Practicum

HE685

Semester: Fall 2020
Days: Field Experience and Online
Time: N/A
Room: N/A
Instructor: P. Daniel Chen, Ph.D.
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Office Hours: By appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION & EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

The purpose of the practicum course is to provide you with a supervised on-the-job experience in an approved college or university setting or an organization or agency involved in higher education. The practicum will provide you with the opportunity to develop skills applicable to college-based teaching or higher education administration or policy. At the end of this semester, I expect students will be able to:

1. Identify the concepts behind supervised practice
2. Recognize the dynamics of a higher education institution or organization's goals and mission
3. Communicate clearly and effectively with supervisor, coworkers, clients, and stakeholders
4. Recognize cultural dynamics of the workplace
5. Respect and promote diversity
6. Work well with a team of diverse individuals
7. Accept feedback and engage in new learning
8. Explain how higher education theories relate to practice
9. Contribute to an ethical and professional environment
10. Recognize ethical dilemmas
11. Add positively to the work of the organization
12. Effectively reflect on your practicum experiences and connect your learning to your coursework in the Higher Education Program
13. Accomplish other learning outcomes specified in the practicum proposal

COURSE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

By signing up this course, you agree to observe the following course policies and procedures:

1. **Blackboard:** Mason uses Blackboard as its learning management platform. Blackboard can be accessed from your computer browser by visiting https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu

2. **Attendance:** You should report to your practicum site supervisor at the beginning of the semester or at a date you and your practicum site supervisor have previously agreed. You are required to complete a minimum of 150 hours of practicum experiences. You are also required to meet regularly with your practicum site supervisor.

3. **Written Assignments:** Written assignments for the Practicum course will involve both informal reflection and academic writing. Your final portfolio will require both informal weekly journal reflections as well as a final paper to be written in a reflective, yet scholarly, voice. More information regarding portfolio requirements is provided below.

4. **Assignment submission:** Unless otherwise instructed, all assignments must be submitted electronically through Blackboard. All assignments must be submitted to Blackboard by **11:59 p.m. on the due day** to avoid late penalty. Assignments submitted late will be reduced **1/10 of the assignment grade**. Assignments submitted after **11:59 p.m. on December 16, 2020**, will not receive a grade.

5. **Writing Style:** All written work submitted in this course must conform to the American Psychological Association (APA) publication standards unless otherwise directed by the instructor. Students are expected to purchase the APA Publication Manual (7th edition) and consistently demonstrate successful application of its content. Assignments that are not conformed to APA style will have a lower grade. Mason's Writing Center has a page on APA style, which can be accessed through https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/guides/apa-style-quick-guide

6. **About grading:** An "A" paper or project is excellent--very strong in every sense. It represents a very solid job in addressing all aspects of the assignment, shows complex thinking and insight, reflects graduate-level writing (including introductory and concluding comments and appropriate transitions linking various sections), and is free of errors (e.g., APA, grammar, spelling, syntax, logic, organization, clarity, style). A "B" paper or project is good. It has some weaknesses in one of more of these areas but captures the essential elements of the assignment. Lower grades (i.e. C, D, and F) are assigned to papers and projects with more significant weaknesses in the areas noted above and do not reflect the quality expected in graduate-level studies. For this course, an "A" paper or project will receive 90%-100% of the total points for that paper or project. A "B" paper or project will receive 80%-90% of the total points. A "C", "D", and "F" paper or project will receive 70%-80%, 60%-70%, and 0%-60% of the total points respectively.

7. **About incomplete:** Incompletes are not given except for major emergencies late in the term and only after consultation and mutual agreement upon a contract specifying when the work will be completed. Incompletes will not be granted simply because more time is desired to complete the assignments or one wishes to complete the course during a subsequent semester.

8. **COVID-19:** If COVID-19-related reasons cause you not able to complete your practicum assignments or required practicum hours, please contact me as soon as you are aware of the

problem. I will do my best to help you and provide the flexibility I am allowed to provide. If you encounter any COVID-19 related issues, please do not wait until the end of the semester to inform me.

