

Recreation, Parks and Leisure Services



Minnesota State University
Mankato

RPLS 495

PRACTICUM HANDBOOK



DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION, PARKS AND LEISURE SERVICES

RPLS 495 - PRACTICUM (8 credits)

Pre-requisite: RPLS 484 Field Experience

INSTRUCTOR: Your RPLS Faculty Advisor

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This is the capstone experience for your undergraduate degree in Recreation, Parks and Leisure Services. It is an opportunity for you to gain professional work experience under an agency supervisor. The Practicum requires 480 hours of service at a Department-approved agency where you work full time for 12 weeks during your senior year.

COURSE PRE-REQUISITE: You are required to complete RPLS 484 Field Experience in order to be eligible to enroll in RPLS 495 Practicum. You will contract with your advisor to complete 100 hours of volunteer or paid experience in a leisure services organization. Written permission is required from the advisor.

NRPA/AALR ACCREDITATION STANDARD:

8.29 Internship, full-time continuing experience in one appropriate professional recreation organization/agency of at least 400 clock hours over an extended period of time, not less than 10 weeks. If an option is accredited, the internship must be directly related to such option.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Through the practicum experience, you will:

1. have the opportunity to integrate your professional-preparation classroom activities with on-the-job experiences;
2. demonstrate your readiness for a professional position within your career track;
3. have the opportunity to attain your practicum goals.

REQUIREMENTS:

1. 480 hours of service over an extended period of time, not less than 12 consecutive weeks;
2. Weekly reports to your faculty advisor;
3. Compliance with the policies and procedures of the cooperating agency;
4. Final report summarizing your overall experiences with the agency and addressing your practicum goals.

EVALUATION:

Your agency supervisor will complete a mid-term and a final evaluation form and discuss each of them with you. The forms will then be jointly signed by you and your agency supervisor. Your faculty advisor will base final Pass (P) or Fail (F) largely, but not exclusively, on these evaluations, your weekly reports and your own final report.

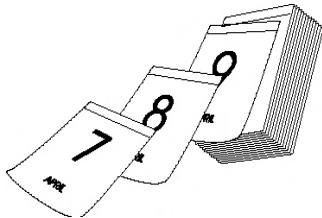
WHAT IS A PRACTICUM?



The practicum is an educational course offered at Minnesota State University, Mankato that provides you with a “hands on” experience in the Recreation and Leisure Services profession. It is an opportunity for you to apply what you have learned in the classroom to real situations under professional supervision. It is required of all students majoring in Recreation, Parks and Leisure Services after all your course work has been completed.

During the practicum, the work place becomes your classroom as you receive “on the job” training at an approved agency. You will serve the agency in the agreed capacity for a minimum of 480 hours (12 weeks – 40 hours per week) and the agency will give you an opportunity to gain experience and confidence while completing these requirements. You will be supervised both by the agency and by your faculty advisor.

WHEN DO I SIGN UP?



You will register for the practicum after all your major course work has been completed with a minimum 2.5 grade point average in your major courses. The practicum is usually completed during the semester prior to graduation. The course is available during each semester and during the summer. All arrangements are to be completed by the mid-term of the semester before the practicum:

Practicum during:



Spring Semester
Summer
Fall Semester

complete all paper work by:



October 15
March 15
April 1

WHAT SHOULD I GET OUT OF MY PRACTICUM?

During your practicum, you should:

- Gain practical experience allowing you to apply theories and philosophies developed in the classroom;
- Develop specific skills and obtain knowledge related to the delivery of recreation and leisure services;
- Evaluate specific personal competencies and limitations in management and leadership through practical experience;
- Have the opportunity to help the agency develop, plan, implement, and evaluate programs to meet the agency’s goals;
- Organize and implement one program/project from beginning to end;
- Begin the transition from student to recreation professional.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?

