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MHA PROGRAM OF STUDY

Health services meet critical human needs and are a leading force in our nation’s economy. Today, industry leaders, health insurance groups, hospitals, physicians, and other providers are working together to build large networks and strategic alliances that deliver coordinated, cost-effective, high quality care. The health care system of the future will focus on greater efficiency and quality through improved technology, organization, and management. Penn State’s MHA program is designed to help prepare tomorrow’s leaders who can direct health service organizations in this increasingly complex and dynamic environment. U.S. News and World Report recently ranked Penn State’s Department of Health Policy and Administration in the top 20 programs in health administration in the nation.

THE SUMMER ADMINISTRATIVE RESIDENCY

All students pursuing a Master of Health Administration are required to complete a 10- to 12-week, full-time summer administrative residency in partial fulfillment of the requirements for completion of the MHA degree. The residency provides MHA students with an opportunity to apply classroom-acquired knowledge to the work environment under the supervision of professionals. It also enables students to gain a better appreciation for the pressures that affect decision making in today’s health care environment and to identify additional skills they will need to acquire to better prepare them for entering that environment. In addition to providing the requisite practical experience in a healthcare setting, the residency supplies 1 credit towards degree completion.

Depending on their backgrounds and professional interests, students may seek opportunities in a wide range of organizations, including physician practice groups, hospitals, health systems, long-term care organizations, managed care companies, or government research or policy organizations. Some will have strong financial and analytical skills. Others will be more interested in organizational management, planning, or information systems. For this reason, it is important for graduate students and potential preceptors to plan thoughtfully about the types of experiences, projects, and responsibilities appropriate to meeting the needs of the organization and the educational and training needs of the student.

Organizations that train graduate student residents have the opportunity to observe and evaluate potential recruits, expand their particular programs and services, provide better or additional services to their clientele, or complete special projects or educational programs. Preceptors also provide valuable input to the MHA faculty on issues from curriculum relevancy to professional needs and concerns.
Objectives: At the end of the summer residency, the student will be able to:

1. Integrate multiple competencies * – written, quantitative, verbal – into one or more projects;
2. Articulate the function of the organization in which he or she worked as a part of the health care system;
3. Manage multiple projects simultaneously;
4. Explain orally in detail complex projects on which he or she worked;
5. Articulate the differences between “customers” and “stakeholders” and “internal” and “external” constituencies;
6. Describe the internal environment of the organization in which he or she worked and the external environment in which that organization functions; and
7. Articulate an improved sense of self-awareness, vis-á-vis recognized new career competencies;
8. Demonstrate applied quantitative skill associated with a project on which they have worked.

*Preceptors will be asked at the conclusion of the residency to rate the students demonstration of all competency areas with the express understanding that a student may not be given opportunities which involve all areas (for example a student’s residency may not include opportunities in IT or financial matters). Preceptors are instructed to mark such competencies with N/A for Not Applicable or Not Observed.
SUMMER RESIDENCY
INFORMATION SHEET

All students should complete this form before leaving campus for their residencies.

Name: ____________________________________________________________

Organization: ______________________________________________________

Organization address: ______________________________________________

Preceptor: _________________________________________________________

Dates of Residency: ________________________________________________

Summer address: __________________________________________________

Summer e-mail address: ____________________________________________

Summer phone number: ____________________________________________

Compensation: Please list the amount (in dollars) of compensation you expect in each category.

_____ Housing  _____ Meal Passes  _____ Travel
_____ Stipend   _____ Wages     _____ Tuition reimbursement
_____ Parking  _____ Other      _____ Scholarship
_____ Conference Fees
MHA STUDENT RESIDENT

For the residency to be successful, each MHA student must be an active participant in the process. Students receive assistance from the department in identifying potential summer administrative residency sites, but ultimately the responsibility for securing the summer administrative residency lies with the graduate student.

During the preparation for the summer administrative residency and throughout the experience itself, students must become involved in a self-assessment process in which they define and redefine goals and objectives, make informed choices, and evaluate their own personal and professional growth and development.

The summer administrative residency is intended to provide the MHA student with an opportunity to develop his/her own professional role through observation of others and by experiencing role-related tasks. Theories, concepts, and skills learned in the classroom are applied in appropriate settings under the guidance of an experienced preceptor.

