



**Carleton**  
UNIVERSITY



Department of  
**Geography &  
Environmental Studies**

## Practicum in Geography, Geomatics & Environmental Studies Sponsor Infopack 2022-2023

Thank you for considering participating as a student sponsor in our Practicum program in Geography, Geomatics or Environmental Studies. This document summarises the scope of the practica courses for geography, environmental studies, and geomatics. With the prospects of a return to more normal circumstances, our fourth-year students will again be looking for placements in their various fields of professional interest. For many of these students, this will be their first foray into the professional world.

Our sponsors are vital partners in our practicum program as they provide our students with their first, real-world professional experience and guidance. We thank you for considering taking on such a role.

If you require further information or assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the practicum coordinator or administrator. They are:

Dr. Paul Williams, Practicum Coordinator  
A239 Loeb Building  
Phone: (613) 520-2600 x6290  
Fax: (613) 520-4301  
E-mail: [PaulWilliams@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:PaulWilliams@cunet.carleton.ca)

Karen Tucker, Practicum Administrator  
B349 Loeb Building  
Phone: (613) 520-2600 x8127  
Fax: (613) 520-4301  
E-mail: [karentucker@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:karentucker@cunet.carleton.ca)

We look forward to your possible participation in our Program!

## Overview of the 'Practicum in Geography, Geomatics & Environmental Studies'

The Department of Geography & Environmental Studies has been offering a Practicum in Geography, Geomatics and Environmental Studies course for more than 30 years. This successful program gives students an opportunity to apply their geographical, geomatics and environmental knowledge and skills to finding solutions to problems in a real work environment. Students are placed at a sponsoring agency, company, or NGO, *without remuneration*, during one academic term (usually 1 day a week for 10 weeks) and work or assist on a project of mutual interest.

The main goal of the practicum is to demonstrate the applicability of geographical education to real work world experiences and problems. This will instil confidence in our students that their education is marketable in both private and public enterprise. We hope that you will consider sponsoring and supervising a student and we are assured that we can find a student who has the skill sets that meets your requirements. Our students are looking to advance their geographical education by working on career-oriented projects for one day a week over a ten-week work term. The project should be performed 'on site' and should require approximately seven hours a week. The final weeks of the term should be set aside for report writing, evaluation and review. As the students are offered academic credit for this course there will be no financial/ monetary commitments involved with sponsoring the project in your office.

Students meet with sponsors prior to commencing the Practicum to review the details of the project/work and to set out a work schedule. These arrangements are made by the sponsor and student. Sponsors from private industry and government agencies have participated in the program and have greatly benefited from the fresh ideas and knowledge brought to the job by our students. Our students have a broad range of backgrounds and interests, encompassing the many fields within geography, including Geomatics, Cartography, Remote Sensing, Social Geography, Urban Studies, Economic Geography, Physical Geography and Environmental Management, Geotechnical Science, Historical Geography, Rural and Resource Development, and Cultural and Political Geography. All that we ask is that you share your interest and enthusiasm with that of the student, so that a rewarding experience is had by all. Of course, a few technical details must be addressed, and these are summarized below.

### *Sponsor Responsibility*

Your participation requires a few basic steps to ensure a successful Practicum for everyone involved. Please review the following points before making your commitment.

*Information:* A sponsor data sheet should be completed by the sponsor and returned to the Practicum coordinator prior to the start of the Practicum. The sheet contains sponsor contact information and a brief statement of the work project that the student(s) will be performing. This sheet will be presented to the appropriate student, who will then arrange to meet with you to discuss the project. In all cases, the student must obtain project approval from the course coordinator prior to the work project being undertaken. This is provided at the end of this document for your use.

*Project:* The Practicum should consist of a clear and focused project that is agreed to by both the sponsor and the student. This project should have a geographical, geomatics or environmental theme to it and be challenging. Research projects, teaching, GIS analysis, cartography, remote sensing, environmental impact assessment, planning, tourism, geotechnical, cultural, historical or other themes are suggested work project ideas. Projects that only focus on repetitive or tedious tasks (such as only digitizing a map, or office duties etc.) are discouraged.

