1. Practicum defined
2. Objectives of the Practicum Program
3. Practicum Eligibility
4. Practicum Course Requirements
5. Types of Practicum, choosing a site
6. Practicum checklist

This handbook was designed to help guide you through the necessary preparations for your FSHD Practicum experience. Read it thoroughly when you first begin to prepare for your Practicum (at least the semester before you plan to enroll in it), and then use it as a reference as questions arise.

1. WHAT IS A PRACTICUM?
A practicum is often practice before a formal internship. The requirements are often more general.


The student engages in an on-going process of observation, practice and reflection in order to learn from experience. In doing so the student gains new knowledge and skills, applies academic knowledge to practical situations, refines previously acquired skills, and gains a greater understanding of self and the Family Studies and Human Development careers.

2. OBJECTIVES
The goals for the students in this course are to:
- Increase the student’s use and practical understanding of academic knowledge by applying concepts in an arena outside the classroom
- Improve the student’s critical thinking about social problems
- Gain an introduction to the functions and daily operations of community organizations
- Exposure to FSHD populations

3. PRACTICUM ELIGIBILITY
- Practicum units (FSHD 394/494) will be available summer sessions to FSHD majors seeking an out-of-town field experience and to FSHD minors seeking credit for a hands-on experience to fulfill their minor requirements.
• Students must enroll in a minimum of 3 practicum units per summer session. Students may enroll in more than 3 practicum units with approval from their major or minor academic advisor.

• Students will be required to see their academic advisor prior to applying for a practicum; the advisor will verify that the student:
  i. Is a declared FSHD major or minor
  ii. Is in good academic standing with the University of Arizona and has at least a 2.25 grade point average (major and cumulative) at the University of Arizona
  iii. Has sophomore, junior, or senior status with completion of one FSHD course
  iv. Have completed a minimum of 12 credits at the University of Arizona

• Practicum will be part of the experiential requirement for the FSHD major curriculum. FSHD majors can currently take FSHD 393/493, 394/494, 492, 399/499.

• Students will be required to have a different job description if they apply for a practicum at their current work/volunteer site.

• On the practicum application, students must specify how the proposed practicum site is connected to an FSHD career or experience.

• Practicum credit will not be offered to students who completed experiential hours in previous semesters.

• Students must complete ALL on-site hours before a grade is assigned for the practicum.

4. PRACTICUM COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Students may enroll for a minimum of 3 units in summer semesters. Students will be expected to:
• Work at their Site each week on a schedule to be arranged with the site supervisor.
• Complete course assignments as outlined in the course syllabus.

Site Work Expectations
Externs are expected to work a total of 45 hours per 1 university unit for their Site. The table below lists the required work hours based on unit enrollment. Students need to make a schedule with their Site supervisor to meet the work requirements. Students are not automatically excused from work during school holidays. All holidays or special events observed by organized religions will be honored for those students who show affiliation with that particular religion. Absences approved by the UA Dean of Students
(or Dean’s designee) will be honored. Time off for holidays needs to be negotiated with the Site supervisor in advance.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Enrolled Units</th>
<th>Required Practicum Hours</th>
<th>Approx. Hours per Week (based on 5 weeks)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students may only count hours spent working at or on behalf of the Site or program. Students may not count hours spent traveling from home to the worksite, or hours spent working on course assignments.

Students are welcome to work more hours than required, but they will not receive points or additional units for any hours beyond the required number.

**Students are required to complete 45 hours per unit, if they do not complete the required hours, they will fail or need to take an incomplete in the course.**

5. **TYPES OF PRACTICUMS, CHOOSING A SITE**

You are allowed to select a site that is within the Family Studies and Human Development Field.
To ensure a quality Practicum experience, the Practicum Coordinator must approve your placement before you begin work. This approval is included as part of the Practicum Application form.

**Step One: Explore your options**
Many of the national agencies we work with in Tucson have various locations all over the World. Some agencies with great reputations are:

YMCA
http://ymca.net
YWCA
www.ywca.org
American Cancer Society
www.cancer.org
Girl Scouts of USA
http://www.girlscouts.org
International Rescue Committee
http://www.theirc.org
Planned Parenthood
http://www.plannedparenthood.org
United Way
http://national.unitedway.org
University of Arizona Career Services
You can use Wildcat Job Link to search for both paid and unpaid opportunities. You will need to create an account in order to access the listings. http://www.career.arizona.edu/

Other Resources
Contact FSHD instructors, advisors, and classmates to hear what local options may be within your area of interest. Talk with professionals in the field or conduct an internet search to locate agencies.

