own agency or organization or in the broader world of human service delivery. Third, if you are a student in a human service program, you also collaborate in the learning environment. Student collaboration includes working with faculty, supervisors, student peers, and clients, especially during the internship experience. All three collaboration efforts are important to participating in a positive and growth producing internship. To examine collaborative efforts in internship, let’s read about Sue, an internship student who works at a homeless shelter.

Introducing Sue

The following account describes the experiences of Sue, a human service internship student, and the variety of kinds of collaborations she encounters:

Carmello Jones: Director of the homeless shelter
Maria Rodriguez: Site supervisor and case manager
George Stephenson: Volunteer and former case manager at the homeless shelter
Dr. Diacon: Faculty supervisor
Gorgia Nijul: One of Sue’s peers also enrolled in the internship experience

By the beginning of the fourth week in her internship experience, Sue is providing case management services for seven adults receiving services at a homeless shelter in southeastern Oklahoma. The shelter uses a strengths assessment for case planning and providing interventions. Together, Sue and her clients fill out initial intake forms. Afterward, they develop goals and implementation plans. Sue and her clients include family, friends, and other
community members in their planning. Sue believes she is gaining as much from her clients as they are gaining from her.

In addition, as she is working as a case manager, Sue attends the client staffing every Thursday morning. Five case managers, the program director, the shelter director, the outreach coordinator, and Sue meet to discuss client progress. Sue gains support and feedback during the staffing. During these meetings, Sue learns that not everyone working with clients focuses on client strengths. In fact, Sue wonders about shelter director Carmello Jones’s attitude toward providing services. His approach is concrete—period: “Here are the services we provide—take them or leave them. He doesn’t appear to have much empathy for the clients.”

Sue has run into difficulties when she is working with other human service professionals in the community. One staff member at the local clothing bank told her, “I need to be careful how many clients from the shelter that I serve. If we shared clothing with everyone who is homeless in this city, we would have little left to share with other individuals who need our help.” Sue was not sure how to respond.

On the other hand, individuals who belong to the County Homeless Coalition attend a meeting every 2 weeks in a downtown hotel. Committed to helping the homeless, these coalition members form a network of individuals and agencies that can help Sue’s clients. All of the staff dress formally for these meetings. To her, this means the members of the network take their membership in the coalition seriously. Also, Sue runs into members of the coalition from time to time in other parts of the community, the grocery store, a doctor’s office, or the local mall. In those settings, these individuals greet her warmly and talk about their work together.

Sue encounters various forms of supervision during her internship experience. In her agency, she has two site supervisors, Carmello Jones, the agency director, and Maria, one of the five case managers. Carmello, while supportive, has little time to meet with her. When they do meet, Carmello is pleasant and supportive and talks to Sue about her future goals but not about her clients and the services she is trying to provide.

During a supervision session, Carmello helped her understand the appropriate dress for working at the shelter. During her first week, Sue wore a dress, boots, and hoop earrings. In their second meeting, he recommended that Sue dress in slacks, comfortable shoes, and smaller jewelry. Carmello indicated the more functional dress might help her relate to her clients more quickly. Sue had received different feedback from her faculty supervisor at the beginning of the semester about dress. He suggested that all interns dress up to distinguish themselves from the clients. Sue decided to follow Carmello’s advice.

Sue’s site supervisor, Maria Rodriguez, is a case manager, and although Maria has never supervised before, she is willing to talk with Sue every day if necessary about her work in internship. She helps Sue with the myriad of details about working with clients and completing the paperwork.

Also at her agency, Sue found a mentor, George Stephenson, who serves as a volunteer after working for the agency for 20 years prior to his retirement. She talks with him frequently when she encounters him in the hallway or the staff lounge. These conversations provide her with ideas and new insights about her clients and her work as a case manager. Sometimes she talks with him about some new projects she has in mind. For example, in her human services methods class, Sue learned about the “wellness” model, and she thinks she might be able to use that model to structure some of her interventions.
Every Monday, Sue attends an internship class. This is an important time for her; she loves hearing about the experiences of her classmates. She is frustrated at times because she thinks her classmates don’t understand the complexities of her case management responsibilities. None of them have responsibilities as a case manager, although several work in agencies that provide case management services. But they do understand what it is like to be an intern in an agency setting.

