**Field Study**

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**Goal of Field Study**  
An essential component of the transition all students must make from the academic to the professional environment is the integration and application of academic theories, principles and practices to the requirements and expectations of the professional arena. To encourage successful transition to the professional environment, supervised field studies in an approved site with business, industry, government or nonprofit sector (or a supervised independent field study project) is an valuable component of the curriculum for all degree studies.

The goal of the field study is to allow students to investigate core aspects of the discipline within the professional environment through close contact with practitioners and real-world situations. Students pursue field studies through a jointly supervised practicum under the direction of program faculty and an approved field site sponsor. Student participation covers a commitment of 50 contact hours with the subject matter for each semester credit awarded.

The field study is intended to provide students appropriate practical hands-on experience and detailed knowledge of their professions. They are expected to complete a daily journal and prepare a scholarly paper summarizing their findings for the field study. Field study may be repeated provided the scholarly topics are non-duplicative. For each field study course, a specially selected instructor will be appointed.

The general learning objectives for field study are as follows:

* Demonstrate theoretical knowledge in applied settings.
* Make immediate improvements within their work settings.
* Exhibit excellence in core competencies.
* Reflect new understandings from the practical studies.
* Demonstrate competence in the general domains of the program.
* Better address the tasks of their professional arena.
* Integrate academic theory and professional techniques within a monitored setting.
* Demonstrate a practical knowledge of cases and situations which are representative of the role and functions of an independent practitioner in the professional environment.

**Student Communication Requirements**

[Telephone Contact Requirements](http://www.akamaiuniversity.us/fieldstudy.html#31)  
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[Optional Contact Requirements](http://www.akamaiuniversity.us/fieldstudy.html#33)

**Telephone Contact Requirements**  
The student and instructor will have an initial phone conversation within one week prior to the student's start date at the field site. The purpose of this interaction is to clarify the plan of action for the field study, the course objectives, and the schedule of activities, familiarize the student and instructor with each other, and develop clear timelines for completion of course requirements. This interaction is required, and it will be conducted at the student's expense unless otherwise arranged by the student and the field site sponsor. In addition to the initial phone interaction, the student and instructor will have phone contact during the progress of the course, at weeks 4, 8, 12 and 16. Through these additional contacts, student and instructor will assess progress and timelines, modify expectations and the plan of action, as necessary, and answer questions and concerns of either party.

**Additional Contact Requirements**  
In addition to telephone contact the student will maintain a minimum of once-per-week email, post or telefax contact with the instructor for the purpose of communicating progress and resolving any difficulties which might arise at the field site. This is a forum for specific questions by the student and instructor, a time for instruction by the faculty, and problem solving, as needed. The instructor and the student are expected to respond to electronic communications within 48 hours, if at all possible.

**Optional Methods of Contact**  
In addition to the methods of communication, each student is encouraged to provide ideas about the optional methods of communication appropriate for the capabilities of the field site environment. For example, audiotaped or videotaped messages can be used, as appropriate, with feedback by the instructor. Synchronous video linking, chat room, and bulletin board access can be used if the student has access to Internet-based video hardware and software. The instructor will be pleased to explore options for increased and improved communication with the student.

**Responsibilities of Student, Instructor and Field Site Sponsor**  
The following guidelines describe the course delivery style and the basic activities and responsibilities of the student, the field site sponsor, and the course instructor for the conduct of this field study.

[Activities and Responsibilities of the Student](http://www.akamaiuniversity.us/fieldstudy.html#41)  
[Activities and Responsibilities of the Field Site Sponsor](http://www.akamaiuniversity.us/fieldstudy.html#42)  
[Activities and Responsibilities of the Instructor](http://www.akamaiuniversity.us/fieldstudy.html#43)

**Activities and Responsibilities of the Student**  
Set mutually satisfactory and feasible goals with faculty and field site sponsors. Become an integral and involved member of the field site staff. Become familiar with policies and procedures and abide by all regulations. Support the field site and its staff in any contacts with the public. Notify the field site sponsor when you are unable to work as scheduled. Consult your supervisor or field site sponsor when confronted with problems you cannot satisfactorily solve by yourself. Complete work as outlined in field study agreement with lead faculty and field site sponsor. Make sure field study sponsor receives, fills out and returns students evaluation form at the end of the field study placement. Students maintain a daily journal for the duration of the field study and prepare a scholarly paper addressing the purpose and goal of the field study for the particular degree program.