MY TEACHING PHILOSOPHY AND EXPECTATIONS

1. I believe class is a learning community. As a community member, learners are expected to actively participate in class activities, behave civilly and ethically toward each other, challenge each other intellectually, and support each other when necessary.
2. I believe my responsibility as a teacher is to inspire learners, share knowledge and experiences, and facilitate learning habits. As a teacher, I strive to be a role model of good learning habits as I work hard to advance my knowledge through reading, conducting research, exchanging and sharing knowledge and ideas with others in the profession, and reflecting and writing.
3. I expect learners in my class to evaluate the validity and reliability of information, remember key facts, analyze and synthesize facts and information, integrate the knowledge and reflect on their own experiences, and apply the knowledge in real life situations through research and practice.
4. I believe learning objectives and expected outcomes must be clearly communicated to learners in the beginning of the semester. All class activities, readings, assignments, assessments, and grading standards must be directly tied to the learning objectives.
5. As future higher education leaders, my students are expected to show professionalism and ethical behaviors in all class-related activities.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The Higher Education Program seeks to create a learning environment that fosters respect for people across identities. We welcome and value individuals and their differences, including, but are not limited to, gender expression and identity, race, economic status, sex, sexuality, ethnicity, national origin, first language, religion, age, and ability. We encourage all members of the learning environment to engage with the material personally, but to also be open to exploring and learning from experiences different than their own.

GENDER IDENTITY AND PRONOUN USE

If you wish, please share your name and gender pronouns with me and how best to address you in class and via email. I use he/his/him for myself and you may address me as "Dr. Chen", "Prof. Chen" or "Daniel" in email and verbally.

PRIVACY

Student privacy is governed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and is an essential aspect of any course. Students must use their MasonLive email account to receive important university information, including communications related to this class. I may not respond to messages sent from or send messages to a non-Mason email address.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. Mason has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct. Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving the person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. Paraphrased material must also be cited using APA format. A simple listing of books or articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in the academic setting. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me.

SHARING CLASS MATERIALS

Sharing of instructor-created materials, particularly materials relevant to assignments or exams, to public online "study" sites is considered a violation of Mason's Honor Code: these include accessing exam or quiz questions for this class; accessing exam, quiz, or assignment answers for this class; uploading of any of the instructor's materials or exams; and uploading any of your own answers or finished work. For more information, see the Office of Academic Integrity's [summary of information about online study sites](#).

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATIONS AND PROCEDURES

George Mason University uses a system called Mason Alert (https://ready.gmu.edu/masonalert/) to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Blackboard for contingency plans for covering course materials.

OBSERVATION OF RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS

It is Mason's policy to encourage its faculty to make a reasonable effort to allow students to observe their religious holidays or to participate in university-sponsored activities without academic penalty. In the case of the Practicum, students may schedule their own Practicum hours and may work around religious holidays or university-sponsored activities.

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION

Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students by upholding the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. If you are seeking accommodations for this class, please first visit http://ds.gmu.edu/ for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Then please discuss your approved accommodations with me. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: ods@gmu.edu, Phone: (703) 993-2474

Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, and Interpersonal Violence

As a faculty member and designated "Responsible Employee," I am required to report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per university policy 1412. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact the Student Support and Advocacy Center (703-380-1434) or Counseling and Psychological Services (703-993-2380). You may also seek assistance from Mason's Title IX Coordinator (703-993-8730; titleix@gmu.edu).

