

PA/PAH/HSMP 509: Organizational Experience

Orientation and
Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

What is PA/PAH/HSMP 509?

- ▶ Final integrative experience in the MPA, MPA: HA and MPH: HMP programs
- ▶ Worth six credits (equal to two classes)
- ▶ Taken after at least 42 credits of coursework completed
- ▶ Ideally taken as close to end of program of study as possible

Purpose of PA/PAH/HSMP 509

- ▶ Provides a final, culminating, applied, integrative, personalized experience
- ▶ Allows students to apply knowledge acquired in courses to field settings
- ▶ Gives opportunity to experience and “work” in a new organization
- ▶ Can explore possibility of future employment
- ▶ Offers opportunity to reflect on learning/career

Who takes PA/PAH/HSMP 509?

- ▶ All MPH:HMP students (no exceptions)
- ▶ MPA and MPA:HA students who have not had at least 3 years of managerial and/or supervisory experience
 - ▶ Faculty advisor must sign off on 509/alternatives for students
- ▶ Experienced MPA students are encouraged to take PA 509

If I don't take PA/PAH/HSMP 509...

- ▶ You must have your advisor's permission to waive the PA/PAH/HSMP 509
- ▶ Instead of PA/PAH/HSMP 509 you will take PA 512 Case Analysis (6 credits)
- ▶ If you think you can waive PA/PAH/HSMP 509, you may leave this presentation now; please consult with your faculty advisor for approval and to register for PA 512

Why “organizational experience” and not “internship”?

- ▶ An “internship” is perceived by many in the field as a full-time intense experience for students who bring very little expertise, require intense supervision, and may not produce much in the way of a substantive product
- ▶ Many students have considerable expertise and will not do PA/PAH/HSMP 509 full-time or need extensive supervision because of their backgrounds
- ▶ SO: “experience” rather than “internship” with higher expectations for outcomes

Prerequisites

- ▶ Completion of at least 42 credits of the MPA, MPA:HA or MPH:HMP program of study
- ▶ For MPA students only, have a signed “Field of Specialization” form on file
- ▶ Meet with your faculty advisor to discuss your interests and relevant sites for a PA/PAH/HSMP 509 experience (they know you and have good contacts)
- ▶ Attend the PA/PAH/HSMP 509 Orientation and review the relevant current documents

What is involved in PA/PAH/HSMP 509?

- ▶ Field-based applied experience
- ▶ Placement negotiated by you to meet your career goals and learning objectives
- ▶ 6 credits = 2 days per week over one quarter or 1 day per week over two quarters plus research and writing time (200 total hours)
- ▶ Develop project report relevant to setting AND a reflective paper AND public presentation
- ▶ Graded A-F:
 - ▶ Project Overview 5%; Project Report 40%; Reflective Paper 30%; Presentation 20%; PA/PAH/HSMP 509 Faculty Assessment 5%

509 Faculty

- ▶ Faculty who approve contract, grade your work, and help resolve problems
 - ▶ Billie Sandberg for MPA students; 503-725-8223, billie.sandberg@pdx.edu
 - ▶ Jill Rissi for MPH: HMP students; 503-725-8217, jrissi@pdx.edu
 - ▶ Theresa Kaimanu for MPA:HA students; 503-725-5155, theresak@pdx.edu
- ▶ Regular faculty advisor reviews and approves draft of contract; PA/PAH/HSMP 509 faculty gives final approval and grades

Finding a Field Site

- ▶ Use your own contacts
- ▶ Get suggestions from your faculty advisor or other faculty
- ▶ Pull information from program listservs
- ▶ Conduct informational interviews
- ▶ Create a special project arrangement at the organization where you work (NOT your regular duties and job)

******* Start looking early *******

What is appropriate for a project?

- ▶ Parameters for the field-based project(s):
 - ▶ Topic of interest to you
 - ▶ Substance of work of interest to the field site and makes a contribution to its operations
 - ▶ Work required integrates across the curriculum
- ▶ Can complete within timeframe available
- ▶ Must have relevant expertise/coursework
 - ▶ For example, do not take on an evaluation project if you have not taken a course on program evaluation or do not have relevant expertise

Can I get paid?

