

Creating Practicum Learning Objectives

Enrollment in Practicum requires the student, in consultation with a faculty advisor, to develop learning objectives based on the job description. Learning objectives are behavioral based and measurable statements that will ultimately help support desired outcomes and incorporate specific actions and activities.

Learning objectives focus your efforts during the internship. Discussing your learning goals with your faculty advisor allows you to gain input on how your work relates to your academic pursuits. Sharing your goals with your supervisor helps ensure that you spend your time productively and everyone is aware of the learning you hope to achieve.

To be useful, learning objectives should be SMART:

Specific
Measurable
Attainable
Realistic
Time bound

Types of learning objectives include:

Knowledge – the acquisition or application of learning and understanding factual information, terminology, and/or concepts. Typically within these goals, you will be building upon previously learned knowledge from the classroom or individual learning.

Skills – what you want to learn how to do or a skill you wish to develop further.

Attitude – attitudes, values, and/or characteristics you believe to be important to your development and wish to improve upon.

Career Growth – career exploration, self-assessment, networking, shadowing and similar activities that will enhance your career decision and management.

For each learning objective, address the following questions:

1. What do I want to learn or do?
2. What are my action steps and deadlines?
3. What information or resources are needed to complete my objective?
4. How will I demonstrate that I achieved my objective?

Example Learning Objectives

The following examples of learning objectives will help guide you in developing your own SMART goals.

| Type | Vague | Specific |
|---------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Knowledge | Understand the grant writing process. | At the conclusion of this internship, I will be able to demonstrate my understanding of the grant writing process. I will connect with grant writers on staff and interview them to learn more. I will research available grant requirements and create an outline for a grant application to share with my supervisor. I will assist with writing at least one grant application during my internship. |
| Skills | Learn how to use Excel better. | By the end of this internship, I will be able to use Excel to analyze financial data. Specifically, I will be able to create, modify and format pivot tables in Excel. To learn these skills, I will work with my supervisor and utilize Lynda.com courses. I will present Excel data to my supervisor and gain verbal feedback on my work. |
| Attitude | Gain feedback on my work ethic. | My goal is to develop a reputation as an emerging top-performing, hardworking professional and earn outstanding, positive feedback from my supervisor. I will ask for any necessary clarification about tasks to understand what is expected of me, provide high quality performance while demonstrating professionalism, learn and grow from my mistakes/constructive criticism, and take initiative to work on extra projects. |
| Career Growth | Find a mentor in my field. | During the first two weeks I will identify 3 potential mentors and reach out for informational interviews with them articulating my desire to have a mentor. Based on those conversations, I will find a mentor who can guide me on my career path. The goal is to meet one on one with my mentor every other week and develop an action plan for my career. |