Practicum Manual for Graduate Students

in the

Student Affairs Concentration

Adult and Higher Education

Department of Educational Leadership & Policy Studies

Practicum: EDAH 5910
PRACTICUM PURPOSE AND PROCEDURES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS IN STUDENT AFFAIRS ADMINISTRATION

A practicum is a supervised fieldwork experience in which a knowledgeable and experienced professional instructs and supervises a student’s introduction to a particular functional area or project. The practicum offers the student the opportunity to gain additional insights into the operations of a particular office or program by focusing on specific issues, problems, concerns and demands of that particular unit.

The practicum is required for students whose concentration is Student Affairs and who do not have operational experience in any aspect of the field. Experience as a student leader is not defined as having had operational experience. If a student serves as a professional or graduate assistant in the field of student affairs s/he will be considered as having operational experience and will not be required to enroll in the practicum.

A student who is enrolled in practicum will normally enroll for three hours under the direction of Dr. Penny Pasque, Assistant Professor in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies. This typically requires 150 clock hours of work in the area(s) to which the student is assigned. The practicum is graded on a pass/fail basis. Every attempt will be made to match the student’s practicum experience with his/her specific professional interests, but the student must be flexible in indicating a number of possible areas of interest in which to enroll in the practicum.

A student will normally not be allowed to enroll in practicum more than once, or for more than a total of three credit hours. These three credit hours serve as part of the total of 36 hours required for the degree. A student is normally limited to one practicum experience unless s/he can present evidence to the adviser of extraordinary circumstances justifying an exception.

Students should note that each practicum experience is tailored to specific academic and career considerations in collaboration between the student and Dr. Pasque. Therefore, comparisons among students (within the Student Affairs concentration or between Student Affairs and Intercollegiate Athletics Administration) regarding assignments and duties are inappropriate.

A practicum seminar may be required and is implemented at the discretion of the Faculty Practicum Supervisor. The purpose of this seminar is to offer students an opportunity to discuss and share learning insights related to their practicum assignment in a group setting.
RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT

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

1. In conjunction with the on-site supervisor, complete the Practicum Contract and return it to the Faculty Practicum Supervisor for review and approval.

2. Maintain a journal noting the experiences and insights related to your growth as a professional. The frequency of the entries in the journal will be:

   [ ] Weekly
   [ ] Monthly
   [ ] Other

   The journal must address the issues listed on the Reflective Journal Guidelines appearing at the end of this manual.

3. Attend the Practicum Seminar with the Faculty Practicum Supervisor as required.

4. Be professional, ethical, and maintain confidentiality at all times while at the Practicum Site.

5. Be responsible for his/her own health and accident, automobile, and professional liability insurance, since it is not provided by the Practicum Site or the University.

6. Be responsible for paying for travel to and from the Practicum Site.

7. Complete and discuss with the supervisor the Student Evaluation of Practicum Experience form and encourage him/her to forward it to the Faculty Practicum Supervisor by the required date.

8. Adhere to the policies, procedures, programs, and operating standards of the practicum site, the University of Oklahoma, and Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) in Higher Education (See http://www.cas.edu/).

9. Notify the Faculty Practicum Supervisor and Practicum Site Supervisor immediately if the student elects to discontinue the practical experience. A detailed justification must be provided to each of them.

10. Read Academic Linkages at the end of this manual.

Any student lacking practical experience who does not participate in the practicum should not expect to receive recommendations for professional positions.
ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT IF PRESENTING AT A REGIONAL OR NATIONAL STUDENT AFFAIRS CONFERENCE

As you know, conference participation is a large part of how people in the field of student affairs share information about best practices, assessment, research, and more. If you elect to submit to and are selected to present at a regional or national conference, then in addition to the responsibilities above, you must:

1. Seek approval for the regional or national conference from your faculty practicum supervisor.
2. Review the mission, goals, and organizational structure of the sponsoring association.
3. Read and reflect on the conference theme.
4. Submit a conference proposal by yourself or with (up to three) colleagues. If presenting with colleagues, your colleagues must write a 1 page evaluation of their experience working with you and turn it in to the faculty practicum supervisor.
5. You must have this conference proposal accepted for this to count as a practicum.
6. Seek funding from the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, College of Education, Graduate College and other sources, if available. This is the topic of one reflexive journal – How did you navigate these processes? In what ways did the organizational structure and application procedures help / hurt you in your application for funding? When administering funds, grants, fellowships, scholarships, awards, and like processes, how will you design it so that it helpful for the student and for administrators?
7. Seek and apply for graduate student fellowships or grants that may help subsidize the conference cost.
8. Note that you must cover the cost of attending the conference and full funding may or may not be available through the options mentioned above.
9. Attend the entire conference (not just a portion of the conference).
10. Volunteer at the conference, if volunteering is available. Reflect on this volunteer experience in one of your journals.
11. Present your session at the conference and provide evaluations to your participants (you must create and provide these if they are not available through the conference).
12. Write a self-evaluation of your presentation. How did you do? Did it go as expected? What would you do differently? What do you think about the evaluations you received?
13. Attend conference sessions that are of interest to you.
14. Write a reflective journal on this entire experience. See reflective journal questions in this manual and adapt them to fit your experience.
RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ON-SITE SUPERVISOR