Sue remembers one internship class that was particularly helpful. During the second week of the internship, Sue texted her faculty supervisor, Dr. Diacon, and asked for supervision during her class meeting. While in class, Sue explained the difficulty she was having using the shelter’s data management system to record how she spends her time. Another classmate, Gorgia, shared with Sue a personal log form she uses. Gorgia uses the form that she developed, and then she transfers the information to the agency system. The class spent 10 minutes helping Sue create a form to help her track her time.

Many of Sue’s early experiences in her internship experience involve multiple opportunities to collaborate. In the following sections, we examine aspects of collaboration such as professional growth and dimensions of collaboration such as type of setting.

Aspects of Collaboration

Collaboration provides the foundation for how we learn to be human service professionals. In other words, collaboration encourages professional growth and development. Specifically, collaboration during the internship experience assumes a critical role in four areas as shown in Figure 1.3:

- Gaining information
- Developing skills
PART I: INTRODUCTION TO THE INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

- Providing support
- Encouraging feedback

By rereading the personal account about Sue’s experiences and the ways collaboration occurs in her internship placement, we see how others help Sue to develop professionally. Note that in Sue’s collaboration with her clients, she is helping them and she is learning from them. Exercise 1.6 helps you consider collaboration in more depth.

Exercise 1.6 Assessing How Collaboration Contributes to Sue’s Professional Growth

Step 1
Take a minute to describe Sue’s experiences of collaboration. Indicate the person or agency with whom she collaborates, the nature of collaboration, the strengths and limitations of that collaboration, and the outcomes for Sue.

Step 2
Decide for each instance of collaboration you identify if or how it represents (a) gaining information, (b) developing skills, (c) providing support, or (d) encouraging feedback.

Gaining Information
- Partner/collaborator _____________________________________________________________
- Focus of the collaboration _______________________________________________________
- Strengths and limitations of the collaboration _______________________________________
- Outcomes of collaboration for Sue’s professional growth __________________________

Developing Skills
- Partner/collaborator _____________________________________________________________
- Focus of the collaboration _______________________________________________________
- Strengths and limitations of the collaboration _______________________________________
- Outcomes of collaboration for Sue’s professional growth __________________________

Providing Support
- Partner/collaborator _____________________________________________________________
- Focus of the collaboration _______________________________________________________
- Strengths and limitations of the collaboration _______________________________________
- Outcomes of collaboration for Sue’s professional growth __________________________
Chapter 1: Defining the Internship

Characteristics of Collaboration

Collaboration can look very different, depending on whether it is structured or unstructured. And in the internship, you will experience both types of collaboration. Each shapes how, when, what, and why it occurs as individuals work together during an internship experience. Because structured and unstructured collaboration also offer different types of assistance and support, let's look at each in more detail (see Table 1.1).

**Structured Collaboration**

Your own experiences already include a variety of structured collaborations. Many of these occur in formal settings. One such formal setting is the university or college you currently attend. In the internship experience, you enter another formal setting, the agency or organization. In both of these formal settings, there exists a teacher or leader (manager, supervisor) who controls the many aspects of the collaborative experience. This manager

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Table 1.1 Characteristics of Collaborative Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of Collaborative Learning</th>
<th>Examples of Collaborative Materials, Tasks, and Activities in Internship Experience</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Structured/more formal</td>
<td>• Class syllabus&lt;br&gt; • Internship contract&lt;br&gt; • Class agenda&lt;br&gt; • Assigned reflections&lt;br&gt; • Case notes&lt;br&gt; • Case presentation&lt;br&gt; • Taping&lt;br&gt; • Midterm evaluation&lt;br&gt; • Final evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unstructured/more informal</td>
<td>• In-the-moment consultation&lt;br&gt; • Change of contract or assignment&lt;br&gt; • Special request from clients&lt;br&gt; • Special requests from site supervisor&lt;br&gt; • Emerging needs or issues of internship site&lt;br&gt; • Casual conversation with peers, faculty, site supervisor&lt;br&gt; • Participation in discussion board, blog or social media</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
or supervisor, as an authority or expert, provides structure by establishing the goals of the collaborative interaction, developing a plan or agenda, and providing critical feedback. Thus, in Sue’s internship experience/internship, structured collaboration includes both the homeless shelter weekly staffing and Sue’s weekly internship class. In addition, internship class assignments such as case notes or case studies represent tasks that contribute additional structure. Sue’s reports about her clients at the agency staffing also help her frame and document her work. A scheduled meeting with a site supervisor also suggests a more formal orientation to learning, especially as the supervision is a requirement for the internship experience.