- ▶ Yes if feasible
- ▶ Not expected/required
- ▶ May be negotiated between student and field supervisor
- ▶ Not a condition of establishing the PA/PAH/HSMP 509 experience
- ▶ University not involved in arrangements

The Learning Contract

2016-2017

The Learning Contract

- ▶ Completed and signed two-page cover sheet
- ▶ Unofficial PSU transcript of classes to date (#4)
- ▶ MPA students: Copy of Field of Specialization form, signed by your faculty advisor
- ▶ Current resume (#5)
- ▶ Career goals -- now and 5 years from now (#6)
- ▶ Description of the setting and the work you will do (#7)
- ▶ Learning objectives for PA/PAH/HSMP 509 experience (#8)
- ▶ List of relevant courses completed, theoretical principles, application to PA/PAH/HSMP 509 project (#9)
- ▶ Description of final submissions to be graded (#10)
- ▶ Discussion of relevant Divisional competencies (#11)
- ▶ Signed special registration form(s)

Why is the learning contract so important?

- ▶ Serves as your syllabus for PA/PAH/HSMP 509
- ▶ Allows you to define:
 - ▶ A relevant learning experience
 - ▶ Your expectations
 - ▶ The expectations of the field supervisor
- ▶ Builds upon your career, skills, graduate education
- ▶ Protects you from inappropriate assignments
- ▶ Provides the basis for your final reflection
- ▶ Basis for PA/PAH/HSMP 509 faculty evaluation and grading

#5: Writing a Resume

- ▶ Many resources on campus
 - ▶ Career Center
 - ▶ Library
 - ▶ Writing Center
- ▶ Check these resources for assistance to write/update resume
- ▶ Resume should be current (not as of application to program)

#6: Writing Career Goals

- ▶ Articulate what you want to do in the near-term
- ▶ Articulate where you want to be in 5 years in terms of professional work
- ▶ Ensure relevance to current program of study
- ▶ Consider potential:
 - ▶ Titles
 - ▶ Settings/Kinds of organizations
 - ▶ Responsibilities
- ▶ Not necessary to discuss your current work, volunteer activities or education
- ▶ 2-3 pages in length (double-spaced)

#7: Work Description

- ▶ Describe the setting, organization
- ▶ Identify the supervisor by name and position
- ▶ **With the field supervisor**, define the work to be done and articulate:
 - ▶ Skills, relevant course work/experience
 - ▶ Expectations
 - ▶ Responsibilities
 - ▶ Deliverables/products
- ▶ Specific for the work you will do during PA/PAH/HSMP 509 from the perspective of the field site
- ▶ **2-3 paragraphs** in length (double-spaced)

#8: Writing Learning Objectives

Learning objectives describe the work you will be doing from your perspective as a learner

- ▶ **4-5 objectives** that integrate across your courses completed to date
 - ▶ Define tasks and evidence for each learning objective (i.e. processes and outcomes)
- ▶ What will be different about you as a result of what you learn/do in the PA/PAH/HSMP 509 experience?
 - ▶ New/enhanced knowledge, skills, competencies
- ▶ **PLUS required final objective** on integration and application of curriculum
- ▶ **1-2 pages** in length; see examples pp. 7-9 in student guide

Example: Learning Objective

Objective 1: Develop & Apply Communication Skills

► Tasks:

- Identify relevant constituency groups
- Develop targeted outreach brochures
- Create presentation slides and script
- Speak to at least four community groups

► Evidence:

- Copies of brochure, slide presentations, script, list of community groups
- Written narrative describing process

#9: Relevant Course Content

- ▶ Your experience should draw upon **8-10 courses** you have completed in your current program
- ▶ For **each** course:
 - ▶ List the course name and course number
 - ▶ Identify and discuss specific and relevant **theoretical learning principles**
 - ▶ Discuss how you will **apply** these in your project work
- ▶ Provide evidence you have the necessary academic background to do the defined work
- ▶ **2-3 pages** in length (double-spaced)

#10: Final Submissions

Explanation of your final submissions must include a description of the project report you will be developing for the site.

