



Rehabilitation Studies
RHAB 4880
Practicum Manual

Department of Rehabilitation & Health Services
College of Health and Public Service
University of North Texas
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Table of Contents

Department of Rehabilitation & Health Services University of North Texas Rehabilitation Undergraduate Program	3
Practicum in Rehabilitation	
Purpose of Field Site Experience.....	4
Agency, Supervisor, Student and Faculty Responsibilities	
The Agency.....	7
On-site Supervisor Responsibilities.....	7
Student Responsibilities.....	8
Faculty/RHS Responsibilities.....	10
Interviewing Performance Goals for Course.....	11
Description of Practicum Activities.....	11
Evaluation of Students.....	12

**Department of Rehabilitation & Health Services
University of North Texas**

Undergraduate Rehabilitation Program

A major part of the mission of the Department of Rehabilitation & Health Services at the University of North Texas is to provide outstanding undergraduate-level preparation of rehabilitation professionals who can help to meet the continuing demand for rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities. Toward this goal, RHS offers a Bachelor of Science degree in Rehabilitation Studies as well as a minor and certificate in Rehabilitation Studies. The curriculum combines academic theory and technique courses with a hands-on practicum experience. The faculty of the Rehabilitation Studies program place very high value on the exposure of students to a broad spectrum of rehabilitation services, professional organizations, interdisciplinary professional activities, as well as advocacy and consumer groups in the field of rehabilitation.

The program at UNT endorses the philosophy that rehabilitation is an empowering process in which persons exercise control over their own lives. The program adheres to concepts of the holistic nature of people, self-responsibility for health promotion and wellness, the uniqueness of each individual, equal opportunity for health care, and social and economic involvement for all persons with disabilities. These concepts form the philosophical basis for coursework which prepares students to provide vocational assessment and guidance, case management, and substance use and mental health services for persons with any type of physical, mental, emotional or social disability.

The purpose of this manual is to identify the function of the supervised practicum and to outline the specific responsibilities of the student intern, the faculty liaison, the agency and the agency supervisor. All undergraduate students in the Department of Rehabilitation & Health Services at the University of North Texas are required to complete a supervised practicum in an approved setting. This experience provides the student with an opportunity to apply the theoretical concepts and skills learned in the academic program and integrate that knowledge with practical experience. In addition, the supervised practicum allows the student to make the transition from the university setting to an actual work setting and therefore adapt more realistically to the professional life he/she is about to pursue.

Field Site Experience in Rehabilitation

Purpose of the Field Site Experience

The purpose of the Practicum in Rehabilitation Services is to provide student trainees with supervised, practical experience in established rehabilitation programs. Prerequisite to field site experiences is satisfactory completion of all or most of the core courses and approval of the faculty for enrollment in practicum. For non-majors pursuing the minor and/or treatment certificate, students are required to complete a minimum of 6 classes. For more details, please see the undergraduate catalogue.

While we have a basic format and general objectives for the practicum, the guidelines are somewhat flexible in that we recognize that each situation is unique, depending on student needs and background, the field-site supervisor, the caseload, and the specific program where the field experience is taking place.

However, our primary objective is to provide students with the opportunity to further develop their skills in interviewing, assessment, case management, documentation, and treatment planning.

Field-site experience

The practicum experience shall include instructional experiences dealing with rehabilitation concerns and clinical experiences that facilitate the development of basic rehabilitation skills. These experience may include opportunities for conducting or observing interviews, case management, documentation, and treatment planning, etc. that will be reviewed by a supervisor. In addition to the off-campus (field site) component of the practicum, students are also expected to engage in the academic component which involves submitting course assignments online to the instructor. Direct, periodic communication will be maintained throughout the semester between the site supervisor and the UNT faculty practicum/internship coordinator. The practicum experience requires a total of 200 hours of experience in the field.

Practicum course

The practicum course builds on the basic skills learned throughout the program. In addition to the field work at an agency site, the practicum includes an online academic course presented through Canvas. This course requires weekly engagement by the student including, but not limited to, timely submission of course assignments, performance evaluations, and teleconference or field site visit (if possible) to discuss individual strengths and needs.

