To our colleagues and students:

This Practicum manual has been prepared to assist our students and Agency Supervisors in understanding the requirements for Practicum in Community and Therapeutic Recreation (CTR) at the University of North Carolina Greensboro. The Practicum serves as an integral part of each student’s total educational preparation for professional practice, augmenting the content and objectives of the classroom.

The distinctive contribution of the Practicum is in the opportunity afforded the student in developing professional behavior and in applying theory to practice in accord with their growing professional knowledge. The Practicum is that phase of professional preparation which enables students to assume leadership in a variety of settings and programs, to progress to supervisory responsibilities, and to gain "hands on" professional experience under the supervision of experienced Agency Supervisors.

We view the Practicum as a commitment to your future -- an opportunity for aspiring CTR professionals to gain valuable experiences under the supervision of seasoned professionals. Many thanks are due to those colleagues in the field who have and continue to contribute to our Practicum program through their ongoing engagement, input, and critical evaluation.

Yours truly,

CTR Faculty
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Introduction

One of the most difficult, and yet most important adjustments for the graduating senior from a recreation and parks curriculum is the application of the academic knowledge attained to professional work situations. The Practicum in Community and Therapeutic Recreation is designed to provide students with an opportunity for practical application of theory in professional work prior to graduation.

Definitions

Practicum: Directed field experience in a recreation and parks agency under supervision of a University Supervisor and an Agency Supervisor.

Community Recreation and Event Planning students, in a 6-week (minimum) program, are assigned on an individualized basis to approved public, private, and commercial agencies for a minimum of 120 clock hours. CREP students will complete a 6-week (minimum), 120 hour Practicum in an approved public, private, non-profit, or commercial agency.

Therapeutic Recreation students, in a 6-week consecutive (minimum) program, are assigned on an individualized basis to approved therapeutic recreation/recreational therapy agencies for a minimum of 120 hours.

Academic Advisor: The faculty member who advises throughout the academic year with such items as your Plan of Study, etc.

University Supervisor: The individual who is employed by The University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG) through the Department of Community and Therapeutic Recreation to supervise students in their Practicum experience and who has final responsibility and authority for assigning grades.

Agency Supervisor: The individual who is employed at the agency/organization at which the student is doing his/her Practicum and who has primary responsibility for directing and supervising the student’s on-the-job experience.

Course Learning Outcomes of the Practicum

Upon the successful completion of the Practicum, the student will be able to:

1. Identify standard policies and procedures of a recreation agency
2. Identify entry-level managerial and supervisory skills
3. Identify one’s own professional strengths and weaknesses with regard to practice in recreation and park settings

CTR 315 - Practicum in Recreation and Parks Management
4. Demonstrate ethical principles and practices within the profession

5. Explain the benefits that recreation and leisure play in improving the health and wellness of individuals and communities

6. Assess the recreational needs of individuals and/or communities

7. Plan recreation programs or events that meet identified needs of individuals and/or communities

8. Utilize group dynamics and leadership techniques to implement recreation experiences and/or events

9. Evaluate the effectiveness of recreation programs or events to meet the needs of individual participants and communities

10. Utilize various marketing techniques in the promotion of recreation programs or events

11. Write in vernacular appropriate to the recreation and parks profession

12. Use informal and formal approaches to writing and prepare multiple drafts as needed to deepen their professional writing skills

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro provides the Practicum in cooperation with agencies/institutions providing events or a community and therapeutic recreation service. The student, University Supervisor, and Agency Supervisor involved in the Practicum will share in the responsibilities of the experience.

**Practicum Expectations**

Practicum in Community and Therapeutic Recreation for which students receive three (3) semester hour credits, is designed to provide students with the opportunity to relate theory to practice through observation and experience. Students complete practicums at approved public, non-profit, private, and commercial agencies. The Practicum is essentially a part-time experience at an event planning, recreation and parks management, or therapeutic recreation site.

