



Guidelines for M.Div. Field Internship

An important part of theological education at Pacific School of Religion is a field internship for students seeking vocations in congregational, non-profit, or community agency settings. Field internship integrates academic study, spiritual discipline, and the practice of leadership. It is the part of the Master of Divinity (M.Div.) curriculum that involves students in supervised work for the formation of spiritually rooted transformational leadership skills at approved placement settings. A congregation, non-profit, or community agency can offer valuable formational leadership and administrative experiences to PSR students.

PSR's mission: to prepare a diverse cadre of spiritually rooted leaders with the vision, resilience, and skill to create a world where all can thrive.

Required framework for PSR M.Div. Internship

Field Internships differ from vocational field work, volunteer activities, and positions of employment because it requires:

- Involvement in significant learning opportunities for the full range of leadership work.
- 6-8 hours per week engaged in the formational activities of leadership, ministry, and administration.
- Collaboration with student intern to develop detailed learning objectives and skills development plans as a foundational best practice for a self-directed, self-reflective learning process.
- Regular spiritual/theological reflection sessions—one-hour weekly—with an experienced mentor, preferably on-site and present for a part of the intern's activities.
- Written evaluations by the mentor and student submitted to the Field Education faculty at designated times.

Internship Guidelines for Congregations, Non-profits, and Agencies (FAQs)

Q: What are the kinds of learning opportunities a placement site can offer that aligns with PSR's educational mission?

A: PSR seeks opportunities for students to collaborate with congregations and organizations in work that provides ministries of healing, care, love, and hope to their communities—individually and collectively—through contemplation, ritual, and action. Transformational leadership formation calls for opportunities for students to observe, engage, and stretch into the vision, resilience, and skills needed for ministries of service.

In offering an internship, it is helpful to reflect on the array of elements of your work and mission, to collaborate on ways a student may both learn skills and contribute to your mission. This requires intentionality that learning opportunities allow the student to engage on a learning curve, to stumble or discern different goals. The student's work during an internship is shaped by both their learning goals and the programmatic goals of the congregation, non-profit, or agency. Still, the formation of transformational leadership skills is central to the internship.

While the student's work may focus on a specific area, it is also important that they be exposed to the missional and administrative aspects of the chosen setting, the practical collaboration and management that supports the viability of any community work.

Q: What is required of the mentoring role?

A: A mentor is expected observe the student at work and provide feedback. Also, to meet with the student for an hour each week. Those sessions are not staff meeting time. Rather, this is time for reflection on the theological/spiritual insights and meaning emerging from the student's experiences—whether exciting, confusing, or disturbing. The student is also focusing on the integration of these experiences with what they are learning through their academic studies and cohort discussions.

Q: Is the mentor expected to evaluate the student's work?

A: The student and mentor collaborate during each semester to discuss the student's desired learning goals. The student then creates their Learning/Serving Covenant, identifying the methods and resources they will use to learn, demonstrate, and receive feedback on these goals. Midway through and at the end of the internship, mentors are asked to write evaluations in conversation with the student on their progress meeting their learning goals. These evaluations are structured to be formative assessments rather than performative critiques. The written evaluations are reviewed and accepted by the mentor and student before submission to Field Education faculty.

Q: Do others in the congregation/organization also have a role?

A: The congregation, non-profit, or agency and the student develop ways for the student to receive feedback and input from members of the congregation filling various roles or from the staff and constituency of the non-profit or agency. We recommend to the students that they have at least one significant conversation per semester with dependable observers to get input for their self-evaluations.

Attendance Expectations

Student are required to participate in a 3-hour weekly course (usually on Wednesday, 9A-12P Pacific) throughout the Fall and Spring semesters of an academic year. There is disciplined study and reflection on the integration of educational studies and practices of spiritual leadership during these class sessions. While the student participates in their internship work for 9 months (September – May) there are no academic classes during January Intersession.

Mentors are expected to participate in an Orientation together with students during the 1st class meeting of the Fall semester. This orientation session is intended to familiarize each student/mentor pairing with the Concurrent Field Education course learning outcomes, and the intentions and practices for collaboration on the student's praxis learning goals.

All Field Education course sessions are hybrid, supporting in person and online participation. Field Education faculty are available for questions or discussions with the mentor throughout the student's internship.

Request to Offer an Internship

PSR is grateful for the partnership of congregations and agencies in preparing students for transformational and spiritually rooted leadership. We recognize and appreciate the commitment made to our students in providing mentoring and a learning environment for their development. If you wish to provide an internship to a PSR M.Div. student, please use [this online form](#) to submit your information. Someone from the PSR Office of Academic Affairs will respond to discuss the possibilities of matching your site with an M.Div. student.