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## COVID-19 Internship, Field Placement and Service Learning Protocol

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*The University adopted this protocol to be in full compliance with current state and local orders and consistent with existing federal and state guidance. The Provost's Office may issue updated protocols, which become effective upon adoption, to comply with changes in state and local orders, to be consistent with new federal and state guidance, or to adapt to changing conditions on campus. Please watch for updates to these protocols and regularly check the DU COVID-19 [website](#) for news and other important information.*

### University of Denver COVID-19 Internship, Field Placement and Service Learning Protocol

**Faculty, staff, students and especially supervisors must follow the COVID-19 guidelines outlined below for internship, field placements and service learning.**

**The University has implemented a [phased approach](#) to returning employees to campus and resuming activities on campus in accordance with state and local orders, Colorado Department of Public Health (CDPHE) and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidance, and University policy and protocols.**

**Please refer to the [DU COVID-19 website](#) for all updates on current policies and protocols.**

As a result of the University of Denver's commitment to experiential learning, many of our programs require or recommend field placements, internships or service learning experiences which help students bridge academic course work with community based or industrial work experiences in a supervised manner. These experiential programs teach students how to think and act in their chosen professional fields prior to graduation. Because students can secure these opportunities on their own and/or these hours are required for licensure, the University has put in place processes to allow students to work either virtually or in-person to gain course credit and/or satisfy program practicum requirements. These policies are designed to enhance safety, advise students of risks, and empower students to make informed decisions in light of these factors.

### Internships and Field Placements

Each program has unique considerations, including regulations from accrediting bodies. Programs should make decisions regarding field work/internships based on prioritizing public health and abiding by governmental mandates, while also supporting students in finding ways to gain field or internship hours needed for their degrees. Every field placement or internship program has a designee who oversees partnerships with industrial or community organizations. These program experts are the best source for advice on finding creative solutions to optimally train students to prepare for their careers, while taking into consideration existing information regarding safety precautions and concerns, personal risk tolerance, and academic needs.

Some programs may choose to prohibit most in-person field work/internships during times of resurgence of the virus and allow students to request exceptions from this requirement. For programs that do not prohibit all in-person field work/internships, the University continues to strongly encourage exploring options for remote work; allowing informed student choice about in-person work (i.e., not requiring students to do in-person work and supporting student choice around alternatives to in-person work); appropriate documentation that agencies providing in-person work options for students commit to abiding by local and state-level governmental mandates, including stay at home/safer at home/protect your neighbor and physical distancing orders, as well as requirements regarding personal protective equipment, and that students choosing in-person work are doing so willingly and acknowledge the risks of such work.

Programs cannot prohibit students from working for pay. If students work for pay and may earn hours for their field placement/internship as part of that work, programs should consider counting those hours toward their degrees. If additional hours are required for credit at the same work site, programs have the discretion of approving in-person work.

Students who need to extend hours into subsequent terms to be eligible to apply for licensure, may extend their graduation to the next term, and the change in graduation fee will be waived. This only applies to students who are conducting field hours beyond those required for their degree.

We acknowledge that our students' often desire to gain work experience by independently seeking internships. In cases where the student is not working with an official University partner through a credit-bearing or academic program requirement, we ask our students to consider the safety protocols below. Student safety is our priority and we hope similar awareness in decision-making can be achieved.

### **Service Learning**

Service learning courses (also called community-engaged classes at DU) incorporate activities and projects that are mutually beneficial to student learning and the community. Sometimes this reciprocal work is based in the community – but not always. Community-engaged classes frequently tackle projects that advance student learning and meet community needs without in-person service. For example, classes have carried out remote research, such as conducting video or phone interviews, designing surveys, or analyzing historical documents or existing data. Classes have also developed products, such as marketing or other communication plans and/or materials; research or evaluation plans; online materials for websites, such as blog posts or newsletter content; annotated bibliographies and literature reviews; workshops, lesson plans, or class curricula; digital and graphic design or artwork; or videos.

If instructors are considering community-based activities, the University strongly encourages discussion of safety plans with community organization, recognizing that many community-based activities may not be possible in the current environment and not desired by community organization. If there is mutual desire by faculty and community organizations to offer community-based activities, the University continues to strongly encourage that instructors do not require students to do in-person work (for example, adaptation of community-based activities to a community-engaged project that can be accomplished remotely, login to Portfolio and [visit here](#)); abide by, and obtain appropriate documentation from community organization to commit to abide by, local and state-level governmental mandates, including stay at home/safer at home/protect your neighbor and physical distancing orders; and that students choosing in-person community based activities are doing so willingly and acknowledge the risks of such activities.

### **Offsite Safety Protocols**

To mitigate health risks, programs that decide to permit some in-person field work, internships or service learning, should follow the below guidelines:

- a. The student must discuss their rationale for working in-person with a member of their DU field/internship team or service learning instructor.
- b. The field/internship/service learning program should consider the following prior to the program agreeing to apply in-person field hours or credits toward degree:
  - o Whether remote work is practicable for, or desirable to, the student intern
  - o Whether the organization has determined that it can remain open based on local/state-level mandates
  - o Whether the organization has the capacity for supervision and back up supervision should the supervisor be unable to complete the field placement/internship/service learning
  - o Whether the organization is committed to taking all necessary precautions to follow, and remain in compliance with, existing local and state-level mandates, including physical and social distancing requirements
  - o Whether the student has safe transportation to and from the community organization
  - o Whether the student's position is intended to replace or substitute for any organization employee, which is not permissible; no student will replace or substitute for any organization employee.

If the DU field/internship/service learning program vets the organization and agrees to apply in-person hours or credits, the student must acknowledge and confirm that they have considered all of their options and discussed their decision with the program designee; that they will remain in compliance with city/state/federal orders; that there is a heightened risk of contracting COVID-19 as a result of in-person field work, internships or service learning; and that they understand the fluidity of the public health crisis. Students should be encouraged to contact their program designee at any time with questions or concerns about their in-person work.