Program Coordinator

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Program Requirement

Two practica are required for the Higher Education Administration program. Each Practicum requires a minimum of sixty (60) clock/contact hours and will individually earn two credit-hours. Each Practicum should be scheduled to last between three to six weeks. The two practica may not be scheduled and/or conducted simultaneously.

Objectives

The Practicum experience is designed to give students an opportunity to gain understanding of functional, administrative areas within an institution. It is also intended to offer students opportunities to observe and assess problem-solving, management and leadership skills, as well as, observe and gain insight into the various interpersonal and working interactions within and between administrative units. Finally, it offers students the opportunity to assess the skills and knowledge professionals in administrative areas need to effectively accomplish their responsibilities and achieve unit goals and objectives.

Procedures in Seeking and Gaining Approval of a Practicum

A) For each Practicum, students will select an administrative area and site that offers opportunities to meet the objectives listed.

Students are encouraged to seek a Practicum experience within areas that reflect their career interests and goals. Students are also encouraged to consider areas outside their direct career interests where additional insight and understanding might assist them in being more effective in their career areas. For example, a student aspiring to an administrative position in college athletics might also feel that he or she might benefit from a Practicum experience in the area of financial aid or admissions. Moreover, if career directions are being explored, or broader understandings of campus administrative functions are sought, the two Practica offer an opportunity to gain insight and exposure to
more than one area. Practicum options can be discussed with the Program Coordinator and/or members of the Higher Education Administration program’s faculty via phone or e-mail.

Note: Students should very carefully consider not only the general area of a Practicum but the specific site and supervisor. With the Practicum Guidelines and requirements in mind, the student’s selection is acknowledgment that he or she believes that the site and supervisor will provide the experiences needed to assist the student in “earning” a “Credit” evaluation.

B) Once a potential area and site are selected, each student will discuss the Practicum Guidelines and The Practicum Experience Agreement Form with a potential Practicum Supervisor who works within the administrative site. The selected Practicum Supervisor must have supervisory responsibilities over other professionals and must have a minimum of three years of professional experience in the area identified. Students should encourage Potential Practicum Supervisors to contact the Practicum Coordinator so additional insights, questions and/or expectations can be discussed.

C) After discussing and identifying opportunities available, and securing the willingness of the supervisor to work with the student and oversee the Practicum experience, the student will draft a list of Practicum goals, with assistance from the supervisor (Note: The first goal of each Practicum will be “Gain specific knowledge of the Unit’s purpose and current goals.”).

D) The student and supervisor will also agree upon a general schedule for the Practicum and include this schedule with the draft of goals and objectives (Note: each Practicum requires a minimum of sixty clock/contact hours.).

E) The drafted goals and schedule must then be discussed with, and initially approved by, the Program Coordinator. This approval can be gained over the phone and documented in an e-mail message.

F) Once approved, this information must be transferred by the student to The Practicum Experience Agreement Form where it will be reviewed for a final time and then signed by the student and Practicum Supervisor. A copy of the signed form must then be faxed to the Practicum Coordinator.

Meetings, Logs and Journals

During the Practicum experience, the student will meet regularly with the Practicum Supervisor. In addition, the student will communicate with the Practicum Coordinator via e-mail or phone a minimum of once every 20 clock/contact hours. These meetings are intended to discuss the Practicum experience and assess the student’s progression toward stated goals.
Each student will maintain a daily log documenting the date, hours, and individuals with whom he or she interacted during the Practicum. A basic form will be developed by each student to log each week’s activity, and must be signed by the student and Practicum Supervisor. The student will also keep a daily journal of the Practicum experiences which corresponds with the logged information above.

The journal might include the following information/insights: Procedures and decision-making encountered; assessed problem-solving, management and leadership skills observed; mistakes made and lessons learned; reflections on the various interpersonal and working interactions within and between administrative units; general assessments of skills and knowledge required of observed professional positions; or, observations of how administrators worked within and outside their units to achieve unit goals and objectives.

The student should also use the journal to document specific steps taken to achieve the goals agreed upon in The Practicum Experience Agreement Form.

Assessment

At the conclusion of the Practicum experience the Practicum Supervisor will be asked to complete an evaluation of the student’s engagement in the Practicum. The student will also be asked to complete an evaluation of the Practicum site and experience.

Note: It is the responsibility of the student to be actively engaged in the Practicum in a manner that achieves the objectives of the Practicum program. Accordingly, it is the responsibility of the student to immediately voice to the Practicum Supervisor concerns related to the Practicum site and/or issues that hinder the meeting of objectives and achievement of goals. Under dire circumstances, it is also the responsibility of the student to communicate to the Program Coordinator a desire to relocate to another administrative site. Failing to do so early in the Practicum experience might affect reasonable steps required to salvage the current Practicum.

Paper

A five-page, double spaced, reflective paper will be written and submitted to the Practicum Coordinator by the student that details the experiences and insights gained during the Practicum experience. Reflections should take into consideration the overall objectives of the Practicum program. The completed paper can be faxed, mailed or attached and sent via e-mail.

Completed Evaluation Forms, Log and Journal

The student should fax or mail the completed student evaluation form (“Practicum Site and Supervisor(s) Evaluation”) and his/her completed log and journal to the Practicum Coordinator. The student should also have the Practicum Supervisor complete the “Evaluation of A Practicum Student” form and have him/her fax this completed form to the Practicum Coordinator.
Oral Presentation

Once the paper, log, journal and evaluation forms have been reviewed by the Practicum Coordinator, a conference call will be scheduled between the student and the Practicum Coordinator to allow the student to share and be questioned on his practicum experiences. Other faculty teaching in the program and current students in the Higher Education Administration program will be invited and encouraged to attend and hear about the student’s experiences.

Overall Practicum Evaluation

Based on review and completion of the above, including submitted assessments, a review of the student’s log and journal, achieving agreed upon goals, and the required paper and presentation, the Program Coordinator will determine a “Credit” or “No-Credit” evaluation. Should a student fail to achieve a “Credit” evaluation, the Program Coordinator has the sole authority to specifically designate, in writing, what the student is required to do to gain a “Credit” evaluation - up to and including rescheduling and repeating the entire Practicum experience.