



Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health (CABH)
Applied Field Experience Guidelines

Table of Contents

CABH Applied Field Experience Overview

Applied Field Experience Structure

Prior to Beginning the Applied Field Experience

Roles and Responsibilities

Requirements by Semester

Applied Field Experience Project Proposal

Applied Field Experience Final Paper

CABH Applied Field Experience Overview

The Applied Field Experience provides a field-based opportunity for students to apply concepts learned in the CABH program and gain practical experience in a public or private child-serving agency. As part of the field experience, students work part time at an agency/organization on a child/adolescent behavioral health issue of importance to the agency/organization or community (e.g., needs assessment, social marketing, strategic plan, program development, research, evaluation, and many other possibilities). The identified child/adolescent behavioral health issue provides the basis of a Field Experience Project that should be of professional interest to the student and also of benefit to the agency and/or community. Successful completion of the Applied Field Experience fulfills graduation requirements for the CABH Master's degree program.

Purpose of Applied Field Experience

The purpose of the Applied Field Experience is to provide students with an opportunity to integrate, synthesize, and apply knowledge gained during the CABH program coursework through a field experience that is relevant to each student's area of specialization and interest.

The Applied Field Experience is designed to meet the following overall CABH Program competencies:

1. Increase access to knowledge about best practices and their implementation within complex systems and diverse communities.
2. Enhance practice in behavioral health care through engaging students and faculty in collaboration with community agencies to strengthen and sustain health communities and improve the quality of life for children and families.
3. Contribute to increased quality and diversity of the child and adolescent behavioral health workforce

Objectives of Applied Field Experience

- Apply appropriate child and adolescent behavioral health theory and knowledge to an identified agency or community issue.
- Demonstrate practical application of skills gained in the CABH program to an identified agency or community issue.
- Demonstrate understanding of how the functions and operations of a public or private child-serving agency contribute to child and adolescent behavioral health.
- Complete an Applied Field Experience Project in a participating Field Experience site.

Applied Field Experience Structure

Students register for a total of 6 credit hours of Applied Field Experience (MHS 6941). Typically, students complete 3 credit hours of field experience in one semester and 3 credit hours of field experience in the following semester. Students may complete all 6 credits of their field experience in one semester with advisor and as long as all requirements across the two semesters are satisfied. Student performance in the Applied Field Experience course will be assessed on an S/U basis.

Hours Requirements

For each 3 credit hours of MHS 6941 Applied Field Experience, students are required to complete a total of 135 hours as part of their field placement. Of the 135 hours, a minimum of 100 hours will consist of work completed on behalf of the approved agency/organization, which may include work completed on-site at the agency/organization, participation in community-based activities such as committee meetings, data collection, interviews with community members, etc. The remaining 35 hours will consist of work completed outside the agency/organization directly related to coursework requirements (see below).

Coursework Requirements

As part of their field experience coursework, students must complete and submit a written Project Proposal as well as a written Final Project Report. Students must also regularly submit a log of time spent working on their projects throughout each semester. Finally, if feasible, students will present their final projects to agency/organization personnel. Students are required to spend at least 35 hours per 3 credit hour semester working on the field experience project proposal, final report, and presentation (if feasible). All products must be successfully completed in order to meet graduation requirements for an MS in Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health through the Applied Field Experience track.

The student's Academic Advisor and Faculty Committee Member determine whether the Project Proposal and Final Project Report successfully fulfill requirements of the Applied Field Experience. Project Proposal and Final Paper will be given one of three assessments: accepted, revise and resubmit, or not accepted. Deadlines for submitting the Project Proposal and Final Project Report are at the discretion of the student's Academic Advisor. However, a general guideline is for the student to expect to submit these assignments during Week 12 of the semester (Week 7 for Summer). Any required revisions must be submitted prior to the end of the semester.