1. Explain the goals, objectives, and operational policies of 1) the department, 2) the institution, and 3) the field. (Read Academic Linkages at the end of this manual.)

2. Discuss the student’s goals and needs in choosing that department/office as a practicum site and how those goals and needs may be harmonized with the goals and needs of the department/office.

3. Discuss expectations such as time on the job, participation in staff meetings, supervisory time, and other responsibilities. Supervisors should excuse students from work time to attend the Practicum Seminar Sessions with the Faculty Practicum Supervisor.

4. Discuss the criteria for evaluating the accomplishment of the practicum goals and how the final evaluation will be conducted (see On-site Supervisor Evaluation of Practicum Experience).

5. Once and agreement on goals and activities for the practicum has been reached, sign the Practicum Contract along with the student and return to the Faculty Practicum Supervisor for signature and credit approval. A signed copy will be returned to the supervisor and student.

6. Interpret the specific purposes of the practicum to the staff and encourage cooperation in creating a positive educational experience for the student.

7. Integrate the student as much as possible into the overall operation of the department/office so he/she feels part of the staff.

8. Schedule regular meeting with the student to discuss programs and to receive observations and reactions to the experience.

9. If needed, consult with the Faculty Practicum Supervisor during the semester concerning the student’s performance or any other related problems.

10. Complete and discuss with the student the final evaluation of the practicum and request his/her own evaluation of the experience.

11. Submit evaluation forms to the Faculty Practicum Supervisor at the end of the semester, so that a final grade may be submitted.
RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FACULTY PRACTICUM SUPERVISOR

1. Communicate with various departments/offices in which students can gain meaningful experiences to identify possible practicum sites. Work with the on-site supervisors to produce written descriptions and potential opportunities and experiences for each practicum site. Provide all on-site supervisors with a copy of the Practicum Guidelines.

2. Develop a list of practicum sites available, specific descriptions, and names of on-site supervisors.

3. Coordinate with all students their interests in particular practicum sites.

4. Provide the students with registration information needed to register for practicum.

5. Develop a syllabus for the Seminar and discuss it with the students – if offered that semester. Provide meeting dates, times, and locations for the Seminar sessions. Assess student interests in topics for the workshop sessions. Note for students: The seminar may not be offered every semester. In this case, communicate monthly with the faculty practicum supervisor about the status of your practicum.

6. Be available for students to discuss possible conflicts or problems related to their practicum assignment. If appropriate, discuss the problem with the on-site supervisor.

7. Communicate with the on-site supervisors regarding the completion and submission of evaluation forms by the deadline.

8. Collect the evaluation form, discuss the overall experience with the students and submit final grades.

9. Solicit feedback from participating on-site supervisors to discuss their perceptions and experiences and share any feedback provided by the students of their experiences. Provide participating on-site supervisors an opportunity to ask questions and to provide recommendations to improve the practicum experience in the future.
PRACTICUM CONTRACT

The purpose of the Practicum Contract is to state in writing the agreements made between the student and the on-site supervisor regarding the joint expectations for the supervised experience. The contract should address the following areas: (1) the student’s goals in the assigned 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.

EXAMPLES OF GOALS MIGHT BE:

- To understand the overall operations of the Admissions Office.
- To develop an awareness of the different ethnic groups served by the Office of Academic Services and understand the differences among the various groups.
- To develop skill in program development and evaluation.

EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES TO ACHIEVE THESE GOALS MIGHT BE:

- Participate in staff meetings.
- Spend time in each unit of the Admission 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.
- 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.
PRACTICUM CONTRACT

EDAH 5910, Section __________   Date ________________

Name _____________________________   ID# ______________________

Semester/Year ______________________   Credits ___________________

On-Site Supervisor/Name ________________________________

______________________________________________

Title

______________________________________________

Department/Office

______________________________________________

Address

______________________________________________

Phone

Number of hours/week practicum student will be expected to work: _______

GOALS (What you wish to accomplish, including skills you want to develop.):
**ACTIVITIES** (What are the activities you will engage in during this practicum that fulfill the goals, such as meetings, events, and online discussions.)