Objectives of the Practicum

1. To learn the function, structure and goals of the agency.
2. To understand how the agency fits into the community human services system.
3. To identify and understand the causes and nature of social problems with which the agency is concerned.
4. To learn how to establish and maintain significant relationships with fellow staff and clients, including persons of different cultural and ethnic backgrounds.
5. To develop skills in written and verbal communication and in interviewing techniques in a human service agency.
6. To identify specific professional and personal strengths and weaknesses of performance during the practicum experience.
7. To develop skills in problem identification, analysis, and problem solving within an agency setting.
8. To gain skills in caseload management, plan formation, plan implementation.

Procedure for Arranging the Practicum

The timeline and procedural description that follows are provided to assist the student and the university in fulfilling their responsibilities for the practicum.

Semester Preceding the Practicum

- The semester preceding the beginning of a practicum, the student will enroll in and complete the self-paced Practicum Orientation course via Canvas. In this orientation, practicum procedures and requirements will be presented in detail to the students. Students will be advised that the practicum materials can be accessed by connecting with the Rehabilitation Studies academic advisor. For a list of advisors, please visit [Advising | College of Health and Public Service \(unt.edu\)](http://unt.edu).
- Ideally, the practicum should be completed during the student's last semester of enrollment. However, if the student has a compelling need to enroll in the practicum prior to their final semester, he/she still must meet all eligibility requirements noted on the practicum application and should be no more than approximately 12 hours (including practicum) of coursework away from graduation. For any deviations from these guidelines, please consult with the RHS Internship Coordinator, Jill Denniston, for guidance and approval.

Suggested Course Load During the Practicum Semester

Students are encouraged to enroll in no more than 12 credit hours during their practicum semester. For example, 3 hours of practicum and 3 other 3 credit hour courses. The practicum course involves a substantial time commitment both in and outside of class. Students should also consider other commitments such as part-time jobs, family responsibilities, or extracurricular activities when deciding how many credit hours to enroll in. RHS realizes that students face difficult financial and time management decisions

on this matter; therefore, students may wish to consult with the RHS internship coordinator for guidance.

Practicum Placement:

Multiple human service-related agencies offer practicum experiences to Rehabilitation Studies undergraduate students. A list of such agencies is maintained by Jill Denniston, Internship Coordinator, and can be shared with students if requested via email sent to Jill.Denniston@unt.edu. If the agency the student desires to complete a practicum with is not listed, this does not imply that a practicum rotation cannot be arranged. RHS welcomes the addition of qualified sites to offer our students to meet their goals and needs. In addition, students may need to arrange appointments with his/her advisor to discuss appropriate practicum sites based on their interests and needs. After meeting(s) with their advisor, the student will investigate practicum possibilities by visiting and interviewing with supervisory personnel at various agencies. When the practicum has been arranged with the agency, the student will complete the student information form and return to the UNT faculty practicum/internship coordinator during the first week of the practicum course. This form will be available to students in the first week of class, in their Canvas course for Practicum.

Field-site supervisor qualification

Qualified field-site supervisors **must** meet the following standards:

- hold at least a bachelor's degree in rehabilitation or a related field, such as Psychology, Social Work, Kinesiology, etc.;
- have a minimum of 3 years of relevant experience; and
- have knowledge of the rehabilitation studies program's expectations, requirements, and evaluation procedures for students.
- For those pursuing LCDC, supervisors should be licensed (LCDC, LPC, or LMSW) in their state to practice.

Semester of the Practicum Experience

The procedures for the practicum are as follows:

- Register for the Canvas practicum orientation by emailing your academic advisor.
- Complete the practicum orientation course, which includes a copy of the student handbook, a video from the Internship Coordinator, Jill Denniston, a no-fail quiz to check for understanding, the practicum application, and a list of practicum sites.
- Complete the practicum application form found on the practicum orientation. This form must be completed and submitted prior to receiving approval to enroll in the course. Students are encouraged to complete this form immediately after completing the practicum orientation.
- Although no contract is required by RHS, your practicum site may require one. If your agency requires such a contract, please contact the Internship Coordinator so that this paperwork can be provided to you. Jill Denniston can be reached via email sent to Jill.Denniston@unt.edu.

- The practicum begins during the first week of the designated semester unless other arrangements have been made with the approval of the RHS faculty liaison and the agency.
- Practicum log forms must be completed weekly and submitted to the course Instructor via Canvas.
- The student information form must be completed and submitted to the course Instructor via Canvas by the first week of class.
- The student evaluation form must be completed by the agency supervisor by mid-term of the semester and then again during finals week. These forms must be submitted to the course Instructor by the student via Canvas by the respective assignment deadlines.
- The student evaluation, agency evaluation, and student self-assessment forms must be completed and submitted to the course Instructor via Canvas the week prior to the final week of class. It is the student's responsibility to see that all three evaluations have been completed and returned to the course Instructor.
- Timely completion of all practicum course assignments is essential in order to earn a grade for the course.