PRACTICUM CHECK LIST:

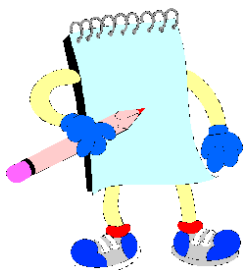


To be completed the Semester Before the Practicum

- Complete major course work with a minimum GPA of 2.5.
- Complete your Field Work Experience (RPLS 484)
- Develop personal objectives for your practicum with the assistance of your faculty advisor.
- Check out the agency information data base and folders located in 215 HNC.
- Meet with your advisor to discuss possible sites that you have identified during the previous step.
- Visit potential sites for practicum and have an Agency Interest Form signed at approving sites.
- Make an appointment with your advisor to discuss the Agency Interest forms and to make your final decision; bring Agency Interest Forms to Advisor.
- Make arrangements for your beginning and ending dates with the agency supervisor – set practicum goals.
- Complete the Application for Practicum Form and attach a copy of your DARS (Degree Audit Reporting System) Report– turn into Advisor. This must be done by mid-term the semester before the practicum.
- Have your faculty advisor enter your permission for you to register.

To Be Completed at Practicum Time:

- Register for RPLS 495 - 8 credits.
- Arrange dates and schedules for practicum with agency supervisor.
- Within the first week, return the Practicum Agreement form to your faculty advisor. Be sure to pick up this form from the secretary BEFORE you leave for your practicum.
- Submit weekly, typewritten or e-mailed reports to your faculty advisor regarding achievement of goals and general progress.
- Be available for visits and phone calls from your faculty advisor.
- Submit a typed final report to your faculty advisor. No grades will be processed until both your final report and your agency's final evaluation have been received by your faculty advisor.



You will find an explanation of all the forms you will need to complete your practicum on page 5.

WHAT ARE MY RESPONSIBILITIES?

- Complete the practicum checklist.
- Comply with all rules and regulations of the practicum agency.
- Work with your agency supervisor to solve problems arising during the practicum.
- Maintain regular contact with your advisor during the practicum.
- Contact your faculty advisor when problems are unsolvable through agency channels.
- Conduct yourself in a professional manner at all times.
- Notify your agency supervisor well in advance of any absence from work.
- Formally thank the agency for the practicum opportunity before you begin and after you have completed the practicum.

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT FROM MY AGENCY SUPERVISOR?

- Maintain high quality staff with both the education and experience to provide quality practicums for students.
- Interview students before agreeing to the practicum.
- When appropriate, be certified, registered, or licensed by the recognized regulatory body.
- Make available at least one supervisor to meet with the student no less than weekly to review goals, objectives, and general progress.
- Provide student with as much supervision and/or freedom as that student's competence demands.
- Design the practicum experience so that the student will experience the many different facets of the overall organization.
- Provide supportive, learning atmosphere.
- Prepare and submit mid-term evaluation.
- Prepare and submit final evaluation.

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT FROM MY FACULTY ADVISOR?

- Assure student has completed the tasks identified in the practicum checklist.
- Assist student with the writing of practicum goals and objectives.
- Assist student in identifying practicum sites.
- Approve final practicum site.
- Evaluate all reports from student and agency.
- Maintain open communication with student and agency throughout the practicum.
- Visit student at the practicum site when possible.
- Determine and process final grade for the practicum.



I KNOW THERE MUST BE FORMS TO COMPLETE . . . WHAT ARE THEY?

1. Agency Interest In Student

After you have discussed practicum sites with your Faculty Advisor, take a copy of this form (page 8) with you when visiting each potential site. Submit completed forms to your Faculty Advisor.

2. Application For Practicum

This form is contained on a data base program on the Department's computer. Complete the Worksheet on page 9 and take it to your Advisor who will help you enter the information into the database. You will also need to provide a copy of your DARS (Degree Audit Reporting System) report.

The Application for Practicum and the Summary of Course Work forms must be submitted to your Faculty Advisor before you will be allowed to register for your practicum credits.

3. Practicum Agreement Form

Pick up this form from the RPLS Secretary or your Faculty Advisor BEFORE you leave for your practicum. Have your Agency Supervisor complete this form with you during your first week. Send ONE copy of this form back to your Faculty Advisor at the end of the first week of your practicum.

