

**Field Placement in Psychology**  
**PSYC 495**  
**Spring, 2010**

**"The great end of life is not knowledge, but action."**  
-T. H. Huxley

Instructor:

Joann Grayson, Ph.D., Clinical Psychologist  
Miller Hall - #1157  
Telephone: 568-6482 (JMU)  
833-5593 (RESIDENCE)  
(There is an answering service on the home telephone -  
a message may be left anytime).  
Pager: 574-8803 (Put in your number and I will call you back).

Office Hours:	<b>Monday</b>	<b>9:00-11:00</b>
	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>9:00-11:00; 2:00-3:00</b>
	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>9:00-11:00; 2:00-3:00</b>
Class Meetings:	<b>Monday</b>	<b>11:45- 1:15</b>
	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>11:45- 1:15</b>
	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>11:45- 1:15</b>

Objectives:

Field placement will offer you several unique benefits. First, you will have the opportunity to use knowledge gained in other courses to solve problems and challenges in the real world. Second, you will develop and refine your practical skills in working with people. Third, you will be able to observe professionals in psychology-related jobs. Fourth, you will be able to demonstrate your abilities on the job, so your supervisors (on site supervisors and university supervisors) can judge your potential as a professional. This may be particularly helpful if you need a recommendation for a job or for graduate school.

Field placement is a capstone course. Sixty percent of the grade is on capstone requirements and 40 percent of the grade is assigned by field supervisors. Therefore, Psychology 495 also meets objectives of the capstone courses. These include:

- Learning to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information from primary sources to address psychologically relevant issues (the logs and the paper meet this objective)
- Demonstrate effective written communication skills using APA style to prepare empirically-based reports, literature reviews, theoretical papers, and/or program evaluation (the paper meets this objective)
- Demonstrate effective oral communication skills at the individual level using one or more professional formats (e.g. individual paper/proposal presentation; participate as a member of a symposium, etc.) ( the oral presentation meets this objective.)

### Requirements:

1. A minimum of 150 hours per semester (approximately 10 to 12 hours per week) on site work.
2. Attendance at class meetings (only one absence allowed without a grade penalty).
3. Weekly logs. 75 points
4. Paper. 75 points
5. Supervisor evaluations. 125 points
6. Presentation. 50 points

### Grading:

A = 300 – 325 (A = 310 – 325; A- = 300 – 309)  
B = 275 – 299 (B+ = 293 – 299; B = 285 – 292; B- = 275-284)  
C = 225 – 274 (C+ = 258– 274; C = 242 – 257; C- = 225 – 241)  
D = 200 - 224  
F = below 200

Field placement is a difficult and demanding course. In a typical semester, 40 to 60 percent of the class will earn a grade of “A” or “A-“ for exceptional performance. Both grades in the “A” range and grades in the “B” range are considered very good performance. Students receiving “B” grades AND those receiving “A” grades have pursued and graduate school successfully and have received very strong letters of recommendation. Students receiving a grade of “C” or lower generally have limitations in performance.

### Hour Requirement:

Hours are on-site hours or part-hours only. Transportation time does not count unless the transportation is on-site. For example, if you are working at the McNulty Center and are making a home visit, travel from the agency to the home and back is counted. If you are at the courts and travel from your office to the detention center, travel time is counted.

Some off-site time can be counted. If your supervisor asks you to take home work, perform library research, or run errands, these activities count towards your total. **YOU MAY NOT COUNT THE TIME SPENT READING FOR YOUR PAPER.** You may count time spent reading other materials assigned or suggested to you by your site supervisor or the class instructor. Reading time is limited to 5 hours except for those at the JMU Counseling Center, those at JMU Learning Strategies or those engaged in research. (If your reading total will exceed 5 hours, get clearance from the class instructor.) If you submit time for off-site reading, you need to submit a log for the reading, reflecting on what you have learned.

Record daily time in quarter-hour units (time less than 15 minutes is dropped).

Example:       Monday, January 6  
                  Time in: 9:07 Time out: 2:17  
                  Total: 5 hours 0 minutes

Hours are to be submitted on a separate sheet from weekly logs and must be certified as accurate by an on-site supervisor. The supervisor should sign next to or below the time, not at the top of the sheet. Any employee who knows you worked can sign your hour sheet. Hours and weekly logs should be turned in each week at the class meeting. (Hint: make a Xerox of your hour sheet for yourself so you can double-check your time.)

