

# DISASTER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Summer Field Experience and Summer Internship  
with Mennonite Disaster Service

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# Hesston College

START HERE, GO EVERYWHERE

# Hesston College Disaster Management Program

## Summer Field Experience and Summer Internship With Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS)

*“The Hesston College Disaster Management Program exists to develop leadership abilities in managing disaster response, emphasizing Christ-like service to socially vulnerable people.”*

### MDS Experience before Hesston College

If the students have not previously served with MDS, it is recommended (although not a prerequisite) that they spend some time at an MDS project site before coming to Hesston College and the Disaster Management Program. This will enhance the learning that will take place at Hesston that much more. The students will have “hooks” to relate the MDS experience with new material that is being presented in class.

### Summer Field Experience

**Course Description:** After the first year in the Disaster Management program, the students will spend eight weeks on a project site separate from the regular MDS sites somewhere in the U.S. or Canada. The first-year students in the program will all be together on the same site, at least for the majority of this time. The students may have the opportunity to spend part of the time at regular MDS sites.

**Learning:** The goal is for all students to learn all phases of the MDS project experience with experienced MDS leaders, including construction skills, cooking, office work, spiritual life, interacting with short and long-term volunteers, interacting with disaster survivors, interagency work, case work, and crew leading. While some of these objectives may not be available to all students during the summer and while they will not experience all of these phases equally, the goal is to have each student have “meaningful exposure” to as many of these objectives as possible. They will also gain an understanding of how an MDS site operates, and in the larger sense, how MDS works with the community in recovering from a disaster.

**Expectations:** The students will be expected to abide by the guidelines set forth in the MDS Manual. Each student will complete a 10-page journal of their experiences by the end of the eight weeks. Included in this will be an interview with a disaster survivor.

**College Credit:** Three hours of college credit will be given for this class. Payment for this class will be expected, using the current per-credit hour fee of the college.

**Expenses:** The students will need to pay for their own transportation to and from the summer project site. Room and board will be provided by MDS.

### Summer Internship

**Description:** After the second year in the Disaster Management program, each student will be given the opportunity to apply for a ten-week internship with a disaster response or recovery organization. The Director, along with the students, will work at securing these internships. The students will pursue internships that will match their interests and goals. They may apply to intern with MDS on a regular project site (not with first-year students) as a crew leader or assistant cook, construction foreman or office manager. They may also apply with Red Cross, with FEMA, with a local emergency manager, or other agencies. This application will be due by the end of the first semester their sophomore year.

**Learning:** The students will take more leadership roles in their second summer, whether that is with MDS or a different response and recovery organization. They will be more focused in their study of a particular phase of disaster response and recovery. This is a good opportunity for students to use this summer as a bridge to the next steps in their lives.

**Expectations:** If they are serving with MDS, they are expected to abide by the guidelines set forth in the MDS Manual. If they are with other organizations, they are to abide by their guidelines.

**College Credit:** This internship is not for college credit, and no college fee is required.

**Expenses:** If the students are serving with MDS, the students’ travel expenses to and from the project site will be paid by MDS, and room and board will be provided. If the students are serving with other organizations, it will depend on the arrangements set up by these organizations.