



AMST 7500

Practicum Student Handbook

December 14, 2009

AMST7500 PRACTICUM HANDBOOK

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AMST7500 PRACTICUM HANDBOOK

PREREQUISITE: AMST 7000 or 7100

AMST7500 PRACTICUM requires students to apply American Studies knowledge, concepts, and/or theory to practical issues, non-academic environments, or to new research questions. The Practicum fosters the ability to (1) read and think critically while using diverse methods to study American cultural products and practices, (2) communicate effective analysis of American culture both orally and in writing, and (3) analyze and critique relationships between cultural products and social values. Students enrolled in AMST7500 Practicum will:

- Develop connections between theory and practice by applying their interdisciplinary coursework effectively to a field experience or community-based research/interpretive project
- Practice ways of applying academic knowledge in new contexts
- Describe and evaluate their experience through a formal written analysis and through a formal oral presentation

PRACTICUM TRACKS:

Students registering for AMST7500 Practicum may choose one of three tracks (which are covered in more detail later in the handbook):

- (1) An INTERNSHIP in the areas of education, public affairs, business, international affairs, or other applicable field; supporting the needs of the internship site and resulting in a substantial paper or other product
- (2) An APPLIED RESEARCH PROJECT developed and implemented by the student and resulting in a substantial paper, interpretive plan, or other product appropriate to the site and desired learning outcomes
- (3) OTHER project as negotiated between the student and MA Director

AMST7500 projects and internships will normally include the following components:

- Project Plan
- Final Paper/Report/Project
- Field/Research Journal
- Reflective Report
- Oral presentation

INTERNSHIP TRACK

Internships Overview:

The student will complete 150 total hours on the internship project. The student will keep a weekly field notes journal, prepare a formal final project or essay, complete a final evaluation of the internship experience, prepare a final reflective report, and present his/her research to a panel of interdisciplinary faculty and students at the end of the semester of enrollment.

Site Supervisor Agreement

Each student will draw up an agreement with the Site Supervisor where he/she will be working (even in the case where the internship is on campus), which will define the scope of the proposed work and identify the supervisor for the experience. The MA Director will work with the intern to complete the contract before the internship begins. (See agreement form at the end of the AMST7500 Handbook.)

Project Plan: The student will work with the MA Director to develop a Project Plan related to the academic goals of the internships experience. The Project Plan outlines the project, goals, intended learning outcomes, and work plan (including a breakdown of grading). Additionally, the Project Plan will include a reading list appropriate to the chosen site/work. The Project Plan must be approved by the MA Director before the internship begins.

Field Notes Journal

The student will keep a weekly account of their experiences at the internship site (all entries must be typed). Typically, the student will be asked not only to detail ongoing projects, problems, relationships, and insights and observations gained at the site, but also make connections to larger cultural studies issues that are central to their experience. The field notes journal is due to the MA Director electronically twice during the semester: at midterm and at the conclusion of the semester.

Final Project or Essay

All interns must complete a required project or essay.

The ESSAY OPTION requires the student to write an analysis (10-15 pages) of the site or a particular issue that relates to their field experience to American Studies concepts, theories, or practices. Typically, the student and the MA Director will develop an appropriate reading list in the Project Plan with an eye to the final essay. The student must draw upon the reading list as he/she makes an argument about this issue. Certainly, the student can draw upon their practical experience, and thus he/she must construct an argument that draws upon both theoretical and practical aspects to provide an analysis of the issue.

The PROJECT OPTION requires that the student work with the MA Director and Site Supervisor early in the semester to develop a workable, achievable plan. The project should contribute to the organization's goals in some way. A second project reader can be chosen by the MA Director and student. (At least one of the two project readers shall be a member of the American Studies faculty.) At the conclusion of the Project, the student must submit a paper and portfolio that details the original project plan, implementation strategy and outcomes. Additionally, the paper and portfolio must detail how the project fit the needs and fulfilled the short- and long-term goals of the group, site, or organization.

Final Evaluation by the on-site supervisor

At the completion of the internship experience, the Site Supervisor will assess the intern's work during the semester at the internship site. The intern should discuss the evaluation with the Site Supervisor and attach the evaluation to his/her Final Reflective Report.

Final Reflective Report. The student will submit a final reflective report of three to five pages that details how the internship fulfilled his/her broader academic goals, the student's success in achieving the learning outcomes outlined in the Project Plan, and how the internship illuminated American cultural studies issues. Finally, the intern is to assess both the internship experience and the internship site, explaining why this site would be useful for future interns. The Final Reflective Report should directly address the Final Evaluation completed by the Site Supervisor.