Community Recreation and Event Planning students are required to complete a minimum of **120 clock hours** over an extended period of time, to be **not less than 6 weeks**. Some participating agencies or institutions may require more than 6 weeks and/or **120 clock hours**.
Students are expected to follow the rules, regulations, and policies of the agency as would an employee. Students may be paid during their Practicum experience. Students should understand, however, that financial compensation is not guaranteed, nor should it be a major consideration in determining placements.

The student will gain experience in one of the following areas:

A. **Therapeutic Recreation.** If the Practicum involves a therapeutic/clinical situation, the student should gain experience/exposures in assessments using recreation therapy protocols, individualized treatment plans, treatment teams, in-services, documentation, and other matters pertaining to the treatment/care of individuals undergoing therapy. Involvement in staff meetings, where appropriate, is strongly encouraged. Therapeutic Recreation Practicum students should address the six knowledge areas of the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC) Job Analysis Survey.

B. **Community Recreation and Event Planning.** If the Practicum involves a public recreation and parks situation, the student should gain experience in dealing with public relations, attend board/commission and other community meetings, work with committees, visit individuals in the agency and community, and receive broad agency/community experiences during his/her Practicum. The Practicum should help the student to understand the total concept of the agency through the discussion of actual problems and situations in the operation of the agency. The general criteria for the Practicum apply equally to public, private non-profit, and private for-profit oriented organizations. The student should gain experience in as many aspects of the business as possible. Because of the diversity of such businesses, it is difficult to detail the types of experiences which will best meet the needs of the student; however, the Practicum application should specifically outline the experiences which the student will receive (e.g., event planning, marketing, customer service, concessions operations).

**Practicum Procedures**

Found at

1. The Practicum student must download the Practicum Manual found at [http://ctr.wp.uncg.edu/practicum-internship-checklists/](http://ctr.wp.uncg.edu/practicum-internship-checklists/). The manual delineates the philosophy and objectives of the Practicum experience, progression and scope of experience, basic policies and procedures, and references forms, records, and reports to be submitted.

2. The student, in conjunction with the Agency Supervisor, must develop Student Learning Outcomes (SLO’s) for the Practicum. Final approval of the Practicum is the responsibility of the student’s Academic Advisor.

3. When possible, the University Supervisor will visit a local Practicum site during the Practicum experience to meet the Practicum student and Agency Supervisor to discuss
the student’s progress and address any issues or problems. For those Practicums conducted outside the Piedmont Triad metropolitan area, phone calls will be made in lieu of a site visit.

4. The student will submit a Mid-Term Report, a Final Report and a time log to the University Supervisor by the deadlines identified in the Report Calendar.

5. The Agency Supervisor will submit a Mid-Term Evaluation and a Final Evaluation of the student's performance by the deadlines identified in the Report Calendar.

**Student Eligibility Requirements**

For Practicum eligibility, students must meet the following requirements:

- Must have an overall GPA of **2.0 or better**. This GPA is a University requirement and NO exceptions can be made.

- Must have successfully completed:
  - **CTR 101** (Leisure and American Lifestyles) or **CTR 111** (Intro to Recreation and Parks)
  - **CTR 212** (Leadership in Recreation and Parks)
  - **CTR 213** (Program Planning in Recreation and Parks)
  - **CTR 231** (Intro to Therapeutic Recreation) **or CTR 241** (Community Recreation)

Eligibility for Practicum will be based upon information obtained from the Registrar's Office at the conclusion of the semester PRIOR to the semester in which the student is enrolled in the Practicum. **Students falling below a cumulative 2.0 GPA will not be permitted to complete a Practicum.**
Liability Insurance for Students

Students enrolled in a CTR 315 practicum section will be covered under the University’s liability insurance policy. If the agency requires a copy of the policy, contact Amy Chandler at ctr@uncg.edu.

Student Responsibilities

Students must adhere to the following general policies:

1. Complete the *Eligibility Form for Practicum or Internship* and submit to your Academic Advisor Fall Break.

2. Identify and contact a minimum of three (3) agencies where you may like to do your Practicum.

3. Submit a description of the potential Practicum experiences to your Academic Advisor for review and potential approval. These descriptions should include what duties, responsibilities, and experiences will be at this site.

