

**GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE**  
**DEPARTMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

**CD1040 AND CD1060**  
**ON-CAMPUS**  
**PRACTICUM I AND SEMINAR I**

**DESCRIPTION AND GUIDE**

**CD1140 AND CD1160**  
**ON-CAMPUS**  
**PRACTICUM II AND SEMINAR II**

**DESCRIPTION**

**Revised: September, 1992**

## CD1040 AND CD1140

### PRACTICUM DESCRIPTION

The practicum component of the Early Childhood Development programme consists of practical experiences in community services such as day care centres, playschools, E.C.S. (kindergarten), and special placements from Monday to Thursday of designated practicum weeks. Students must successfully complete time and task requirements as well as demonstrate a rapport with young children and a growing knowledge of, and willingness to assist with, routines.

The student is required to complete a minimum of 28 days of practicum, each day consisting of seven working hours for a minimum total of 196 hours. The student must complete the time commitment to receive credit. Exceptions of up to two days may be given to students due to illness and/or extenuating circumstances. Permission of the college practicum instructor must be received for absences other than illness. In some cases a medical certificate may be required. A student who misses more than the acceptable hours must make up the time prior to the completion of the semester. In special cases, a student may make arrangements to complete the practicum requirements at a later date.

The student must notify the practicum supervisor and the practicum instructor prior to, or as early as possible, regarding absences.

Some practicum time in Semester I will be spent in the Children's Centre, the college demonstration preschool. The student will be notified about this scheduling at the beginning of the semester. The time spent in the Children's Centre is considered as part of the total practicum hours.

The Early Childhood Development Department observes all statutory holidays as well as College Reading Week (see college calendar for specific dates). Closures in the school system will not be considered as absences in applicable practicum placements.

In order to integrate the practicum component with class content, and to share and expand experiences, students will regularly meet for scheduled practicum seminars. Students must fulfil requirements for Practicum and Seminar in order to receive credit for both.

## GUIDELINES FOR PRACTICUM SUPERVISORS

Practicum provides important learning experiences for each student in our programme. We ask that supervisors share the philosophy of their programme with the student and give the student an opportunity to fulfill all expectations and to challenge individual capabilities. To guide supervisors, we offer the following suggestions:

1. Delegate responsibility according to the level of the student's experience. During the first semester the inexperienced student should deal with individual children and small groups. The experienced student may be ready to take on large groups and/or increased responsibilities.
2. Assist the student to be aware of the rules and procedures in the centre. The student will need clear direction regarding her/his role in all routine activities.
3. Discuss the student's written plans prior to, or on the first morning of each practicum week. The student is responsible for coordinating practicum and course assignments with the centre's schedule. Assignments will require observations of children and child/adult interactions. The student is also expected to provide a variety of experiences for the children. Written plans should be initialled and dated by the supervisor upon presentation.
4. Provide positive reinforcement and on-going feedback. It is important that you interpret incidents to students as they occur whenever possible. It is strongly recommended that you and the student arrange time for regular discussions of daily events. This will help the student feel involved with the programme and promote opportunities for learning. Discuss the student's progress on an informal daily basis. In order for the student to prepare written plans for the following practicum week, the supervisor should be prepared to share programming ideas and identify goals for each practicum week.
5. Keep a record of student attendance on the provided time sheet. This record will be submitted to the instructor at the end of the practicum placement.
6. Students should not be left alone with a group of children nor should they be used as substitutes for regular staff. This helps to ensure that students are given appropriate supervision and feedback regarding their interactions with children.
7. Provide the student with a comprehensive verbal evaluation midway through the practicum. A written evaluation at this time is recommended. At the end of the practicum, the student and the supervisor should discuss in-depth the final written evaluation of the student's overall growth and development prior to submission to the college instructor.

## **GUIDELINES FOR PRACTICUM INSTRUCTORS**

1. The college instructor will visit the assigned student for at least eight hours throughout the practicum placement.
2. The instructor's role will be to observe the student, discuss individual progress, and identify the needs of the student in consultation with the supervisor. The instructor is a consultant for both the student and the supervisor. A written evaluation will be completed by the instructor after each visit and a copy will be given to the student.
3. The instructor is always available to both student and supervisor should any questions or concerns arise.
4. The final evaluation of the student will be determined by the instructor.

