



Northeastern
UNIVERSITY

College Student Development and Counseling Program
Department of Counseling and Applied Educational Psychology
Bouvé College of Health Sciences, Northeastern University

Learning Contract

Proposed Practicum Site:

Office or Functional Unit: MIT Careers Office (MITCO)
College or University: Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)

Job Description:

The Career Assistant for Preprofessional Advising is an 18-20 hour position in the MIT Careers Office (MITCO). The CA working in this area is considered part of the Preprofessional Team, which provides services to students interested in health-related and law fields. The preprofessional CA responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

1. Cover letter and resume walk-in coverage specifically for prehealth and prelaw students.
2. Conducting mock interviews for prehealth and prelaw students.
3. Coordinating and assisting with the implementation of various events (both departmentally sponsored and student-group sponsored), such as the Advisor/Advisee mixer.
4. Updating and maintaining both existing presentations and the preprofessional portion of the MITCO website.
5. With supervisor approval, individually counseling students interested in pursuing a health-related or law career (most likely to occur second semester).
6. Maintaining and updating the Preprofessional CA training manual.

The Preprofessional CA will report directly to the Assistant Director for Preprofessional Advising, and will participate in weekly one-to-one meetings to assess their progress throughout the year.

Candidates interested in applying for the Preprofessional CA position should be working towards (or have) a master's degree and possess high levels of self-motivation and organizational skills.

Personal and Professional Interest in Learning Experience:

During the spring semester of my first year in graduate school, I interned in the Career Services office at Northeastern University. This experience provided me with skills as they relate to resume and cover letter critiques as well as career databases. I enjoyed the environment of Career Services, as I found it both intriguing and fulfilling to provide support to students determining the course of their professional future. However, while the time I spent in this office was positive, I felt as though it would be beneficial to my personal and professional development if I sought a similar opportunity but in a different institution. It is for these aforementioned reasons that I am completing my practicum in the MIT Careers Office, specifically in the area of Preprofessional Advising.

By completing my practicum at MIT, I will have the opportunity to work with a specific group of students, guiding them as they make important decisions regarding their professional careers. Working with a different student constituency affords me the chance to better understand the intricacies of an institution that varies greatly from those with which I have had exposure. This learning experience will also enable me to develop professionally, as I am working with knowledgeable individuals who maintain a sincere passion for their work. Such relationships will allow me to establish strong connections and provide me with greater professional networking skills.

Specific Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of my practicum (2006-2007), I would like to have:

1. Identified the components and developed an understanding of medical school requirements as they relate to the preparation and application process for a student pursuing such a career.
2. Engaged in interpretation and inquiry regarding the career development process—from initial interest to committed pursuit—for students interested in professional fields (e.g. medicine, health and law).
3. Demonstrated understanding of the prehealth and prelaw statistics for MITCO and articulated the meaning of such data for the appropriate populations (e.g. students interested in such career areas, advisors, administration, etc.) in a user-friendly format.

Plan for Achieving and Measuring Learning Outcomes:

-Definitions of key words used so that stated criterion for achieving outcomes is understood-

Accurate: Final product does not contain any errors and is as up-to-date as possible.

Clear: The appropriate audience can easily understand information presented.

Comprehensive: Thorough and fully-encompassing of all applicable information.

Ease of Use: Appropriate information is readily accessible and user-friendly.

Effective: Target audience(s) benefits from and uses resource(s) to advance their own knowledge.

Organized: Clear presentation of information with consistent flow of information.

Learning Outcome #1: To identify the components and develop an understanding of medical school requirements as they relate to the preparation and application process for a student pursuing such a career.

Measurement of Learning Outcome #1:

In order to accomplish the aforementioned learning outcome, I will begin by reviewing the American Association of Medical Colleges (AAMC) Medical School Admission Requirements (MSAR). Doing so will allow me to become familiar with the expectations for students interested in applying to medical school. In conjunction with this review, I will also become familiar with the credential file form that students complete when requesting a prehealth advisor. I anticipate acquiring such knowledge through shadowing the Assistant Director and Preprofessional Counselor when they meet with students opening such a file. The combination of these experiences will allow me to better understand the premedical requirements and the process of beginning one's application. To demonstrate my comprehension, I will create a *Student Evaluation Form* for the preprofessional team to use when meeting with students. This document will be used by the professional staff to provide students with feedback as to where they are in the application process—what areas of their application are strong and those areas that are in need of improvement.

On the next page is an example of the aforementioned document. The criteria presented on the evaluation are those that the preprofessional team believes are essential to students developing into well-rounded candidates for medical school.

Please note: I reserve the right to edit this document as I acquire more knowledge relevant to medical school applications and the premed timeline as well as input from my supervisor and the preprofessional team.

Student Evaluation Form

As a student interested in applying to medical school, it is essential that you understand the criteria that medical schools use to evaluate applicants. The preprofessional team believes that the following areas are those that contribute to a medical school candidates' application. Please understand that these are merely suggestions; however, it is our hope that they will guide you throughout the process.