If you don't have your hours signed, turn in a copy of the unsigned sheet. The signature can be obtained later. Please turn in weekly logs on time. There is a late penalty for late logs but not for late hour sheets. Please be certain that the dates and times of the hour sheet and the log sheet match.

Be aware that vacations and holidays differ in the working world. This may affect your hours in a given week. Check now for the calendar of holidays. Remember that the 150 hours are a **minimum**. Schedule extra time so you are not caught short because of snow days, illness or family emergency. Note that the 150-hour minimum is required for an "A" or an "A-".

### Logs

Logs are a major way to record your ideas and to communicate with the instructor. Logs serve several purposes. First, logs document your activities and involvement in your placement. Second, logs serve as a legal record should there be a question about your performance. Third, logs help you become accustomed to documentation, which is required by insurance and public agencies and often in private industry as well. Fourth, logs allow you to demonstrate your learning.

Logs should mention the major activities of your day (clients observed, meetings attended, tasks performed). In grading logs, the instructor will look for evidence of thinking and learning. Thus, your ideas and analysis are of much importance. What are your ideas about a client's difficulties? What factors are important in a given situation? How can service be provided better and/or what factors limit service delivery? Whether you are involved in an agency fund-raiser or observing a meeting or sitting in court or helping analyze data about fast food preferences, you should be thinking and your log should reflect learning and integration of information from past courses.

Sample logs are available in Dr. Grayson's office. Your weekly logs are not returned so Xerox a copy if you want to keep your own record. There should be a log for each day's hours. This includes work done off-site or attendance at a conference. Typed logs are preferred but handwritten or a combination of typed and handwritten are acceptable. Logs should not contain complete names or identifying information about clients. Use first names, pseudo names, or initials when describing cases.

Logs should be turned in weekly and are due by noon on Wednesdays for the preceding week. Logs turned in late are subject to grade penalty.

NOTE: For each day or part-day that you work, you should have a corresponding log entry.

### Class Attendance:

Class attendance is required. One absence is allowed for sickness or other excused activity. In the event of prolonged sickness requiring hospitalization or time at home away from JMU, an incomplete will be arranged. Class absences in excess of one will be penalized by lowering the grade (13 points) for each occurrence. Missing part of a class counts as half an absence. Out of courtesy to others, try to arrive on time. Missing more than 15 minutes of class whether because of arriving late or whether because of leaving early counts as a half absence (6 points penalty). You may, on occasion, substitute attendance in one of the other classes. Please give advance notice if you would like to come on another class day. This makeup is meant to allow you to attend a special staffing or training or other field placement event or to accommodate illness, not simply for your convenience.

\*Please note that while most class meetings are as a group, two additional class meetings (midterm and final) are scheduled individually. Attendance is required at both group and individual meetings.

### Supervisor Evaluations:

You will develop, in consultation with your site supervisor and the JMU instructor, a form for your evaluation. The evaluation form will be completed by your site supervisor as well as by yourself if you choose to do a self-evaluation. Sample forms are available in Dr. Grayson's office.

A rough draft of the evaluation form is due about the third week of the semester. At midterm, the evaluation form will be used to offer structured feedback on your strengths and weaknesses. Both midterm and final evaluations will count towards the grade. Your optional self-rating can be included in your final report. It does not count towards your grade. An individual session will be scheduled at midterm and during finals week to provide feedback to you on your performance. The individual meeting is considered as a class for the attendance policy.

### Presentation:

Each week, one or more of the class members will give a presentation. The presentation should cover the following: 1) The history of your agency; 2) The staffing pattern (how many of each type of staff are employed); 3) Organizational pattern -- who is in charge; 4) How your agency is funded; 5) Services provided; 6) Who and how many are served in a typical year; 7) Goals of your agency/business; 8) Examples of typical ways staff spend their time; 9) Plans for future (expand, cut-back, different services, different populations served). These points need not be covered in order. Sites are very different and presentations vary. Some sites have slide or video presentations about the agency. It is fine to use these. Your supervisors or clients may come to assist you, but be certain that the presentation is yours. Don't "hand over" your presentation to someone else. Bring any printed material available about your agency or make a chart or poster. The presentation should be approximately 45 minutes in length. Consult the presentation checklist in preparing your presentation.

