



Proposal and Course Completion Guide
GRAD 606: Internship in Professional Teaching
Capstone Experience of the Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) Program

The purpose of the GRAD 606: Internship/Externship in Professional Teaching course is to provide the graduate student with a hands-on experience and practical applications of skills and knowledge gained through the PFF Program courses in a classroom, clinical, field, and/or studio instruction setting under the tutelage of a senior faculty member at an institution that most likely mirrors the institution of interest to the student.

Basic Course Information

Prerequisites

The following courses are prerequisites for the GRAD 606 Internship/Externship in Professional Teaching course: GRAD 601 (The Academic Profession), GRAD 602 (Teaching, Learning, and Technology in Higher Education), GRAD 603 (Responsible Conduct of Research), and GRAD 605 (Professional Specialty Seminar).

Credit Hours, Contact Hours, and Registration Information

A total of three credit hours are required for successful completion of the course. Each credit hour is equivalent to 50 contact hours in the form of preparation for and carrying out the project outlined in the student's proposal. Students may choose to register for variable course credit (1.0, 2.0, and 3.0 credit hours) in the fall, spring, and summer semesters. This means that a student may plan for multiple of semesters for the preparation and completion of the project. The student will outline the registration plan within the proposal and on the approval agreement sheet. ***Students will be registered for the course by the PFF Program Office upon approval of the proposal.***

Step One: Identifying Your Faculty Mentor

The student will select a faculty mentor who is a senior faculty member at an institution of interest to the student (the institution is one that most closely matches the intended institution at which the student intends to seek faculty employment after completion of her/his graduate degree).

Roles and Responsibilities of the Student and the Faculty Mentor

During the internship/externship project, the student's role will be that of "junior faculty member" and the faculty member's role is that of guide and mentor. It is expected that the student and the faculty mentor will communicate with regularity during the semester(s) of enrollment in this course and that the nature and frequency of the mentoring relationship will be discussed both in the proposal and the final report.

Step Two: Developing Your Proposal

Timeline and General Information

General guidelines for the design of an internship/externship project are provided below. All questions, concerns, and comments should be directed by the student to the PFF Program office. We are also available to meet individually with students (and faculty mentor if desired) prior to the submission of the proposal. Please contact our office to schedule an appointment. ***Please note that the completed proposal must be submitted to the PFF Program office at least one week before the first day of classes for the semester of intended enrollment*** in order to ensure that the student and the faculty mentor have ample time to plan the proposal and that the PFF Program office has ample time to review, approve, and register the student. Proposals received after that deadline will be considered for the following semester.

Proposals should be submitted electronically, via e-mail to pffprogram@vcu.edu. Scanners are available in many departments and schools as well as in campus libraries.

Proposal Content:

The proposal must (a) define the overall purpose of the project, (b) define the intended outcomes, (c) specify the learning goals and the agreed-upon methods for evaluation of those goals, (d) discuss the dynamics of the mentoring relationship with the faculty mentor, and (e) identify the institution where the project will take place.

As you and your faculty mentor work to develop your internship/externship project proposal, you may find the following list of activities helpful. These are activities/tasks that past students have included in their projects. *These are illustrative of the many possibilities, and are not included as limitations or parameters!* Students should discuss project components with their faculty mentors. Please keep in mind that fifty contact hours are required for each credit hour for which a student is registered. Students almost always combine a variety of activities/tasks in their projects in order to meet the learning objectives established. Students are recommended to estimate the number of contact hours to be spent on each task component within the proposal since there is great diversity in activities and tasks among the many disciplines and professions represented within the PFF Program and inclusion of this information will assist in the proposal approval process.

