

SUPERVISOR ORIENTATION GUIDELINES

“Supervising Your Intern: Fuller’s Expectations”

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AN INVITATION

This brief, written orientation to field education and supervision at Fuller Seminary was first developed in response to the need for supervisors to have a concise articulation of our approach to field education. We hope it communicates our expectations and understanding of what it means to take a Fuller student under your supervision. We invite your consideration about what goes into what for many is the most formative relationship in their graduate theological education, the supervisor-intern relationship.

Approach

Fuller’s approach to field education is, perhaps, much like what you experienced in your own training, or what other seminaries require. Students’ fieldwork is an essential part of their theological education. Fuller serves a student body that ranges in tradition from free church Pentecostal to fairly high church Episcopalian and Orthodox. We try to embrace each tradition and respect the different sizes and types of ministries prevalent today. We also seek to individualize the field placement according to the requirements of a specific tradition and meet any denominational requirements that may pertain.

Fundamentals

We do think there are some fundamentals involved in effective supervision. These fundamentals may well be universal and, we argue, non-negotiable. Unfortunately, there are very few resources on good supervision. People usually supervise the way they were supervised. We would encourage you to see our approach as a baseline upon which to build. Your working style, personality, job responsibilities, and situation will dictate how you can best supervise the Fuller student who now is part of the life of your congregation or ministry.

Expectations

The most important point we would like to make about supervision is *commitment* from everyone involved. Commitment from the student, supervisor, and congregation or ministry group will go a long way towards making the internship a success for you and the intern. If the real intent of the internship is to get a student to do a ministry that no one else wants to do, or if it is considered “cheap labor,” you can expect frustration on all sides. We know you are busy and under enormous demands. But the success of an internship largely depends on good faith—and good will—from everyone involved.

The trajectory of this orientation will go from the general to the specific. We will begin with the goals of field education, move on to the supervisor’s role, and conclude with the nuts and bolts of the internship—i.e. paperwork and phone numbers in case you have questions or concerns. This introduction will be most helpful if you have the current Supervisor Handbook in front of you, and the three sets of handouts included with this document for ideas of how you can shape your own approach to supervision. Your signature on the Supervisor Application indicates that you’ve read and understand our approach to supervision. We would also appreciate any comments that you have.

THE GOALS

There are four goals of the field education program at Fuller. They are discernment of vocation, development of an operating theology, improvement of skills, and witness to the faith (with its partner spiritual formation). We believe these goals are broad and not fully achievable. But depending on the maturity, character, and ministry experience of the intern, we look for *substantial movement* toward

achievement of these goals. Our expectation is that by working toward these goals your congregation's or organization's goals will also be met.

1. The first goal is ***discernment of the student's vocational calling and ministry focus***. Students of all ages need mentors, role models, faithful listeners, and guides. Most come to seminary not completely sure of the shape and focus of their ministry. Your role in giving honest, clear feedback of the "gifts and graces" you see for ministry is a significant one.
2. The second goal is ***to develop an operating theology*** which undergirds the practice of ministry. Another way to put this is to help students sharpen the skill of theological reflection. Such seemingly trivial things as committee meetings, clergy or collegial etiquette, denominational activities, and ecumenical meetings will help interns develop a theology of persons and events that we are calling their "operating theology." Please work on this with your intern. We suggest you do this by reflecting theologically with the student on things like greeting at the door, the benediction in a worship service, or the use and reporting of money in ministry.
3. Our third goal is ***competency in ministry skills and growth in attitudes necessary for successful practice in ministry***. We want our interns to be better preachers, better teachers, better counselors, better retreat leaders and so on after their internship with you. The more specific and incremental you can be in helping them achieve this goal the better (e.g. "I want you to preach from this assigned passage this week," or "I want you to go the mall this week and tell me what students are wearing," etc.). If you do not see growth in skills and competence in the time you have with him or her, you need to discuss with the student the possibility that ministry may not be for them. We are here to help you with this most difficult part of supervision.
4. A fourth goal includes ***expression of the faith of the intern to the Church and the world***, and its companion fruit, ***spiritual formation***. We would hope that students enthusiastically and effectively share their faith while at the same time remaining open to the pain, risk-taking, and even failure that witnessing to the faith occasionally entails.

It is important to acknowledge the dual roles the intern fills. He/she is both a ***worker*** and a ***learner***. As worker, you want him/her to achieve certain things for your church or organization, perhaps keep a certain number of youth in the fellowship group or visit a certain number of people. But as learner, the intern may run into snags or resistances which he/she does not have the skills to overcome. It is most helpful to keep in clear view whether you are speaking to the intern as a worker or as a learner as you correct or offer suggestions of how they can improve their performance.

IMPLEMENTATION

If the four goals are the destination, consider the next section to be the steps or provisions needed for the journey.

1. The greatest provision is ***time***. You will need to make one hour per week available. Occasionally, a supervisor wants to see their interns only every other week or even monthly. We want to be understanding of your limited staffing situations and the extreme demands on your time. But one hour of supervision of required weekly meeting is non-negotiable. If you absolutely cannot make the one hour per week, tell us honestly and find a lay coordinator or other staff person who will supplement your time. Also, we do not recommend meeting in a restaurant or immediately before or after a worship or teaching event. Prayer, focus, and privacy are essential. The first provision, then, is setting aside one hour per week for one-on-one supervision.

