



FIELD PLACEMENT GUIDE

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MAJOR RESEARCH PAPER OR FIELD PLACEMENT?

As part of the degree requirements for a Master of Arts in Criminology and Social Justice (CSJ), the program offers alternative streams for in-depth learning — the Major Research Paper (MRP) and the Field Placement.

MAJOR RESEARCH PAPER (MRP)

A Major Research Paper is designed to investigate primary sources of information, show an understanding of the existing literature on the topic, and demonstrate an independent conclusion. An MRP does not have to showcase original ideas, but it should contribute to academic knowledge and must indicate extensive research and independent analysis. The MRP may be an argumentative research paper with the student's stance on a debatable topic identified in the thesis statement, or it may be an analytical research paper with a research question that fuels exploration and evaluation of the topic.

RECOMMENDED FOR

Students who plan to continue their graduate studies at the doctoral level or pursue a law degree are encouraged to write an MRP. A research paper will allow students to submit a scholarly writing sample with their applications.

ADVANTAGES OF WRITING AN MRP

Writing an MRP offers opportunities to:

- contribute to existing knowledge that may be used by other researchers, professionals, policy makers.
- have a publication on record to include on a resume.
- be cited in other research studies.
- submit the MRP for graduate and professional conferences or journals.
- learn to publicly advocate for and defend the findings of the research.
- write grant and conference proposals, and obtain ethics approval

REQUIREMENTS

Students will need to pass an elective course in the area of qualitative, quantitative, or mixed research methodology in the Winter term. Students will need to work with an MRP supervisor, usually a faculty member, to complete the MRP as well as defend it before the end of the Spring/Summer term.

FIELD PLACEMENT

A field placement is a supervised 120-hour internship (typically full-time) in an organization that provides services related to the mandate of the program. The organization may be a social service agency, Government agency or law firm, prison, or other type of agency. Field placements are designed to help students build bridges between academic knowledge and actual work situations. They give students an opportunity to learn through experience. To accommodate part-time students' work responsibilities, the required hours may be completed with flexible scheduling.

The Field Placement may be paid or unpaid.

RECOMMENDED FOR

Students who would like frontline or “hands on” experience working with diverse groups of people, and an opportunity to see how the theories learned in the classroom are integrated into the practical world would benefit from doing a field placement.

ADVANTAGES OF DOING A FIELD PLACEMENT

Doing a Field Placement offers opportunities to:

- get practical experience.
- improve professional knowledge and skills.
- learn about organizational culture and governance.
- develop interpersonal skills while working with diverse populations.
- interact with professionals who can offer advice and guidance.
- network within the sector and build contacts.

REQUIREMENTS

Students will need to fulfill the requirements, which will include attending seminars, completing two online D2L modules on Environmental Health and Safety Awareness & Workplace Violence and Harassment, writing a final report, and presenting about the placement experience. Students will need to complete 120-hours field placement at an approved host by the end of the Spring/Summer term.

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PAID PLACEMENTS	UNPAID PLACEMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students receive salary or wages for doing their placements tasks.• In a paid placement you will likely have a job description.• Insurance is covered by the host agency.• Students must adhere to the workplace policies regarding gifts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students do not receive salary or wages for doing their placement tasks. <i>(Placements are still considered unpaid if students receive one or more of the following types of payments: social assistance benefits, training allowance, honorarium, reimbursement of expenses and stipend paid to the trainee).</i>• In an unpaid placement you will have more leeway to negotiate the type of responsibilities you want.• Unpaid placements are covered by WSIB. Forms must be completed prior to starting placement.• Students must not solicit or accept gifts, cash or favours from service users at their placement.• Students must adhere to the workplace policies regarding gifts.

Through the field placement, students apply and test their classroom learning in applied settings such as:

- Community organizations and centres
- Government services and ministries
- Immigrant-serving organizations (ISO)
- Universities
- Law offices and legal aid networks

Please note that CSJ students are not be eligible for placements at some government agencies such as Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA), Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) for a number of reasons:

- Generally, these agencies require fulltime work for 4 – 16 months.
- Students are required to return to full-time studies in the next academic term.
- Application process may start in the previous year before the student enrolls.

The student may apply on their own initiative for the Federal Student Work Experience Program.