1-800 Volunteer
http://www.1-800-volunteer.org

Step Two: Discuss your ideas with the Practicum Coordinator
Call, email, or set up a meeting to discuss your ideas about Practicum. The Practicum coordinator can provide help with interviewing, contact people, goodness of fit, and ideas for alternative sites. It is always best to double check the site with the Practicum Coordinator before you set up an interview.

Step Three: Interviewing
Once you have chosen some possible sites, and have discussed them with the Practicum Coordinator, you should contact the organization itself for more information. When you call, explain that you are a student at the University of Arizona, that you are planning to participate in a Practicum experience, and you would like to learn more about their organization. Ask who would be the best person to talk with about Practicum—this may be a volunteer coordinator, human resources representative, or a program director. When you talk with that person, ask if you can set up an appointment to meet, or if they have some time to talk by phone.

In Preparation for the Interview:
Do your homework before the interview. Be familiar with the organization—its services, size, location(s), clients, and the work they expect you to perform. Examine your own career goals and skills. Think about what you want to get out of your Practicum and what you would like to learn.

Bring or have available to fax or send as a PDF:
• The Practicum Application
• Two copies of your résumé
• A typed list of references
• A pencil or pen and a pad of paper to take notes

Questions You May Want to Ask Interviewers:
• Tell me about the clients you serve.
• What are the most rewarding aspects of working for this Site?
• What are the most challenging aspects?
• What opportunities are available for students?
• What is the structure of the department where I would be working?
• What days/hours would I be expected to work?
• What activities would I be performing?
• Who would be my supervisor?
• What kind of training would I receive?

For more information about interviewing, go to UA Career Services on the fourth floor of the Student Union Memorial Center, or visit their website at http://www.career.arizona.edu/

Step Four: Fill out the Application Form with the Site Supervisor
Remember that you can talk with the Practicum Coordinator at any time during your search to get tips, advice, or help in making a decision. Enjoy your experience; this is great practice for professional job hunting!

6. Practicum Checklist
☐ Open and read the Practicum Application Form
  • You must be familiar with the form and know who needs to sign it.
☐ Make an appointment to see your academic advisor.
  • Bring with you a current copy of your SAPR.
  • Bring with you the Practicum application form as your advisor will need to sign a page.
  • Together, you will consider whether you are ready for the experience and get answers to your academic questions before you proceed with application process.
☐ Explore your options:
  Engage in a Site search using our FSHD Practicum list or search sites on your own.

☐ Discuss your ideas with the Practicum Coordinator
  The Practicum Coordinator can guide you in the selection process

☐ Interviewing
  • Interview at the site or over the phone.
  • Create your Practicum schedule during the interview.
  • Have your site supervisor sign the application packet.

☐ Submit the completed Practicum Application Form to the Practicum Coordinator
All pages of the application must be signed and dated before you will be enrolled in Practicum.

This process must be completed by the following dates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester to Enroll</th>
<th>Applications Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Last day of regular classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the semester prior to practicum</td>
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The Practicum Coordinator will review your application. If approved, your information will be sent for registration. If changes are needed, the Practicum Coordinator will contact you to discuss the matter. It is important that you confirm your registration status by checking Student Link.

☐ Next Steps: After you’ve been accepted at a site

Once you have chosen your site and submitted your application packet to the Practicum Coordinator, there will be tasks that you must complete before beginning work at your site. Your site supervisor should tell you what you need to do, but you should ask to make sure things go smoothly. Following are some common things you may be expected to do.

- **Site paperwork.** You may need to complete a volunteer or employment application or fill out other human resources forms before you can begin work.

- **Fingerprinting and criminal background check.** If you will be working with children or working closely with clients, you will be expected to go through a criminal background check. This typically involves fingerprinting and signing some legal forms. The background check can take from three weeks to three months. Because many organizations must receive the results of the check before allowing you to begin work, you should complete this step as soon as possible. You may be required to pay a fee for this process.

- **Volunteer training.** Many organizations require a structured volunteer training while others may train you individually or on the job. The training may not be offered at a time that coincides with the semester schedule, meaning that you may have to complete the training during the preceding semester or during winter or summer break. You are responsible for completing all training as required by the placement organization.

- **Setting up your work schedule.** You are responsible for setting your work schedule with your site supervisor. Most agencies are flexible and are willing to work with your school schedule. However, the things you are most interested in
doing might occur when you are scheduled to be in class. Check these out with your supervisor. Please be as flexible as you can to accommodate the organization’s needs as well.

☐ **Beginning the Semester**

Shortly before the semester begins, you will be connected to D2L and contacted by email regarding course meetings and assignments. Please contact the Practicum Coordinator with any questions. Congratulations! You’re on your way to a great summer!