4. Prepare a resume (see CTR website for sample resume and visit Career Services for guidance on developing your cover letter, etc.) to submit with your application.

5. **NOTE:** Do not accept a Practicum placement prior to formal approval of the site by your Academic Advisor.

6. Work with your Agency Supervisor to develop 7-10 appropriate Student Learning Outcomes (SLO’s). Sample SLO’s can be found on the CTR Fieldwork web site at: [http://ctr.wp.uncg.edu/practicum-internship-required-forms/](http://ctr.wp.uncg.edu/practicum-internship-required-forms/).

7. Submit the Student Learning Outcomes (SLO’s) to your Academic Advisor for final review and approval. These may be submitted electronically via email.
8. Once the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are approved by Academic Advisor, the following forms must be **completed, signed, and submitted** to the Academic Advisor PRIOR to end of the semester preceding your Practicum:

- Site Approval Form (with SLO Form and Resume)
- SLO Form (attached to Site Approval Form)
- Resume (attached to Site Approval Form)
- Report Calendar
- Liability Insurance Form (plus payment)

**For TR Students**: Many clinical sites are now requiring students to complete “onboarding” procedures and clearances before beginning his or her fieldwork experience. Onboarding can include procedures such as criminal background checks, TB tests, flu tests, drug tests, ethics questionnaires, orientations, etc. These can take time to arrange and process and costs are typically are paid for by the student. Students interested in working in a hospital or other “clinical” setting should inquire from the agency as to whether they require onboarding, and if so, what the typical timeline for processing these procedures are. In addition, the tests can cost upwards of $50 each, so it will be important to budget accordingly.

**NOTE**: Practicum hours will not be counted until all the above mentioned forms have been completed, signed, and submitted to the Academic Advisor.

**Agency Selection**

Practicum placements should result from the combined effort of the student, the Academic Advisor, and the Agency Supervisor. The selection of the professional agency should be matched with the student's needs in order that the student can best fulfill personal and professional goals in their area of concentration.

**Basic Criteria for Agency Selection**

1. The agency must submit a list of tasks and learning opportunities the student will have.

2. The Agency Supervisor must assist the student in developing a list of SLO’s the student will be given the opportunity to meet by the end of the Practicum.

3. The agency and its staff should be willing to provide opportunities for active participation in, as well as observation of programs, events and services.

4. The agency and its staff should be willing to conduct an agency orientation and provide other information needed by Practicum students.
5. The agency staff should be qualified through education, experience, and credentials (e.g., professional certification and/or licensure) as necessary to provide supervision and guidance to Practicum students.

6. The agency should have sound written administrative policies and procedures, including budget and finance, publicity and public relations, maintenance and operation, and personnel management, as applicable.

7. The agency staff should be willing to accept the student as a contributing professional member of the staff.

**Basic Criteria for Agency Supervisor**

1. Agency Supervisors should have one of the following:
   - 4-year degree from an NRPA/AALR accredited college/university in recreation or parks or a closely allied field, and a minimum of 2 years supervisory and/or administrative experience.
   - Master’s degree from a college/university in recreation or parks or a closely related field and a minimum of one-year supervisory and/or administrative experience.

2. The Agency Supervisor must be willing to provide guidance and direction during the Practicum experience, facilitate accomplishment of the student’s Practicum Learning Outcomes, and submit required evaluation reports to the University Supervisor.

**Agency Responsibilities**

The Agency and the person recognized by the University as the Agency Supervisor shall be responsible for the content of the student’s Practicum experience. He/She will be expected to offer instruction to the student and utilize the agency’s operations to further the student’s professional competency as follows.

1. Interpretation of the practicum program to other staff members in preparation for the student’s arrival.

2. Orientation of the student to the agency and community. Acquaint the student with the agency’s basic philosophy, policies, and objectives.

3. Meet with and assist the student in the development of proposed learning outcomes before the start of the Practicum.

4. Serve as advisor and mentor throughout the Practicum experience.

5. Identify those activities, which are available in the agency to meet the student’s Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs).