PRE-PLACEMENT

SEMINARS & D2L TRAINING MODULES

The seminars prepare the students to translate academic concepts and research evidence into practice. Students must attend the four seminars and take two online training courses on D2L

SEMINARS

1. Orientation to the Field Placement

Students will learn about:

- the highlights and challenges of completing the Field Placement versus writing a Major Research paper
- the process and steps of the placement
- the requirements for receiving a Pass grade
- different types of placements

2. Resume Writing and Cover Letter

Students will learn about:

- constructing a professional resume that clearly outlines student's unique skills and qualifications
- writing a concise cover letter and a professional thank you letter

3. Interview Techniques

Students will learn about:

- effective interview techniques
- how to prepare for an interview
- the dynamics of interviewing for a placement

4. Skills for a Successful Placement

Students will learn about:

- how to make the most of the placement experience
- how to set clear expectations
- how to take charge of your own personal and professional growth

Note: Other seminars with guest speakers from the sector may be scheduled from time to time. Attendance at these seminars will be voluntary.

ONLINE TRAINING MODULES

1. Environmental Health and Safety Awareness ONLINE TRAINING MODULE

The law requires mandatory environmental health & safety training for both paid and unpaid workers. This includes student interns in research placements, practicums, exchanges, zones and thesis-related activity working at TMU.

2. Workplace Violence and Harassment Prevention ONLINE TRAINING MODULE

After completing the two online courses, students are required to submit a copy of the Certificate of Completion to the Placement Co-ordinator via email.

PLACEMENT PREPARATION

Step 1: Identify Possible Placement

Student will research potential placements and submit a proposal to the Field Placement Co-ordinator, including:

- host agency description
- relevance to the CSJ program
- complete contact information of the signing authority

To initiate contact with an organization to find a possible placement, the student may submit a letter of interest and resume as well as the document for potential host agencies giving a background of the course. The document is on our departmental website.

Step 2: Agreement between host and TMU

An Agreement between host agency and TMU will need to be signed. This will be facilitated by the Placement Co-ordinator using the contact information in the Proposal. The process of creating and signing an Agreement between TMU and the host agency may take up to 6 weeks.

Step 3: Vulnerable Sector Screening (VSS) from the local police force (if relevant)

Students will be required to submit results of a valid Vulnerable Sector Screening (VSS) if the placement requires students to work with vulnerable clients. The placement organization will supervise this process. The process of applying and funding the cost of the VSS will be the responsibility of the student and in collaboration with the placement organization. VSS Volunteer applications generally cost between \$20.00 and \$70. Some organizations may reimburse the cost. Further details about this process can be found on our website.

Checklist: Step 1 to 3

DOCUMENTS	PAID PLACEMENTS	UNPAID PLACEMENTS
Placement Proposal	Required	Required
	<i>Proposal Form available on D2L</i>	
Voluntary Sector Screening	Only if the host requires it.	Only if the host requires it.
	<i>VSS Policy and Procedure available on D2L</i>	
Agreement with TMU	Not required	Required

Step 4: Immunization

If the student will be working with children, youth, or seniors, immunization may be an agency requirement:

- Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis
- Measles/Mumps/Rubella
- TB Skin Test
- Seasonal Flu Shot

Step 5: Submit Pre-Placement Documents

Once the placement has been confirmed by the host organization and TMU, the student will need to submit the required paperwork. The completed documents should be scanned and submitted via email to the Placement Co-ordinator before the placement begins.

Confidentiality Agreement (required)

Students are required to sign a Confidentiality Agreement to protect the confidentiality of all information obtained in the course of their placement, within limitations of the law. Three (3) signed copies will need to be submitted: one copy to the organization, one copy for the student's own record, and one copy for the Co-ordinator's records.

Students may also be required to sign similar agency documents.

Work Plan (required)

To maximize the learning experience for students and to ensure that the placement organizations' requirements for services are met, students and Placement Supervisors should negotiate and fill out a Work Plan. The work detailed in the Plan should conform to course requirements at the graduate level.

The Work Plan should include:

- The name of organization
- The name and designation of supervisor and contact information
- Placement dates or approximate time period, and whether it is a full-time, a part-time or
- flexi-time placement
- The tasks/responsibilities that the student will be involved in as part of the placement

Some agencies do not operate on a 9 - 5 schedule, therefore, the hours students are expected to work may vary. The schedule should be determined between the student and the Placement Supervisor while discussing the Work Plan.

Insurance Coverage Letters of Understanding (required)

The Ministry of Advance Education and Skills Development (MAESD) provides Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) coverage for Ontario Postsecondary students who must complete an unpaid work placement as a requirement of their publicly supported postsecondary education program.

