ENVIRONMENTAL FELLOWS PROGRAM
FIELD EXPERIENCE GUIDELINES
2014-2015

I. Select a Field Experience Opportunity

All Environmental Fellows will complete a Field Experience between the end of the sophomore year and the end of the senior year. The goal of the Field Experience is to move your environmental education beyond the classroom and help you begin to put your academic learning into practice. Your field experience may take the form of an internship, an off-campus study program, supervised research, a civic project, or a creative endeavor. Or it may be something that we have not yet envisioned! Work with your advisor, the EF program office, and the Hubbard Center to find a field experience site or opportunity that fits your personal, academic, and professional goals. Don’t feel you must be bound by what other students have done; take ownership of the field experience by actively seeking or creating an opportunity that matches your needs and interests. Explore widely before choosing.

The mission and anticipated outcomes of field experience as articulated by the Environmental Fellows Steering Committee are given below for your reference.

II. Initial Proposal

After formulating a goal for your field experience, you will compose a brief proposal (~2 pages) specifying what you hope to achieve during your field experience, how it will enhance your understanding of environmental issues, and what specific outcomes or projects you expect will result from your efforts. Share this proposal with your program advisor and with one of the co-directors and schedule a meeting in the EFP office to discuss and refine your proposed field experience. Developing and choosing an appropriate field experience and preparing the proposal may take multiple drafts and conferences, so leave plenty of time for this planning phase. When the proposal is ready, you will submit it to the Environmental Fellows co-directors for approval. The EFP office will keep a copy of the approved proposal on file.

III. Proceed with Planning and Logistics

When you have an approved proposal, it’s time to iron out all the details and make logistical arrangements. This may include securing housing, making airline reservations, writing off-campus study applications, filling out personnel forms for your host organization, and a hundred other tasks. Be sure to check in with the EFP office as things proceed; we can help with many of these details.

IV. Before Beginning: File Your Learning Contract

Before embarking on your field experience, it’s important to have a clear idea of what you intend to get out of it. After finalizing plans for your field experience, you should work with your faculty sponsor, program advisor (if different), and one of the EFP co-directors to complete a learning contract (see the template attached to these guidelines) determining the nature and frequency of your communication with your DePauw contacts during your field experience; clarifying the work you will engage in; and identifying your learning objectives for these activities. This learning contract indicates the seriousness of your reflection in preparing for the field experience and your intent to earnestly carry out the work. It also
helps ensure that you, the EFP and your on-site host (if applicable) all agree on the scope and educational purpose of your work, but it is not used as a tool in evaluating your successful completion of the field experience. Your completed learning contract, including all signatures, must be on file in the program office before you begin your field experience.

V. While you are on Field Experience

Refer back to your learning contract and stick to your plan to communicate with your faculty sponsor or other EFP contact, particularly as the experience evolves and changes. It’s a very good idea to keep a blog or a journal during your field experience and to share these entries at regular intervals with the EFP Office, whether or not your learning contract specifies this as part of your communication plans. Take pictures. Take time to record what you are doing and learning. Consider and write about the ways the experience enhances or applies your previous classroom learning. Reflect on its implications for your future academic and career goals. Doing so will make the final phase of your field experience – documenting and presenting it – much easier and more successful.

VI. After you Return

Congratulations! You’re close to completing one of the key parts of the Environmental Fellows Program. To bring closure to the field experience, you’ll write a final summative reflection, submit a portfolio of representative work, and participate in a public presentation, poster session or talk. The reflection, portfolio, and presentation are used to assess the extent to which your environmental education was enhanced through the field experience and to share the fruits of this experience with audiences on and off campus.

The overall purposes of the portfolio and summative reflection are: 1) to summarize your main accomplishments; and 2) to explore how your field experience enhanced your understanding of specific environmental issues and enabled you to clarify your environmental skills, interests, and future path. Some of the following suggestions may help you characterize and evaluate your project, though it’s unlikely that all of them will be relevant:

• Demonstrate how you contributed to reaching decisions as part of a team.
• Give examples of how ideas, concepts, and theories from your coursework at DePauw informed your field experience.
• Describe the relationships you developed with your co-workers/collaborators and what you learned from them.
• Demonstrate how you communicated complicated information to non-technical audiences.
• Give specific examples of how this experience has expanded your technical abilities, for example, in scientific research or statistical analysis.
• Explain how your creative or artistic project explores environmental issues.
• Reflect on your field experience and how it enabled you to clarify your environmental skills, interests, and future path.

Submit the final summative reflection and portfolio to the co-directors at envfellows@depauw.edu by the end of the second full week of classes the semester after you finish your field experience. The co-directors will work with you to set a public presentation date for later in the semester. The format of the public session may vary from semester to semester, depending on the number of students on field experience and the nature of the field experience projects.
I. General Information

Student Name:

Field Experience Title:

Faculty Sponsor:

Off-site Host Name:

II. Contact Information

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<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Host</th>
<th>Faculty Sponsor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
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<td>Faculty sponsor's name</td>
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<td>Faculty sponsor’s address</td>
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<td>Faculty sponsor’s e-mail</td>
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<td>FE phone number</td>
<td>Supervisor’s phone number</td>
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III. Description of Project

Describe in detail your role and responsibilities while on the field experience. List duties and projects you plan to complete. What kind of instruction, assistance, and consultation will you receive, and from whom? Details, details, details!

IV. Learning Objectives

What do you intend to learn from this experience? List each one as a separate “bullet point” below. Type one in, then hit “return” to start a new bullet point.

• Sample objective: By interacting with clients from several different Latin American countries, I hope to expand my knowledge and use of colloquial Spanish.

V. Communication

How often and in what form will you communicate with your faculty sponsor and/or the EFP co-directors during your field experience?
VI. Evaluation

*How will your field experience performance be evaluated? Plan to give the EFP office copies of materials you create on the field experience, if your host is agreeable. This might include press releases, draft reports, presentations, or other projects.*

VII. Agreement

The student, faculty sponsor, and program director have agreed on the details of this learning contract.

________________________  ______________________
Student                              Date

________________________  ______________________
Faculty Sponsor                         Date

________________________  ______________________
Program Director                       Date
APPENDIX: GOALS AND OUTCOMES OF FIELD EXPERIENCE

Mission (Approved by EFSC 11.11.13)
Enhance and apply the student’s environmental knowledge and skills by pursuing an extended, focused endeavor tailored to the student’s individual goals and needs.

Outcomes (Approved by EFSC 11.11.13)
We expect these outcomes to be typical of most field experiences. However, due to the tailored, individualized nature of field experience, not every fellow will achieve all of them.

During the field experience, students will:

A. Gain enhanced understanding of specific environmental issues and their complexity.
B. Develop facility at working with others as part of team to achieve a common goal or in the completion of projects and activities.
C. Apply theories and concepts from their classes to environmental problems. This may include approaching questions from the perspective of the sciences, social sciences, humanities, or arts, or from multiple perspectives.
D. Expand their network of professional relationships and contacts. This may include developing relationships with mentors and role models who serve as a source of advice and support.
E. Use and refine their skills in critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, writing, speaking and listening, and use of technology.
F. Improve ability to communicate technical information to a wide range of audiences, for example by communicating at multiple levels with younger or other lay audiences.
G. Build on and expand their technical capabilities in conducting scientific research and statistical analysis.
H. Explore environmental issues through a creative or artistic project.
I. Reflect on their individual interests and skills, particularly in relation to their field experience, and consider and explore possible future career paths.