Prior to Beginning Applied Field Experience

Field Experience and the Comprehensive Exam

Students must successfully complete the CABH Comprehensive Exam prior to enrolling in Applied Field Experience. In some instances, it is possible for a student to request approval to complete the comprehensive exam (first attempt or re-take) during the same semester as beginning the Applied Field Experience. This requires that the *Approval Request to take the Comprehensive Exam Concurrent with Field Experience* form be completed and signed by the student, the student's Academic Advisor, and the CABH Program Director and then submitted to the Academic Services Administrator.

Selection of a Field Experience Site and Identifying a Site Supervisor

It is recommended that students begin generating and developing ideas for the field experience **at least 2 semesters BEFORE** the student is scheduled to enroll in Applied Field Experience. While it is the responsibility of the student to identify an agency/organization, the student's Academic Advisor and the Field Experience Coordinator will assist students in doing so if the student does not have a specific placement in mind. In addition to identifying an agency/organization, a Site Supervisor must be identified from agency staff and must agree to in writing before the student's placement. Students must have Academic Advisor approval for both their field placement site and Site Supervisor before beginning their Applied Field Experience Project.

Site Selection Criteria

The following are criteria to be considered when selecting the agency/organization for the Applied Field Experience. In order to provide an optimal field experience, an agency/organization should:

1. Provide planning or services relevant to child and adolescent behavioral health.
2. Enable the student to further develop and apply specific skills and competencies learned in the academic program.
3. Provide a Site Supervisor who is willing and able to spend regularly scheduled time with the student and provide guidance.
4. Afford the student regular/daily contact with staff.
5. Exhibit a willingness to gradually increase student responsibility and independence over the duration of the field experience.
6. Provide support and access to appropriate equipment and resources.
7. Match the needs of the students' academic focus.
8. Offer a uniquely valuable experience in behavioral health.

Desirable Site Supervisor Traits

The following are criteria to consider when identifying a Site Supervisor for the Applied Field Experience. The Site Supervisor is:

1. Approachable and provides feedback to student.
2. Interested in the academic and career goals of student.
3. Gives assignments that balance administrative work with substantive tasks.

4. Monitors student activities through regular meetings.
5. Helps student meet the goals and objectives of the CABH Applied Field Experience.
6. Integrates student with the agency staff.
7. Provides adequate resources and materials for student to be successful.
8. Views student mistakes as learning opportunities
9. Introduces student to others who can help with his or her field experience.
10. Gives student the chance to learn new skills/knowledge.
11. Allows student to take part in projects where he or she can be involved from beginning to end.
12. Provides expertise in specific areas of student interest.

Identification of a Faculty Committee Member

A student's Field Experience Faculty Committee consists of the student's Academic Advisor and a Faculty Committee Member. Academic Advisors will work with students to identify a second faculty member to serve on the student's Field Experience Faculty Committee. This faculty member should be an individual whose area of expertise corresponds with student professional and academic interests. Together, the student's Academic Advisor and the Faculty Committee member are responsible for assessing student performance on both the field experience proposed project and field experience final paper.

Completing the Field Experience Application

Prior to enrolling in the CABH Field Experience, students must complete and submit the *Applied Field Experience Application*. The completed field experience application, including signatures from the student, the student's Academic Advisor, and the field experience Site Supervisor, must be submitted to the Field Experience Coordinator no later than the end of week 3 of the semester PRIOR to beginning the field experience. Because approval of the field experience application initiates the process whereby the Field Experience Coordinator obtains an Affiliation Agreement with the student's selected placement, it is important the field experience application be submitted on or before the stated deadline. **An Affiliation Agreement between USF and the selected agency/organization is required before the student can begin any work with the agency/organization.** Affiliation Agreements can take a substantial amount of time to fully execute, as they often require several layers of approval within the organization or agency, as well as the University. It is therefore helpful if the completed field experience application is submitted to the Field Experience Coordinator as soon as possible.

