

Course Syllabus

Spring 2010

TITLE: *PSY 450/490: Practicum*

PROFESSOR: **Kelly Sheehe, M.A.**
Director for Professional Practicums

CREDITS: 3.0 semester hours, 4.5 quarter hours

DESCRIPTION:

The purpose of the practicum is to provide students specialized experiences in a career field tailored to one's academic discipline, skills, and/or professional interests. The practicum allows each student the opportunity to design a personalized program, by electing to work at a professional practicum site or, for a limited number of students, working on an independent study. Students choosing to work at a professional practicum site will work at an agency within the Focus on the Family organization or Rocky Mountain Region, learning about professions related to their discipline and/or life goals. It is expected that students will ultimately spend 120 hours of logged time at their practicum site and on practicum related requirements culminating in a typed, 3 page summary of their experience. In contrast, students choosing to work on an independent study will be given the opportunity to work on a topic of choice (under the supervision of an advisor) which is related to the family arena, applies to their academic interests and gifts, and integrates a Christian worldview. It is expected that students choosing this option will produce the equivalent of a 25 page typed paper.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Place students at a professional practicum site that is relevant to their discipline, skills, and/or interests.
2. Become exposed to professionals within Focus on the Family and the Rocky Mountain Region.
3. Perform job tasks on career-related programs and experience the organizational dynamics of a professional setting.
4. To further enhance the student's understanding of the concepts of career and calling and expose them to tools that might assist them in determining God's call in their lives.
5. Design and complete an independent study which benefits others, on a topic and in a format aligned with one's interests and gifts, related to the family arena, and which integrates a Christian worldview.

REQUIREMENTS OF THOSE WORKING AT A PROFESSIONAL PRACTICUM SITE:

Students choosing to work at a professional practicum site will be placed at a site at Focus on the Family or within the Rocky Mountain Region. Every effort will be made to place each student at a site that is consistent with the student's skills, academic discipline, and/or professional interests -- aligned with the needs and requirements of the particular job site. Students will meet their site supervisor and be given an orientation of their practicum site during the week of January 25.

Service Hours: Students will work approximately eight hours each week for 12 weeks, completing 96 logged hours of time at their work site by semester's end. An additional 24 hours of time on practicum related assignments (outlined below) will also be required. The Institute's recommended credit of 3.0 semester hours is therefore based upon the completion of 120 total hours. Host colleges and universities will be provided a record of the number of hours served by the student (including any additional hours over 120), in order to help them determine the amount of credit hours the student should receive.

Reading: Rath, T. (2007). *Strengths Finder 2.0*. New York, NY: Gallup Press. (Reading schedule is located in Practicum Handbook).

Classes: Students will attend three practicum classes to be held on February 5, February 12 and February 19.

Practicum Director: Students will meet with the practicum director at least once during the semester at a designated time. Failure to do so will result in a reduction of grade.

Journals: Practicum Journals are required to be turned in to the Director for Professional Practicums on 2/3, 2/17, 3/3, 3/17 and 4/7. The journal is intended to be a working paper, a written reflection to help the student think critically about the work they are doing, why they are doing it, and how it relates to the bigger picture of their time at the Institute. It is not intended to be busy work, or a mere log, but a learning tool that reflects the integration of faith, studies, and practicum experience.

The journal entry should be one typed (12 pt. font, double-spaced and stapled) page. It should include a ***brief*** (no more than one paragraph) description of the student's practicum assignments for the previous two weeks. The remainder of the paper should respond to questions outlined in the handbook. **Journal entries are held in confidence. If you have a concern about something at your practicum site, feel free to discuss it with the Director for Professional Practicums in person and/or in your journal.**

Site Supervision: Each student will be assigned to one site supervisor, who is responsible for assigning projects and tasks, along with mentoring, supervising, and guiding the student. Students will privately meet with their site supervisor or department representative periodically throughout the semester to:

- share feedback with each other regarding the professional practicum experience.

- receive guidance on tasks and projects.
- discuss insights and observations obtained while at the practicum site.
- exchange information related to one's professional discipline and interests.
- express concerns and prayer requests.
- share other topics related to one's integration of faith and work.

Feedback: During the week of March 1-5, each student will be given the opportunity to provide mid-course feedback regarding his or her satisfaction with the practicum site. Similarly, the Site Supervisor and the Director for Professional Practicums will provide feedback to each student regarding the student's performance at that time. A final evaluation will also be completed at the end of the semester.

Summary Paper: Students will submit a 3 page double-spaced, typed summary paper to the Director for Professional Practicums no later than April 19. The first page should provide a brief summary of what the student did and learned from being at the practicum site. It should include what the student learned about his or herself (strengths, weaknesses, likes, dislikes, personal style of relating, etc.). The second page should reflect on how taking the Strengthsquest profile benefited you as well as what you gleaned from the Strengthsquest class. Were you able to utilize your strengths at your practicum site and if so, how? If not, how could you have? How will learning about your strengths affect your career pursuits? The last page should be a reflection on Dr. Tackett's lecture Created to Create (the Sphere of Labor) and how it relates (or could relate) to your practicum experience. How did Dr. Tackett's teaching on labor affect your thoughts about your practicum experience and influence your thinking as you prepare to enter the workforce?

GRADING:

There will be one overall grade for the practicum that will be based upon the following:

- Site Supervisor feedback throughout the semester
 - Punctuality and faithfulness to schedule
 - Productivity and quality of work
 - Attitude and working up to potential
 - Initiative, resourcefulness and willingness to do work assigned
 - Extra effort beyond assigned tasks
 - Communication and interpersonal skills
- Student journals and summary paper

Grade Breakdown:

- 70% Site Supervisor Assessment
- 30% Practicum Director Assessment (including all journals and papers)
 - 5 Regular Journals = 20%
 - Summary Paper = 10% (Grade will be determined according to content, writing skills and the ability to follow paper guidelines).

Host colleges and universities will be provided a letter grade on each student, and a verification of the amount of student hours spent at the practicum site.

REQUIREMENTS FOR AN INDEPENDENT STUDY:

Schedule: Students desiring to complete an independent study in lieu of professional practicum service must be approved to do so during the week of January 25 by the Director for Professional Practicums. Each student will then be assigned to work with a faculty member who will serve as his or her advisor. Students will meet with their advisor on an as needed basis throughout the semester. Students must submit a 2-3 page outline of their independent study that will serve as a “blueprint” for what they want to accomplish in their study. The due date for this outline will be established by each advisor accordingly. A mid-semester evaluation of the student’s progress will take place during the week of March 1-5. The final product will be due to the advisor on April 19.

Requirements: The nature of the independent study may take any form mutually agreed upon by the student and the advisor. However, the basic expectation is that students will spend approximately 75 hours total on the completion of the study over the course of the semester. While independent studies are unique and take on many forms, it is expected that the final product would be the equivalent of a 25-page double-spaced paper. For a list of possible studies and formats, please see the Practicum Director. Students doing an independent study must also turn in journals and read the required text.

PRACTICUM SCHEDULE:

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| January 25 | Introduction of practicum requirements; meet site supervisors and discuss goals, objectives and job tasks. |
| January 28 | Submit request for Independent study. |
| January 25-
April 22 | Work at practicum site; attend weekly meetings with site supervisor; submit journal entries to Practicum Director. Work on Independent study. |
| February 5
12 and 19 | Practicum Seminar |
| March 1-5 | Mid-Semester Evaluations for both professional practicums and Independent Studies |
| March 19-28 | Spring Break |
| April 19 | Practicum Summary Paper and Independent study due |