Agency, Supervisor, Student and Faculty Responsibilities

The Agency

1. The agency will make available an experienced on-site supervisor who is directly involved in providing rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities. This on-site supervisor must be available to provide close, one-on-one supervision to the student on a daily basis. The on-site supervisor should have experience in rehabilitation and be experienced in the management or supervision of rehabilitation trainees.
2. The on-site placement agency and site supervisor should be aware of the expectations and standards for rehabilitation practicum students. This information should be made available to the agency and the site supervisor prior to the student's placement in the agency.
3. All ethical and HIPAA guidelines for protection of client confidentiality and client information will be strictly adhered to by the student and the University.

Field-Site Supervisor Responsibilities

1. The on-site supervisor should acknowledge his/her willingness to supervise the student.
2. Each on-site supervisor is asked to initially assist the student to develop a preliminary practicum activity plan, which includes the goals, objectives, activities, and expected completion dates of the learning experiences.
3. The field site supervisor's role for Practicum students will be to provide the student orientation and observation experiences to familiarize them with the agency or facility policies and procedures, role of the rehabilitation professional in that setting, type of clients/families and disabilities served, etc.

4. The supervisor will assign tasks to the student, depending upon the student's level of readiness and prior experience. If intake sessions are assigned, at least a portion of the sessions must be directly observed by the field site supervisor.
5. The on-site supervisor must agree to complete two standard student field site performance evaluation report at mid-term and at the end of the semester. Each evaluation report provides a checklist plus written narrative that summarizes the student's progress in terms of strengths and areas that require improvement on skills and competencies of a Rehabilitation Professional. These evaluations should be discussed with and signed by the student prior to being submitted to the faculty practicum coordinator.

Responsibilities of the Student

1. To learn and observe the procedures, policies and regulations of the agency.
2. To ask for assistance and supervision when needed to assure the client adequate services.
3. To seek the assistance of appropriate staff members to address problems and, if necessary, to register complaints.
4. To utilize the agency supervisor's direction for maximum learning opportunities.
5. To attend conferences, staff meetings, client staffings, etc. assigned by the agency supervisor.
6. To conform to the dress code of the agency.
7. To inform the agency supervisor when he/she will be late or absent.
8. To complete weekly log sheets and submit them to the faculty liaison.
9. To complete a student self-assessment form and an agency evaluation to be returned to the faculty liaison the final week of the semester.
10. To contact the faculty liaison in the event of any problems.

In addition to these responsibilities, the following admonitions regarding internship settings have been developed and apply to all students:

1. Students will not visit clients socially during regular working hours.
2. Students will not correspond with clients except regarding matters of a professional nature.
3. Students will not bring anything into or out of the agency without the permission of the agency supervisor.
4. Students may not make outside contacts for clients without the permission of the agency supervisor.
5. Students may not accept gifts from clients. If the student desires, they may purchase items the client usually sells providing the purchase is conducted through agency procedures established for this purpose.
6. Any unusual or inappropriate client behavior must be reported to the agency supervisor.

7. Students are expected to adhere to the field-site program's policies regarding confidentiality as well as relevant ethical standards.
8. Field-supervisors are encouraged to get in touch with the Clinical Coordinator for the Rehabilitation and Health Services program in the event of any student issues/concerns.

Documentation requirements

1. Upon approval of the student's application for practicum or internship, the student should meet with the on-site supervisor to jointly develop a set of individual learning objectives and activities upon which to focus the student's field site training experience during the semester. A copy of this learning activities plan will be provided to the practicum coordinator by the end of the third week of the semester.
2. Field Site Experience Documentation: Students are required to maintain records of their field on site experiences on a daily and weekly basis. This documentation includes the following:
 - a. Learning objectives/activities plan
 - b. Daily Time/Activity Log: chronological record of daily activities showing actual clock hours spent in various rehabilitation services activities (ex. 8:00-10:00 – attended weekly staffing). At the side of the last entry for the day, students should indicate the total accumulated hours (ex. Cum. Hrs.: 45). Supervision time should be recorded separately, as well as the amount of time the student provided direct client services. However, the cumulative number of hours at the field site will include supervision, direct client services, and all other activities performed.
 - c. Weekly Supervision Summary: A narrative summary of topics discussed in student's weekly supervision meetings at the field site, along with a summary of what was learned in supervision that week
 - d. Supervisor evaluation of student performance: both the mid-term and final evaluation must be completed by the on-site supervisor, using the special UNT evaluation form provided to the students.
 - e. Student's Final Self-evaluation Report: the student's written self-evaluation at the end of the semester, focusing on the objectives in the initial Learning Activity Plan. This report should summarize the student's progress in meeting the specific learning objectives established at the beginning of the field site experience, and what additional learning objectives the student believes he/she needs to pursue for continued growth and development as a Rehabilitation Professional.