Students are not graded on class participation. However, it is expected that students will participate in class by:

- a) Paying attention to classmates' presentation. This means students should put other work away and not read or do other work during presentations. Students who are reading or doing other work during presentations may experience penalties (up to 3 points for the first occurrence and up to 5 points for a subsequent occurrence);
- b) Asking questions or offering observations about a classmates' presentation;

- c) Giving a report on your site activities without needing to be called upon.

Paper:

This summary and critique of 8-10 double spaced pages (minimum) is a capstone requirement. Use APA format for this paper. This paper should integrate your practical experience with the knowledge you have gained in classes. The paper should:

- a) Describe models of service delivery and the “best practices” and standards for the services offered at your site. Example: If you are at the intensive outpatient treatment for alcoholism, summarize the methods for some aspects of the treatment offered. The “best practices “and what the clinician should do should be the focus.
- b) Point by point, describe how the services at your site differ (or don't) from models and methods of service delivery in the literature.

See separate guidelines for specifics. Sample papers are available in Dr. Grayson’s office.

It is highly recommended that students complete their papers as much as possible for pregrading. Pregrading is not counted towards the final grade—it is “free advice” about how to succeed with the paper. No extensions are available on pregrading. Pregrading is the best way to do well on this assignment.

Safety: There are dangers in any job or field site. For example, those working in hospitals (and elsewhere!) are likely to be exposed to diseases/viruses. Work place violence is a regular occurrence nationwide. If your site has safety training, please attend it. If your site has safety rules, please follow them. Report unsafe conditions or dangerous situations immediately to both your site supervisor and to the course instructor. Don’t be shy about safety. If you feel unsafe or notice a problem, SPEAK UP!

As you travel to work and back to campus, please be safe. For example, don’t stop your car for strangers and don’t stop in an unlit, untraveled area for anyone (even a police officer – proceed to the nearest well-lit spot). You may page me (574-8803) any time of day or night (even if your problem is unrelated to field placement).

Individual Help: Students are welcome to schedule a 20-minute appointment on the scheduling board on the office door. Individual appointments are useful if: a) your placement is not what you hoped it would be; b) you have a problem at your placement and want individual input on it; c) you need help with your presentation or paper; d) any other concerns.

Malpractice Insurance: Student Professional Liability insurance is available from several companies. It is highly recommended that students purchase a liability policy.

General Expectations:

Sites and supervisors vary in the amount of time spent with students. There are no specific requirements for supervisors of undergraduate placements (this differs from graduate training). Students are expected to communicate with their supervisors, to seek supervision when needed, and to ask when they have questions. Students are expected to be active and take responsibility for identifying the experiences that will help their growth. If there are activities that interest you at your site, ask if you can be included or if you can observe.

Students are expected to adhere to dress codes, requests, and other policies of the site. Students who fail to follow policies can be subject to termination or restrictions of activities. Students should remember that they represent the Psychology Department and should try to present themselves in a professional manner.

Students should NEVER take clients or child clients to their homes. Giving clients your home address and/or phone number is discouraged. Please check with your supervisor before supplying any personal information to clients.

### **Schedule**

Jan 11	First meeting for Monday class
Jan 12	First meeting for Tuesday class
Jan 13	First meeting for Wednesday class
Jan 27	Signed statement on ethical behavior due/ paper topic due
Feb 3	Rough draft evaluation due / reference list due
Feb ???	Rough draft evaluation due for Thursday class / paper topic due
Feb 24	Two copies of completed evaluation due
March 3	Integrative Papers due for pre-grading (turn in whatever is done)
March 10	Supervisor mid-term Evaluations due (these should be sent directly)
Week of March 15	Individual midterm meetings- NO CLASS
April 14	Integrative Papers due at <u>NOON</u>
April 19	Last group class for Monday's class
April 20	Last group class for Tuesday's class
April 21	Last group class for Wednesday's class
April 30	Final Evaluations by site supervisors due to Dr. Grayson ( <u>these should be sent directly</u> - not delivered by the student)
Week of May 3	Final individual meetings

NOTE: Class meets every week- the schedule highlights deadlines

NOTE: Due dates mean the material is received by NOON of that day.