

## **SCHOOL OF INDIGENOUS AND CANADIAN STUDIES GUIDELINES FOR PRACTICUMS**

A practicum is a part-time student placement in an on- or off- campus work environment. The practicum student is expected to spend one workday or up to ten (10) hours per week with the host institution. The student earns a half credit (0.5) for successful completion of a one-term placement (CDNS 5801) and 1.0 credit for completion of a two-term placement (CDNS 5800).

The purpose of a practicum is to provide a learning experience of a kind not otherwise available in a standard academic setting. A practicum frequently involves exposure to both theory and practice; i.e. opportunity to consider the application of broader ideas to specific settings. The choice of practicum should be based on a student's research interests. Ideally a practicum will involve the student working on a discrete project related to the core work of the placement workplace that can be completed in 130 hours a term with the guidance of a workplace supervisor.

### **I. ELIGIBILITY**

- a) At the undergraduate level, practicums in Canadian Studies are available only to those students who have declared Canadian Studies as their Major, Combined Major or Minor program.
- b) At the graduate level, practicums in Canadian Studies are available only to full-time students in the Canadian Studies M.A. Program who have completed at least one full term of study. Up to one full credit of practicum experience can be used towards completion of the degree requirements.
- c) Practicum placements are not available to Q-year students.
- d) Practicum credit is not granted for paid employment.

Exceptions to the above restrictions may only be granted by the Graduate or Undergraduate Supervisor in unusual circumstances.

### **II. APPROVAL**

- a) During the term prior to the practicum placement, the student finds a placement on their own or contacts the graduate supervisor for assistance. (The graduate supervisor will consult with the SICS practicum co-ordinator.)
- b) The host institution must provide the student with a place to work in its normal workplace and 70% of the student's hours must be spent in that setting.
- c) The student's work will not involve clerical tasks such as filing, photocopying, transcribing, or answering inquiries except as these tasks are associated with the project(s) assigned to them.
- d) For a practicum to be approved a workplace supervisor in the host institution as well as an academic evaluator from faculty within the School of Indigenous and Canadian Studies must be identified.

- e) The workplace supervisor and the academic evaluator must discuss the placement, including:
- i) Qualifications of the student for the position
  - ii) What work the student will be expected to complete
  - iii) A reporting protocol that includes at least three updates on the student's progress during the course of the practicum, including a written progress report to be submitted to the academic evaluator by the student at the mid-point of the practicum. This reporting protocol should be designed to allow adjustments to the nature and scope of the student's work to be made as circumstances warrant and to give the student feedback to assist them in their work.

The agreement on these issues will be written into the practicum contract for the student placement.

- f) Once a placement is agreed to in principle by the workplace supervisor and the academic evaluator, the Practicum Contract should be filled in by the student and signed off by the workplace supervisor, the academic evaluator, and the Graduate Supervisor of the School of Indigenous and Canadian Studies. The practicum contract will indicate the work hours and day(s) of the week and the work to be completed, including specific deliverables to be produced by the student.
- g) The completed practicum contract must be approved by the Graduate Supervisor **at least two (2) weeks before the last day for changes in registration (four (4) weeks for graduate students).**

### III. WORKPLACE INSURANCE

This course involves participation in an unpaid work placement. Please visit the Risk and Insurance website to review the information on unpaid work placements and to complete the insurance forms required.

<http://carleton.ca/financialservices/risk-management/student-unpaid-placements/studentsregistered-course-unpaid-work-placement-requirement/>

As a registered student you are eligible for insurance coverage. Follow the link and complete both forms:

<http://carleton.ca/financialservices/students-registered-course-unpaid-work-placement-requirement/>

### IV. EVALUATION

a) The evaluation of a practicum is based on assessments of the workplace supervisor and the academic evaluator, with the academic evaluator being responsible for the final mark. The evaluation will be based on the degree to which the work identified in the

practicum contract (or that work as modified by subsequent agreement) was completed and the quality of the work.

b) The following information must also be included in the workplace supervisor's final report to the academic evaluator:

- The nature and quality of the work completed by the student, including the degree to which the student met the workplace supervisor's original expectations
- The strengths and weaknesses of the student's work
- Suggestions for improvement

c) Evaluation by the workplace supervisor will normally include one of the following grades:

- EXCELLENT                      A- to A  
Exceeds Expectations – work is above requirements for in nearly all areas. The student's commitment and proficiency are noteworthy.
- GOOD                              B to B+  
Meets expectations – Work generally meets and sometimes exceeds requirements for the student practicum position. Student should continue her/his efforts to develop professionally.
- UNSATISFACTORY      F to D-  
Below expectations – Work usually does not meet the basic requirements.

In exceptional circumstances the workplace supervisor may suggest a grade of:

- EXTRAORDINARY      A+

d) Student Deliverables to the Academic Evaluator

i) Copies of Work Completed (or equivalent)

The student must submit to the academic evaluator copies of reports and/or links to relevant websites or other resources produced in the course of their work. In cases where workplace confidentiality or proprietary restrictions prevent sharing of such documents, the student will provide a work log describing the documents but omitting the information that cannot be shared by the workplace.

ii) Student Report

The report should be 1700-2000 words in length and include the following parts:

- a) Description of the workplace
- b) Description of the work conducted by the student
  - i) as it was presented at the start of the project

- ii) as it evolved during the project
- c) Catalogue of new skills acquired and/or skills refined
- d) A critical reflection on the student's work experience. Whereas in the practicum the student's work is subject to particular workplace constraints, in this part of their report they are expected to transcend that role and write as an independent critic of their work experience. Appropriate topics to address include the constraints and opportunities (policy, resources) that were in play, the political interplay of various interests (internal and external stakeholders), methodological or interpretive problems encountered, or any other factors identified as significant by the student. The student should relate these issues as appropriate to aspects of theory and practice that have emerged in their program of study as a whole. These elements are more important than the descriptive part of the report.

These criteria may be modified on a case-by-case basis in keeping with the exact nature of particular practicum placements with the approval of the Graduate Supervisor.