6. Develop a work schedule for the student and provide a copy to both the student and to the University Supervisor by the end of the first week.
7. Meet with the student on a weekly basis to answer questions the student might have and to deal with problems or revise the work schedule.

8. Observe the student’s job performance as often as possible and provide feedback on a weekly basis.

9. Complete and submit to the University Supervisor a Mid-term evaluation concerning the student at the end of the 60-hour Practicum experience.

10. Notify the University Supervisor as soon as possible if the student is experiencing difficulty or not performing up to expectations.

11. Complete and submit to the University Supervisor a final evaluation concerning the student’s performance within two weeks (2) of the end of the Practicum experience.

Grading Procedures

The student's final grade for the Practicum experience will be based upon the following factors: mid-term report, mid-term evaluation, mid-term time log, final evaluation, final student report, and final log. Reports should be well-written.

NOTE: Final grades cannot be posted until all final paperwork is completed, submitted, and graded by your University Supervisor.

Report Information

During the course of the Practicum, the student will submit a mid-term and final report which will provide information about the agency, the learning experience, and progress toward meeting his/her SLO’s. All reports will be kept on file and should be regarded as professional papers. As such, the reports should be carefully and thoughtfully drafted and thoroughly edited. Reports should be typed, double-spaced, and free from errors (e.g., spelling, typographic, grammar, and punctuation).

If mid-term reports are inadequate or contain excessive errors, they will be returned to the student for revision. Acceptable mid-term reports should be used as the template for a well-written final report. Poorly written and/or incomplete final reports will receive a grade reflective of the inadequacy and/or poor quality.

Mid-Term Report and Evaluation
After you have completed a **minimum of 60 hours, at the half-way point of the Practicum**, you will write a report (**minimum of 4 pages**) describing what you have experienced and the progress you have made toward accomplishing each of your learning outcomes. As this fieldwork is primarily a learning experience, the *emphasis should be on what you are learning rather than the duties you are performing.*

The Mid-Term Report and the Mid-term Time Log are due to the University Supervisor by the deadline indicated on the Report Calendar.

The Practicum Mid-Term Evaluation should be completed by the Agency Supervisor. The Agency Supervisor must discuss the evaluation with the student prior to submitting it to the University Supervisor. The mid-term evaluation should be submitted by the deadline indicated on the student’s Report Calendar.

**Please note that the Mid-Term Report contains information that will be requested again on the Final Report. Therefore, please use your Mid-Term Report as a template to expand upon for the Final Report.**

**Mid-Term Report Format:** Use the subheadings listed below to format the Mid-Term Report. Be sure to discuss your experiences and learning relative to each section. (see template provided by the University Supervisor.)

**A. Agency Description –**
- Philosophy
- Mission and Goals of the overall agency and units involved
- Organizational Structure (include organization chart)
- Programs, Events, and Services
- Areas and Facilities

**B. Student Learning Outcome Summary -** For each Student Learning Outcome, summarize how it was accomplished. Provide specific examples. Also, discuss any problems and difficulties and how these were overcome. Again, provide specific examples.

**NOTE:** Each SLO should be listed separately. If it has not been addressed/accomplished yet, then provide a statement to that effect and how it will be addressed before the end of the Practicum.

**Final Student Report**

The student, upon completion of the Practicum experience, is required to submit a final report to the University Supervisor. **The final student report should be returned to the University by the deadline indicated on the Report Calendar.** Typically, this report is a **minimum of 10 pages in length**, plus any attachments about the agency or samples of your work or special project.

**The Final Report, Agency Evaluation of Student Practicum student Form, Evaluation of Agency Form, and a complete Time Log must be turned in by**
the deadline indicated on the Report Calendar. This is absolutely essential for students who are planning to graduate during the same term in which the Practicum is completed. If papers are submitted late, an Incomplete will be given. To remove an Incomplete, all work must be completed, submitted and accepted as satisfactory within one month of the end of the Practicum experience.