**Activities and Responsibilities of the Field Site Sponsor**  
Orient the student to the philosophy, policies, programs and services of the placement site. Prepare the site staff for the arrival of the field study student. Define the expectations of the field study student including specific project(s) for the duration of the placement. Determine with field-study student, the types of learning experiences, which provide challenge, growth and success - and provide these experiences. Integrate the field study student as a fully functioning participant in appropriate levels of on site activities, projects and programs. Provide supervision by meeting at least once a week (or other more appropriate time interval) with the field study student. Train field study student as necessary. Evaluate field study student's progress, overall performance and the degree to which s/he has met the stated goals and objectives through a verbal review at mid-placement and by a written final evaluation, as requested by the University.

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**Activities and Responsibilities of the Instructor**  
Communicate and review progress with the field study student at least monthly during the field site placement to supervise academic components of work (suggest readings, help students connect internship to theoretical base, clarify assignments of academic work). Serve as a consultant to field study student and field site sponsor for technical advice regarding the expectations and guidelines of the university. Conduct a mid-placement review and submit progress report. Provide mediation support for field-study student, as needed. Provide guidance in focusing the final paper, which should be a minimum of 15 pages in length. Arrange communication with student at end of field placement to review and evaluate experience. Oversee the gathering of the student and field site sponsor's final reports. Review and evaluate the student's course paper. Prepare the final evaluation in a timely manner and submit the grade report.

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**Application for Field Study**  
Preparation should begin at least two months before the student anticipates enrollment for the field study course by gathering the necessary information needed to effectively complete the Application for Field Study and submission to lead faculty. As needed, the field study student will work with the field sponsor and the instructor to create the necessary framework and schedule for the successful completion of the field study application. For the application to receive approval, it is essential that the field site sponsor agree to provide on-site coordination and have the capacity to offering clear expectations and guidance to the student for the duration of the field placement.

The Application for Field Study should include the following information:

1. Specify the course to be conducted by field study by name and number.
2. Indicate proposed date of enrollment by indicating when the student will begin actual field placement activities.
3. Name the field site, sponsor (and direct supervisor, if different) and contact information (full address, telephone number, and email address).
4. Name of Administrator in Charge of the organization within which the field site rests.
5. Propose the onsite timetable and schedule of hours to show minimum hours will be achieved.
6. Describe the full array of activities you will conduct on site and identify the position title assigned.
7. Explain how field placement will help you focus on field study goals.
8. Clarify the accommodations and services to be provided for student at the field site.
9. Clarify the accommodations and services the student must provide and how these will be attained.
10. Identify the insurance coverage protecting student, this institution and field site institution from liability claims.
11. State the itinerary of the student for traveling to and from the field site.
12. Clarify that the student has attained proper papers and medical clearance by submission of photocopies or letters of attestation.
13. State the student-faculty timetable for communications during the field study.
14. Attach a student-faculty course memorandum including the course syllabus with list of assignments and methods of evaluation.
15. Attach a statement signed by the administrator of the organization responsible for field placement site, agreeing to the terms of the field study placement and assigning or authorizing the field site sponsor to undertake the responsibilities of the field site placement.
16. Include signatures of agreement of the student and faculty-in-charge.

