



**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: The Office of the Dean of Harvard College**

College or University: Harvard University

### **Job Description:**

*The Office of the Dean of Harvard College is offering an internship to a current graduate student in higher education and/or student affairs administration.*

*Working closely with the Assistant Dean of Harvard College, the intern will focus on student activities and social opportunities for Harvard College students.*

*Harvard College is at an exciting time in its history. In the midst of the first curricular review in thirty years and the recent addition of 42,000 square feet of new space available for undergraduate co-curricular activities, the College is taking an opportunity to review what students want and need as it relates to academic, extracurricular and social opportunities. The intern will have the opportunity to examine and review Harvard College students' social experiences with the possibility of affecting these experiences in positive ways in the coming years.*

*The intern will work on policy creation and implementation for the new Student Organization Center at Hilles. In addition, the intern will work in the Center advising student organizations, making recommendations to improve the Center, and helping the Manager with other duties as determined. The intern will also work with the Campus Life Fellow in the advising of the new Campus Events Board with campus-wide programming and planning. Other projects include helping to establish a system for domestic and global travel by student organizations, leadership seminar trainings for student organizations, and the annual registration of student organizations. The intern will also have the flexibility to work on projects of interest to the intern.*

*The goal of the internship, from the supervisor's point of view, is to introduce the intern to a nontraditional structure of student affairs. As Harvard is completely residential with student life centered in upper-class Houses, and the administration is decentralized and faculty-centered, this would be an opportunity to examine student development and student affairs administration in a different structure.*

### **Personal and Professional Interest in Learning Experience:**

I am interested in this position for several reasons. I was drawn to Harvard because of its non-traditional structure of student affairs, its reputation for academic excellence and the student population that it serves. Harvard is a tremendously active campus and has recently acquired new program space with renovated programming spaces as well as the new student organization center. These new spaces should serve the campus community well and help unite students on campus, as well as strengthen all active student organizations. With such

great resources in a non-traditional student affairs setting, Harvard College is a great place for me to develop and strengthen my skills in student activities.

As an undergraduate, I was involved in several clubs and organizations and that experience generated my interest in a career in student affairs. Professionally I will benefit from this experience in many ways. First, it will allow me the chance to directly advise students in the student organization center, as well as play an active role advising the Campus Events Board in the planning and implementation of campus-wide programming. Also, I will be working with my supervisor and manager of the student organization center with the creation of policy for the center, as well as gain experience with facilities management.

### **Specific Learning Outcomes:**

1. To gain direct experience advising student organizations in the student organization center.
2. To assess the needs of students and successfully work on policy creation and implementation over the course of the academic year. To develop the practical skills necessary for a student affairs professional to succeed in a student activities Division at a college or university. These skills include professionalism, organization, analytical thinking, and self-reflection.

### **Plan for Achieving and Measuring Learning Outcomes:**

Learning Outcome #1: To gain direct experience advising and interacting with student organizations in the student organization center.

This outcome will be achieved through exposure to students as a resource and necessary training at the beginning of the academic year. My specific duties will allow me spend a great deal of time interacting directly with students, as well as weekly meetings with my supervisor and a constant working relationship with the manager of the student organization center. Also, I will be assisting the Campus Life Fellow in the advising of the new Campus Events Board with campus-wide programming and planning. This will allow me to work directly with the students and receive feedback and assistance from staff members as I develop in this position.

Measurement of Learning Outcome #1: My abilities in this aspect of my practicum can be addressed through my day-to-day interactions with my colleagues and supervisor and more specifically through weekly one-on-one meetings with my supervisor. This will be done in an effort to create the most effective assessment to address my strengths and weaknesses and aid in my development as an advisor working directly with students during the academic year.

Based on the feedback I receive from both my supervisor and the manager of the student organization center, each semester I will draft a report comparing my application of student involvement theory to practice across the semester. In this effort, I will reflect on my learning outcomes focused specifically on advising. To assist in the report, I intend to utilize the lens of student involvement (Astin, 1984) when reviewing programming efforts by the Campus Events Board and in the student organization center. This report will be

comprehensive and will contain all feedback discussed with my supervisor during the year in our one on one meetings as well as through corresponding Forms C and D. The report will be used to keep track of my own development and observe any changes. This paper will be handed in to my practicum supervisor at the end of each semester. I will ask my practicum supervisor to evaluate my performance in this area based on the following criteria:

- **Comprehensive:** Practicum student's development is thoroughly discussed in relation to the chosen theory. Practicum student accurately described strengths and weaknesses, as well as challenges faced over the course of the semester in relation to their performance.