- Teach undergraduate- or graduate-level course, including but certainly not limited to, the following activities/tasks as appropriate for your profession/discipline¹:
 - Manage the BlackBoard components (discussion groups, postings, etc.) of an undergraduate- or graduate- level course;
 - Develop evaluation materials for course evaluation, analysis of evaluation, and dissemination of results;
 - Work closely with faculty mentor on research activities related to teaching, pedagogy, and instruction modules on profession/discipline-specific topics;
 - Course and lesson development, course instruction, facilitation of seminar/discussion, etc.;
- Serve on a university, school, or department committee or shadow a faculty member in her/his role on a committee;
- Engage in regular meetings with faculty mentor to discuss teaching, research, and service goals and planning for the student's career;
- Develop or revise the student's curriculum vitae;
- Engage in dialogue with faculty mentor on discipline-specific, profession-specific, or other unique dimensions of life as a faculty member;
- Exploration of and participation in professional development endeavors including attendance at conferences/workshops, presentation(s) at conference/workshop, and volunteer at professional development activity;
- Discuss with faculty mentor the academic employment process and work toward student's preparation for the job search;
- Keep a reflective journal of the internship/externship process;
- Instruct or assist a professor with a service-learning course (contact PFF Program Office for more information about this option);
- Assist faculty mentor and colleagues with preparation for/orientation of new students including involvement with new student orientation and student advising (undergraduate and graduate).

¹ The student **may** utilize a teaching experience as a part of the proposal (such as a Graduate Teaching Assistantship or adjunct faculty position) that is concurrent with the semester of registration in GRAD 606 **as long as the proposed experience includes additional experiences aside from the paid assignment. The proposal must clearly articulate what enhancements are being added to the normal duties that will qualify this teaching experience as part of the PFF Program internship/externship in professional teaching.** Suggestions for other tasks and activities beyond basic duties of instruction are included in the "Proposal Content" section. ***It is crucial that the student be explicit about the dynamics of the mentoring relationship between the student and the faculty mentor, regardless of whether the teaching experience is paid or unpaid.***

Proposal Outline:

- GRAD 606 Internship/Externship Course Approval Agreement Sheet: Please complete this sheet, available on the PFF Program website, and submit electronically with the proposal to pffprogram@vcu.edu no later than one week prior to the official first day of classes for the intended semester of enrollment.
- The proposal must define:
 - A statement of the overall project rationale and purpose.
(Example: "The roles and responsibilities of faculty in Social Work incorporate classroom, field, advising, research, and service duties. Sally Student has served as a Graduate Research Assistant (GRA) to Dr. Fran Faculty for two consecutive years and has served for one year on a school committee. The purpose of this internship project is to expose Sally Student to the dynamics of faculty life outside of research and service, which will include tasks associated with field liaison work, classroom instruction, and technology-based instruction. Sally Student will continue her mentoring relationship with senior faculty member Dr. Fran Faculty who has agreed to serve as Sally's faculty mentor during this internship.
 - The learning objectives for the project. *Ask: What will I gain from this project?*
 - The student's goals associated with these learning objectives. *Ask: What do I hope to accomplish (tasks) in relation to this learning objective? How will I go about gaining the skills/knowledge outlined in the learning objective?*
 - The anticipated outcomes of the project. *Ask: What will the outcome be? How will I know that I accomplished the goal?*
 - The agreed-upon methods for evaluation of the project. *Ask: How will my faculty mentor be able to assess my progress in relation to this learning objective?*

Most students choose to group the goals, outcomes, and methods for evaluation directly underneath the statement of each individual learning objectives.

A **required method for evaluation** of the project **for all students** is the successful completion of an electronic portfolio that is appropriate for use in the student's job search. The electronic portfolio requirements are found in the document *Electronic Portfolio Requirements for the Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) Program*, which is found on the program's website: <http://www.graduate.vcu.edu/programs/pff/courses.html>. The faculty mentor will review the electronic portfolio at the end of the internship experience as a part of the overall evaluation.

For example:

Learning Objective One: At the end of the project, Sam Student will have a thorough understanding of the issues associated with serving as a field liaison and will be equipped with the skills necessary to serve as a field liaison.

