

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

**CD2040
ON-CAMPUS
PRACTICUM III DESCRIPTION AND GUIDE**

**CD2060
SEMINAR III DESCRIPTION**

Revised April, 1994

CD2040

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.

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 component with class content, and to share and expand experiences, students will regularly meet for scheduled practicum seminars. Students must fulfill 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. The experienced student should 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 support, encouragement 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. The evaluation is then submitted to 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.

CD2040 PRACTICUM III

EXPECTATIONS

This semester students should demonstrate increasing ability in working with larger groups of children and display greater ability to program in all areas for young children.

1. The student will continue to develop rapport with the children in the program.
2. The student will demonstrate increasing skills in helping children develop autonomy and initiative. This would involve dealing with more complicated and interpersonal conflicts that occur among children.
3. The student will continue to develop skills in interacting spontaneously with individuals and small groups of children helping them learn through their play.
4. The students will plan, implement and evaluate activities which take into account the developmental needs of an individual child.
5. The student will plan and carry out activities which stimulate and develop children's thinking.
6. The student will be able to plan, implement and evaluate appropriate activities for a particular learning centre being aware of the use of space, time and materials.
7. The student will plan, implement and evaluate a series of coordinated activities using a flow chart method of planning.
8. The student will demonstrate skill in working with larger groups of children.
9. The student will show sensitivity towards and acceptance of the children and their families regardless of ethnicity, religion, economic situation and family lifestyles.

CD2040 PRACTICUM III

STUDENT PRACTICUM TASKS

WEEK 1

During this week you are expected to interact informally with the children in all aspects of 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

During two weeks of practicum students will take responsibility for two centres in the program (i.e. water, sand, woodworking, etc). This could involve new centres or changing existing ones and should be done in consultation with the practicum supervisor.

Students will also be responsible for planning and carrying out at least 6 groups (circle) times. The students should be demonstrating increased confidence in dealing with larger groups on their own.

Written plans should be discussed and initialled by the practicum supervisor at the beginning of each practicum week.

Towards the end of the third week (first block), the student and supervisor would have an in-depth verbal evaluation of the student's progress. A written evaluation at this time is recommended. At the end of the final week the student and supervisor should discuss the supervisor's written evaluation of the student's overall progress. The evaluation should then be submitted to college instructor.

According to DAP, (page 68) "programming is integrated so that learning occurs primarily through projects, learning centres, and playful activities that reflect current interests of children...teachers use much of their planning to prepare the environment...so children can learn through active involvement with each other, adults and the many learning opportunities provided within the environment..." Students will plan and carry out integrated programming experiences within a variety of programme areas. These experiences should be implemented with an integrated approach. A set of three or more integrated experiences should be implemented during both the first and second block of practicum.

SEMINAR DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the seminar which accompanies the practicum is to allow students to integrate the theories they are being introduced 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 of 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.

CD2060 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.

CD2060 will focus on the needs and interests of Practicum students and also include:

1. Clarification of Practicum Expectations and Tasks.
2. Integrated Activities, Play Based Centres, Routines, Group Times, Skills in Observing Children, and Evaluating Planned Experiences.
3. Sharing and Analyzing Experiences in Practicum Settings.
4. Resume Writing and Interview Skills
 - writing a professional resume and covering letter.
 - familiarization with interview procedures and techniques.