## GUIDELINES FOR PRACTICUM STUDENTS

1. The student is expected to become familiar with the philosophy, policies, routines, and methods that are used in the practicum setting.
2. The student is expected to demonstrate a professional attitude with regard to attendance, punctuality, dress, confidentiality and feedback.
3. The student must contact the practicum supervisor and the instructor as soon as possible if late or absent.
4. The student is expected to share plans with the practicum supervisor on the Monday morning of each practicum week and have them initialled by the supervisor.
5. The student is expected to inform the supervisor of scheduled visits by the practicum instructor.
6. The student should consult with room supervisors for informal feedback at the end of each day.
7. The student should consult with the supervisor to discuss plans prior to the following practicum week.
8. The student should take equal responsibility with the supervisor in initiating ongoing communication.
9. The student should display a desire to learn.
10. The student is expected to spend time assisting with the day to day operations of the programme through preparation, clean up, assistance with routines, etc.
11. The student will be encouraged to assess personal progress in working with children, and to act upon this assessment. This process of self-evaluation is an important part of learning and personal growth. This evaluation will occur orally in informal discussions with the practicum instructor and the practicum supervisor.

**PRACTICUM I EXPECTATIONS**

This semester the student will focus on work with individuals and small groups of children. The more experienced student may be ready to work with larger groups.

1. The student will begin to develop skill in establishing rapport with young children.
2. The student will begin to develop skills in setting and maintaining appropriate limits.
3. The student will interact with, and facilitate the play of young children in a variety of play areas.
4. The student will begin to develop skills in observing, recording, interpreting and evaluating the behaviour of young children.
5. The student will begin to develop skills in planning and implementing learning experiences based on the developmental needs and interests of young children.
6. The student will demonstrate increasing skills in planning and implementing experiences in such areas as art, language, music and movement, and fine and gross motor development.
7. The student will demonstrate professionalism in regard to attendance, punctuality, dress, confidentiality, and receiving feedback.
8. The student will begin to develop skill in establishing rapport with all other adults in the programme.

**PRACTICUM TASKS**

WEEK 1: ORIENTATION

During this week students are expected to interact informally with the children in all aspects of the programme (eg. indoor and outdoor activity periods, routines). The student should begin to establish a rapport with the children and staff, and get to know the programme. Opportunities to sit back and observe the children should be included in this week, as well as throughout the semester. Centre/classroom philosophy, rules, regulations, routines, procedures and goals should be identified by the student during this week.

WEEKS 2-7

Throughout the remaining weeks the student will be responsible for planning and implementing a variety of experiences for young children. The student will also observe, and interact with, young children and facilitate their play. Specific tasks required by the student will be identified in consultation with the instructor. This individualized approach will assist the student to build on strengths, address weaknesses, and will reflect the uniqueness of each practicum setting. The student can expect that the tasks will include at least some of the following:

- a) Art experiences.
- b) A variety of songs, fingerplays, games, nursery rhymes, poems and stories, some of which will include the use of props such as puppets and flannelboard characters.
- c) Activities which promote fine and gross motor development.
- d) Observations and other assignments as designated by individual course instructors.



## PRACTICUM II EXPECTATIONS

This semester the student will develop a growing self-confidence in working with larger groups of children and display greater understanding and skill at programming for young children.

1. The student will demonstrate increasing skills in developing rapport with children as well as demonstrating a supportive and accepting attitude toward all children in the programme regardless of ethnicity, religion, economic situation and family lifestyles.
2. The student will demonstrate increasing skills in setting and maintaining appropriate limits. The student will learn to anticipate problems, constructively redirect children, and help children cope with and address problems in a positive manner.
3. The student will demonstrate the ability to interact spontaneously with individual and small groups of children with a growing awareness of how to facilitate, extend, and enrich children's play in a variety of play areas.
4. The student will demonstrate initiative in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of daily activities and routines.
5. The student will plan and implement small group activities using information obtained from observations. These child-centred experiences are to be based on the developmental needs and interests of the children.
6. The student will demonstrate increasing skill in using questioning techniques which promote curiosity, enhance language development, and encourage problem-solving among the children.
7. The student will demonstrate a developing understanding of the techniques and skills involved in working with larger groups of children.
8. The student will demonstrate a growing awareness of how the use of time, space and materials affect the child's learning experiences.
9. The student will demonstrate an awareness of the nutritional, health, and safety needs of young children.



