

Experiential Learning is defined at Case Western Reserve University as an innovative approach to education that emphasizes hands-on experience. Post-Graduate Planning and Experiential Education coordinates and supports two primary experiential learning programs, Internship and Practicum.

Internships

Internships are experiential learning opportunities available to all undergraduate and graduate students at CWRU who wish to explore a career path in order to clarify career goals. Internships may be part-time or full-time, paid or unpaid, though most are paid. By design, internships are broader-based, exploratory experiences. It is suggested that students enter internships with learning objectives in mind and share those objectives with a mentor or supervisor at the internship site.

Practicum

Practicum is an experiential learning collaboration between a student, a faculty advisor of his or her choosing, and an employer, coordinated by Post-Graduate Planning and Experiential Education (in other words, think of Practicum as a more formalized and structured internship).

The program is designed for students who wish to pursue a particular, identified career path. While completing a practicum assignment (almost always paid), a student works full-time (40 hours/week) in a professional setting and does not take classes. The student will maintain full-time student status during the experience. Part-time options are also available in the fall, spring and summer – the student must work 20 hours/week.

Students who successfully complete the Practicum Program (as determined by the Experiential Learning Advisor and the Faculty Advisor, with recommendations from the employer) receive transcript notation.

Note that the Practicum Program fulfills CPT requirements for international students.

Intended Learning Outcomes for Students

- Integrate academic theory with practical experience in a professional field of interest
- Clarify career goals
- Develop content specific and transferable skills
- Establish mentoring relationships with professionals in a career field of interest
- Build a professional network

Benefits to Employers

- Utilize the ideas, skills and talent of bright young students over extensive time period
- Contribute to the development of the future workforce in your field
- Recruit and evaluate potential employees
- Increase brand recognition on campus

For more information about the Practicum Program, please contact Brian Matthews, Assistant Director for Experiential Learning, at 216-368-4446 or brian.matthews@case.edu.

Key Responsibilities of Practicum Participants

Students	Faculty Advisors	Employers/Supervisors
Meet with Practicum Coordinator in Post-Graduate Planning and Experiential Education one semester prior to intended practicum term	Meet with practicum student to discuss program requirements and positions under consideration	Register your company or organization with Handshake and include the primary contact for the organization
Attend a mandatory Practicum workshop (if applicable)	Assist student with creating learning objectives, ensuring that they are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely	Ensure that the student has a supervisor who can provide information about company policies, expectations, key contacts, and feedback
Email copy of the offer letter to the Practicum Coordinator before accepting the offer	Review learning objectives and email approval to Practicum Coordinator	Review the practicum student's learning objectives prior to the start of his or her employment with your company
Meet with academic advisor to discuss how practicum would affect graduation timeline	Be available to the student/employer to discuss student performance throughout the Practicum experience	Provide an orientation for the student that covers the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Facility tour ▪ Worksite policies and procedures ▪ The organizational structure ▪ The office culture Introduction to co-workers
Identify a Faculty member to serve as your advisor and to help you create appropriate learning objectives. Be sure to share a job description.	Review both the student and employer evaluations to monitor student progress on learning objectives	Support a possible site visit from the Practicum Coordinator during the semester. Coordinator will contact you to schedule the site visit
Visit Office of Financial Aid, Housing, and ISS (if applicable) to review logistics of participating in program	Provide guidance on content of reflection paper and review upon completion	Conduct a mid-point and end-point evaluation of the practicum student (evaluation will be emailed). Share your evaluation with the student so that he or she can gain valuable feedback
Create learning objectives and share them with your Faculty Advisor for approval. Once fully approved, upload them into Handshake and notify the Practicum Coordinator	Assign grade in SIS (PASS/NO PASS) for the experience	
Fill out Practicum Form in Handshake		
Register for non-credit practicum course and receive class permit from Practicum Coordinator (all done in SIS)		
International Students: Complete CPT paperwork and submit to ISS		
Complete a mid-term and final evaluation		
Complete final Reflection Paper and updated resume, uploading each into Handshake		
Keep in touch with Faculty Advisor, as needed, through reflection assignments		
Ensure all steps have been completed and that you will receive transcript notation		

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Key Components of Practicum Program

- **Learning Objectives**—Student creates two to three learning objectives for the practicum experience. These goals must be approved by the Faculty Advisor and shared with the Practicum Supervisor.
- **Mid-point and Final Evaluations**—Students complete self-evaluations at the mid-point and end of the practicum experience. Practicum Supervisors also evaluate students at these times. The evaluations will be sent to students via email with specific due dates. These evaluations should be based on student’s progress towards achieving the learning objectives.
- **Reflection Paper**—At the end of the experience, students are required to write a reflection paper and upload the paper to Handshake. The format, design, and content of the reflection should be agreed upon between the Faculty Advisor and the student. Some advisors may ask students to submit weekly or monthly reports; others ask for a comprehensive reflection at the end of the experience.

Practicum-Internship Comparison

Criteria	Practicum	Internship
Eligible Students	Students enrolled in CAS, WSOM, CES, Entrepreneurial ventures (undergrad & grad)	All
Duration of Experience	Minimum 11 weeks (early ID programs 6 week minimum) <i>(FT: 40 hours/week PT: 20 hours/week)</i>	Typically 8 weeks (part-time or full-time), but can vary
Class Standing	1 st year through graduate students	None
GPA Requirement	Minimum of 2.5	None
Transcript Notation	Yes, upon completion (PASS/NO PASS)	None
Registration	Registration in SIS required	None
Compensation	Paid or unpaid, but typically paid	Paid or unpaid
Components	Learning Objectives, Mid-point and Final Evaluations, Reflection Paper(s)	Learning Objectives suggested

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