Roles and Responsibilities

Student

1. Select behavioral health agency/organization for field experience with guidance and assistance from their Academic Advisor and Field Experience Coordinator.
2. Contact the behavioral health agency/organization to confirm the field experience and confirm the Site Supervisor
3. Discuss goals and field experience project ideas with Site Supervisor during the first meeting.
4. Work with Site Supervisor to identify possible projects that meet the student's goals and objectives and the needs of the agency. A project agreeable to both the student and Site Supervisor and approved by the Academic Advisor should be identified no later than the third week of the field experience.
5. Review IRB requirements/eligibility with the Academic Advisor (if needed).
6. Adhere to behavioral health agency/organization rules and regulations.
7. Maintain professionalism, confidentiality, ethical standards, and appropriate dress codes within the behavioral health agency/organization.
8. Maintain the *Field Experience Effort Log* and provide to Site Supervisor for signature and Academic Advisor for review.
9. Participate in professional and in-service activities within the agency, with partner agencies, or in the community.
10. Complete all required reports and assignments and share them with the Site Supervisor and Academic Advisor.
11. Be responsible for all costs associated with finger printing and background checks (if needed).

Academic Advisor

1. Assist student in conjunction with Site Supervisor in developing the field experience plan and project.
2. Cultivate relationships with potential field experience agencies/organizations – along with the Field Experience Coordinator.
3. Guide and assist student in selecting a site for field experience.
4. Review IRB requirements/eligibility with student (if needed).
5. Communicate with the Site Supervisor via phone or email concerning the progress of student midway through the semester.
6. Obtain completed *End-of-Semester Evaluation* form from the Site Supervisor.
7. Monitor student time log.
8. Monitor the academic progress of the field experience plan and project and provide timely feedback to the student.
 - Student in conjunction with the Academic Advisor will develop a method for monitoring and feedback during the semester.
 - Student will develop timeline of field experience progress and obtain approval from Academic Advisor.

- Student in conjunction with the Academic Advisor will determine what the deliverable will be for the Applied Field Experience. Examples of deliverables include a report, policy brief, portfolio, or project.
8. Work in collaboration with the Faculty Committee Member to grade the field experience (S/U).
 9. Issue grades for the field experience (S/U).

Site Supervisor

1. Assist student in conjunction with Academic Advisor in developing the field experience plan and project.
2. Provide work experiences that are challenging and expose the student to real world environment of a child and adolescent behavioral health agency/organization.
3. Integrate student with agency/organization staff.
4. Explain the structure and function of the behavioral health agency/organization.
5. Help student better understand the needs of children, families, and communities served by the behavioral health agency/organization.
6. Invite student to professional meetings within the agency/organization, with partner agencies, or in the community.
7. Monitor and sign student time log.
8. Evaluate performance of student using the *End-of-Semester Evaluation* form. If there are low marked items then both the Academic Advisor and the Site Supervisor will review the evaluation together with the student.
9. Maintain contact as needed with student's Academic Advisor.

Note: Site Supervisors are prohibited from discrimination on the basis of gender, race, color, age, national origin, religion, or disability.

Requirements by Semester

Semester 1 and 2 Requirements:

- Submit all assignments on time.
- Meet regularly with Academic Advisor and Site Supervisor.
- Regularly complete and submit the field experience effort log to the Academic Advisor (submission timeline determined by the Academic Advisor).

Semester 1 Requirements:

- Initiate work with identified agency/organization and complete a total of 135 hours for each 3 credit hours of Applied Field Experience (a minimum of 100 hours will consist of work completed on behalf of the approved agency/organization, and the remaining 35 hours will consist of work towards completion of the Applied Field Experience Project Proposal).
- Work with agency/organization Site Supervisor and Academic Advisor to conceptualize an Applied Field Experience Project based on a child/adolescent behavioral health issue of importance to the agency/organization or community.
- Submit the Applied Field Experience Project Proposal (described in subsequent sections) to Academic Advisor by the stated deadline (determined by the Academic Advisor).
- Submit any revisions to the Project Proposal deemed necessary by the Faculty Committee to the Academic Advisor by the stated deadline (determined by the Academic Advisor).
- The Faculty Committee must approve the Applied Field Experience Project Proposal before students can begin the Final Paper or be approved and permitted to register for Semester 2 of the Applied Field Experience. Permits will be authorized by the student's Academic Advisor.