Students on unpaid placements have to submit signed copies of the Letter/Declaration of Understanding regarding insurance coverage. There is one letter specifically for Placement Employers (host agencies) and one for the student.

The Ministry coverage is in effect from the start date of the work placement to its end date. The student is covered only when the student reaches the Placement Employer's premises where they are assigned to work. However, coverage does extend to students who, in the course of their placement, go to and from work in transportation provided by the Placement Employer. When the conditions of employment require the student to travel away from the Placement Employer's premises, the student is eligible for ministry coverage. However, the student is not eligible for the ministry coverage when on a personal errand or business. How the student travels does not factor into the determination of the coverage. WSIB does not cover any injuries outside of the work placement.

Worksite Placement Form (if relevant)

Some part-time students may wish to do their field placement at their place of employment. To ensure the field placement is clearly differentiated from their work and meets the placement criteria, the student will need to fill out a Worksite Placement Form.

The following criteria must be met to ensure a new field experience for the worksite student:

- The worksite agency must approve and allow the student a new learning experience with sufficient resources that include a different populations and/or project.
- The Placement Supervisor must be different from their regular supervisor.
- The placement hours/days must be defined and separated from the regular working days
- If possible, the placement locations should be separated from the work location i.e. different department, program or service to new population in order to help define clear boundaries.

If the placement agency has a car/van that students are required to use as part of their placement tasks, the student is responsible for verifying that the agency liability insurance policy covers the student.

In the event of a placement-related injury or illness at a paid placement, please refer to the employer's accident/emergency procedures. In addition, please report any accidents/incidents to the Placement Co-ordinator.

Students should ensure that they have a copy of all completed forms for their records before submitting the forms to the Co-ordinator.

DURING PLACEMENT

Placement Responsibilities

- Make own travel arrangements and cover any additional costs.
- Provide the Placement Supervisor with a current address and telephone number
- Accept and operate within the policies and procedures of the placement setting including, but not limited to:
 - Appropriate language
 - Breaks
 - Cell phones or other electronic devices
 - Dress code
 - Food and drinks (including gum or candy)
 - Tobacco products, drugs or alcohol
- Attend orientation and/or training sessions
- Meet all field practice responsibilities as negotiated with the Placement Supervisor in the Work Plan.
- Meet the course requirements regarding minimum number of hours in field placement. Any time missed, regardless of cause, must be made up at the placement setting.
- Notify the Placement Supervisor with as much advance notice as possible if unable to attend the placement. If absent for more than two consecutive field placement days, the student is required to give a letter explaining the cause and supply a medical certificate if required.
- Attend meetings, conferences or seminars on behalf of the agency as requested by the Placement Supervisor
- Complete and submit all reports and other assigned tasks on time as required by the Placement Supervisor.

Agency politics are a complex and sensitive matter and students are strongly discouraged from getting involved in the internal politics of the agency involving friction between staff and management, between two or more staff members, or between the agency and service users, funders, or community. Students are encouraged, however, to discuss with their Placement Supervisor any incidents of racism, homophobia or other forms of oppression and violations of the Ontario Human Rights Code that they may witness. If they are uncomfortable with discussing the issue with their Placement Supervisor they should discuss the matter with the Placement Co-ordinator.

On-site Safety

Agencies are required by law to ensure the health, safety and welfare of their employees, service users, volunteers, and placement students whilst they are at their agency. They must provide a safe and healthy environment for placements. This includes toilets, drinking water, and appropriate lighting and temperature.

Although there are no legal prohibitions on expecting students to work alone or lift heavy material, if students have an issue with health and safety provisions at the placement site, they should discuss the matter with their Placement Supervisor and inform the Placement Co-ordinator.

Off-site Visits

At times, students may be required to go for off-site meetings or community outreach programs. Placement agencies are responsible for assuring students' safety. However, as is the case at all times, students should apply common sense precautionary measures, be alert, and trust their instincts when they are in unfamiliar situations.

Students are not permitted to transport service users in their personal vehicles.

Self-Care

Some placements, specifically those where students work with vulnerable populations, may cause work-related stress or may trigger emotional responses. Self-care practices like meditation, yoga, running, or tai chi are useful, or students may approach trained professionals for free and confidential counselling.

