

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Practicum Guidelines

A.	Purpose/Procedures	1
B.	Spring and Fall 2009Timeline	2
C.	Responsibilities of the Student	3
D.	The Practicum Contract	4
E.	Responsibilities of the On-Site Practicum Supervisor	5-6
F.	Responsibilities of the Faculty Practicum Coordinator	6
G.	Appendices	
A.	Practicum Site Requests	
B.	Practicum Contract	
C.	Student Evaluation of Practicum Experience	
D.	On-Site Supervisor Evaluation of Practicum Experience	

PRACTICUM GUIDELINES

A. Purpose/Procedures

A practicum is a supervised fieldwork experience in which Student Affairs and/or other professionals guide, instruct, and supervise the student's introduction to a particular functional area or project. It offers the opportunity to gain additional insights of a particular office or program by focusing on specific issues, problems, concerns and demands of that particular unit.

The Student Affairs Administration in Higher Education (SAAHE) Program requires two practica of 150 clock hours each for a total of six credit hours (three hours each semester). The first practicum (Practicum I) is completed in the summer semester of the students' first year. The second practicum is completed in the fall semester of the second year.

Students are encouraged to complete their practica in two different areas in which they need additional knowledge and experience. In fact many of our students have completed summer practica at colleges and universities from around the country and even internationally. Information regarding outside practica can be obtained from Dr. Peck Parrott. Academic credit is granted on a grade basis.

An important part of the practicum experience is the Practicum Seminar facilitated by the Faculty Practicum Coordinator. The purpose of the seminar is to offer students an opportunity to discuss and share learning insights related to their job assignment. In addition, the seminar can be used as a workshop setting to provide students the opportunity to develop other professional skills.

B. Timeline (on following page)

Summer 2009
Practicum Timeline

October 17	Practicum Informational, 12:00 - 2:00, MSC 292
April 14	Deadline to turn in Practicum Request forms to the student's Committee Chair
April 28	Notification of Practicum Approval and approved request forms to the Practicum Faculty Coordinator
May	Practicum Contract Due and First Practicum Class (date, time & location TBA) – course otherwise on-line
TBA	Deadline for mid-semester evaluations (Students and On-Site Supervisors)
TBA	Deadline to turn in Practicum Evaluation (students and supervisors) to Practicum Faculty Coordinator

Fall 2009 Practicum
Timeline (Dates subject to change)

August 19	Deadline to turn in Practicum Request forms (students) to the student's Committee Chair for fall practicum work
August 26	Notification of Practicum Approval and forms submitted to the Practicum Faculty Coordinator
August 26	First Practicum Class (date, time & location TBA)
Sept. 2	Deadline to turn in Practicum Contract to Practicum Faculty Coordinator
October 7	Deadline for mid-semester evaluations
December 2	Deadline to turn in Practicum Evaluations (students and supervisors) to Practicum Faculty Coordinator

C. Responsibilities of the Student

To register for and participate in a practicum the student should follow the procedures listed below:

1. Attend the Practicum Informational held in October to learn about how to set up your practica.
2. Set-up interviews with the On-Site Practicum Supervisors of those areas in which you have an interest. Discuss with the On-Site Practicum Supervisor(s) your interests in the practicum site and ask about specific expectations and duties of the experience, and how supervision will occur.
2. Complete a Practicum Site Request form (Appendix A) and have it signed by the practicum supervisor where you wish to work and submit it for approval to your Committee Chair/ Faculty Advisor by the dates requested. Students and supervisors will be notified of the confirmed practica within two weeks.
4. After your Practicum Site has been confirmed, work with the On-Site Practicum Supervisor to determine the desired outcome(s) of the practicum experience.
5. In conjunction with the On-Site Practicum Supervisor, complete the Practicum Contract (Appendix B) and return it to the Faculty Practicum Coordinator for approval no later than the second practicum class. A signed copy will be returned to the student and the supervisor.
6. Maintain a journal of weekly experiences and insights as it relates to your growth as a professional. Share this information at the Practicum Seminar.
7. Attend the Practicum Seminar with the Faculty Practicum Coordinator as required.
8. Meet with your On-Site Practicum Supervisor mid-point through the semester to discuss/evaluate the Practicum, so that any adjustments can be made in the responsibilities and contract.
9. At the end of the Practicum meet with your On-Site Practicum Supervisor for an evaluation of the experience. Students should complete and discuss the Student Evaluation of Practicum Experience form (Appendix C) and supervisors should complete and discuss the On-Site Supervisor Evaluation of Practicum Experience form (Appendix D). Both forms should be forwarded to the Practicum Faculty Coordinator.