## STUDENT PRACTICUM TASKS

### WEEK 1

During this week you are expected to interact informally with the children in all aspects of the programme. You should be establishing rapport with the children and adults in the programme. Opportunities to sit back and observe the children should be included in this week. Centre/classroom rules, routines, procedures and programme philosophies should be clarified during this week.

### WEEK 2-7

In consultation with the practicum instructor and supervisor the student will plan and carry out learning experiences for the children in their care. All the planned learning experiences should reflect careful observation of the program and the children's needs, abilities, interests, backgrounds, personalities, and stage of development.

- a) Plan and carry out six activities from several of the following areas:

water	language arts
sand and mud	blocks
music	gym
carpentry	puppetry
manipulative play	outdoor play
audio-visual	modelling materials
sensory (touch, taste, sight, smell, hearing)	make-believe play
	two and three dimensional art

- b) Plan and prepare, in consultation with the supervisor, a minimum of two nutritional snacks for children. Children should assist with the preparation of at least one snack.
- c) Plan and carry out two sets of three integrated activities.

- d) Plan and set up a learning centre which is based on the children's interests as determined through observations and in consultation with the practicum supervisor and instructor. The student is responsible for gathering the necessary materials, setting up the centre for a minimum of one week, interacting with the children in the centre, and submitting written plans, observations, and evaluation.
- e) The student will plan and carry out three group times. Students are encouraged to make the group time relate to what is happening in the program.

PLEASE NOTE:

All written plans for the week are to be discussed with the supervisor on Monday morning of practicum week. These are to be initialled by the supervisor. Both the supervisor and student should have an in-depth verbal evaluation of progress, midway through the semester. At the end of the final week the student and supervisor should discuss the supervisor's written evaluation of the student's overall practicum progress during the semester before giving it to the College instructor.

### SEMINAR DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the seminar which accompanies the practicum is to allow students to integrate the theories they are being exposed to in their course work with their own emerging practices. As well, since some of the practices which students will observe are different from the philosophical approach espoused by the Early Childhood Development Department, it is necessary for students to understand some of the reasons for this discrepancy. Seminar, then, should serve both short term and long term needs.

1. In the first practicum experience students are often preoccupied with immediate concerns such as planning activities and dealing with limit setting. Ample time to discuss immediate specific issues should be allocated, however, this should not be the only focus.
2. Students should have an opportunity to examine their own assumptions, biases and personal history and to determine the impact on these factors on their current and developing beliefs and practices in terms of their work with young children.
3. Students should be aware of some of the research which relates to their own socialization as early childhood professionals and discuss the implications of these findings.
4. With the two preceding items in mind, students can then critically examine the practices they have been exposed to and undertake a critical examination of the reasons for different styles and approaches to dealing with young children.
5. All of these topics can be discussed on an on-going basis during the student's two year program. Other issues which will no doubt arise during consideration of the above items include: advocacy not only for young children, but for the early childhood professional; professionalism and continued peer support after graduation; and guiding children's behaviour.
6. Regular journal entries may assist the student in reflecting on their beliefs and behaviours and their own learning and development.

Seminar should not only provide a time for students to discuss their immediate concerns, but it should also develop in the prospective early childhood professional, a spirit of critical inquiry. Preparation in the form of reading, thinking and writing should constitute a vital component of seminar.

## CD1060 SEMINAR GUIDELINES

Seminar provides students with the opportunity to integrate practicum with class content and to share and expand experiences. Students will meet regularly for scheduled seminars. Students must fulfill the requirements for Practicum and Seminar in order to receive credit for both.

CD1060 will focus on the needs and interests of Practicum students and also include:

1. Clarification of Practicum Expectations and Tasks.
2. Writing Objectives, Completing Planning Sheets, Skills in Observing Children, and Evaluating Planned Experiences.
3. Sharing and Analyzing Experiences in Practicum Settings.
4. Enhancement of Communication Skills in Dealing Positively with Adults and Children. Topics to be covered will include:
  - recognizing one's own values in relating to others.
  - positively guiding children.
  - recognizing appropriate times to deal with interpersonal issues.
  - augmenting communication skills to work effectively with children, families, co-workers, and the community.