1.) The prospective applicant is aware of their GPA and how it might affect their application.

5	4	3	2	1
Takes Ownership for GPA		Acknowledges GPA & Need for Improvement		Unwilling to Acknowledge

Comments/Feedback:

2.) The prospective applicant is on schedule with their academic requirements, particularly those necessary for applying to medical school.

5	4	3	2	1
Yes		Almost Complete		Needs Improvement

Comments/Feedback:

3.) The prospective applicant can clearly articulate why they want to enter the field of medicine.

5	4	3	2	1
Yes, with Supporting Examples		Ideas Present, Yet Need Clarity		Uncertain

Comments/Feedback:

4.) The prospective applicant has explored the field of medicine and demonstrates knowledge as such.

5	4	3	2	1
Yes, Can Provide Examples		Somewhat		Needs Improvement

Comments/Feedback:

5.) The prospective student has engaged in research opportunities.

Yes No

Comments/Feedback:

6.) The prospective student has assumed leadership positions.

5	4	3	2	1
Many		A Few		None

Comments/Feedback:

If you have any additional comments or feedback to provide, please do so in the space below.

I would like my supervisor to evaluate my work of the *Student Evaluation Form* using the following criteria:

Accurate: Final product does not contain any errors and is as up-to-date as possible.

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Learning Outcome #2: To engage in interpretation and inquiry regarding the career development process—from initial interest to committed pursuit—for students interested in professional fields (e.g. medicine, health and law).

Measurement of Learning Outcome #2:

To better understand the career development of preprofessional advisees, I anticipate shadowing both the Assistant Director for Preprofessional Advising and the Preprofessional Counselor when they meet with students. After these appointments, I will engage in discussion with the appropriate professional staff to share my observations and pose questions. These debriefing sessions will allow me to learn from professionals with years of experience and better understand the intricacies of working with the preprofessional (particularly prehealth) population.

When my supervisor feels as though a clear comprehension of the process (career counseling students interested in preprofessional fields) is achieved, I would like to meet with students on my own, helping them to initiate the first stages of their interest. (Most likely this opportunity will occur during the second semester of the 2006-2007 academic year, as was noted during my initial meetings with my supervisor.) In order to measure my effectiveness with the students, my supervisor and I will create an assessment tool. This tool will allow my supervisor and the preprofessional counselor to evaluate my progress, making observations as they shadow me. This evaluation will allow me to understand better my strengths and weaknesses as they relate to working one-on-one with students in the career counseling setting. The feedback acquired through these evaluations will allow me to improve my techniques and further my development as an aspiring student affairs professional.

On the following page is an example of the evaluation my supervisor and the preprofessional counselor will complete. After each appointment, I will also complete the evaluation and compare my perspective with my supervisor and the other counselor.

Please Note: I reserve the right to edit this document as I acquire more knowledge relevant to career counseling for the preprofessional population and input from my supervisor.

**Career Assistant for Preprofessional Advising
Evaluation of Appointments with Students**

1. During the appointment, the CA demonstrated the ability to thoroughly engage the student as an active participant in the student's application process, through:

a. Engaging the student in discussion as to why the student is pursuing a career in medicine.

1	2	3	4	5
Poor		Average		Excellent

Feedback:

b. Discussing with the student the reality of how their GPA may influence their application.

1	2	3	4	5
Poor		Average		Excellent

Feedback:

c. Recognizing where the student is as far as their coursework is concerned and noting what efforts are necessary to keep inline with the application process.

1	2	3	4	5
Poor		Average		Excellent

Feedback:

d. Inquiring about research experience.

1	2	3	4	5
Poor		Average		Excellent

Feedback

e. Inquiring about leadership experience.

1	2	3	4	5
Poor		Average		Excellent

Feedback:

f. Inquiring about (and providing more information, if necessary) about volunteerism.

1	2	3	4	5
Poor		Average		Excellent

Feedback:

2. The CA showed thorough understanding of any issues (e.g. parental pressure, uncertainty as to when to apply, etc.) affecting the student during the appointment.

1	2	3	4	5
Poor		Average		Excellent

Feedback:

3. The CA demonstrated professionalism throughout the appointment.

1	2	3	4	5
Poor		Average		Excellent

Feedback:

Overall Evaluation of CA during appointment:

1
Poor

2

3
Average

4

5
Excellent

Areas of Weakness:

Areas of Strength:

Suggestions for Improvement:

Learning Outcome #3: To demonstrate understanding of the prehealth and prelaw statistics for MITCO and articulate the meaning of such data for the appropriate populations (e.g. students interested in such career areas, advisors, administration, etc.).

Measurement of Learning Outcome #3:

Statistics and the meaning of data intrigue me; however, my conceptualization of specific findings and their meaning is weak. Therefore, in an effort to become more familiar with data interpretation, I would like to review and be involved in the process of discerning the meaning of statistics as they relate to the preprofessional student population at MIT.