During the summer administrative residency, students are expected to meet all the requirements and responsibilities established by the preceptor and to work to the best of his/her abilities. Administrative residents are expected to be timely, dress professionally, and behave appropriately. In addition, they are required to:

1. Ensure that the Summer Administrative Residency Work Plan (attached) is fully completed and submitted to the Residency Instructor. Residencies cannot be approved if the work plan is not submitted by the required deadline date.

2. Complete Reports (see page 17).

3. Make sure the preceptor is aware of the evaluation form, which must be completed and mailed. Schedule an appointment with the preceptor to receive a professional review at the conclusion of the residency.

4. Deliver a formal oral presentation of summer administrative residency to MHA faculty and fellow students (see page 19).

5. Read The New York Times and/or USA Today daily for topical healthcare subjects.
THE PRECEPTOR

Preceptors for the summer administrative residencies are health organization professionals who have an interest in serving as mentors to other professionals. They make an important commitment to the development of emerging professionals. They provide guidance and coordinate the graduate interns’ experiences in a supportive, professionally stimulating environment. The role of the preceptor is similar to that of a supervisor to an employee, with the exception that a strong educational focus characterizes the entire experience.

Throughout the summer administrative residency, the preceptor assumes a key role in the graduate student’s development. Through regularly scheduled meetings, the preceptor interacts with the graduate student and reviews progress, answers questions, helps resolve problems, and reviews performance in the context of mutually established goals and objectives.

The preceptor’s role extends beyond the time frame of the practicum itself. The following suggested guidelines represent activities normally performed by preceptors before, during, and after the residency experience.

BEFORE THE SUMMER RESIDENCY

1. Meet with the MHA student resident to develop realistic objectives for the summer administrative residency experience.

2. Work with the student to design an appropriate work plan that contains a balance of general administrative exposure and focused skill application.

3. Orient other appropriate personnel to the MHA summer administrative residency program and the role of the resident.

4. Make sure that adequate space and support services are available to the graduate student upon arrival.

5. Ensure all pre-arrival arrangements have been made with other offices and that those arrangements have been communicated to the graduate student, including Human Resources, Employee Health, etc.

6. Participate in an initial conference call of other preceptors and the course instructor, if needed.
DURING THE SUMMER RESIDENCY

1. Make sure the MHA student is provided with an orientation to the organization. This usually includes a tour and information about the organization’s mission, history, policies, and organizational structure.

2. Finalize a schedule for the summer administrative residency with the student.

3. Arrange regular meeting times to discuss progress, problems, and questions and provide feedback to the graduate student on an ongoing basis.

4. Introduce the MHA student to other key personnel.

5. Arrange for the student to attend a variety of staff and board meetings.

6. Provide opportunities for the student to observe the relationship between the organization and other local, regional, and national health organizations.

7. Provide opportunities for the student to become aware of the relationship between the organization and its constituents and the community that it serves.

8. Meet with the MHA student at the end of the summer administrative residency to evaluate his/her performance and to complete and mail the graduate student Summer Administrative Residencies Evaluation Form (attached).

9. Write a letter of reference to mail with the evaluation form. This will be kept in the student’s file and may be used by the student during his or her search for fellowship or employment opportunities. A well-written letter at this time may prevent numerous requests for recommendations in the near future.

AFTER THE SUMMER RESIDENCY

1. Maintain contact with the MHA faculty regarding future student resident placement opportunities and other mutual interests.

2. Inform the residency instructor of special needs regarding requests for residents to assist with meeting the organization’s specific needs. This may include requests for MHA students with specific skills to assist with forthcoming projects.
CHECKLIST FOR STUDENTS

_____ Register for HPA 896 (1 credit) by the deadline for the first summer session.

_____ Pay Bursar’s bill.

_____ Notify HPA graduate staff assistant of summer residence (address and telephone) before leaving campus for the summer.

_____ Submit completed Work Plan to the residency instructor; deadline is June 1.

_____ Make sure that either you or your preceptor submits your preceptor’s resume to the course instructor; deadline is June 1.