**PRODUCTS** (What are the products that will be provided to the department or to students through this practicum, such as a revised syllabus, evaluation results, training packets, and/or updated websites.)
ON-SITE SUPERVISOR EVALUATION OF PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE

Semester/Year: ______________________________
Department/Office: ___________________________
Student: ____________________________________
Supervisor: _________________________________


MAIL THE EVALUATION TO:

Practicum Faculty Supervisor
Penny A. Pasque, Assistant Professor
Adult and Higher Education, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
Women’s Studies Program
820 Van Vleet Oval, 210 Collings Hall
University of Oklahoma
Norman, OK 73019-2041
405/325-5976
pasque@ou.edu
http://education.ou.edu/pasque/

Please rate the level of accomplishment attained by the student using the following:

0 = Not applicable.
1 = Did not meet the minimal performance expectations.
2 = Met minimal performance expectations.
3 = Exceeded minimal performance expectations.
4 = Performed at an exceptional level.

PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR ON THE JOB

The graduate student . . .

_____ 1. Familiarized him/herself with office functions and procedures.
_____ 2. Dressed appropriately for the environment.
3. Exhibited a desire to consult with the supervisor and staff.
4. Participated actively in office activities.
5. Exhibited consistent behavior that was reliable, punctual, and responsible.
6. Fulfilled the amount of hours required.
7. Followed directions with minimal supervision.
8. Seized learning opportunities.
9. Followed through with assignments and projects.

**COMMUNICATIONS AND HUMAN RELATIONS SKILLS**

1. Conveyed ideas and thoughts clearly and articulately.
2. Established open and honest relations with others.
3. Exhibited the capacity to admit mistakes.
4. Exhibited flexibility and adaptability to new situations.
5. Displayed tact in expressing views.
6. Exhibited understanding of and respect for others.
7. Demonstrated the ability to listen to others.
8. Handled confidential information in an appropriate manner.
9. Exhibited good writing skills.
10. Solicited feedback / received feedback in a professional manner.

**MANAGEMENT AND PROGRAMMING COMPETENCIES**

1. Demonstrated an ability to work with minimal supervision.
2. Exhibited the ability to select and use appropriate materials.
3. Displayed resourcefulness and innovation.
4. Comprehended basic administrative procedures.
5. Exhibited positive decision making and problem solving skills.
6. Comprehended the department’s role and functions.

**SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES FOR THE PRACTICUM**

Do you feel the graduate student accomplished his/her goals for choosing this practicum site? Do you feel the expectations you had for the work to be done by the graduate student were accomplished? Please explain.
OVERALL EVALUATION OF THE PRACTICUM (Please check one)

_____ The graduate student has successfully completed the goals and achieved a reasonable level of competence.

_____ The student was not able to achieve the goals established for the practicum and should repeat the experience.

Please indicate in which areas the student needs to improve to gain a reasonable level of competence.

___________________________________________________
On-Site Supervisor

___________________________________________________
Date
GRADUATE STUDENT EVALUATION
OF THE PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE

Student Name: ______________________________ ID#: ____________________________

Semester/Year: ______________________________

On-Site Supervisor: ___________________________

Name

________________________________________

Title

Faculty Practicum Supervisor: _____________________________________________

Hours/week spent in practicum setting: ______________________________

EVALUATION OF PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE

Mark the number that best represents your opinion based on the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1. I received adequate orientation to the goals, objectives, and operational policies of the department/office. 5 4 3 2 1

2. I was treated as an equal; as a colleague on the staff. 5 4 3 2 1

3. I was given sufficient time to learn and to assume responsibility. 5 4 3 2 1

4. I was given freedom to exercise my judgment and try out new ideas. 5 4 3 2 1

5. I obtained helpful feedback from my supervisor on my strengths and weaknesses. 5 4 3 2 1

6. The experience was well structured and designed to promote learning. 5 4 3 2 1
7. I received support from the staff and felt that I was welcomed. 
   5 4 3 2 1

8. I was completely satisfied with this fieldwork/practicum experience. 
   5 4 3 2 1

9. This experience was valuable in my professional development. 
   5 4 3 2 1

COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. What specific recommendations can you provide to improve the practicum experience in this department/office?

2. What specific recommendations can you provide to improve the supervision aspect of the practicum in this site?

3. What specific recommendations do you have to improve the faculty supervision and seminars?

4. Provide any additional comments and recommendations concerning the practicum requirement:

_____________________________________  ____________________
Student’s Signature     Date
REFLECTIVE JOURNAL GUIDELINES

Your graduate education is an intellectually stimulating, intense experience designed to engage learning by introducing you to challenging ideas and intriguing concepts – but there is never enough time for reflection. As you know, student affairs research shows that students gain significantly more if there is meaningful reflection. Consequently, we require you to maintain a journal that will document your experiences and insights on your practicum.

