A practicum is a part-time student placement in a work environment related to the student’s field of study. Through practicums the School engages with the community and provides its students with experiential learning experiences that complement their scholarly engagement and enrich their education.

The practicum student is expected to spend 130 hours a term (the equivalent of an average of 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 a full credit (1.0) 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. 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.

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.
e) Practicums should not be at the student’s current or former place of employment

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

II. PLANNING A PRACTICUM

a) Practicum planning should be completed during the academic term preceding the placement.
b) Students may find placements on their own or in consultation with the School’s practicum advisor.
c) For a practicum to be approved the student must secure the cooperation of a workplace supervisor in the host institution and an academic evaluator in the School of Indigenous and Canadian Studies.
d) The host institution must provide the student with a place to work in its normal workplace. Normally 70% of the student’s hours must be spent in that setting (exceptions may be considered upon request when circumstances warrant).
e) The student’s work should 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.
f) The workplace supervisor and the academic evaluator must discuss the placement, including:
   i) Matching the work to be assigned with the student’s skills
   ii) Availability of resources to complete the work
   iii) Availability of supervision for the student’s work
   iv) A reporting protocol that includes updates on the student’s progress during the course of the practicum, including a one-page written progress report to be submitted to the academic evaluator by the student in the fourth week 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.
g) Once a placement is agreed to in principle by the student, 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.
h) 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.

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) In addition to noting the student’s strengths, the workplace supervisor is encouraged to provide constructive criticism about areas where the student could improve their workplace skills.

See the Practicum Workplace Supervisor Performance Review Form to complete the evaluation.

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.
- **GOOD** B to B+
  - Meets expectations – Work generally meets and sometimes exceeds requirements for the student practicum position.
- **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 1000-1500 words in length and may 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 (e.g. 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.

The above criteria may be modified on a case-by-case basis in keeping with the exact nature of particular practicum placements. For example, the student may, subject to the permission of the academic evaluator, substitute for a written report an oral presentation with appropriate supporting graphics and illustrations or another form of summative deliverable of a nature agreed upon by the academic evaluator and the student. Such alterations in the criteria should be approved by the Graduate Supervisor.