Centre for Student Development and Counselling

JOR-07C, Lower Ground Floor, Jorgenson Hall

Phone: 416-979-5195

Email: csdc@torontomu.ca

Reporting Incidents

Incidents or injuries of serious nature are extremely rare in the field. In the rare event that there is an incident involving personal threat or harassment, discrimination, the risk of physical or emotional harm, or items stolen from the student while at his/her field placement, the student should contact the Field Placement Co-ordinator in a timely manner.

Depending on the nature of the issue, they may also report the matter to the Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Services.

Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Services

POD 254A

Phone: (416) 979-5349

Office hours: Monday-Friday: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

COMPLETION OF PLACEMENT HOURS

Students are required to complete a minimum of 120 hours of field placement. Typically, for full-time students this will involve approximately 3.5 weeks of full-time placement. Lunch time and breaks are not counted towards the hours. Some host agencies may negotiate for longer placements, but only the first 120 hours will be counted towards the placement requirement. Please note that if the extended hours are beyond the school year, the student will not be covered by Workplace Safety and Insurance Board for any harm or injury.

Students will be required to fill in Time Sheets and get their Placement Supervisors to sign them.

Students are expected to adhere to agency working hours unless otherwise negotiated with the placement agency and the Placement Co-ordinator

PLACEMENT REPORT

After completing 120-hours placement, an electronic copy of the placement report should be submitted via email latest by 15 August. The subject should read "Placement Report – Full Name of Host Agency".

There is no word limit for the report, but a concise version is preferred.

1. Title page

- a. Name of the organization
- b. Student's full name

2. Body of the report

- a. Organizational Structure
 - i. A description of the organization
 - ii. A brief history of the organization
 - iii. Organization's vision statement
 - iv. Description of the client population
 - v. Organizational workforce with flowchart (if relevant)
- b. Task Description
 - i. Supervisor's name, designation, and complete contact information
 - ii. Describe type of placement e.g. paid/unpaid, full-time/part-time
 - iii. Describe tasks and responsibilities
 - iv. Supervision/mentoring style, frequency of meetings
- c. Highlights and Challenges of the Placements

Reflect on what you enjoyed most about the placement and what you found challenging.
- d. Personal and Professional Learning and Growth

Triggers for reflection may include concrete experiences, or more abstract concepts such as one's assumptions, feelings, ideas or behaviour. It does not need to be a dramatic or life-altering event.

3. Signed Timesheets

4. Letter of Completion

5. Annexures (if relevant)

6. References (if required)

The report should be submitted electronically.

PLACEMENT PRESENTATION

A post-placement symposium will be held towards the end of August at which students will share their placement experiences with their classmate, faculty and invited external practitioners.

The order of presentations is determined on a "first sign-up, first present" basis on the day of the presentations.

The presentation should not exceed 10 minutes. It may be a formal presentation using PowerPoint or other electronic media, or it may be an informal "conversation style" presentation.

The following topics should be addressed:

- A brief description of the host agency
- Tasks and responsibilities
- Personal highlights of the placement/ personal challenges
- Personal/professional learning and growth

If a student is unable to attend on the scheduled dates, they may present to the Program Director and Placement Co-ordinator on another mutually convenient time.

In special cases, at their discretion, the Program Director and Field Placement Co-ordinator may accept a video of the presentation.

PLACEMENTS ABROAD

If a student wishes to do an international placement, the student is responsible for all financial and logistical obligations related to it. International placements must meet the same course requirements as local or national placements. Students need to take into consideration that the process to internally approve an international placement may take up to four months.

In addition to the program's placement process, the student is responsible for co-ordinating with TMU International for risk assessment and orientation.

OTHER TYPES OF PLACEMENT

Part-time Placements

Scheduling of placements for part-time students will be flexible to ensure equivalent placement time. Flexible arrangements need to be negotiated with the Field Placement Coordinator.

Worksite Placement

Students who are employed full-time may do their placements at their place of work if the agency/organization and the placement opportunity meet the eligibility criteria. A worksite placement must be different from the student's regular job description. Students wishing to do a worksite placement are required to complete a Worksite Placement Form. Approval of a work-site placement is at the discretion of the Placement Co-ordinator.

Special Considerations

Students with special circumstances that may require individual arrangements, such as parental leave or medical leave, must inform the Placement Coordinator in advance or as soon as the unforeseen circumstance becomes known.

Multiple Placements

By and large, students are not allowed to split the 120 hours between two or more placement agencies. Students who wish to do two or more placements to get wider experience may do so of their own initiative as long as one primary placement of 120 hours is completed as required and both placements are complete before the end of the Spring/Summer term.