**Conduct of the Field Study**

[Field Placement Activities](http://www.akamaiuniversity.us/fieldstudy.html#61)  
[Oral Reviews with Instructor](http://www.akamaiuniversity.us/fieldstudy.html#62)  
[Reflective Paper or Project Report](http://www.akamaiuniversity.us/fieldstudy.html#63)  
[Course Evaluation](http://www.akamaiuniversity.us/fieldstudy.html#64)  
[Course Timetable](http://www.akamaiuniversity.us/fieldstudy.html#65)

**Field Placement Activities**  
Participate within the field study site according to the plan of action established with the instructor and the field site sponsor at the outset of the course. Maintain required activities, and the communications and meetings with instructor and site sponsor, according to the course completion timetable. Conducts required or recommended readings and maintain daily journal notations.

**Oral Reviews with Instructor**  
Schedule and conduct telephone (or other means of communication, as arranged beforehand) contacts with the instructor, according to the course completion timetable, for the purposes of oral review of learning and progress at the field site. Clarify or revise of the plan of action for the field study, review of the course objectives, and the schedule of activities.

**Reflective Paper or Project Report**  
Develop a academic paper or project report relative to the "subject matter" of the field study, in a manner that is reflective of the experiences undertaken. The reflective paper should be approximately 10 double-spaced, typewritten pages, addressing the objectives of the course, drawing from the daily journal notations, and required readings (if any), and formulated in such a manner as to contribute insight and ideas relative to the professional development of the student. The primary purpose of the paper is to permit the student to reflect upon the new learning acquired through the field study, to reflect upon the new professional maturity, to relate what was learned in the practical environment to the core studies of the program and the academic literature reviewed. Paper should adhere to standard manuals of style and contain effective scholarly discussions, and a thorough referencing of the literature used (if any).

**Course Evaluation**  
Both the experiential (time spent at the field study site) and the academic work are valued towards the award of credit. Regularly scheduled communications with the instructor, meetings with the field site sponsor, the academic readings, journal notations, and formal evaluations are expected parts of the field study. For the course grade, the instructor will evaluate the student through mid-placement and end-of-placement oral assessments, the final overarching assessment of the field site sponsor, and the student s scholarly paper.

The student will participate with the field sponsor in the conduct of a final field study review. This review will reflect upon to effectiveness of the student in addressing and accomplishing the objectives of the course within the field site environment.

The course grade will be calculated based upon the following formula:

* Mid placement oral review by instructor [25%]
* Reflective paper [25%]
* Final evaluation by site sponsor [25%]
* Final oral review by instructor [25%]

**Course Timetable**  
The following timeline is a suggested map for completion of the field study course. It is only a suggested timeline, and the student may negotiate an effective timeline with the course instructor and field site sponsor.

Week #1: Instructors final review of student application/plan of action. Participate in oral discussion and orientation with the instructor prior to placement.

Week #2: Formal initial meeting between student and site sponsor wherein student objectives and tasks at the field site are formally reviewed, and plan of action is set for the first half of the field placement. Student begins field site activities and begins maintaining daily journal notations that will continue for the duration of the field placement.

Week #3: Student sends first written communication to instructor via post, fax, or email, verifying that field placement is underway in an orderly fashion.

Week #4: Student makes first telephone contact with instructor to review progress and to arrange to work out any difficulties at the field site.

Week #7: Formal mid-placement meeting between student and site sponsor wherein student progress is reviewed, and plan of action is set for the second half of the field placement. Site sponsor sends written review to instructor following this meeting.

Week #8: Student schedules mid-placement oral review with instructor.

Week #9: Student makes telephone contact with instructor for mid-placement oral review. Following the oral review, student and instructor review progress and establish plan of action concerning any difficulties at the field site.

Week #13: Student makes telephone contact with instructor to review progress and to arrange for final evaluation requirements at the field site.

Week #14: Student arranges for final review by field site sponsor and the completion of the written final evaluation of the student.

Week #15: Formal end-of-placement meeting is held between student and site sponsor wherein student success in field placement is formally reviewed including a thorough review of the contents of the sponsor's final evaluation of the student. Site sponsor completes the written final evaluation of the student and sends to the instructor.

Week #16: Final evaluation by site sponsor is to be received by instructor.

Week #17: Instructor conducts final oral review and student grade report is prepared and submitted to the University.