Semester 2 Requirements:

- Complete a total of 135 hours for each 3 credit hours of Applied Field Experience (a minimum of 100 hours will consist of work completed on behalf of the approved agency/organization, and the remaining 35 hours will consist of work towards completion of the Applied Field Experience Final Paper).
- Submit the Field Experience Final Paper (described in subsequent sections) to Academic Advisor by the stated deadline (determined by the Academic Advisor).
- Submit any revisions to the Final Paper deemed necessary by the Faculty Committee to the Academic Advisor by the stated deadline (determined by the Academic Advisor).
- The Faculty Committee must approve the Applied Field Experience Final Paper for the student to successfully complete the requirements of the Applied Field Experience.
- Ideally, results of Field Experience will be presented to agency/organization and/or community stakeholders. The student and Academic Advisor will determine the feasibility of this as the project is developed.

Applied Field Experience Project Proposal

1. Organizational Background and Issue to be Addressed

- Describe the organization in which your project will take place including the agency's mission, vision, and goals.
- Provide background about the agency's history and explain the services provided.
- Identify the population or stakeholders the agency/organization serves.
- Identify the need or issue to be addressed in the project. Provide a more thorough background of the program within the organization that will be the focus of your project.
- Briefly describe the need for the project with a few references from the literature.
- Provide citations and references for the organization's information. This may come from interviews with administrators and/or your Site Supervisor, brochures, needs assessments (program or community), policies and procedures, and other materials developed by the organization. Although you want to focus on providing information that is relevant to your project idea, you will also need to provide some overall background for the organization.

2. Overall Goal for the Proposed Project

- The goal identifies what you want to accomplish for the project. Remember to make the goal measurable, realistic, and specific.
- Introduce the goal with a short summary of the need for the project that you and the organization identified and how your goal fits with this need.

3. Objectives

- Identify the objectives that you need to complete in order to achieve the goal. Remember to make the objectives specific, measurable, and achievable.
- Identify and describe the proposed products or deliverables for your project and their anticipated content. All materials you develop for the project will be placed in the appendices of your final report. This is a preliminary list as you may develop more materials as you begin project implementation. Everything you develop will be available in the appendices of your final report.

4. Activities that Relate to the Objectives

- Describe specific actions, processes, and work assignments that will allow you to achieve each objective.
- Develop activities for each objective. Be sure to develop specific objectives and activities for evaluating your project
- Develop a project timeline for each objective that includes all identified activities

5. Conclusion

- Identify how this project meets the goals of the agency/organization
- Identify your professional goals and objectives. Write these as student learning objectives. These are objectives related to what you will learn as you implement the project, but they are not project objectives.
- Discuss how your proposed project meets your professional goals and objectives.
- Discuss how your proposed project meets the purpose and objectives of the Applied Field Experience.
- Discuss any anticipated barriers or limitations to your project. Actual barriers or limitations you encounter as you do the project will be included in the discussion of your final report. However, you should try to identify potential barriers and limitations so that you can avoid them if possible.

Applied Field Experience Final Paper

1. Title page with signatures (i.e., the *Final Paper Signature Page*)
2. Brief Summary of Organizational Background (from the Project Proposal)
3. Student Learning Objectives (from the Project Proposal) - Be sure to describe any revisions made to student learning objectives as stated in the Project Proposal to meet the objectives, including barriers and modifications that have occurred since the project was initially proposed.
4. Literature Review - Provide a review of literature relevant to this issue or problem as a context for discussion of results and findings. The background and review of literature should be relevant to the identified issue or problem. It must be tied to objectives and should include any relevant agency or community documents.
5. Project findings and results.
6. Discussion of results and recommendations.
7. Professional reflection on field experience project.
8. Appendices:
 - Relevant supporting documents such as instruments, permissions, contacts used in the conduct of the project.
 - PPT Presentation used in agency/organization stakeholder presentation, if determined that this is feasible.
 - Student CV or resume to appropriately reflect the students experience during the field placement.