_____ Submit reports to course instructor by noon on Mondays following the week worked.

Checklist for Preceptors

_____ Submit updated resume, if one has not been provided in two years.

_____ Meet with summer administrative resident and complete and sign Summer Administrative Residency Work Plan.

_____ Meet with MHA student/resident to provide end of semester performance review.

_____ Complete and mail the Summer Administrative Residency Performance Evaluation Form to:

Joe Dionisio  
HPA 896 Instructor  
The Pennsylvania State University  
Department of Health Policy and Administration  
118 Keller Building  
University Park, PA 16802

Remember to plan for next year’s Penn State summer administrative resident.
HPA 896 INSTRUCTOR

The instructor is responsible for maintaining relationships with the MHA students, the preceptors, and the department. Specific responsibilities include:

1. Develop and maintain relationships with health service organizations and agencies at which students may secure appropriate internships.

2. Provide students with consultation and information helpful in securing and planning summer administrative residencies.

3. Approve each student’s Summer Administrative Residency Work Plan to ensure that the summer administrative residency experience will provide an acceptable balance of general administrative exposure and focused application of skills.

4. Be accessible to MHA students and preceptors throughout the residency period. Graduate students and preceptors should feel free to contact the Residency Director at any time.

5. Encourage graduate and preceptors to give constructive feedback regarding the academic and professional preparation provided by the department.

6. Provide information preceptors may need to ensure a successful experience for student and preceptor alike. Organize one or more conference calls facilitating preceptors’ communication with each other in sharing best practices.
WORK PLAN

MHA student’s name: ____________________________________________________________

Address while on residency: __________________________________________________

Preceptor’s name: ____________________________________________________________

Title: __________________________________________________________________________

Health care organization: ______________________________________________________

Department/Division: __________________________________________________________

Address: ___________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

Telephone: _______________ Fax: ___________ E-mail: _____________________________

Date of residency commencement: ______________________________________________

Date of residency completion: __________________________________________________

MHA student’s objectives:

1. ________________________________________________________________________

2. ________________________________________________________________________

3. ________________________________________________________________________

4. ________________________________________________________________________

5. ________________________________________________________________________
RESIDENCY WORK PLAN

Although it is understood that a summer administrative residency may evolve as the preceptor and MHA student get to know one another and the graduate student’s skills are assessed, it is important for there to be some agreement about the type of administrative experiences the student will have. Please list observational opportunities (committees, board meetings, clinics, etc.) and participatory activities (committees, surveys, projects, assessment and planning activities, etc.) below. At least one project to which a student is assigned should have a significant quantitative component. Examples include, but are not limited to: a cost-benefit analysis, a market share study, a revenue flow analysis, an operational efficiency assessment, etc.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.
Additional Duties/Limitations:

The summer administrative resident will work the equivalent of a full-time work week as defined by the host organization, generally maintaining the same work schedule as the preceptor. Hours may vary. Occasionally evening and weekend hours may be required. In general, the residency should consist of approximately 400 hours of mentored experience in a 10-week period.

The MHA student will be expected to complete required reports (see Page 17). For ensured confidentiality, no patient or employee names will be used in the reports, unless the graduate student has been given written permission to do so. Also, the student will not copy or use any confidential business information without the express consent of the preceptor. The graduate student is fully aware of these requirements and agrees to the preceptor’s right to request and retain copies of any academic work completed for the residency.

If unusual circumstances or emergencies prevent the completion of any of the commitments stated above, the appropriate parties who signed this document must be consulted and give approval prior to any other action.

If the MHA student defaults on the summer administrative residency agreement, all credits may have to be forfeited, and the student may receive a failing grade for the residency.

MHA student signature:________________________________Date:______________

Preceptor signature:__________________________________Date: ____________

HPA 896 Instructor signature:___________________________Date: ____________
REQUIREMENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION

Each student is assigned a letter grade for the summer administrative residency, based on the following criteria:

Preceptor’s Evaluation 25%
Reports 50%
Final Presentation 25%
**PRECEPTOR’S EVALUATION**

Note to Preceptors: Please complete and return this evaluation to the Residency Director at the end of the summer administrative residency. If you are willing to serve as a reference for this graduate student, please also attach a letter of reference that can be used during the next year for employment or fellowship searches.

It would be unusual for a preceptor to have observed all of the following competencies. Therefore, we would expect – even prefer – a preceptor mark “not applicable” than give a lower rating because the competency was not observed.