Learning Tasks, Due Dates, & Grading

Task	Due Date	Points
Pre- and Post-Practicum Self-Assessment: You are required to complete a pre- and post-assessment to assess your level of ability in each of the ten competency areas outlined by ACPA: College Student Educators International and NASPA: Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education. A detailed explanation of the competency areas, rubrics that you can use to assess your level of ability, and a template that you can use for your self-assessment are posted in the "Course Content" section of Blackboard. If you feel that a particular competency area does not apply to your Practicum setting, please make a note of that in your self-assessment. Please upload your pre-assessment to Blackboard **and** post it in your portfolio as well. You do not need to upload your post-assessment to Blackboard; you only need to post it in your portfolio along with the pre-assessment.	Pre: 9/6 Post: 12/13	30
Weekly Journal: The purpose of the weekly journal is to help you reflect on and learn from your practicum experiences. Your journal should be written in a narrative form (APA Style is NOT required) and document learning experiences as well as reflections and goals for problem situations. Sample questions to reflect upon include, but are not limited to the following: • What are you learning about your site/work area/yourself? • What has surprised you? • What challenges are you experiencing? • What might you do differently in the future? • What links are you making to your Practicum experience and your Higher Education coursework? • How are your experiences guiding your professional journey? Please post your weekly journal by **Sunday night 11:59 pm** on Blackboard Discussion Board. Your weekly journal can be viewed by your fellow practicum students, so please do not post any private or sensitive information. If you have any concerns regarding your practicum site, your site supervisor, or colleagues, please contact me directly.	By Sunday 11:59 pm	10 each week; 150 total
Weekly Log: Please document your practicum hours including brief descriptions of how you spent your time. Your weekly log should be submitted to your portfolio website by each due date.	9/29 10/18 11/15 12/13	2 each week; 30 total
Mid-Term Evaluation Meeting: I will visit your practicum site around the middle of the semester. (*Due to COVID-19, I may conduct a virtual visit instead of physically visiting your practicum site.*) During this visit, I will meet with both you and your supervisor to discuss your progress and explain the site supervisor evaluation process. Each site visit will be scheduled at the convenience of all parties. Students are responsible for scheduling the site visit. More details will be provided to you through Blackboard.	Vary	50

Practicum Portfolio: At the conclusion of your Practicum you are responsible for producing a digital portfolio that captures your experience. The portfolio must include the following, at a minimum: • Your approved practicum proposal and evaluation rubric • Pre- and post-assessment of ACPA/NASPA professional competencies • Weekly journal • Weekly log • Materials developed as part of the Practicum experience including, but not limited to: syllabi, tests, reports, or policy memos; additional evidence of meeting learning objectives, such as video of classroom interactions, web sites, PowerPoints, overheads, sample tests, readings, or other materials • Reflection Paper: A 5-10 page (double-spaced) paper reflecting on how this experiential learning opportunity has helped develop awareness of issues in higher education and how your thinking about higher education has evolved throughout your Practicum experience. References to higher education literature and coursework are required. Additionally, this paper should follow guidelines outlined above under the "Course Policies and Procedures" section and be written in a scholarly voice. APA Style is required for this assignment. • Written Site Supervisor evaluation using the evaluation rubric that you included with your original practicum proposal Portfolios should be presented online, in a format that is easy to navigate. Portfolios should not be submitted as a single Word or PDF document. A sample electronic portfolio from students who completed a Practicum previously will be posted on Blackboard in the "Course Content" folder. Please note these portfolios are only examples; feel free to be creative and organize your portfolio in a way that reflects you and your Practicum experience. Below are a few suggestions of platforms that you can use to assemble the various components of your portfolio, although you are welcome to choose a platform not listed here. (Note: Some platforms offer password protection. It is acceptable to use a password or other permission setting, but it is your responsibility to ensure that I have access to all portfolio elements at the time of submission.) • Google Sites (if using Google, please make sure files are accessible to non-Gmail users) • Wix.com • OnMason.com • Blackboard: mymasonportal.gmu.edu • Wordpress.com • Livebinders.com • Weebly.com You will be required to submit components of your final portfolio throughout the semester. Assignments submitted throughout the semester will be graded based on effort and completion, meaning if you submit a completed component on time you will receive full points. If you do not submit a component on time, or if it is incomplete, you will receive zero points for that assignment. All assignments must be thorough, high-quality, written at a graduate level and must fully address stated requirements outlined above. The following criteria will be used to assess your final portfolio: • Content	Components are due on 9/29 10/18 11/15 Final portfolio is due on 12/13	100