D. The Practicum Contract

The purpose of the Practicum Contract is to state in writing the agreements made between the student and the on-site practicum supervisor regarding the joint expectations for the supervised experience. The contract should address the following areas: (1) the student's goals in choosing the practicum; (2) the specific activities that will be undertaken to fulfill these goals; (3) the products (if any) that will be completed during the practicum; and (4) the hours the student will work.

Some examples of Goals might be:

1. *To understand the overall operations of the Admissions Office.*
2. *To develop an awareness of the different ethnic groups served by the Multicultural Services Department and understand the differences among the various groups.*
3. *To develop skills in program development and evaluation.*

Some examples of Activities to achieve these goals might be:

- ✓ Review the Admissions Operations Manual.
- ✓ Participate in staff meetings.
- ✓ Spend time in each administrative area of the Admissions Office and with each supervisor learning about their operation.

- ✓ Review department documents and data.
- ✓ Read about the characteristics of each ethnic group served in the department.
- ✓ Participate in staff meetings.
- ✓ Attend and participate in workshops and other in-service activities offered by the department.

- ✓ Identify a specific idea for a program and discuss it with the on-site supervisor.
- ✓ Determine the goals and desired outcomes of the program.
- ✓ Make an outline of the different tasks that need to be accomplished.
- ✓ Develop an evaluation mechanism based on the goals and outcomes.
- ✓ Carry out the program.
- ✓ Evaluate the results.

The product is a tangible outcome of the learning experience and might consist of a special project, a report, a video or other product that will benefit the office or department. The end-product needs to be jointly determined by the on-site supervisor and the student.

Contracts should be completed no later than the first week of classes. Use the Practicum Contract form (Appendix B) or follow a similar format.

E. Responsibilities of the On-Site Practicum Supervisor

1. Attend the Practicum Informational to discuss the practicum options available to the students.
2. Interview interested students. During the interviews, discuss the following areas:
 - a. The student's goals and needs in choosing your department/office as a Practicum Site, and how these goals and needs can be harmonized with the goals and needs of the department/office.
 - b. Expectations such as time on the job, participation in staff meetings, supervisory time, and other responsibilities.
3. Once you have selected a student, sign the Practicum Site Request form (Appendix A) and return it to the student so the student can submit it to the Committee Chair for approval by the dates requested. Your Practicum student should be confirmed within two weeks.
4. Meet with the practicum student to develop the Practicum Contract (Appendix B). Be sure to discuss the criteria for evaluating the accomplishments of the practicum goals and how the final evaluation will be conducted (see On-Site Supervisor Evaluation of Practicum Experience). Once an agreement on goals and activities for the practicum has been reached, sign the Practicum Contract along with the student and return it to the Faculty Practicum Coordinator for approval no later than the first week of classes. A signed copy will be returned to the supervisor and student.
5. Attend the On-Site Practicum Supervisor's meeting held at the beginning of the semester by the Faculty Practicum Coordinator.
6. Before the practicum student begins (or soon thereafter), inform other staff in your office about the specific purposes of the practicum and encourage their cooperation in creating a positive educational experience for the student. Integrate the student as much as possible into the overall operation of the department/office, so he/she feels part of the staff.
7. Schedule regular meetings with the student to discuss progress and to receive observations and reactions to the experience.
8. By mid-semester, complete the mid-semester evaluation (See Appendix D) and discuss any changes that may be needed in the responsibilities and/or contract.

9. If needed, consult with the Faculty Practicum Coordinator during the semester concerning the student's performance or any other related problems.
10. At the end of the semester, complete and discuss with the student the final evaluation of the practicum and request his/her own evaluation of the experience (See appendices C and D, respectively).
11. Submit evaluation forms to the Faculty Practicum Coordinator by the deadline so that a final grade may be submitted.

F. Responsibilities of the Faculty Practicum Coordinator

1. Communicate with various departments/offices in which students can gain meaningful experiences to identify possible practicum sites. Work with the On-Site Practicum Supervisors to produce written descriptions and potential opportunities and experiences for each practicum site.
2. Provide all On-Site Practicum Supervisors with a copy of the Practicum Guidelines.
4. Review the practicum requests from students and communicate final approval of the practicum placement.
5. Meet with practicum supervisors prior to or at the beginning of the practica to discuss expectations and strategies for assuring a positive practicum experience for the students.
6. Develop a syllabus for the seminar. Assess student interests in topics for the workshop sessions.
7. Be available for students to discuss possible conflicts or problems related to their practicum assignment. If appropriate, discuss the problem with the On-Site Practicum Supervisor.
8. Collect the evaluation forms, discuss the overall experience with the students and submit final grades.
9. Solicit feedback from participating On-Site Practicum Supervisors to discuss their perceptions and experiences and share any feedback provided by the students of their experiences. Provide participating On-Site Practicum Supervisors an opportunity to ask questions and to provide recommendations to improve the practicum experience in the future.