2. The second provision for the journey is *special assistance* to give the intern the access that will help him or her accomplish the primary ministry assignment with integrity and productivity. This may mean:
 - modeling a ministry task before it is done by the intern, such as teaching a Bible study.
 - making a few phone calls or conversations with essential youth advisors or co-workers.
 - exercising due diligence to insure that the intern does not get into things for which he has not been trained to do (e.g. counseling a severely depressed person or leading a rock-climbing or whitewater rafting trip without professionally-trained help).
 - brokering meetings with people in your congregation and community who are key to the intern's and ministry's success, safety and longevity.

3. The third provision is *imagination* to guide the intern through a general ministry experience of the local church or ministry. If you are supervising the course we call FE501, the nine-month, church-based internship, you should know that it is designed as a "basic anatomy" encounter with a local church. You can share with the student how you perform funerals, or visits, or committee meetings, or church finances. One supervisor has a checklist of fourteen areas of the church's life which the intern must go to, observe, and have initialed by the staff person or elder that oversees it. (See Handout #1.) Another has an internship curriculum which serves as a guide for the internship. (See Handout #2.) This same supervisor requires the intern to write at least two thank-you notes a week to members of the congregation to get the intern into the practice of being a pastor to each one who walks through the door.

4. The next provision for the journey is a *plan of supervision*. We recommend a separate quarterly plan that is distinct from Fuller's Learning Agreement. A single page at the beginning of each quarter with a concise list of objectives, methods, and evaluation criteria has been found most helpful. (See Handout #3.) This learning guide is just between you and the intern but it serves as a focusing document for each meeting. It is especially useful in helping a student to connect current course work with ministry by having him/her put down in writing what courses he/she will be taking that may benefit your congregation or group's ministry. The intern must, of course, adapt his/her seminary work for the needs of the congregation.

Whether you use a quarterly plan, the Learning Agreement alone, or some third method, **you need to have an intentional plan.** The inductive approach is the easiest and many supervisors default to this. In this approach the supervisor talks about whatever comes up and makes sure there is ten minutes left for prayer at the end of the supervision. But the deductive approach will probably cover more ground. September could be Christian education month; October—the budgeting cycle; November—evangelism. All of this must be adapted to fit your needs. But nine months is a long enough time that if you do not have a plan, your meetings may drift and frustrate both of you.

5. A final provision for the journey is *evaluation*. An honest evaluation helps an intern know his or her gifts for ministry. Your own intuition of whether a student has what it takes to make it in ministry must be primary. Not only the student, but a staff member at Fuller and often ordaining bodies (with the student's permission) will read your comments. The more careful and explicit your comments are, the better. Another tool for evaluation is feedback from lay people in your congregation. We would hope that enough trust will be built up over the months that you can tell the intern what they need to hear.

Here are two more provisions you may choose to take along. A *lay coordinator* can give the intern feedback that you cannot. In every congregation or organization there are some people with the special charism of nurture or insight. If you have someone who is available, connect him or her with the intern. This is not to get you off the hook, but just to give the intern a different set of eyes and ears. And second, if your church is able to establish a *discernment committee*, it may help the intern know if the ministry is

right for them. One Episcopal congregation forms a discernment committee of three persons which meets with the intern once a month for six months. Both the lay coordinator and the discernment committee are recommended but not required.

FORMS, DEADLINES, HELPS, AND FULLER CONTACTS

1. For the *nine-month internship*, there are four paperwork deadlines: the Learning Agreement, and the first, second, and third quarter evaluations.
2. For the *ten-week full or part-time internship* there are two deadlines: the Learning Agreement and the Evaluation.
3. Fuller is on the ten-week, quarter system, with quarters starting roughly late September, early January, late March, and late June. **It is up to the intern to remind you of the deadlines and get the paperwork in on time.**
4. *The Learning Agreement is the controlling, covenantal document.* If you need to change any provisions, do so in quarterly increments.
5. *Evaluations* are due at the end of each quarter. You will need to meet with your intern to review each evaluation a week or two before it is due.
6. Your sensitivity to programmatic “crunch times” like retreats and mission projects is most appreciated by the student. The same goes for when the student has final exams.

The Supervisor Handbook is a resource for your review. If you have worksheets, checklists, or any books or pamphlets on supervision that have helped you, we would like to know about them. We regularly provide Ministry Enrichment Seminars for Fuller students in Pasadena. These seminars are always open to supervisors as well. They cover topics like tax preparation for clergy, time management, and gender and legal issues. Your intern (if in Southern California) has a list of current seminars.

For all information call us at 1-800-235-2222, ext. 5387 outside the Southern California area or at 626-584-5387 within Southern California.