- ▶ Includes **detailed written documentation** developed for the organization (as relevant)
- ▶ May include **recommendations, conclusions, policies**
- ▶ Should identify any **additional submissions** you will provide that reflect the evidence discussed in your learning objectives
- ▶ Should also discuss **briefly** the project overview, reflective paper, and the presentation

#11: Competency Attainment

Your organizational experience should help you to attain many of your program's competencies.

- ▶ Identify *by number* which of the competencies your experience will help you attain.
- ▶ Describe which competencies will be achieved through which of the learning objectives (may be multiple).
- ▶ Add other clarification to help you focus on the competencies.
- ▶ MPA:HA students should use the health version of the competencies (on website).
- ▶ MPH:HMP students should use the SPH competencies (on website).

Approval of Learning Contract

- Meet with your faculty advisor soon
- Find a placement and field supervisor
- Negotiate project(s) and expectations
- Discuss project, its outcomes and associated tasks with faculty advisor
- Complete elements 6-7 of the learning contract in draft, **email** them to faculty advisor, receive feedback, revise, get faculty advisor approval of draft (iterative)
- **Email** draft of entire learning contract (#6-11), including approved #6-7 to PA/PAH/HSMP 509 faculty, revise, finalize (iterative)
- In-person meetings are not required

Registering for PA/PAH/HSMP 509

2016-2017

To Register for PA/PAH/HSMP 509

- ▶ When PA/PAH/HSMP 509 faculty approves learning contract, prepare all materials in **hard copy** including completed, signed special registration form(s)
- ▶ Register for 6 credits in one quarter, or 3 credits each in 2 consecutive quarters
 - ▶ Complete and sign 1 special registration form (6 credits) or 2 forms for 2 quarters (3 credits each)
- ▶ MPA register for PA 509; MPA:HA for PAH 509; and, MPH:HMP for HSMP 509 (use correct CRN on special registration form)
- ▶ Submit **hard copy** and PA/PAH/HSMP 509 faculty will sign contract and register you (no one else can do this)
- ▶ Registration cannot be done online or without a complete signed contract

Approval/Registration Deadlines

- ▶ Submit complete first draft of #6-7 of the contract to your faculty advisor by email during quarter prior to registration
 - ▶ Faculty advisors need **1-2 weeks** to review
- ▶ Submit draft of entire learning contract (#6-11), including approved #6-7 to PA/PAH/HSMP 509 faculty
 - ▶ PA/PAH/HSMP 509 faculty need **2 weeks** to review draft
 - ▶ Winter 2017: Deadline for advisor-approved draft to 509 faculty is December 12; must be registered by January 19
 - ▶ Spring 2017: Deadline for advisor-approved draft to 509 faculty is March 20; must be registered by April 13
 - ▶ Summer 2017: Deadline for advisor-approved draft to 509 faculty is June 5; must be registered by June 29

Completing PA/PAH/HSMP 509

2016-2017

Important Completion Deadlines

- ▶ To receive a final grade, must hand in all four submissions in hard copy to PA office by:
 - ▶ Fall: Dec 1; Winter: March 10; Spring: May 31; Summer: September 5
- ▶ Presentation follows report submission
- ▶ May complete PA/PAH/HSMP 509 in summer and still participate in June graduation
- ▶ If all requirements not completed by University deadlines, you must negotiate an incomplete with the PA/PAH/HSMP 509 faculty with written agreement on file
 - ▶ You must submit products and present in the next quarter

Completing 509: The Project Overview

- ▶ 3-5 pages double-spaced
- ▶ Includes:
 - ▶ An overview of the setting of the work
 - ▶ The process for completing the work
 - ▶ The outcomes of the work

Completing 509: The Project Report

Project report format varies:

- ▶ Includes **detailed written documentation** developed for the organization (as relevant)
- ▶ May include **recommendations, conclusions, policies**
- ▶ Provided to the organization and the university
- ▶ Should have a **table of contents**; references between narrative of the report and appendices to **track connections**

