

Field Experience,  
Internship, or Practicum  
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Activities in which students are off-campus doing work related to their field of study while enrolled as students, go by a variety of names, such as early experience, field experience, clerkship, internship, practicum, or coop-education placement. Typically in these activities, the student is supervised by someone on site who is usually not on the NDSU faculty.

The purpose for these off-campus activities varies by department and discipline. However, the department faculty have some reason for having the field experience in the program. It may be to enable the student to demonstrate knowledge or skills acquired in the major, to relate theory to practice, to apply principles to jobs related to the major, or other outcomes expected in the program. The department faculty has discussed what expectations it has for what the students are to "get out" of the field experience. How are the students different or what learning can they demonstrate from the experience?

The supervisor of the field activity is an excellent source for direct evidence of how well the students are achieving the intended student outcomes. The key is to include items for the supervisors to rate that relate to the intended student outcomes.

Asking supervisors questions such as how satisfied they were with the student, or did the student come on time, may be useful for the program but do not provide evidence of learning in relation to the intended outcomes. Some examples of items from forms used at NDSU follow.

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Example Form 1

1. **EVALUATION FACTORS:** Please evaluate the student's performance considering the student's academic level and the nature of the work assignment. To rate the first Sections use the following definitions:

1. Exceptional performance.
2. Performance higher than expected.
3. Performance fully as expected.
4. Performance less than expected.
5. Performance consistently falls below expectations.
- N/A. Insufficient opportunity to observe student performance.

- a. **Job Proficiency**

\_\_\_ Utilizes necessary technical knowledge and skills to perform assigned tasks.

- \_\_\_ Quickly understands and applies new techniques or concepts.
- \_\_\_ Recognizes problems accurately and proceeds in a responsible manner.

**b. Communication and Work Relationships**

- \_\_\_ Written communication is clear and effective.
- \_\_\_ Oral communication is clear and effective.
- \_\_\_ Works well with others; assists and encourages teamwork.
- \_\_\_ Demonstrates maturity and self-confidence in daily work.

**Taken from NDSU - Cooperative Education**

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Example Form 2

**DIRECTONS:**

For each of the traits listed below, place a check mark above statement best describing the applicant.

**JUDGMENT-ABILITY TO LEARN AND ANALYZE INFORMATION**

Uses no judgment. Decisions must be constantly reviewed to prevent error.	Judgment usually poor. Decisions made are usually not reliable.	Exercises a fair amount of common sense. Routine decisions usually adequate.	Has good judgment. Can make decisions that are usually reliable.	Unusually keen insight. Decisions almost always correct.	No response.
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**ACCURACY-QUALITY OF WORK**

Almost worthless. Work must always be checked for errors.	Makes frequent errors. Accuracy of work not always dependable.	Is usually accurate. Work requires only spot checking.	Makes very few errors. Checks own work accurately before release.	Almost never makes an error. Unnecessary to check applicant's	No response.
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Example Form 3

**The rating scale is: 4 = Highly Satisfactory (HS) through 1 = Very Unsatisfactory (VU); and, 0 = No Opinion or Not Applicable (NA)**

**HS <=====> VU NA**

Did the employees show:

fundamental knowledge needed for the job?	4	3	2	1	0
knowledge of crops (or plant production)?	4	3	2	1	0

knowledge of weeds?	4	3	2	1	0
knowledge of insects?	4	3	2	1	0
knowledge of diseases?	4	3	2	1	0
knowledge of chemicals and safety?	4	3	2	1	0
knowledge of up-to-date cultural and biological management practices?	4	3	2	1	0
ability to integrate plant protection strategies?	4	3	2	1	0
ability to apply fundamental knowledge to your practices?	4	3	2	1	0
ability to learn in your current situation?	4	3	2	1	0
willingness to learn?	4	3	2	1	0
the ability to communicate effectively:	4	3	2	1	0
Orally?	4	3	2	1	0
Writing?	4	3	2	1	0
Were they effective/productive on the job?	4	3	3	3	0

**Taken from NDSU - Plant Sciences**