- Student's goals associated with learning objective one:
 - During the first month of the semester, I will sit in on at least four field liaison meetings with Dr. Fred Faculty.
 - During the second month of the semester, I will co-facilitate at least four field liaison meetings with Dr. Fred Faculty.
 - During the third month of the semester, I will serve as the lead facilitator for at least four field liaison meetings with Dr. Fred Faculty as a co-facilitator.
- Anticipated outcomes: At the end of the semester, I will have served as a primary facilitator for at least four field liaison meetings. Dr. Fred Faculty and I will discuss my progress during our mentoring meetings, and I will chart my progress and reflections on the experience in a journal that I will keep throughout the semester.
- Methods for evaluation: Through regular mentoring meetings, Dr. Fred Faculty will discuss my progress with me. By the end of the semester, I will incorporate my reflections from my journal into my final report for the internship project. Dr. Fred Faculty will evaluate me on this learning objective based on what she observed throughout the semester in regards to my work as a field liaison. Dr. Fred Faculty will review the final electronic portfolio based on the parameters we agreed-upon during the internship as being appropriate for my future academic job search.

Step Three: Submitting Proposal and Your Registration for GRAD 606

Staff in the PFF Program office are available to meet individually with students (and faculty mentor if desired) prior to the submission of the proposal but it is more common for the student and faculty mentor to work together to devise the proposal and then provide a draft via email to pffprogram@vcu.edu for feedback. Please contact our office to schedule an appointment, though, if you prefer to meet, with sufficient lead time. **Please note that the completed proposal must be submitted to the PFF Program office at least one week prior to the official first day of classes for the intended semester of enrollment.**

Proposals should be submitted electronically, via e-mail to pffprogram@vcu.edu. Scanners are available in many departments and schools as well as in campus libraries. Upon receipt of your proposal, our office will review and may provide written request for edits via email using your VCU email address. Once the proposal is accepted, the PFF Program office will register you for the

appropriate section of the course based on the number of credit hours and semester of enrollment specified on your proposal agreement sheet.

Step Four: Final Report, Completion of the Electronic Portfolio, and Course Grade

Final Products of the GRAD 606 Internship in Professional Teaching:

- **Electronic Portfolio Completion:** By the end of the internship, the student will have made final edits and uploads of all relevant materials to her/his electronic portfolio using the specifications and expectations disseminated throughout the PFF Program courses and based on the consultation of the faculty mentor as to what is deemed appropriate for the student's academic job search. The electronic portfolio requirements are found in the document *Electronic Portfolio Requirements for the Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) Program*, which is found on the program's website: <http://www.graduate.vcu.edu/programs/pff/courses.html>.
- **Final Report of the Capstone Experience:** The student will post a final report to the electronic portfolio that contains critical reflection on the internship experience in such a way that explicitly addresses the extent to which the student was able to accomplish the stated learning outcomes along with any attachments (documents/images/files) that were listed on the proposal as agreed-upon methods for evaluation of the student's work during the project.

Evaluation and Grading:

- The faculty mentor will submit an email to pffprogram@vcu.edu on or before the official last day of classes for the semester of enrollment. This email will provide a statement of the internship evaluation based on the agreed-upon methods for evaluation outlined in the proposal. The faculty mentor's written evaluation can be as brief or descriptive as deemed necessary by the faculty member. Internship is graded as pass/fail/incomplete, and the grade is to be assigned by the faculty mentor within this email evaluation. **The faculty mentor's grade assignment must be received by the PFF Program office on or before the last official day of classes.** The student should plan accordingly in terms of submission of final report materials and electronic portfolio postings.
- The grade notification email must be received from the faculty mentor on or before the last official day of classes for the semester of enrollment (last day of classes, which is before the exam period). It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the materials necessary for evaluation are completed and submitted for the faculty mentor's review and evaluation. Accordingly, the student is encouraged to build in a reasonable amount of time for review and evaluation within the agreed-upon methods for evaluation of the project, including the completion of the electronic portfolio.
- If a grade notification is not received from the faculty mentor by the stated deadline, then a grade of "Incomplete" will be entered for the student. The steps necessary to change the grade from an "Incomplete" to one of "Pass" or "Fail" will be determined based on the VCU grade change procedure.

Upon successful completion of the internship experience, the student will be awarded the Certificate of Achievement for completion of the Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) Program. Additional information about the certificate ceremony and mentor appreciation celebration will be communicated to the student and faculty mentor by the PFF Program office.