

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT CRIMINAL JUSTICE FIELD PLACEMENT

Q: What is Field Placement?

A: Field Placement (CJ4095) is one of three capstone courses in the criminal justice BS program. The other option for on-campus students is a research practicum class. Online students enroll in CJ4097, Senior Seminar, for the same credit. If you are an on-campus student, as your advisor about which course (research practicum or field placement) is right for you. If you are an online student, ask your advisor for more details about CJ4097. Field Placement comprises five weeks of professional development material and a 112 hour (generally unpaid) internship.

Q: How do I qualify to take Field Placement?

A: Students must be on-campus students who have accumulated 75 credit hours and attended an orientation session hosted that academic year. Orientation sessions take place each fall and spring semester. Look out for updates on the undergraduate advising page for dates and times.

Q: How many hours is field placement?

A: Students must complete a total of 112 hours to fulfill the internship requirements for field placement. These hours are verified via timesheets, a letter from your internship site, or an email from the internship site stating that you completed the hours. Your agency will select which method is most convenient for them.

Q: Must I attend classes for field placement?

A: Yes. In the first 5 weeks of the semester, you'll be required to attend your internship as well as weekly class meetings. The weekly class meetings will cover professional development material (e.g., resumes, cover letters, networking, and interviewing tips). If you miss any classes or assignments, you will be directed to withdraw from the class or you will receive a failing grade.

Q: When should I make arrangements for field placement?

A: As soon as possible. You should make arrangements for your placement at least one semester in advance. If you do not have a placement by the end of the first class date of the semester, you must withdraw from the class or you will receive a failing grade.

Q: Can I intern at an organization that is not on the list of options?

A: Yes you can, but you must receive permission from the professor beforehand. If permission is granted, you must then provide documentation that your placement has been approved by the agency. You'll also need to provide contact information for your supervisor at the agency. Permission will be granted based on the tasks and experiences the site has in mind.

Q: How do I get a placement with a federal agency?

A: Internships at federal agencies are harder to find and will often be very competitive. Federal agencies are also reluctant to host interns. Keep a close eye on postings to the undergraduate advising page, as we often post updates for internship opportunities. Otherwise, search the agency's homepage and network to find opportunities. The only federal placement that we are currently sending students to is The Washington Center (www.twc.edu) in Washington, D.C. Speak with your advisor for more information on this internship option. Most students who are successful at finding federal internships are those who started their search over a year in advance. If federal agencies are a career goal for you, get involved in leadership opportunities on campus, attend guest lectures and invited talks by those at these agencies, and reach out to the undergraduate program director early and often.

Q: How do I arrange my placement?

A: Start by looking at the field placement options online and making contact with the organization that you would like to intern with. It is an easy process if you start early enough. If you procrastinate, then we are unable to help you, as many agencies require a background check and slots within agencies will fill up fast.

Q: Does the field placement coordinator or faculty advisor arrange my placement?

A: No. You are responsible for arranging your placement. Although we handle the applications for select agencies, all other agencies should be contacted by students. We can point you in the right direction if you're struggling with selecting a site that fits your career goals, though.

Q: Must I have a resume and cover letter?

A: Many internship sites are requesting resumes and cover letters of prospective interns. Have your materials reviewed at the career studio prior to submitting. Additionally, all students will be required to have their resume and cover letter created and reviewed by a professional over the course of the class. Have it prepared based on the guidelines provided in class in advance of your meeting.

Q: Do I have to keep a log?

A: Yes, all students must log their hours and activities. This can be done using the log cover sheets provided by your instructor or by having your agency draft a letter or email to the instructor. Your agency will select which option is most convenient for them.

Q: Is there a paper associated with the class?

A: Yes, you must write a 10-page reflection paper as part of the class. The specific requirements will be provided by the instructor in the form of a rubric.

Q: Are the rumors about the class true/is the class as hard as I've heard it is?

A: This class is easy to pass as long as you follow the directions in the syllabus. The class is about learning the ropes of the professional world, professional development, and attention to detail. It's a pass/fail class, meaning that you either complete all requirements or you fail. Closely follow all directions/rubrics provided in the class.