

Guidelines for Distance Education Students: Arranging Professional Practice Experience in HINF 3005, Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Practicum

The Department of Health Management and Informatics embraces the concept that professional skills development begins in the classroom and is honed by directed practical experience in a work-place setting. As such, the curricula for the degree and certificate programs include **Practicum** courses. These courses also meet the accreditation requirement for **Professional Practicum Experience (PPE)** course credits. Students enrolled in the Department's distance education program have certain responsibilities for the arrangement of the required PPE. Outlined below are key guidelines that students must follow to ensure timely and satisfactory completion of all required PPE courses. Students may access the practicum course syllabi located within the respective D2L courses as well as on the DHMI website.

Certificate Administrative Practicum (HINF 3005) Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Program, Summer Semester

1. HINF 3005 is a required course for students enrolled in the post-baccalaureate certificate program. The course must be completed during the final (Summer) semester of the student's enrollment.
2. Students should begin the process of identifying a suitable facility by no later than February during the spring semester (final year) of their enrollment. **Students who desire the opportunity to complete this course in a health care facility located in the Augusta area must contact the GRU course instructor for assistance.**
3. A suitable site is defined as a site that can provide the student with **(a)** the experiences necessary for completion of HINF 3005 course assignments and **(b)** supervision by RHIA credentialed staff. It is not mandatory that the experience be completed at an inpatient acute care facility; other types of facilities are also acceptable such as long term care, hospice, or rehabilitation. The facility must have applicable accreditation status, such as accreditation by the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Health Care Organizations (JCAHO) or Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). For the HINF 3005 course, the Department of Health Management and Informatics does not require a contract between the facility and the Department; however the student must be aware that some health care facilities may require a contract. For this reason, it is crucial for the student to begin the search for a suitable facility immediately as the arrangement of a contract can be a lengthy process and will necessitate the involvement of faculty and staff at GRU.
4. Students will need to contact the Director of Health Information Services (medical record department) and explain their purpose in making the contact. It may be necessary to make an appointment with the Director to discuss the requirements of the course. Students should provide the Director with a copy of the course syllabus. The course syllabus contains the details of the course requirements and should be reviewed by the student thoroughly before contacting a Director to request the

opportunity to be supervised by the Director. Students will need to obtain written confirmation from the Director regarding the Director's agreement to supervise the student in completing course requirements; the letter must include a schedule for completion of assignments at the site. A suitable form of written communication includes an e-mail from the director or memorandum from the director and must be submitted to GRU as evidence of the agreement.

5. After providing the DHMI course instructor with a copy of the confirmation from the site director, students must receive final approval from the GRU course instructor before engaging in course activities at a site. The student must complete and submit **a completed [Student Request for Practicum Site Approval form](#) at least eight weeks prior** to engaging in course activities.

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