When you reviewed Sue’s collaborative experiences described earlier in this chapter in Exercise 1.6, you found multiple ways Sue works with others. For instance, as discussed earlier, Sue attends homeless shelter staff meetings and internship classes weekly. These two meetings represent formal, planned, and structured collaborative events each with unique strengths and limitations. Regular meetings provide opportunities to work with others. Experts in charge of these meetings or classes bring a specific agenda to help each member of the group prepare for the meeting. A structured meeting focuses on the topics and issues addressed. There are several possible limitations of formal collaboration. Members of a staff or class may encounter issues for which they need immediate help, or salient topics not on the agenda may be brought up. However, a structured meeting may not provide time for brainstorming or a full discussion of topics or issues.

**Unstructured Collaboration**

Collaboration that is relatively unstructured or informal “refers to the experiences of everyday living from which we learn something” (Merriam, Baumgartner, & Cafarella, 2006, p. 24). One important aspect of the unstructured collaboration is that it can originate with the internship student rather than with the supervisor or the faculty. For example, if an intern encounters a client diagnosed with ADHD, and the intern understands little about the diagnosis, the intern may ask others to help her understand this diagnosis. The intern, within the unstructured framework, seeks someone who cares and is willing to help rather than only seeking “the individual in charge.” Sources of informal collaboration may include internship peers, friends, electronic sources, and media to name a few. Informal collaboration also can include consulting with teachers, administrators, and experts in a less official way with less emphasis on evaluation or critical review.

Another characteristic of this more informal collaboration is that it can occur spontaneously. Examples in the human service internship experience may include a quick call or text with peers about issues and challenges, conversations with staff in the internship experience setting, and searching online for ideas about how to address specific client needs. (Note that searching online and reading textbooks and journal articles represent a different type of collaborative conversation. During your reading, the conversation occurs between you and the writer. It is a collaborative conversation nonetheless.)

Let’s review Sue’s collaborative experiences described in Exercise 1.6 again, this time looking for times when more unstructured and informal collaboration occurred. Informal collaboration appears to sustain some of Sue’s work. For example, members of the County Homeless Coalition
provide Sue support outside her agency internship environment. These professionals greet her if they encounter her in the community and provide her whatever support they can. She comes to the coalition meeting with her own agenda and members of the coalition respond in a helpful matter. A volunteer for the homeless shelter also provides guidance for Sue whenever she asks. He does not evaluate Sue or structure her work. Often, their collaboration is spontaneous and unstructured. Finally, Sue’s peer, Gorgia, provides her with a way to address her data management tasks. Although Gorgia does this within the framework of a formal class, this collaboration between the two students is not part of the class agenda. Sue determines her specific need, and Gorgia offers a solution. This is a sharing among peers in which there is no expert and no evaluation.

We will return to the concept of collaboration and how it occurs in your own internship later in the term. For now, we think it is important that you note its importance and consider ways you might collaborate with others.

We end this chapter with a section titled “Deepening Your Understanding.” See Box 1.6 to better understand the organization of this section.

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**Box 1.6 Studying the Text: Deepening Your Understanding**

Studying the text: The following outline will help you read and study the text material in this next section.

1. Peer-to-peer dialogue
   a. Alicia: Motivation for studying human services
   b. Lucas: Motivation for studying human services
   c. Tamika: Motivation for studying human services
2. Faculty and site supervisor dialogue
   a. Dr. Bianca: Introduction
   b. Ms. Bellewa: Introduction
3. The professional voice and tips for success: Gwen: Collaboration
4. Terms to remember
5. References

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In this section you will hear more about Alicia, Lucas, and Tamika and their motivations for studying human services. In addition Dr. Bianca and Ms. Bellewa share their faculty and site supervisor backgrounds. Gwen, in the Professional Voice and Tips for Success section, introduces ways collaboration can occur in the internship site. We also include Terms to Remember and References to support your learning.
PART I: INTRODUCTION TO THE INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

Peer-to-Peer Dialogue: Alicia, Lucas, and Tamika

We asked Alicia, Lucas, and Tamika to talk about the motivation and context of their internship experiences. Their perspectives can help broaden your understanding of the beginning of this experience.