We would like to hear from you about any ideas you have for improvement. *Please take a moment to acknowledge your understanding of our approach to Field Education by filling out and signing the New Supervisor Application or Supervisor Renewal Form that you received with these guidelines.* We need to ensure that your understanding (and that of your church or ministry organization) agrees with our program’s goals and implementation. Thank you for supervising an intern and taking the time to understand what that means for us at Fuller.

Field Education and Ministry Formation Office

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Quarterly Plan for Supervision

The following is adapted from David Augsburger's "Supervised Experience in Ministry: Pastoral Counseling."

A. OBJECTIVES: What I *want* to accomplish (not "ought")

Objectives should be specific, measurable, attainable, time-bound behaviors.

1. *Professional and skill growth anticipated* (counseling skill, ability to work with groups, ability to theologize from experience, preaching, teaching, group leading, etc.) List focused steps and signs of growth.
2. *Academic growth anticipated* (necessary theology or theory, books I want to read, books I *must* read, etc.) List projects, classes and goals in growth.
3. *Personal growth anticipated* (self-initiative, empathic listening, spiritual growth, self-care of body, sleep, exercise, etc.) List specific areas, steps, and changes planned.

B. METHODS: What I will do (not "hope" to do)

1. *Clear definition of task* (give ____ talks, sermons, class lessons; attend ____ planning meetings; lead ____ retreats/mission projects; counsel ____ people; tape or video ____ talks/sessions)
2. *Resources to be used* (presentation, feedback from small group, supervisor feedback, individual reading, lay coordinator, discernment committee, etc.)
3. *Personal helps to be used* (journaling, daily exercise, imaging, methods of prayer and personal study, meditation)

C. EVALUATION: How did I do?

1. *With whom?* (Youth groups, whole congregation, adult class, supervisor, peer group)
2. *What data?* (Case presentations, handouts, overheads, notes, system of organization, feedback sheets)
3. *When?* (After each counseling session, every week, each month, at the end of the term; after a retreat, talk, or final project)

Pastoral Intern Checklist

I. The Role of the Pastor

- A. Authority
- B. Symbol
- C. Intermediary
- D. Single Pastor
- E. Woman/Man Pastor
- F. Self-concept
- G. Servant-leadership
- H. Prophet/Priest differentiation
- I. Biblical options
- J. Ordination
- K. Modeling (the presenting self)
- L. Privacy vs. "Life in Glass House"
- M. Integrity of Role and Personal Integrity

II. The Function of Pastor

- A. Administrator
 - office, delegation, conflict, time management
- B. Preacher
- C. Teacher
 - catechism
- D. Theologian
 - interpreter
- E. Counselor/Listener
 - confidentiality, clergy liability
- F. Discernment
 - self analysis
 - situational analysis
 - spiritual discernment
- G. Leader

III. The Pastor as Person

- A. Self-discipline
- B. Appearance
- C. Time-management
- D. Conflict management
- E. Personality
- F. Self-evaluation (strength/growth areas)
- G. Depression
- H. Nurture

IV. The Pastoral Call

- A. Called to What (see I. & II.)
- B. Personal
 - phenomenological, experiential, process
- C. Congregational role
- D. Denominational role
 - licensing, ordination

V. Other

- A. Supervision
- B. Mentor
- C. Church Discipline and Boundary Setting

Pastoral Internship Skills Check List

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p><input type="checkbox"/> Premarital Counseling Observation
 Staff Assigned _____
 Date Sched _____ Date Comp _____
 Staff Sign-off _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Individual Counselor Observation
 Staff Assigned _____
 Date Sched _____ Date Comp _____
 Staff Sign-off _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Funeral Preparation Observation
 Staff Assigned _____
 Date Sched _____ Date Comp _____
 Staff Sign-off _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Wedding Preparation and Observation
 Staff Assigned _____
 Date Sched _____ Date Comp _____
 Staff Sign-off _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Hospital Visitation
 Staff Assigned _____
 Date Sched _____ Date Comp _____
 Staff Sign-off _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Psychiatric Hospital Visitation
 Staff Assigned _____
 Date Sched _____ Date Comp _____
 Staff Sign-off _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Pastor's Financial Issues Discussion
 Staff Assigned _____
 Date Sched _____ Date Comp _____
 Staff Sign-off _____</p> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Elder Board Visit
 Staff Assigned _____
 Date Sched _____ Date Comp _____
 Staff Sign-off _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Supervision Leader Team Observation
 Staff Assigned _____
 Date Sched _____ Date Comp _____
 Staff Sign-off _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Supervision Preaching Evaluation
 Staff Assigned _____
 Date Sched _____ Date Comp _____
 Staff Sign-off _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Philosophy of Worship Planning
 Staff Assigned _____
 Date Sched _____ Date Comp _____
 Staff Sign-off _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Supervised Teaching Evaluation
 Staff Assigned _____
 Date Sched _____ Date Comp _____
 Staff Sign-off _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Public Leadership Evaluation
 (prayer, announcements)
 Staff Assigned _____
 Date Sched _____ Date Comp _____
 Staff Sign-off _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Project Planning Experience
 Staff Assigned _____
 Date Sched _____ Date Comp _____
 Staff Sign-off _____</p> |
|--|---|