MHA student’s name: ___________________________ Dates of residency: _____________ to _____________

Evaluation prepared by: ___________________________

Using the scale below, please rate the student’s performance in the following areas.

| 1 - Beginner | 2 - Evolving | 3 - Intermediate | 4 - Advancing | 5 - Expert | N/A |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HEALTH INDUSTRY KNOWLEDGE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulatory and Delivery Systems: Understanding of the</td>
<td>n/a – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>structures and institutions that make up the US healthcare system</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Incentives and Analysis: Understanding of payment systems, incentives and basic economic theory (e.g., supply and demand)</td>
<td>n/a – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epidemiologic Analysis: Understanding of disease patterns, needs assessment and policy/intervention formulation</td>
<td>n/a – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Issues and Analysis: Understanding of health professionals, clinical technologies and terminology</td>
<td>n/a – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MANAGEMENT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Analysis: The ability to analyze, interpret and make decisions based on financial statements; understanding financial flows, budgeting and time value of money concepts</td>
<td>n/a – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market Analysis: The ability to define and analyze markets and customers; understanding of competition and promotion</td>
<td>n/a – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Awareness: The ability to identify and understand organizational cultures, structures, processes, politics and power dynamics</td>
<td>n/a – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources Management: The ability to apply the principles of organizational behavior and motivation to compensation, job analysis and design and evaluation</td>
<td>n/a – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process Management: The ability to analyze process flows, conduct process analysis and redesign, and understand operating systems</td>
<td>n/a – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Planning: The ability to conduct external situational analysis, develop and specify strategy, and understand the principles of strategic alignment</td>
<td>n/a – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project Management</strong></td>
<td>The ability to establish and stick to timelines, set and reach milestones and targets, engage in teamwork and evaluate performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Change Leadership</strong></td>
<td>The ability to identify change opportunities, set and/or respond to strategic visions, conduct internal situational analysis, and guide strategy execution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ETHICS &amp; PROFESSIONALISM</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legal Analysis</strong></td>
<td>Understanding of the law-making process and the ability to apply existing health law to decision-making processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethical Decision-Making</strong></td>
<td>Understanding and application of ethical concepts, frameworks and demonstrates an orientation towards social responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Achievement Orientation</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates a desire for excellence, sets priorities and works to improve performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professionalism</strong></td>
<td>Acts with integrity, demonstrates social accountability and exhibits openness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-Confidence</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates self-awareness, independence and poise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interpersonal Understanding</strong></td>
<td>Exhibits empathy for others and demonstrates an orientation towards understanding and serving others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relationship Building</strong></td>
<td>Interacts positively with others, shows compassion and exhibits an ability to trust and be trustworthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collaboration</strong></td>
<td>Recognizes interdependence with others, exhibits cooperative behavior, and is a team player</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CRITICAL THINKING</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information Seeking</strong></td>
<td>The ability to ask the right questions, identify the key sources of information and delve deeper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Data Analysis</strong></td>
<td>The ability to organize data, conduct statistical analysis and interpret both quantitative and qualitative data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Analytical Thinking</strong></td>
<td>The ability to identify relationships and recognize patterns and trend in data and information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Innovative Thinking</strong></td>
<td>The ability to apply rules and logic; demonstrates a forward thinking orientation and the ability to develop sound solutions to problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMMUNICATION SKILLS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Listening Skills</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates the ability to pay attention to, comprehend and respond to verbal communications in a variety of settings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Written Word</strong></td>
<td>The ability to compose the written word in an appropriate way, using proper grammar and vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spoken Word</strong></td>
<td>The ability to communicate verbally with clarity, using appropriate tone, enunciation and word choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Verbal Skills</strong></td>
<td>The appropriateness of posture, body language, facial expressions, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Additional Comments:

__________________________  ______________________
Preceptor’s signature         Date
ASSIGNMENTS

Each MHA student who completes a summer administrative residency must complete four reports about the residency experience. The purposes of the reports are as follows:

1. To provide a record from which to develop the student’s Oral Presentation

2. To provide a guide to direct the student in his or her study of the organization

3. To provide a vehicle for sharing with the HPA faculty and future MHA students information about the student’s experiences.

Students must be aware of issues related to patient, client, and corporate confidentiality. Confidential information should not be included in the reports without express consent from the Preceptor. Students should be willing to provide a complete copy of the reports to the Preceptor if requested.