Alicia

I am going to continue to talk about myself and describe why I decided to become a human service professional. Earlier I talked about my family and decided to pick up my story in a dramatic way.

When I was a senior in high school, a boy who was also in my grade raped me. That resulted in my being pregnant with Thomas. That period of my life was one that was filled with anger, pain, and struggle. I could not understand why it had happened to me and felt that my life, my future, and my goals had all come to a screeching halt. I could not feel my family in the eyes because I was so ashamed of what had happened. My mother tried to reach out to me, but I kept pushing her away. I remember waking up on so many mornings hoping it was all just a nightmare, a reality that I never had to face. I considered running away from home because it all became so overwhelming. It wasn't until my first visit to the doctor, when I heard my baby's heartbeat that I realized life was not just about me anymore.

The journey to where I am today was, and still is, difficult. I told myself, "You need to keep going" because Thomas became my priority. I was raised to believe that love and support was at the foundation of a family, and I wanted Thomas to have that too. My mother tried to reach out to me again, and we worked on our feelings of anger and pain together. She became my rock and biggest support, and I know how grateful I am to have her in my life; I also knew this wasn't easy for her either. The relationship I had with my stepfather became strained; he had a difficult time understanding and accepting what had happened to me. At times, it was easier for him to blame me for the rape. I never talked to him about it because I, too, believed it was my fault.

I started meeting with the school counselor, who referred me to people who could help me. I attended parenting classes, and I made plans for a visiting teacher to come to my house when I couldn't attend school. At the time, I just wanted to get through the high school year and focus on everything I needed to do to make sure my baby was going to be okay. I thought about going to college but I knew I had to put it on hold for at least a year or two. But I also knew exactly what I wanted to study when I finally did get there. Two years after Thomas was born, my mother volunteered to keep Thomas in the mornings, if I wanted to start college. I started as a part-time student, majoring in human services. I went to school in the morning, and I worked a part-time job as a receptionist in the early afternoon. While I appreciated my mother's support, I did not want to be completely dependent on her.

I'm not going to lie—everyday is a struggle. Everyday I want to call my mother and ask for help. Everyday I ask myself if I can keep doing this, and everyday I remind myself that it is not only about me. Thomas needs me and I cannot let him down. My understanding of how I see the world has shifted a lot in the past few years. I don't think that life will ever be easy but my own goals are clear. I want to take care of Thomas. I want to work...
with victims of sexual assault. I don’t know if things happen for a reason. I don’t think I’m that optimistic. I do know what I have been through, and I want to help other women get through it as well. I look forward to sharing more of my experience, especially as it relates to the field of human services and the journey you are preparing to start.

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Lucas

At the beginning of the chapter, I talked about my family. Now I want to talk about the two realities where I was raised. Both influenced me. I was born in Berks County, Pennsylvania, an urbanized city, and raised in a rural community in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. I tell people that growing up I had the opportunity to experience two realities that shaped my beliefs and values. I will briefly explain these two realities to give you an understanding of where I came from. When I was born into this world, my first reality was Berks County. There was high cultural diversity, working-poor families, high drug and violence rates, and a poor educational system. In this reality, street life influenced me with eccentric languages, mannerisms, and beliefs different from dominant societal norms. I learned to try to beat the system. I heard from members of my family and friends in Berks County that “You must do what you have to do to survive.”

When my parents realized the negative effects city life had on our development, due to the prevalence of drugs and violence in our community, they moved my little brother and me to Lancaster County. In my second reality, there was less cultural diversity, affluent families, and high educational standards. I was a black dot on a white wall. During this reality, I was behind my peers in terms of reading and writing. My behaviors in class were different. And I had to work hard to catch up with my peers. The expectations in this reality consisted of a high grade point average, college ambition, and an aristocratic lifestyle. As a result, the beliefs and values in this system were the importance of education, power, and recognition.

As you can imagine, I had to juggle the expectations from my family culture, inspired by the urban and city life, with the culture of a rural community that was predominantly White, upper-middle-socioeconomic level with different values and beliefs. In order to survive in this new world, I had to conform to its cultural norms and set aside my own beliefs. During these times, I experienced extreme anxiety and stress, due to the opposing beliefs and values from these two realities. However, I developed two skills growing up that helped me figure out ways to survive and cope with adversity: observation and self-reflection. These skills helped me identify who I was, what I needed to do to survive, and the expectations my new culture had for me. More important, I developed the social skills to fit in and to take advantage of the opportunities for personal advancement.