More on the Project Report

- ▶ Ensure evidence presented reflects **approved learning objectives**, but is not organized by them
- ▶ Must be sufficiently **detailed** to merit 40% of 6 credits
- ▶ Clearly indicate what is **your original work**, and what is the work of others
- ▶ Do not include extraneous “nice to know” information; you are being graded for **your work** not for the work of others
- ▶ Ensure this is a **comprehensive, polished and professional** document

Confidential Material in Report

- ▶ Field supervisor needs to discuss with PA/PAH/HSMP 509 faculty well in advance of project completion
- ▶ Determine what can be released in confidence and what must be blinded
- ▶ Report is only read by one PA/PAH/HSMP 509 faculty and then returned to student
- ▶ Clarify timing of submission and return to maintain confidentiality
- ▶ Ensure student does not get caught in rework to remove confidential information at last minute

Completing the 509: Reflective Paper

- ▶ Reflective paper based upon the experience **(10-12 pages)**
 - ▶ Achievement of learning objectives (or not)
 - ▶ Description of related learning
 - ▶ Opportunities for integration of curricular content
 - ▶ Accomplishment of some/all of the Divisional competencies
 - ▶ Need for future professional development
 - ▶ Implications for future career
 - ▶ Personal narrative describing new insights and observations
 - ▶ Submitted only to university

Completing the 509: Presentation and Assessment

- ▶ Presentation
 - ▶ 10 minute presentation (**no more than 12 slides**)
 - ▶ Submitted in hard copy with other submissions
 - ▶ Presented in public setting, with 5 min. Q&A
- ▶ Competency self-assessment (via email)

Presentations 2016-2017

- ▶ Each student presents 10 minutes on organizational experience (guide on website) + 5 minutes of Q&A
 - ▶ Be attentive to professional style and attire
- ▶ Field supervisors, faculty, students attend
- ▶ Opportunity to synthesize, share experiences, professional development
- ▶ Dates for 2016/2017:
 - ▶ Fall - December 9;
 - ▶ Winter - March 15;
 - ▶ Spring - June 8;
 - ▶ Summer - Sept. 18
- ▶ **Required** of all students to complete PA/PAH/HSMP 509
- ▶ Alternative if out of town is via Skype, **no waivers**

Grade Determination

- ▶ Project narrative (5%)
 - ▶ Summation of the project and nature of work completed
- ▶ Comprehensive final project report (40%)
 - ▶ Complete and detailed documentation and synthesis of work, context, processes, challenges, accomplishments, and outcomes; professionally presented product
- ▶ Thorough written reflection (30%)
 - ▶ Accomplishment of learning objectives, insights into career goals and directions, thoughts on relevant coursework, competency attainment
- ▶ Professional presentation (20%)
 - ▶ Satisfactory summary and professional delivery
- ▶ PA/PAH/HSMP 509 faculty assessment of progress (5%)
- ▶ Incomplete assigned if insufficient documentation to assess; must then complete next quarter
- ▶ 509 faculty will provide guidance for incompletes

What to do if ...?

- ▶ The emphasis of the work changes, OR
 - ▶ The breadth/scope of the work changes, OR
 - ▶ There are major disagreements, OR
 - ▶ The field supervisor changes, etc.
-
- ▶ Refer back to the learning contract
 - ▶ Attempt to resolve at the site
 - ▶ Contact the PA/PAH/HSMP 509 faculty
 - ▶ Revise your learning objectives
 - ▶ Get new objectives/evidence approved

Other Useful Information

- ▶ Plan ahead
- ▶ Be attentive to published deadlines
- ▶ Follow the guidelines to avoid delays
- ▶ Be prepared to revise materials
- ▶ Use current 509 materials on PA website
- ▶ Ensure PA/PAH/HSMP 509 faculty have current contact information for you
- ▶ Respond promptly to all 509-related emails
- ▶ If you have not had a contact from the 509 faculty by one month prior to submission deadline, check your spam/junk folder for emails!

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Good luck!