

Coe College Practicum Experience

Practicum (from page 21 of the Handbook, bold portions are additions)

A practicum experience is required of all students for all undergraduate degrees, except those earning second degrees. Typically completed in the student's junior or senior year, all practica are experiences that integrate academic components with career or other life goals and are significant educational exercises outside the classroom. A practicum experience can consist of an internship, off-campus study, an honors project, a community-based project or some other kind of independent activity.

Depending upon the type selected, some practica are graded A-F, while others are S/U. Some practica are credit bearing, while others are not. In some instances, the practicum must be approved by the student's major department.

1. Full-Term Off-Campus Study
2. Wilderness Field Station Summer Courses
3. Honors Thesis or Honors Project, etc. as stated
4. Independent Project (required department approval for practicum credit)
5. *Internship (See a complete listing of internships on p. 22)
6. *Community-Based Project (CBP)

*A maximum of two course credits earned through any combination of Internships and Community-based projects may be included in the 32 course credits required for graduation.

Community-Based Project Description

Over the course of one or two terms, students may work under the supervision of a faculty member on service projects proposed or approved by external constituencies such as non-profits, community agencies, or government organizations. Students will learn about the issues, problems, and techniques associated with developing projects that address real world problems, as well as apply the skills they have gained through academic study to provide services to community partners.

COMMUNITY BASED PROJECT GUIDELINES¹

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- *Integration of Coursework and Community Projects:* Students will apply academic concepts, techniques and methods to community problems and projects related to their chosen professions and careers.
- *Development of Student Interpersonal, Social and Problem Solving Skills:* To expose students to the expectations, pressures, and challenges posed by work and society. By working alone or in teams, students will confront the kinds of organizational problems, resource and human considerations of developing and completing community-based projects. Students will gain a greater understanding of the need to act in a socially responsible and ethical manner in challenging situations.
- *Professional Development Through Community Involvement:* To allow students to experience and accomplish professional rewards by completing service projects proposed or approved by community partners. In addition, students will demonstrate their academic and professional skills to evaluators and potential employers outside of the college before graduation. Students will also

¹ Adapted from Monmouth University's Master Syllabus for Community and Service-Learning Projects

have the added benefit of being able to include their service projects and accomplishments in their post-graduation professional portfolio.

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- Students registering for CBP – 325 will decide upon a suitable project in consultation with a faculty advisor and the Director of Community Engagement (DCE).
- Students will formulate a project proposal for review and approval. Upon approval, the faculty member (with support from the DCE when desired) will assist students in fashioning academic assignments that connect with and complement the service objectives and tasks presented under a community project. The DCE will also stay in frequent contact with the student and his/her site supervisor or community liaison during the project.
- While engaged in their CBP, students will conduct various research, methodological and/or organizational activities necessary to initiate and develop their chosen projects. Examples of such activities include interviews with external experts and sources, field visits to facilities, institutions and agencies, tracking, scheduling and executing project components or tasks, compiling work logs, field journals, and documentation of on and off campus activities.
- Students will meet and communicate regularly with their faculty advisor and/or DCE who will track the progress of the project and the achievement of tasks set under the approved project proposal with the aid of verbal or written reports from the site supervisor. In general, students will keep a reflective log and or an instrument that documents learning and student's self-assessment, a cumulative reflective and/or research paper, as well as other related academic assignments as proposed and agreed upon by the student, faculty advisor, and DSL.
- Upon completion, students will arrange for site verification of the completed project for the faculty advisor and DSL in the form of a returned evaluator's report, survey form, official letter, or other written fashion.
- Students will be expected to present the results of their project at the Coe Research Symposium or other public audience (can be presented through an online medium).
- Total hours spent on academic and community-based activities will equal at least 140 hours per course credit awarded (activity log provided by the Office of Community Engagement).

METHODS OF EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT

- The faculty advisor, taking into account evaluative information from the Director of Community Engagement and the site supervisor, will assign a grade. The most important criteria determining the assignment of the grade are:
 1. Adherence of students to the project proposal (which may be updated) in terms of quality of completion of tasks, timeliness of task completion, level of cooperation, initiative and responsibility in completing tasks, management and application of resources, and level of academic and personal engagement in work tasks.
 2. Continuous student involvement and improvement of the quality of the project during the development process.
 3. Continuous improvement of the effectiveness of student academic, personal, and professional performance during the life cycle of the project and on individual work tasks.
 4. Quality of final work logs, journals, papers, and formal presentations.
 5. Input and assessment of student performance by site supervisor and DCE.