Throughout my life, I have seen people fall victim to the system, due to the lack of mental skills to cope with stress, to overcome adversity, and the lack of self-efficacy to better their lives. These personal experiences inspired me to pursue a degree in the helping profession to give others a chance to survive and thrive. In class we call this developing a sense of well-being and becoming self-actualized.

Written by Jorge Roman, 2015. Used with permission.
Tamika

As you can tell from the way I began my story, my parents had a major influence. They still do today. I want to tell you more about them and my earlier life with them.

My parents are both college educated and work in social services. My mom is the admissions director of a prominent nursing home in my hometown, and my dad works for the state's child welfare department in Michigan's capital. My parents were quite strict and a bit overprotective. They instilled in me strong values of self-respect and respect for others; and they also raised me to seek achievement at the highest level possible. My parents taught me the value of education at an early age and instilled in me the significance of helping those around me—principles that are still important to me and have shaped my decision to enter the helping profession.

Living as part of the lower middle class in my community, my parents chose to make sacrifices to ensure that I could take advantage of any educational or extracurricular opportunity available to me. Growing up, I competed in several sports, played flute and piccolo in the band, danced, and maintained involvement in several clubs and organizations. We lived in a small apartment for most of my childhood. I never had the most expensive clothes. But I do remember that my family provided me with what I needed for my academic work or for my extracurricular interests. And both of my parents attended my games, concerts, performances, and ceremonies. This provided a level of support that I always knew I was lucky to have. I never doubted that my parents loved me and wanted the best for me.

My mother also involved me in volunteer work from a very early age. Together, we have worked in soup kitchens, packaged Christmas presents at the Salvation Army, taught English to Spanish-speaking immigrants, and spent time reading to nursing home residents. I have always admired my mother’s heart for giving to others, which is probably my primary motivation for entering the helping field.

Another motivation came from my lack of relationships with extended family. After leaving Illinois, where my parents both grew up, we were quite isolated from my aunts, uncles, cousins, and grandparents. Growing up, I felt as if something significant was missing from my life, and I can distinctly remember feeling jealous of those friends who enjoyed large family get-togethers. I especially missed not having a relationship with my maternal grandmother, as I was particularly distant from my mother’s side of the family. As a result, I am interested in family and group dynamics, and in the ways relationships (or the lack, thereof) can impact a person’s life. I have spent a great deal of time reflecting on my own life experiences. I credit my parents for the inspiration to pursue my passion of helping others to live the best lives that they can. I enjoy working with a variety of populations and have had interesting and unique experiences. Thank you for allowing me to introduce myself. I am looking forward to sharing more of my personal, academic, and professional endeavors with you along the way!

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Exercise 1.7 Writing Your Own Story, Entry 2

You just read short summaries of the personal development of Alicia, Lucas, and Tamika. In Exercise 1.1 you wrote Writing Your Own Story, Entry 1 and began a description of you and your family. Now it is your turn to write more about yourself.

Step 1

Use the questions below to expand your initial entry.

- Think about your own life and the people, events, and environments that contributed to your decision to help others.
- Provide basic information about yourself, including your name, age, gender, nationality, and ethnicity. Describe how each of these demographics helps define who you are. Provide information about how each of these demographics may influence your work as a human service intern.
- Describe your family and any ways you believe that your family influences your decision to study human services. Include the influences of your parents, siblings, and other family members.
- List five basic values and beliefs that shape who you are and guide your actions. Explain why you think you hold these values. How do you believe these values will shape your work in human services?

Step 2

- Tell the story of “coming” to or choosing the human services as your profession.

Faculty and Site Supervisor Dialogue:
Dr. Bianca and Ms. Bellewa

In addition to meeting Alicia, Lucas, and Tamika, we asked Dr. Bianca, a human service faculty member, and Ms. Bellewa, a human service site supervisor, to introduce themselves. The goal in the summaries that follow is for you to get to know both of them in a personal way.

