Practicum Expectations

Student
Cooperating Teacher
University Supervisor
EXPECTATIONS FOR PRACTICUM STUDENTS

Practicum field experiences at William Paterson University provide a foundation for the senior teaching internship.

**What Practicum Students Should Know and Understand**

- Behavioral characteristics of children in various educational settings
- Individual differences among and between students coming from diverse backgrounds
- Family, social, and cultural contexts that affect student behaviors
- The importance of social interaction and student collaboration in the classroom
- Economic, political, technological, and socio-cultural issues influencing education today
- School and classroom routines and the schools' social and cultural climate
- How concepts, skills and values are taught through the curriculum
- The short and long-term planning process for various content areas (i.e., how objectives fit into the schools' curriculum objectives)
- The importance of using varied and effective instructional techniques that promote higher-level thinking skills
- Assessment procedures regarding student learning outcomes (formative, summative etc.)
- Legal and ethical responsibilities as a teacher
- The relationship between your grade level or content-area(s) and the school’s curricular goals/philosophy

*NOTE:

1. Students must adhere to all University policies.
2. Students must have insurance as required by the University and complete the Office of Field Experience Emergency Information Form.
3. A Substitute license and current Mantoux are required to begin Practicum.
4. The State of New Jersey does not certify anyone with a criminal record.
EXPECTEDATIONS FOR PRACTICUM STUDENTS (continued)

What Practicum Students Should Do

- Observe, assist, plan and gradually implement lessons and units, where appropriate, using the co-planning and co-teaching strategies along with varied materials, technologies, and instructional formats.

- Assist with classroom routines (e.g., attendance, bulletin board designs, grading classwork and homework, and grade books).

- Assist with classroom instructions (e.g., one-to-one, small group, large group) to promote learning, social interaction, and student collaboration.

- Demonstrate professional teacher behavior, appropriate appearance, positive attitude, and commitment (e.g., respect for students, punctuality, appropriate relationship between student and teacher, willingness to accept and act on constructive feedback).

- Demonstrate positive and nurturing attitude working with children and young adults.

- Maintain and promote high expectations for self and students.

- Observe, reflect upon, and gradually implement appropriate techniques for classroom management.

- Use good judgment in handling classroom emergencies or problematic student interactions.

- Participate as a member of a team both within and external to the classroom (e.g., faculty meetings, Child Study Team meetings, professional development workshops, grade-level meetings, parent conferences).

- Assess student's progress on a short and long-term basis.

- Visit another teacher who is teaching the same or a similar area, if possible.

A university supervisor will visit at least twice during the semester to observe and talk with the student. (See specific program requirements within departments.) The supervisor will discuss the students' progress with the cooperating teacher. Both the university supervisor and the cooperating teacher must submit a final report (see pages 25 & 26) about the extent to which the student has fulfilled practicum expectations.

The aforementioned information is a guide for the student, cooperating teacher, and university supervisor. The university supervisor may not necessarily observe all of these behaviors.
VARIATIONS ACCORDING TO PROGRAM

Practicum experiences differ according to the program in which students are enrolled. Admission to each practicum requires completion of a certain number of university credits which include specific prerequisite courses, acceptance into the program, and a specific grade point average.

Practicum is required in the following areas:

**Early Childhood Education (P-3)**

A one-day per week experience CIEC 2000  
One two-day per week experience, with two full weeks at the end of the semester CIEC 3000

**Elementary Education (K-6)**

One two-day per week experience, with two full weeks at the end of the semester CEE 3010  
A one-day per week experience for one semester CIEE 5170

**K-6 and K-12 with Teacher of Students with Disabilities**

A one-day per week experience for SPC 3550  
and  
K-6 - Practicum B - One two-day per week experience, with two full weeks at the end of the semester CIEE 3010  
K-12 – Practicum B - One two-day per week experience CISE 3520

A one-day per week experience for SPC 5750

**Subject Field (K-12)**

One two-day per week experience CISE 3520  
A one-day per week experience for one semester CISE 5300

**Music (K-12)**

A one-day per week experience for each of two semesters MUSI 3290 and MUSI 4290

**Physical Education (K-12)**

A one-day per week experience for each of two semesters PETC 3970 and PETC 3980

Reminder:  Students are expected to have at least one urban and one experience during their practicum and/or student teaching experience.
THE PRACTICUM STUDENT'S CHECKLIST

As a practicum student, you are both a discoverer and a learner. You are discovering whether or not you like teaching, and you are learning some things about public schools you may not have realized before. Here is a checklist of suggestions to assist you during your practicum experience.

PRIOR TO PRACTICUM

___ Read this entire booklet, including parts labeled for the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor.

___ Evaluate your personal appearance -- is it in accordance with the standards for teachers in the school and community? If you are not sure, dress conservatively.

___ Review what you know about child or adolescent psychology.

___ Get to know your university supervisor.

___ Locate the school assigned and determine commuting time.

___ Contact your school and teacher. Identify the time you are expected to arrive and the procedures to be followed on arrival.

THE FIRST DAY

___ Arrive at the school early, reporting first to the school office. Tell the secretary who you are and ask for your assignment.

___ Introduce yourself to the cooperating teacher, giving him or her a copy of this Handbook.

___ Introduce yourself to the school principal and other staff members.

___ Observe the students in your assigned class and begin to learn their names.

DURING THE FIELD EXPERIENCE

___ Engage in co-planning and co-teaching with your cooperating teacher. Use the Co-teaching guide, found in this handbook.

___ Prepare for teaching assignments with a written plan.

___ Attend regularly. (You are expected to be regular in attendance except when prevented by illness or other unavoidable circumstances. You are allowed one unavoidable absence).
Additional absences must be made up by arrangement with the Office of Field Experiences, the cooperating teacher, and the university supervisor.