In order to achieve this learning outcome, I believe it would be best to meet with the appropriate staff members (the preprofessional team) and review previous years data and learn how it is presented to the necessary populations (students, faculty, administration, etc.). I would then like to participate in the organization and review of recent data, observing the process of interpretation.

The outcome of my observation and understanding will be a clear, concise and attractive report of information that is appropriate and user-friendly for the student population to use (at all stages of their preprofessional career pursuit). This report of information will provide more detailed statistics than are generally available to students via the MITCO publications and website. (The inclusion of specific statistics has yet to be determined, as this depends upon when MITCO receives the appropriate data.) In creating this report, I will also create a sign-out procedure, as this is a document that will not leave the office. I would like my supervisor to evaluate this report on the following criteria:

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Comprehensive: Thorough and fully-encompassing of all applicable information.

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Organized: Clear presentation of information with consistent flow of information.

Support Needed to Meet Learning Outcomes for Practicum Experience:

In order to achieve my learning outcomes, I anticipate needing the following support:

1. Weekly Meetings with my Supervisor (which are already scheduled into my working week). These weekly meetings will allow me to update my supervisor as to my progress on these specific tasks, but also ask for guidance, support and direction as necessary.
2. Support of being included with others. Having the opportunity to shadow others within MITCO will allow me to observe other counselor's working styles and develop relationships with them should I need to seek their assistance/guidance at a later time.
3. Training on specific issues. There will most likely be moments when my lacking knowledge of Preprofessional Advising will hinder my progress with my learning outcomes. In these instances, being able to openly inquire and seek further guidance will be necessary.

Site Schedule:

- This is an 18-20 hour per week position beginning on August 14, 2006 and concluding on May 18, 2007. (As a result, this experience will exceed the required 300 hours of practicum involvement required towards my Masters Degree in College Student Development and Counseling.) In order to fulfill the hours as outlined in my contract, I will be working approximately four to six hours per day (19 hours/week total), with the exception of

Tuesdays, as that is the one day I must remain on Northeastern's campus for both class and my Residence Life responsibilities. At times, I may work evenings, depending on the needs of MITCO.

- Approximately five hours of my week will be devoted to walk-in coverage for resumes, cover letters and general student inquiries. During one of these five hours, I will be working with preprofessional-track students. Three hours of my week will be dedicated to already scheduled meetings. For the remaining 11 hours of my week, I will be conducting mock-interviews, completing various assigned tasks, working on projects of my own initiation, and following through with my learning outcomes.
- My schedule will vary depending on my dual responsibilities (Residence Life and MITCO), but for Fall 2006 I will be at MITCO during the following days and times: Monday 9:00am – 1:00pm; Wednesday 8:00am – 2:00pm; Thursday 9:00am – 1:00pm; Friday 9:00am – 2:00pm.

Professional Requirements and Competencies:

It is expected that I will be on time, presentable (business casual, formal business attire when appropriate), and maintain a professional demeanor when at MITCO. If I cannot make it to my scheduled hours on any given day, I am to contact both the main office and my direct supervisor to make them aware of my absence and to clarify what my responsibilities (i.e. walk-ins, appointments, etc.) were for that day.

As part of my Career Assistant responsibilities, I am required to participate in all CA Staff Meetings (Monday mornings at 10am), all Preprofessional Team Meetings (Wednesdays at 10am) and all One-to-One Meetings with my direct supervisor (Wednesday Mornings at 9am). Due to my curricular requirements, I am unable to attend the MITCO Department Meetings, as they are scheduled on Tuesdays when I am in class.

On evenings when MITCO events are taking place, and when my schedule allows (Wednesday-Friday) evenings, I will attend. If an event is scheduled for a Tuesday evening (when I have Residence Life responsibilities) and my presence may benefit my professional development, I will work with my supervisor at Northeastern to make other arrangements so that my absence is not detrimental to my staff and colleagues. MITCO is fully aware of my Graduate Assistant position at Northeastern, and my supervisor at Northeastern is aware of my practicum responsibilities. Open communication has been established with my direct supervisors at both locations such that flexibility and the need for such support are acknowledged.

“As a student affairs professional in training, I am responsible for promoting students' learning and development, enhancing the understanding of student life, and advancing the profession and its ideals. As a new professional in training, I possess the knowledge, skills, emotional stability, and maturity to fulfill my practicum responsibilities as outlined through the aforementioned learning outcomes. I understand that high levels of professional competence are expected in the performance of my duties and responsibilities. I also understand that I am ultimately responsible for the consequences my actions or inaction. *(Downloaded & Adapted from www.myacpa.org).*”

Signatures Approving Proposed Learning Experience and Job Description:

Student's Signature:

Date:

NU Practicum Advisor's Signature:

Date:

Field Site Supervisor's Signature:

Date:

Form A