At a minimum, you should reflect on the three issues/themes/concerns (celebrations or challenges) that have been paramount in the practicum experience. What did you learn this week or month – about yourself, the practicum, the students, or your supervisor? Your reflections will provide the basis for the conversations with your Faculty Practicum Supervisor.

Begin by considering the following issues to stimulate your thinking as you record your thoughts and feelings throughout your graduate career. Address other issues as appropriate.

- What professional skills do I want to enhance? What additional experiences should I try?
- What ideas from class would I like to try out in my practicum?
- What are my successes and challenges? Why? What would I do differently? Why?
- How has the application of development theory or administration models helped or hindered my understanding of this practicum?
- Am I satisfied with the ways in which I balanced my responsibilities – my practicum, my courses, and self? How was I able to accomplish this? What can I improve?
- What is working the climate at my practicum site? Am I a valued team member by the staff or in this environment? If so, how did my professional co-workers and/or supervisor convey that feeling to me? If not, why not? Am I able to risk?
- Can I trace my accomplishments so that I am ready to document my strengths to my future employers and on my resume?
- What ideas do I want to talk over with my Practicum Supervisor or with my Faculty Practicum Supervisor?
- What would I do differently next time?
- What recommendations do I have for the Faculty Practicum Supervisor?

Submit your journal entries to the Faculty Practicum Supervisor on these dates:

_______________________________________.
ACADEMIC LINKAGES

INTERNSHIPS: A VITAL LINK

Barbara A. Mann, Associate Professor of Higher Education
Florida State University

An old proverb holds that “I hear and I forget; I see and I remember; I do and I understand.” The internship, a vital link between the practicing student affairs professional and the graduate preparation program, puts that proverb into practice. The proverb underscores the importance of applying theory and knowledge in an actual work setting for the graduate student to achieve learning and mastery.

The internship, or practicum, is an integral and important part of the student’s total learning experience. The experiences are carefully selected by the student and major professor to add breadth and depth to the student’s overall program. The internships are usually selected because they relate to the student’s career goals or broaden the student’s background for work in student affairs. For the graduate student, the “hands-on” experience in the internship provides the opportunity to apply theory to practice, observe how a student affairs office “really works”, observe role models for professional behavior, develop and refine a personal philosophy of student affairs and working with students, and, in general, continue development in critical thinking, analysis, and synthesis skills. A good internship can be a totally integrative experience for the student.

There are benefits as well for the student affairs offices which become sites for internships. The busy office enjoys the services of an eager, energetic, extra hand to help with all the projects what need to be done. The graduate student is often looking for an experience with direct contact with students to put into practice the theories and knowledge from the classroom and can be very helpful with advising groups and developing programs. The graduate student can make suggestions that can help make the office a more effective unit in the student affairs division and on the campus. Internship supervisors have the opportunity to contribute to the professional growth
and development of a new professional and can be very influential at this stage of the intern’s development.

The graduate student and major professor look for key elements in an internship site. Good supervision is often the highest priority. A good supervisor will set clear expectations, help the student determine reasonable responsibilities to meet the student’s goals and the goals of the office, make an assignment of specific duties to the intern, give regular performance appraisal with the student’s professional and personal development in mind, talk with the student about relationships with other offices and how to get things done in the college or university (practical politics), and consult with the student’s major professor about any concerns and exceptional work performed by the student. Some supervisory functions are descriptive of mentoring, and many graduate students find an internship supervisor who becomes a mentor to them.

Another key element is a significant task or project that is the student’s responsibility. The graduate students need a project that will enable them to practice what they are learning in their classes and show what they can do. Collating, stapling, and stuffing envelopes when everyone in the office is involved in a major project becomes part of the internship experience, but the meaning of the experience for the student is in organizing leadership awards night, advising the IFC scholarship committee, developing a new program on sexual abuse issues, developing a handbook for student organizations, or providing student information sessions for the student rights and responsibilities office. Offices which provide the opportunity for these and similar experiences are more likely to be chosen as internship sites. These experiences provide the “I do and I understand” portion of the proverb.

As the supervising faculty member, I often see exciting personal development for the student when the student and the internship provider from student affairs are engaged in significant activities and good supervision. I also see professional staff members who are excited about the work and the personal development of graduate interns. One role of a professional is to develop the next generation of professionals. It is from this role that internships provide the vital link between student affairs professionals and graduate programs.

Few campuses have graduate preparation programs for a steady supply of graduate interns. We welcome internship sites on other campuses. Graduate students need experience in different settings and sizes of institutions. Contact a nearby graduate program; your campus can be a site for making the proverb a reality.