Feedback/Comments:

- **Depth of understanding:** The paper communicates a comprehensive understanding of how the practicum student has appropriately utilized theory in practice for this analysis and also details a thorough understanding of the position and the role they serve as Graduate Intern.

Feedback/Comments:

**Reflective:** Practicum student is able to reflect on and use ideas based on theory to further promote efforts to develop both students and staff.

Feedback/Comments:

Learning Outcome #2: To assess the needs of students and successfully work on policy creation and implementation over the course of the academic year.

Measurement of Learning Outcome #2: By the end of the first semester of my practicum experience, I will have spent considerable time interacting with students in the new student organization center as well as the manager of the center and my practicum supervisor. After a full semester of use, the student organization center's effectiveness will be reviewed and new policies will be created and implemented over the course of the following semester and/or the following year. In conjunction with my supervisor and the manager of the student organization center, I plan to create a survey for both students and advisors to rate the efficiency of the center to see if policy changes need to be made in order for the center to run more successfully. Since the center has not yet opened, the specific criteria of this assessment will be determined in the second half of the semester.

Upon completion of collection feedback, I will create a comprehensive report consisting of assessment results, my own interpretation of the results, and my recommendations for change based on assessment results. I will then ask my supervisor to provide me with his perspective on my analysis, specifically; I would like him to evaluate the following:

1. Accuracy of interpretation and analysis
2. Depth of interpretation and analysis
3. Professional maturity of interpretation and analysis

Learning Outcome #3: To develop the practical skills necessary for a student affairs professional to succeed in a student activities Division at a college or university. This

outcome will be achieved through the overall interaction with students and staff members during my experience in the Office of the Dean of Harvard College.

Measurement of Learning Outcome #3: I will ask for written feedback from my supervisor in the form of an evaluation at the end of each semester. I will create an evaluation form based on the following criteria:

Overall Professional Growth:

- Professionalism: Demonstrated professionalism with all students and staff members
- Reflection: Exhibited self-analysis and a desire to improve throughout the practicum experience
- Analytical: Problem solving skills are used to overcome obstacles or to obtain new information
- Proactive: Information is sought actively
- Organization: Ability to multitask, meet deadlines, prioritize and complete all assigned duties in a timely manner.
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Specific Advising Growth in the areas of:

- Maintenance: Help student organizations to constantly push themselves to achieve greater success. This will be done by helping groups adapt and provide continuity and persistence without interfering with the group dynamics.
- Group Growth: Help the students grow by reinforcing the skills and responsibilities of good leadership, such as problem-solving, decision-making, conflict resolution, and program planning and implementation.
- Participant Growth: Help the groups members grow as individuals by assisting them in fundamental group skills for improving relationships and improving self. These skills include effective communication, stress management and an openness to change and diverse ideas.

Program Content: Help shape program content by offering new perspectives and direction while working closely with students throughout the entire programming process. By working closely with organizations on campus events, new program ideas can be initiated and implemented, and discussions can be stimulated around the efficiency of campus programming. This allows for the ongoing assessment of programs in an effort to allow for greater success in program content over the academic year.

Additionally, I will write a self-evaluation using the same criteria of the skills obtained from the practicum experience. This will be completed at the end of each semester. My self-evaluation will be shared with my supervisor prior to his formal evaluation of me each semester. I will also share my self-evaluation with my practicum instructor prior to the end of each semester.

### **Support Needed to Meet Learning Outcomes for Practicum Experience:**

The support needed to meet my learning outcomes includes weekly meetings with my supervisor for direction and constructive feedback on my job performance, as well as

inclusion in Office of the Dean of Students staff meetings when possible to stay informed on departmental activities.

**Site Schedule:**

The total estimated hours worked per week will be ten hours. Due to peak times during the semester I will do my best to accommodate their needs, and attend various campus events and meetings that my supervisor feels will be beneficial for me to attend. My supervisor and I have both allowed for flexibility in our schedules, and I plan to work both day and evening hours as assigned each week. My tentative schedule is currently Tuesdays from 9am-3pm and Thursdays from 6pm-10pm.

**Professional Requirements and Competencies:**

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. *(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*