Oral Presentation

The student will make an oral presentation on his/her work at some point during the semester that includes slides, visual aids, or handouts as appropriate. As with the Final Report, the presentation should relate the work to American Studies concepts and/or theories. The

presentation may be delivered to an audience related to the internship site (e.g., board of directors, clients) or to some group within the American Studies program (e.g., AS program meeting, class, brown bag). If the presentation is delivered to a KSU audience, approximately five minutes should be devoted to how the experience helped the intern realize the learning outcomes outlined in the Project Plan as well as the student's broader academic goals at the University. If the presentation is delivered to a site-related audience, the intern should work with the site supervisor to identify appropriate topics to be addressed.

Grading

Grading for the Internship track is as follows:

Final Project/Essay: 40%

Field Notes Journal: 20%

Final Reflective Report 20%

Oral Presentation: 20%

A=90-100; B=80-89; C=70-79; D=60-69; F=0-59

APPLIED RESEARCH PROJECT TRACK

OVERVIEW:

Students choosing the APPLIED RESEARCH PROJECT track will develop a substantial paper, interpretive plan, or other product that is informed by and draws on American Studies principles and knowledge. Through participation in this track, the student will hone skills relevant to carrying out independent research, analysis, and interpretation. Designed to embrace students' interests and professional goals, the project may take any number of forms, including (but not limited to) a research paper, exhibit, curricular materials, public interpretive project, program assessment plan, community documentation program, or similar work. (In this option, you are not working with an outside agency or entity.)

The APPLIED RESEARCH PROJECT may take one of two forms:

(1) **TEAM-BASED PROJECT.** Students may join a team of students and a faculty Project Supervisor to research and/or interpret a larger theme or develop a multi-component project. Team-based projects are initiated and led by a faculty member with graduate faculty standing in MAST. Team-based projects will be initiated and broadly conceptualized by faculty members, but may take on a collaborative structure in implementation. Team-based projects will be announced prior to the registration period for the semester in which they are to be offered.

(2) **STUDENT-INITIATED PROJECT.** Students may initiate their own independent applied research projects. Students intending to work independently on an applied research project are responsible for coordinating with a faculty member appropriate to and willing to serve as Project Supervisor for the work. (Faculty are not required to serve as Project Supervisors for student-initiated Applied Research Projects.)

APPLIED RESEARCH PROJECT: TEAM-BASED PROJECT

HOW DO I REGISTER FOR AMST7500 IF I WANT TO DO A TEAM-BASED PROJECT?

Topics and descriptions of team-based research projects will be posted to the MAST student listserv, AMST website, and will be readily available to students in the MAST office.

Students interested in registering for a team-based AMST7500 Applied Research Project should obtain, read, sign, and return a copy of the Course Contract to the faculty Project Supervisor (or the program's administrative associate) at least one week prior to final registration for the semester in which the student plans to enroll in AMST7500. Course contracts for specific projects will be available at the MAST office. Questions regarding the contract or the project should be directed to the Project Supervisor.

Since the Course Contract is essentially a student's agreement that they understand and believe they can fulfill the project requirements, faculty members may elect to combine the Course Contract and the Project Plan.

WHAT TO EXPECT DURING THE SEMESTER:

Project Plan: Each student will work with the faculty Project Supervisor to develop a Project Plan that outlines the student's project, goals, intended learning outcomes, work plan (including a breakdown of grading), and final product. The Project Plan should include all project requirements and a draft calendar. All plans MUST include a reflective journal, oral presentation, final reflective report, and a final project. Additionally, the Project Plan will include a reading list appropriate to the chosen site/work.

Journal: The student will keep a weekly account of his/her experiences as he/she completes his/her research, analysis and interpretation. The student will explore details of his/her ongoing project, problems, relationships, and insights and observations, but also make connections to larger cultural studies issues that are central to his/her experience. The student is also strongly encouraged to make direct ties between the project, class work and American Studies literature and theory. The journal is due to the faculty Project Supervisor electronically twice during the semester: at midterm and at the conclusion of the semester.

Oral Presentation: The student will make an oral presentation on his/her work by the end of the semester. The student should prepare for a fifteen minute presentation, which should incorporate slides, visual aids, or handouts as appropriate. Approximately five minutes should be devoted to how the project helped the student realize the learning outcomes outlined in the Project Plan as well as his/her broader academic goals at the University. The Project Supervisor will work with you to identify an audience appropriate to your presentation (e.g., the community you've been working with, the AMST faculty, or an AMST class).