Responsibilities of the RHS Faculty Practicum/Internship Coordinator at UNT

1. The Rehabilitation program will provide a designated faculty member each semester as practicum coordinator and course instructor. All arrangements for field site placements and for the maintenance of field site experience requirements/documentation rest with this individual.
2. The regular group supervision/seminar meetings of the practicum will be scheduled and supervised by the practicum instructor. Individual and group supervision of practicum students also will be arranged and/or conducted by the instructor.
3. The practicum instructor is responsible for maintaining communication with each field site supervisor assigned to a student each semester. The instructor will ascertain that the site supervisor has received copies of all relevant field site documents including the **Field Site Guidelines Manual**, progress evaluation forms, and any other information needed to allow the supervisor to fulfill their student supervision task efficiently and effectively.
4. The practicum instructor is responsible for determining the final course grade for each student, using the site supervisor's, the student's and their own assessments of the student's level of accomplishment of the tasks and objectives of the course (See Evaluation of Students section below).
5. The practicum instructor is responsible for maintaining regular contact with the field site supervisor throughout the semester and for monitoring all field site activity reports on a regular basis. The instructor, in consultation with the site supervisor, is responsible for modifying the activities, assigned readings, etc. to supplement or enhance the field site experience of a student, based on their assessed progress.

Procedure for Handling Lack of Satisfactory Progress in Practicum/Internship

If it is determined that a student is not making satisfactory progress in the practicum field site experience, the Practicum Instructor and Field Site Supervisor will consult as soon as possible to identify specific problem areas and to meet jointly with the student to develop a plan for resolving training deficiencies or addressing attitudinal or behavioral problems that are not consistent with professional or ethical expectations of Rehabilitation Professionals.

If a student does not respond satisfactorily to initial supplemental educational/training efforts, the Practicum Instructor will report the student's lack of progress to the full Rehabilitation faculty for their review and recommendations. The faculty may request a meeting with the site supervisor and the student during its deliberations. In cases of serious student misconduct, either the Rehabilitation Studies Program or the practicum site may terminate the student's practicum experience, preferably after initial remediation efforts have been attempted unsuccessfully. When behavior is considered unethical or fails to abide by the rules of the agency or university, the student may be dropped from the program.

Description of Practicum Activities

It is expected that each student beginning a practicum experience is knowledgeable about services, procedures, and the treatment process. When the student begins a field-based practicum experience the student should be prepared to participate in the following activities:

Assessment

- Procedures involved in diagnostic work-up (required)
- Assessment summaries (required)
- Case or team staffings/conferences (optional)
- Medical and psychiatric consultations (optional)

Clinical Counseling Experiences (for LCDC students only)

- Individual counseling sessions (required)
- Group counseling (co-lead with experienced group counselor)
- Family counseling: co-counselor (optional)

Provision of Services

- Case management (required)
- Treatment plans (required)
- Termination/discharge summaries (required)
- Psychoeducational groups: co-lead or lead (optional)

- Attend staff meetings (optional)

Evaluation of students:

A **mid-term** and **final** evaluation will be conducted by the field-site supervisor and faculty supervisor. Thus, it will be possible for both the faculty and field-site supervisors to evaluate how well students are meeting the objectives of the Practicum course throughout and at the end of the Practicum experience.

Evaluation by student: A final typed summary report of the academic component, field experience component, and clinical supervision component of the practicum is required from the student at the completion of the course. Copies of this summary should be presented to the field-site and faculty supervisor. The report should include personal impressions, reactions, and examples of meaningful experiences, suggestions for improving the field experience, supervision, and other comments the student feels appropriate. The report should present and reflect a concise picture of the total experience including both on-campus seminar and supervision, and the field-site experience.

Final grade: The assignment of the final grade is the responsibility of the faculty supervisor, with input from the field-site supervisor.