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Dr. Claude Bianca

Hi! My name is Claude Bianca. Marianne asked me to tell you about myself and how I became a faculty member in human services. I will begin with a brief introduction in this personal entry. Later, I can talk with you about my current work. First, I was born in Canada, and my parents moved to the United States when I was 6 years old. In Canada, we lived in the same town with my grandparents, aunts and uncles, and cousins. The move was very difficult for me. One of the things that made the move easier was the Boys and Girls Club just down the street from my house. We lived in a town on the edge of Tucson, Arizona. At the Boys and Girls Club, we had a wonderful time after school. I can remember the college students who volunteered at the club. They taught us how to play ball, how to draw, how to play games, and there was always time to read. When I was eight, I asked one of the volunteers who read to us each day if I could read to the younger children. I think my teaching career was launched at that point. I had so much fun, and this reading time soon became one of my favorite activities. Looking back on the experience, I think I was a natural teacher. My family says that I have the teaching gene just like my grandmother. The journey was long from that Boys and Girls Club to today and my job as a faculty member in human services. When I think about what I want you to understand most, it is that I want to “teach” you about how to thrive in your internship experience. Marianne asks that throughout this text, I provide you an inside look at how faculty think about internship and why faculty set up this experience as they do. So that is exactly what I will do. I also hope to learn from you during this time. See you in the next chapter.
Ms. Zu Bellewa

My name is Zu Bellewa. I am very happy to meet you. I am honored to meet you and to talk to you about my work. Dr. Woodside asked me to write an informal paper about my life. I am not sure that I can offer the informal tone she suggested. In my family and in my culture, we show respect in formal ways. I respect you since you are learning. It is my humble hope that I can help you.

I moved to the United States about 7 years ago from Niger. In Niger, I worked in an NGO [nongovernmental agency] whose mission was to educate children. We operated an on-the-street program [outreach] for children who did not attend school. We were a team of three in our agency. We worked in a very large urban area. Unemployment was 40%. Only 10% of children had access to education. Our small contribution was to find 50 children living on the streets and bring them to our agency each day. We had a standard curriculum (today the program uses tablets to deliver instruction) and fed children breakfast, lunch, and dinner.


Written by Dareen Basma.

The Professional Voice and Tips for Practice: Gwen

Gwen Ruttencutter has a long-time association with the human service profession. She has experience as a domestic violence counselor and as an executive director of a nonprofit affordable housing organization. In this chapter and each that follows, Gwen offers insights she gained while working in the human service delivery system. She is kind enough to share those ideas and “tips for success” with us.

Gwen

In this chapter, Marianne writes extensively about collaboration, which is defined as “working jointly with others” (“Collaboration,” 2015). And while we can understand what collaboration is, and how it benefits us in human services, let's see what collaboration looks like in action. In other words, what are the behaviors that create collaboration? Below is an introduction to Seven Aspects of Reflective Practice, developed by John Peters (2011), who researches, writes, and teaches extensively about reflective practice as a means to working and thinking collaboratively:

**Climate building:** Creating an environment in which there is a sense of safety and respect, supportive of a collaborative relationship among all participants.

**Questioning:** Asking questions that help identify assumptions, clarify thoughts, and develop fair and balanced questions.

**Listening:** Skillful listening to others’ mental models, wants, assumptions, and values.
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**Focusing:** Seeing and hearing what each other say and how they say it, moment to moment, individually and jointly.

**Thinking:** Identifying and suspending one’s own frames, assumptions, values, and biases, in order to understand one’s own and others’ viewpoints and behaviors.

**Acting:** Taking the next steps based on critical reflection of one’s own and others’ thoughts, feelings, and actions.

**Facilitating:** Enabling conditions that create and sustain dialogue by participants. 

(Peters, 2011).

After reading and thinking about the behaviors and skills that create a collaborative environment, consider what behaviors and skills you already use in your school and personal life. How will these help you in your internship experience? And last, what are the behaviors and skills that are new to you? How might you develop and grow new collaborative behaviors and skills?

Collaboration is not only a key to success in your internship experience; collaboration is a key to success in all aspects of life. By developing the skills discussed above, and learning to implement them in your interactions with others, you are on your way to creating a collaborative way of being.

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**Terms to Remember**

Collaboration
Community support skill standards
Council for Standards in Human Service Education
Course description
Faculty supervisor
Final evaluation
Human Services-Board Certified Practitioner
Intern
Internship experience
Internship handbook
Internship syllabus
Midterm evaluation
National Organization for Human Services
Organizational definitions
Placement or internship site
Program description
Site supervisor
Structured collaboration
Supervision
Unstructured collaboration
Chapter 1: Defining the Internship

References