4. Agency Evaluation Forms

A Mid-Term and a Final Evaluation form will be sent to your agency supervisor. Your agency supervisor will visit with you after completing each form and you will keep one copy of this form. Your agency supervisor will mail one copy to your Faculty Advisor.

5. Student's Final Evaluation

There is no form for this. You are expected to type a final report summarizing your overall experiences with the agency and addressing your practicum goals. Submit a copy to your Faculty Advisor.

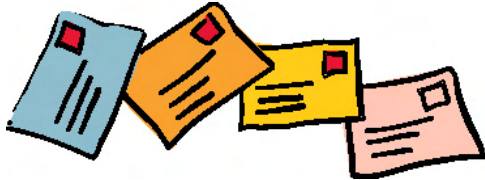
No Final Grade will be processed until the Final Agency Evaluation Form and your final report has been received by your faculty advisor.

WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT GRADING?

The 12 weeks of your practicum may not fit within the calendar dates of the semester. For example, your agency may ask you to begin your practicum in mid-June and complete it in mid-September. If this should happen, your Faculty Advisor will submit a grade of "In-Progress" (IP) when grade rosters are due. After you have completed your 12 weeks and your final report has been received, your Faculty Advisor will then change the IP to a "Pass" (P) or "Fail" (F) whichever is deemed appropriate.

HOW CAN I CONTACT MY FACULTY ADVISOR?

When submitting your reports and forms, send them to:



Minnesota State University, Mankato
Your Advisor's Name
213 Highland Center N
Mankato, MN 56001



E-mail Addresses:

James.petersen@mnsu.edu

Joy@mnsu.edu

Ronald.nickerson@mnsu.edu

James.wise@mnsu.edu

Dr. James Petersen

☎ Phone: 507-389-2127

Dr. Joy Joyner

☎ Phone: 507-389-5930

Dr. Ron Nickerson

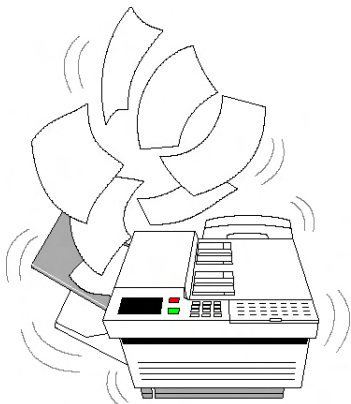
☎ Phone: 507-389-3201

Dr. James Wise

☎ Phone: 507-389-2128

RPLS Office:

☎ Phone: 507-389-2127



☎ FAX: 507-389-2985

AGENCY INTEREST IN STUDENT

To be completed by the student:

Your name _____

Phone # _____

Campus Address: _____

To be completed by the Agency:

Name of Agency: _____

Agency Address: _____

City State Zip

Agency Supervisor's Name: _____

Supervisor's Phone: () _____

Supervisor's E-mail: _____

If this student decided to complete a Practicum (12 weeks – 480 hours) with your agency, what would be the:

Starting Date: _____ Ending Date: _____

Salary/Stipend (if applicable)

Would this Student be covered by your agency's:

General liability insurance?

Yes

No

Workman's compensation insurance?

Yes

No

This agency hereby indicated interest in the above named student as a practicum student under the provisions listed above.

Agency representative

date

Thank you for taking the time to interview this student.

APPLICATION FOR PRACTICUM WORKSHEET

Directions: This is a worksheet for you to complete (by hand) and submit to your Faculty Advisor for approval. Once you have received approval, the Faculty Advisor will help you enter the information into the database and print copies of it. Your Faculty Advisor will then send one copy of the form with a letter to your Agency Supervisor. Be sure to take the time to write out thoughtful goals and objectives that will be measurable. ***Attach a copy of your DARS Report to this application***

Name _____

Starting Date is:

Ending Date is:

My address during my practicum:

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

My phone # during my practicum: () _____

My e-mail address (if you have one): _____

Name of the Agency where I will be doing my practicum: _____

Agency Address:

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Supervisor's name: _____

Supervisor's phone #: () _____

Supervisor's e-mail address: _____

My goals and objectives to be achieved during this Practicum include:
(list 5)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

ATTACH

DARS

REPORT

HERE