- Portfolio must include ALL components outlined above and comply with format guidelines. - Portfolio must demonstrate what you have accomplished in your Practicum in relation to the learning outcomes you outlined in your proposal. - Demonstration of learning must be supported with concrete examples or explanations, as well as appropriate linkages to higher education literature and coursework. - You must detail your role in creation of materials submitted as described in the portfolio guidelines above. For example, rather than simply including a PowerPoint presentation from a workshop, explain your contributions presentation. - All written materials must be presented in a scholarly manner (e.g., formatted appropriately, no spelling or grammatical errors, written in APA Style). • Organization - Materials should be organized in a logical fashion, as described above. - Materials must be easily accessible on an online website. • Appearance - Website should be neat and professional in appearance.		
Site Supervisor Evaluation: Your mentor/site supervisor must complete a written evaluation of your performance. This evaluation is to be included as part of your Practicum portfolio. Specific criteria for evaluation by the mentor are agreed upon at the time of the Practicum proposal submission. I will also be reaching out to your mentor/site supervisor at the beginning of the semester to introduce myself, remind them of expectations for your Practicum experience and make myself available to them if they have any questions or concerns throughout the semester. Upon the completion of your Practicum, your practicum site supervisor must submit an evaluation that indicates you met or exceeded all expectations outlined on your evaluation rubric in order for you to receive full points for your Practicum experience.	12/13	100

GRADING MATRIX

Task	Points
Pre- and Post-Practicum Self-Assessment	30
Weekly Journal	150
Weekly Log	30
Mid-Term Evaluation Meeting	50
Practicum Portfolio	100
Site Supervisor Evaluation	100
Total	460460

Final Grade	
A+	445 points or above
A	420-444 points
A-	410-419 points
B+	400-409 points
B	375-399 points
B-	365-374 points
C	320-364 points
F	Below 320 points

COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Assignments Due
September 6	- Read the report posted on Blackboard describing the ACPA/NASPA professional competency areas for student affairs practitioners - Using the report and rubrics designed by ACPA/NASPA, assess your level of ability in each of the competency areas and make notes/reflections on each competency. A template that you can use for

	your pre-assessment is also available on Blackboard. Upload completed pre-assessment to Blackboard in appropriate folder under "assignments" tab
	• Upload a copy of your approved Practicum proposal to Blackboard in appropriate folder under "assignments" tab
September 29	• Create your portfolio website and organize/upload the required components that you have at this point
	• Post weekly journal entries to your portfolio website for practicum hours completed up until this point (You can copy and paste your weekly journal entries from Blackboard Discussion Board to your portfolio site.)
	• Document weekly log of hours on your portfolio website including brief descriptions of how you spent your time
	• E-mail me the link to your portfolio which includes the above information. Please include your password if your portfolio is password-protected.
October 18	• Schedule a 30-minute mid-term evaluation meeting for me, you, and your practicum site supervisor.
	• Continue to organize/upload the required components to your portfolio website that you have at this point
	• Post weekly journal entries to your portfolio website for practicum hours completed up until this point
	• Document weekly log of hours including brief descriptions of how you spent your time
	• E-mail me the link to your portfolio which includes the above information. Please include your password if your portfolio is password-protected.
November 15	• Continue to organize/upload the required components to your portfolio website that you have at this point
	• Post weekly journal entries to your portfolio website for practicum hours completed up until this point
	• Document weekly log of hours including brief descriptions of how you spent your time
	• E-mail me the link to your portfolio which includes the above information. Please include your password if your portfolio is password-protected.
December 13	• Make sure your practicum site supervisor complete your final evaluation and send it to me through email.
	• Compile final portfolio and ensure all items in the list of required portfolio components (see section above) are included
	• Complete post-assessment of ACPA/NASPA professional competency areas for student affairs practitioners and post to your portfolio
	• E-mail me the link to your portfolio which includes the above information. Please include your password if your portfolio is password-protected.