Reports should be no a minimum of two pages, but not to exceed three single-spaced, and should be submitted via CANVAS.
Directed Learning Questions

Report 1 – Due Date: End of second week
Describe the ownership and structure of the organization for which you are working. If it is a subsidiary of a parent corporation, include a description of it. Include an organizational chart and indicate where in the organization your department is located. How did the organization come to be structured in the way it is? (i.e., initial development, mergers, acquisitions, joint ventures, etc.) Describe the responsibilities and functions of the department. What does the department contribute to the organization as a whole?

Report 2 – Due Date: End of fifth week
Describe the external environment in which your organization functions – what are the key threats to its success? What are some of the opportunities available to your organization?

Report 3 - Due Date: End of tenth week
Demonstrate a quantitative project on which you have worked (or are working) during your residency. This may be a cost-benefit analysis or market-share analysis or other project requiring the use of Excel and requiring multiple calculations or iterations.

Last Week: Meet with your preceptor for your final evaluation.

Report 4 - Due Within One-Week of Your Return
Prepare a one page confidential memo on your residency experience...be sure to comment on how the organization helped you achieve your objectives, the effectiveness of your preceptor, and whether you’d recommend the residency site to others.
ORAL PRESENTATION

A portion of the residency grade is the oral presentation of your residency experience. Conducted during the fall semester of Year 2, the presentation is a formal discussion of key aspects of the summer administrative residency, followed by a question-and-answer period. The presentation is considered to be a professional assignment and should reflect the communication and technology skills acquired during Year 1.

The presentations are given in the MHA Oral Presentation Competition. The class will be divided into two or three groups for the preliminary rounds. Presentations will be judged by a panel of judges consisting of practitioners and chaired by a member of the HPA faculty. Winners of the preliminary round will present a second time to a different panel of judges. The preliminary round of the competition is ordinarily held on the Friday before classes start and the final round is ordinarily the following Friday. Students choosing not to attend either the preliminary or final rounds of presentations will be penalized one letter grade. Support for attending a professional conference is provided to the finalists.

A. Format and Content. The 15- to 20-minute presentation is directed toward a panel of judges comprised of practitioners and faculty, as well as an audience of Year 1 and Year 2 MHA students and HPA faculty. Presenters should plan on approximately 10 to 15 minutes for questions, in addition to their prepared presentations. Individual presentations should not exceed 30 minutes, including questions and answers. It should include the following topics:

- Very brief introduction
- Residency objectives
- Brief description of the health care organization
- Explanation of major activities performed
- Relevance of MHA classes
- Lessons learned/advice to Year 1 students

B. Evaluation. The judges will evaluate each presentation. A letter grade is assigned by the Instructor and is based on the following criteria:

- Content: discussion of content areas listed in Section A;
- Style: presentation, communication, and technology skills;
- Audio-visual materials: overheads, slides, etc.;
- Responses to questions
FREQUENTLYAskedQuestions

1. What should a preceptor do if there are questions about the summer administrative residency or if problems arise during the residency?

The preceptor should contact the residency Instructor, Mr. Joe Dionisio, regarding any questions or problems at (814) 865-3934 or by e-mail at jdd19@psu.edu.

2. Are students insured?

Because MHA students are not performing clinical duties, they generally do not need professional liability insurance. For most employers, student administrative residents can be used without affecting their insurance. If, however, the placement requires the graduate student to obtain coverage, the graduate student is responsible for obtaining coverage, and the preceptor must notify the graduate student of that responsibility. A number of companies carry graduate student liability coverage.

3. What about compensation for summer administrative residents?

Although residents are seeking training opportunities, they provide valuable service to the organizations for which they work. They frequently are able to complete projects that would have taken the commitment of a large amount of staff time, and the students bring skills and knowledge to the projects. In addition, the amount of time they work to complete the residency makes additional full-time employment prohibitive.

All agreements about compensation are ultimately up to the preceptor, the organization, and the summer administrative resident. Preceptors are encouraged to offer compensation to the graduate student, if possible. If graduate students cannot be salaried, compensation can be provided in a number of other creative ways. Residents can be put on wage payroll similar to other temporary employees. Stipends for travel or other expenses, meal passes, lodging, attendance at conferences, and tuition reimbursement are all valuable forms of compensation.

4. How long does the summer administrative residency/field experience last?

The minimum summer administrative residency length is 10 weeks of full-time work.