Final Reflective Report. The student will submit a final reflective report of approximately five pages that details what he/she learned, how the project fit with the student's broader academic goals at the University, and how the project internship illuminated American cultural studies issues by the due date established in the Project Plan.

Class meetings: If a Practicum is organized as a team-based investigation, the student may be required to meet regularly with team members to discuss project design, progress, related readings, or other relevant issues. Any such requirements will be outlined in the Project Plan.

Final Project. The final form and expectations of the project (e.g., paper, interpretive plan, proposal) shall be determined by the individual, team, and/or faculty Project Supervisor, as appropriate.

Grading:

Weighting for grades may be outlined in the Project Plan. Otherwise, the following weighting will apply:

- Final Project/Essay: 40%
- Field Notes Journal: 20%
- Final Reflective Report 20%
- Oral Presentation: 20%

A=90-100; B=80-89; C=70-79; D=60-69; F=0-59

APPLIED RESEARCH PROJECT: STUDENT-INITIATED PROJECT

HOW DO I REGISTER FOR AMST7500 IF I WANT TO DO A STUDENT-INITIATED PROJECT?

Project Plan:

1. To register for a student-initiated APPLIED RESEARCH PROJECT, each student must identify a Project Supervisor and work with that Project Supervisor to develop a Project Plan that outlines the student's project, goals, intended learning outcomes, and work plan (including a breakdown of grading), and final product. The Project Plan should include all project requirements and a draft calendar. All plans shall include a reflective journal, oral presentation, final reflective report, and a final project. Additionally, the Project Plan will include a reading list appropriate to the chosen site/work.
2. The Project Supervisor must indicate his or her development and approval of the Project Plan to the Director of the MA, either by email or signature, at least one week prior to final registration for the semester in which the student plans to enroll in AMST7500.
3. Once approved by the Director of the MA, the student will be permitted to enroll in the appropriate section of AMST7500.

Journal: The student will keep a weekly account of his/her experiences as he/she completes his/her research, analysis and interpretation. The student will explore details of his/her ongoing project, problems, relationships, and insights and observations, but also make connections to larger cultural studies issues that are central to his/her experience. The student is also strongly encouraged to make direct ties between the project, class work, and American Studies literature and theory. The journal is due to the Coordinator and/or Project Supervisor electronically twice during the semester: at midterm and at the conclusion of the semester.

Oral Presentation: The student will make an oral presentation on his/her work by the end of the semester. The student should prepare for a fifteen minute presentation, which should incorporate slides, visual aids, or handouts as appropriate. Approximately five minutes should be devoted to how the project helped the student realize the learning outcomes outlined in the Project Plan as well as his/her broader academic goals at the University. The Project Supervisor will work with you to identify an audience appropriate to your presentation (e.g., the community you've been working with, the AMST faculty, or an AMST class).

Final Reflective Report. The student will submit a final reflective report of approximately five pages that details what he/she learned, how the project fit with the student's broader academic goals at the University, and how the project internship illuminated American cultural studies issues by the due date established in the Project Plan.

Class meetings: Regularly scheduled meetings shall be outlined in the Project Plan.

Final Project. The final form and expectations of the project (e.g., paper, interpretive plan, proposal) shall be determined by the individual and faculty Project Supervisor, as appropriate.

Grading:

Weighting for grades may be outlined in the Project Plan. Otherwise, the following weighting will apply:

Final Project/Essay: 40%

Field Notes Journal: 20%

Final Reflective Report 20%

Oral Presentation: 20%

A=90-100; B=80-89; C=70-79; D=60-69; F=0-59

Site Supervisor Agreement

**American Studies Internship
Kennesaw State University**

This form must be completed in full and returned for approval to the MAST Director. Approval is required before registration.

Name _____
Last First MI

Student ID # _____ Semester (circle one): Fall//Summer/Spring 20 __

Local Address _____
Street City State Zip Code

Phone Number _____ Email _____

INTERNSHIP ORGANIZATION INFORMATION:

Name of Organization/Agency _____

Name and Title of Supervisor _____

Address _____
Street City State Zip Code

Phone Number _____ Email _____

Web Address of Organization/Agency _____

The intern will work at the site for 150 hours over the course of the semester and will be responsible for the following tasks over the course of the semester:

At the completion of the internship experience, the Site Supervisor will evaluate the intern's work. MAST will forward the evaluation form to the Site Supervisor.

Student Signature

Site Supervisor signature

MA Director Signature

CC: Student file, Site Supervisor, MA Director, Intern