*Supervision:* Engagement is an important part of this experience. A sponsor should meet regularly with the student. This is to ensure that the student is completely aware of what is required, that the sponsor can monitor progress, and that any issues can be dealt with quickly. Potential conflicts, if any, should be resolved early on. The sponsor should be available, during the work term, to resolve any problems or questions that may arise. Most students take pride in working independently and require minimal supervision. However, in the real world, oversight by a supervisor is inevitable and such oversight is encouraged.

*Workspace:* Similarly, a workplace experience is important. All our students have experience working on assignments at home. However, even as we moved towards a hybrid work environment, a workplace experience is a desire component of the placement experience. Different sponsors and sponsoring institutions or organisations have their own limitations and this, too, is part of the experience for students. However, it is hoped that even for placements where a 'permanent' workplace space is not possible, the students will be included in meetings and other in-workplace activities, so they gain that vital workplace experience.

*Timeframe:* The student is required to work 70 hours during the school term. This is usually organised as one day a week for 10 weeks. If mutually agreeable, if schedules permit, and depending upon the nature of the project itself, the student may complete the 70 hours in a shorter period of time (e.g., every day for two consecutive weeks). The students generally register in the practicum for one academic term (Fall - September to December; or Winter - January to April), but are also permitted to take the course for two consecutive terms, to enable them to obtain more complete exposure to and experience in the workplace. We do ask that the sponsors keep in mind that the students are taking a full course load and so this means that they are taking another four courses.

*Insurance:* The university is responsible for claims management if any accidents should occur involving students registered in the Practicum while they are off campus at a sponsor's workplace. Students are covered by Workplace Safety and Insurance Board insurance or private insurance. Information forms must be completed by the student and the sponsor and returned to the Practicum coordinator PRIOR to the start of the Practicum.

*Assessment:* At the end of the Practicum, the sponsor will be required to fill out two short forms to assess the performance of the student. We ask that these be returned by the last day of classes, the date of which is indicated on the forms. The students are required to submit to the Practicum coordinator a report on their Practicum project and give a 5-minute oral/poster presentation describing their Practicum experience to their peers and to the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies faculty. upon finalisation of course grades, the students will receive your appraisals. We want to emphasise that these appraisals

are very important insofar as they provide the majority of the students with their first, professional evaluation.

*Help:* If you require further information or assistance, or if you have suggestions on ways to improve these courses, please do not hesitate to contact the course coordinator and/or administrator. They are:

Dr. Paul Williams, Practicum Coordinator  
A239 Loeb Building  
Phone: (613) 520-2600 x6290  
Fax: (613) 520-4301  
E-mail: [PaulWilliams@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:PaulWilliams@cunet.carleton.ca)

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Web: [www.carleton.ca/geography/practicum](http://www.carleton.ca/geography/practicum)

We thank you for your interest in our practicum program and look forward to your participation.

**PRACTICUM IN GEOGRAPHY - GEOMATICS - ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES**

**SPONSOR DATA FORM - CARLETON UNIVERSITY**

*Thank you for your interest and participation in our Geography, Geomatics and Environmental Studies Practicum. Please fill in this form (thanks for printing legibly or attach a business card!) and return it via e-mail to: Dr. Paul Williams, Practicum Coordinator, [PaulWilliams@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:PaulWilliams@cunet.carleton.ca).*

Yes, I would like to sponsor a Geography student(s) for one day a week for ten weeks between September 2021 - December 2021 \_\_\_\_ and/or January 2022 - April 2022 \_\_\_\_ (check one or both). I have a project of a geographical nature which will provide the student with useful experience and enhance their education.

**I UNDERSTAND THAT MY PARTICIPATION INVOLVES SOME SUPERVISION AND GUIDANCE OF THE STUDENT(S) IF NECESSARY, AND A FINAL EVALUATION WITH A LETTER GRADE FOR THE STUDENT'S PERFORMANCE. I AM ALSO IN RECEIPT OF AND HAVE READ THE 'OVERVIEW OF THE PRACTICUM IN GEOGRAPHY' DOCUMENT, WHICH DETAILS MY RESPONSIBILITIES AS A PRACTICUM STUDENT SPONSOR.**

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TITLE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PHONE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-MAIL:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ORGANIZATION:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**NUMBER OF STUDENTS REQUIRED:** \_\_\_\_\_

**STUDENT NAME (IF KNOWN):** \_\_\_\_\_

**SHORT STATEMENT OF PROJECT(S) TO BE UNDERTAKEN:**

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