Notify both the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor of absences or delays in getting to school.

Dress and groom yourself in accordance with the standards of the school.

Arrive early and stay until the teacher's departing time.

Use tact and courtesy in dealing with teachers, administrators, secretaries, and custodians

Observe the cooperating teacher to learn new ideas.

Keep a Contextual Factors Journal. (Refer to Appendix T of the Practicum Handbook).

Carry out tasks assigned by the cooperating teacher.

Relate this experience to methods classes and vice versa.

If something goes wrong, ask the cooperating teacher and/or university supervisor for help or advice without delay.

If you tend to disagree with school policy or the teacher, obtain information before drawing conclusions.

Follow the cooperating school's calendar. However, practicum students will observe WPU's spring vacation and need not attend practicum that week.

EVALUATION

Seek and accept constructive criticism and suggestions.

Reflect on your own behavior to improve your performance.

Ask the cooperating teacher for a detailed conference and evaluation at the end of the semester.

Complete the Student Evaluation of the Practicum Experience form at the end of the semester, and return it to the Office of Field Experiences.

Ask yourself, "Do I really want to become a teacher?"

AT THE CONCLUSION

Return any materials/books that belong to the cooperating teacher or the school.

Ask your cooperating teacher if he/she can recommend you when you begin to develop your portfolio and resume.

Submit all required reports by the final seminar meeting.
YOU AND THE LAW

1. **SCHOOL STRIKES** -- Since a school experiencing a teacher strike is not considered an optimum learning center for a field experience, contact your supervisor immediately to arrange to withdraw from the school during the period of the strike. Call the Office of Field Experiences at the university for an appropriate interim assignment.

2. **TUBERCULOSIS REGULATION** -- The State of New Jersey requires that all personnel working in a public school must be tested for tuberculosis. Make sure that you have provided the Office of Field Experiences with the appropriate documentation about the results of your Mantoux test.

3. **LIABILITY RULES** -- Two of these are of greatest concern:
   
   1) Report any accidents which may happen to you or to the pupils on school property to the school authorities.
   2) Don’t drive public school pupils to or from school, or on field trips, in your car. You may not be properly insured.

4. By law, all public school districts must have in place various policies, regulations and procedures regarding legal concerns. It is incumbent upon the students to become aware of these issues and how you are to handle each. Included are such issues as:

   - Assualts
   - Beeppers
   - Bias Incidents/Hate Crimes
   - Child abuse and Neglect
   - Sexual Abuse
   - Civil Liability
   - Confidentiality: Disclosure of Juvenile Records
   - Illegal Substances
   - Student Under the Influence
   - School Searches
   - Teachers as Victims
   - Trespassers/Stalkers
   - Weapons
THE COOPERATING TEACHER’S CHECKLIST

The practicum field experience at William Paterson University is intended to be a learning situation for the university student based on involvement in a series of graduated tasks. It should begin with observation, continue to serve as a teacher’s assistant, and conclude with some teaching.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR THE UNIVERSITY STUDENT

____ Assist with technology.
____ Give individual help to students.
____ Help with classroom chores.
____ Assist with field trips.
____ Help to set up displays, exhibits, bulletin boards.
____ Teach small groups.
____ Teach class lessons.
____ Volunteer to assist in any endeavor that will enhance your professional growth.

EVALUATION

____ As with your own pupils, allow for different rates of development among practicum students. Don’t assume that the university student has had all the educational methodology courses or that all students will show equal readiness. Some students have had experiences working with children before and others haven’t.

____ Remember that with some practicum students you will need to build self-confidence. With others you will need to speak firmly and frankly when they show poor judgment.

____ Recognize that this may be the university student’s first try at a responsible, professional and demanding job.

____ Keep the student informed regularly of his or her progress.

____ Talk at length and frankly with the university supervisor concerning strengths and weaknesses of the practicum student.

____ Contact the university supervisor or the Office of Field Experiences (720-3132) if there is a serious difficulty.

____ At the end of the student’s experience, fill out the Cooperating Teacher’s Practicum Report, review it with the student, and mail it to the Office of Field Experiences.
THE UNIVERSITY SUPERVISOR'S CHECKLIST

The practicum field experience continues to grow in importance in teacher education programs in order to:

1. Give the student first-hand experience with children and youth, and with the operation of the public schools.

2. Enable the student, at the end of the practicum, to analyze self-behavior and the nature of teaching, in order to make a wise career decision.

3. Enable the university to advise students about continuing in the education preparation program, based on oral and written reports.

THE UNIVERSITY SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES

University Supervisors should:

_____ Visit the school or center.
_____ Observe students teaching at least two lessons.
_____ Conduct post-observation conferences with the student (and cooperating teacher if possible).
_____ Communicate regularly with the cooperating teacher (and principal, department head, or supervisor as needed).
_____ Mentor practicum students, and read journals.
_____ Make additional visits as necessary.
_____ Conduct seminars, or act as a liaison with the seminar instructor, where applicable.

EVALUATION AND REPORTING

_____ Encourage the student to discuss any problems directly with the cooperating teacher. Give the student your home phone number and/or office number so that he or she may contact you when necessary. The emphasis should be placed on your potential helpfulness rather than your duty to give a grade.

_____ Document strengths, weaknesses and concerns in writing, being very specific.

_____ If a student is likely to fail the experience, has been absent more than once, or needs additional counseling, report this to the Office of Field Experiences immediately.

_____ Submit your final report to the Office of Field Experiences within one week after the practicum ends. Read the cooperating teacher's report and/or talk in detail with the cooperating teacher first.

_____ A complete, honest, and full report will assist the student and the university in decisions about the future. Your practicum report does not become a part of the student's permanent file. Its main purpose is to guide the student and alert the university about serious problems.