Internships are the traditional heart of experiential education and applied learning. Academic internships at SUNY Potsdam allow students to earn up to 12 upper division credits towards the 45 required for a Bachelor’s degree. They get great real world experience for their résumés, and can try out their selected career field to see if this is the career path they will take in the future. And finally, they begin to build the network of career professionals in their desired field that will be so critical to their future successes.

Toby White, The director of the Experiential Education Office, implemented a number of new programs and opportunities for students at SUNY Potsdam, which include:

- Working with 25 teachers from BOCES in Norwood to develop resume techniques
- Implemented pre-internship seminars in ENVR 210, CIS, and Music Business courses/Majors
- Established a relationship with the Academic Internship Council to establish 60 new internship sites in NYC for the spring 2020
- Worked with Dr. Savita Hanspal and the micro-internship company CapSource to implement a live business marketing case for the spring 2019, as a test case for a larger initiative - SUNY Potsdam CONNECT
- Worked with a team from Fort Drum to establish internship opportunities with the Natural Resources and Public Works Environmental Division, resulting in the immediate placement of an intern in the summer of 2019
- Worked as Academic Mentor to 12 students receiving 81 hours of internship credit
- Awarded over $18,000 to 11 students for Summer 2018 Scholarships
- 399 new potential internships were added to Handshake for students to investigate
- Established a program for the Police Academy cadets to reach out to prospective Criminal Justice students to share their applied learning experiences at Potsdam

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The Law Enforcement Training Institute

We provide students with the opportunity to complete a rigorous pre-employment, state-approved police academy as part of their undergraduate curriculum. Students are trained in defensive tactics, emergency medical services, emergency vehicle operation, processing crime scenes, and more. The NYS police academy curriculum is one of the very best in the country and is above the standard of most other state and agency training. SUNY Potsdam’s Criminal Justice faculty have augmented this excellent curriculum to create an exceptional learning experience.

Overall accomplishments include:

- We have become a full police academy, training newly hired officers from regional agencies alongside our undergraduates.
- We began offering refresher training for officers interested in School Resource Officer positions, to support our local and regional schools.
- We have become the first police academy in New York State to implement technology - Stress Vests - that simulates the shock and/or pain of injury during Reality Based Training. Our cadets absolutely loved this applied learning component which will make them so much better in the field of law enforcement.
- Instructors maintained qualifications to instruct, and expanded their certifications at sessions that included officers from regional agencies also interested in advanced training.

Partnerships:

- Stress Vest training conducted with the Ogdensburg, Potsdam and SUNY Potsdam University Police Supervisors.
- Missing Persons’ training held in Potsdam with officers from the St. Lawrence County Sheriffs, Tribal PD, Potsdam PD, and numerous other area agencies.
- The New York State Police sent 5 State Police cars and instructors to assist in our Police Driving Course.
- Malone PD has sent their Drug Recognition Expert to teach at our academy.
- Saranac Lake PD has sent their K-9 to train with our cadets.
- New York State DEC has sent 8 of their Forest Rangers to teach at our academy.
- We held in-service defensive tactics training for Malone, Potsdam and Tupper Lake Police Departments.

We are so proud of our graduates!

Since our first graduating class in 2017, our graduating Cadets have been hired in-state at Potsdam PD, Norwood PD, Norfolk PD, Rome PD, Schenectady PD, Malone Village PD, Saranac Lake Village PD, Ogdensburg City PD, New Berlin PD, the NYPD, St. Lawrence County Emergency Services, Jefferson County Sheriffs’ Office, SUNY Potsdam University Police, and as Safety Officers at private colleges.

Out of state, they are working at U.S. Supreme Court Police, U.S. Customs Enforcement, U.S. Army Special Operations, Essex VT PD, Burlington VT PD, Dallas TX PD, Raleigh-Durham NC PD, and 3 have been hired at Gwinnett County GA PD.
Service Learning

Service-learning is a credit-bearing, educational experience in which students participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility.


Service Learning Sections Offered

273 students enrolled in service learning courses in 2018-2019’s academic year. 10 faculty taught 27 different sections of service learning courses.

Those courses included:
- EDLS 201: Principles of Education
- ENVR 391: Environmental Studies Field Project
- OVS 465: Jamaica Field Service Abroad
- POLS 289: Approaching Political Puzzles
- SOCI 305: Sociology of the Family
- WILD 360: Leadership in Adventure Education

Planning ahead: two new major Projects

Dr. Nancy Lewis of the Sociology and Criminal Justice Department won The Bob award in 2018, using the competitive faculty grant to fund development of a new Service Learning opportunity. Dr. Lewis is building a partnership between the St. Lawrence County Correctional Facility and SOCI 435: Corrections and Punishment using The 7th Step model. This model was selected to build the service-learning class because it meets the two priorities noted by partners working in the correctional facilities: peer support and re-entry support. In addition, 7th Step has established partnerships with post-secondary institutions and values the role of non-offenders in its triad support approach.

Five courses in four departments, some new to Service Learning, will work with the Malone Central School District on their GEAR UP grant designed to promote college readiness in middle school students. The five goals and objectives of GEAR UP are:
- To increase students’ high school graduation rates and post-secondary preparation.
- Increase post-secondary participation.
- Increase family knowledge of post-secondary education options, preparation and financing.
- Create or expand opportunities for credentials in STEM or computers.
- Promote the development of skills to become informed, thoughtful and productive citizens.