

GRADUATION REQUIREMENT:

FIELD WORK EXPERIENCE

Work Experience, Internship, Practicum, and Thesis Guidelines

Beginning with the Fall, 2010 semester, as a requirement for graduation, students must show evidence of having completed a minimum level of professional level work experience (defined below) in a human resources (HR), management/administrative, or other closely-related field of organizational practice.

Keep in mind that all students must complete 36 credit hours as specified by the Degree Curriculum Requirements. If you use option 1, you must still complete the 36 hour requirement; if you use option 2, 3, or 4, you must register for either HRD 696, HRD 697, or PSYC897. Upon successful completion of the course, you will have earned 3 credit hours of the required 36 hours.

The Field Work Experience (FWE) requirement can be met in one of four ways:

Option 1. Technical or professional work experience in a HR-related job.

Students who are currently or recently working in a professional or specialist HR position are expected to use this option.

HR-related positions would be most specific position in human resources, including: HR manager; staffing specialist; compensation or benefits specialist; trainer or organizational development specialist; or other HR specialist positions. These positions must involve professional or exempt levels of responsibility; clerical, secretarial and/or administrative assistant support-level positions do not qualify.

- This work experience must be current and/or may have occurred within the past three years.
- Certain non-HR positions like an office manager with substantial and ongoing HR-kinds of responsibilities (i.e. hiring, training) may (but do not automatically) qualify depending on the nature, frequency, and degree of HR responsibilities involved.
- The student's total time in such positions should be equivalent to a minimum of four months full-time. (Individuals in part-time positions that meet the substantive responsibility requirement would have their experience *pro rated* into monthly equivalents.)

Students wishing to use this option must submit a portfolio of evidence to the Program Director that contains the following documents and information:

- A copy of the job description(s) of the position for which they are claiming the experience
- A letter of attestation from the general manager, partner or other suitable senior level authority from that organization verifying that the student occupied/ies that position, performed the duties as stated and indicates the time period involved
- An integrative and reflective paper that provides a summary of the student's work experience, listing the content areas of the discipline covered by the work experience, and a portfolio of various professional projects completed. The paper should be a minimum of 8-10 pages (double-spaced), should describe at least five professional projects or on-going professional duties for which the student is/was responsible, and what the student's involvement was in those projects.

This portfolio of materials should be submitted as a hard copy in a binder with the proper organization of materials. The packet will NOT be accepted as an email attachment. This packet must be submitted to the Director of the HRD Program for review no later than the end of the semester in which the student is scheduled to complete 24 credit hours in the program. Portfolios requesting this option will NOT be accepted after the student has completed 24 credit hours in the program, unless the Program Director has given written approval in advance for a later submission.

Students that have a PHR, SPHR, GPHR, SHRM-CP, or SHRM-SCP will be deemed as having met the field work experience requirement and will NOT be required to complete the Option 1 FWE Portfolio. Provide documentation of the certification to the Program Director to satisfy this requirement.

Or

Option 2. Successful completion of HRD 696, Internship.

According to University policy, the Internship requires the student to perform a total of 120 hours of meaningful, technical or professional level work with some organization. This amounts to approximately 10 hours a week over the course of a semester.

- Students must have completed 27 credit hours towards the HRD degree in order to be eligible to enroll in this course.

Details explaining the Internship are provided in different bulletins in this same Student Resources section.

This option is expected for students who do not have HR field work experience and are who are either full-time students and/or who are only working part-time.

Or

Option 3. Successful completion of HRD 697, Practicum.

This option is only available to students currently working full-time in a non-HR field or position.

- Students must have completed 27 credit hours towards the HRD degree in order to be eligible to enroll in this course.

Students using this option are expected to complete a minimum of five HR-related projects for their current employer. Or, if that option is not possible, the student may arrange to complete these projects with another organization, such as a non-profit, charitable, volunteer or religious group, for example.

The exact nature of the assignments or projects is to be negotiated with the employer and in consultation with the Program Director. Possible projects include (but are not limited to):

- Preparing and/or carrying out a training program
- Establishing a better selection procedure
- Conducting a human resource audit
- Carrying out a survey of employees
- Developing a policy manual
- Planning and carrying out a program evaluation
- Developing job descriptions
- Doing a job evaluation
- Carrying out a compensation or benefits analysis

This project work should represent the equivalent of the amount of time a student would otherwise have spent in a regular course during the semester; that is, the work should be the equivalent of 10 hours a week beyond the student's normal job duties.

Students must prepare a portfolio (like that required of the Internship) of their projects for grading. Details are explained in another bulletin under Student Resources at:

- Internship: Portfolio Requirement for Grading Purposes

Or

Option 4. Successful completion of PSYC 897, Psychology Thesis

This option is only available to students pursuing the Industrial and Organizational Psychology area of study. The option requires the design and execution of a research project that involves the collection of original data; while exploratory research may be considered, typically the research will involve the testing of a hypothesis(es) using some kind of experimental design.

You will work under the supervision of a faculty advisor in developing and carrying out your thesis project

The prerequisites for taking the Thesis course include:

- HRD 679: Special Topics: Advanced Issues in I/O Psychology
- Psy 687: Adv Experimental Design I
- Psy 688: Adv Experimental Design II

All policies and rules for thesis as established by the Psychology Department and Towson University apply.