A final grade for CTR 315 Practicum in Recreation and Parks cannot be submitted until the following have been completed and submitted to the University Supervisor:

- Final Student Report
- Final Time Log
- Final Agency Evaluation of Student Practicum student Form
- Student Evaluation of Agency Form

**Format:** Use the subheadings listed below to format the Final Report. Make sure to discuss your experiences and learning relative to each of the sections. (See template provided by the University Supervisor.)

**A. Agency Description**
- Philosophy
- Mission and Goals of the overall agency and units involved
- Organizational Structure (include organizational chart)
- Programs and Services
- Areas and Facilities

**B. Student Learning Outcome Summary** - For each Student Learning Outcome, summarize how it was accomplished. Provide specific examples. Also, discuss any problems and difficulties and how these were overcome. Again, provide specific examples.

NOTE: Each SLO should be listed separately. Also, please make sure that you “update” each SLO to reflect the entire Practicum time period.

**C. Special Projects Assigned** – Thoroughly discuss and describe the nature and scope of any special projects assigned by your Agency Supervisor (include any attachments you deem appropriate). Be certain to discuss how these relate to your Student Learning Outcomes.

**D. Professional Development** - Discuss any orientation sessions, workshops, conferences, seminars, symposiums that you attended. Relate them to your Student Learning Outcomes.

**E. Self-analysis of the Practicum Experience** - Discuss your personal and professional growth or development of skills/competencies that you developed over the course of the Practicum. Make sure to address and discuss the following:
1) your strengths and weaknesses,
2) specific strategies for self-improvement, and
3) any emerging career interests as a result of your experience.

Be specific, concrete, and critical! Don’t hesitate to state that an assignment did not go as planned, or that you did not achieve all of your goals. However, explain what you learned from the situation, make suggestions for what could have been done better, what went wrong, and how things might be changed. We often learn more from our mistakes than our successes.

F. Recommendations Relative to the University, Agency, and Agency Supervisor
- Make specific recommendations and suggestions for improving any facet of the Practicum experience. Recommendations should be specific and address: (a) the Agency, (b) the Agency Supervisor, and (c) the University.

Agency Supervisor Mid-Term and Final Evaluations
The mid-term and final evaluations serve as a major communication link between the student, the Agency Supervisor, and the University Supervisor. The student is responsible for providing the Agency Supervisor with a copy of the mid-term Agency Evaluation of Student Practicum student form and the final Agency Evaluation of Student Practicum student form (both of which can be found on the CTR website). The Agency Supervisor will complete the evaluations, review them with the student, and then submit them to the University Supervisor. The mid-term evaluation should be emailed, mailed, or faxed to the University Supervisor after completion of approximately 60 hours. The final evaluation is submitted after completion of 120 hours.
Required Practicum Forms

Required forms for Practicum are located on the CTR Fieldwork web site. Please visit the site and download all forms at:
http://ctr.wp.uncg.edu/practicum-internship-required-forms/

**Eligibility Form for Practicum or Internship**
This form is completed by the student and submitted to the student’s Academic Advisor. The form and the premium payment due must be submitted before a student can begin the practicum or internship.

**Request for Practicum or Internship Site Approval**
This form is completed by the student and Agency Supervisor and submitted to the student’s Academic Advisor for approval of the practicum or internship site. Be sure to attach 1) SLO’s, 2) resume, and 3) Agency Supervisor’s signature before giving to Academic Advisor.

**Report Calendar for Practicum or Internship**
This form is completed by the student and Academic Advisor.

**SLO Form**
Student Learning Outcome Form that must be signed by you, your Agency Supervisor, and your University Supervisor.

**Agency Evaluation of CTR Practicum Student**
This form is completed by the Agency Supervisor and is submitted to the University Supervisor once at the mid-term of the Practicum, and again at the end of the Practicum. Prior to submission; the Agency Supervisor must discuss each evaluation with the student. A separate mid-term and final evaluation form is provided for TR students (TRIE).

**Student Evaluation of the Agency**
This form is completed by the student and is submitted to the University Supervisor with their final report.

**Time Log**
This form is completed by the student and is submitted to the University Supervisor with the mid-term and final reports. The student and Agency Supervisor signatures are required.