

## **Science & Global Change Program Checklist for Developing a Practicum Project**

In the Spring of your sophomore year you will be enrolled in a course called the Practicum, the capstone experience of Science & Global Change. The Practicum is an individual research, service-learning, or internship project related to the natural sciences. While the Practicum is designed to be completed *during* the second semester of sophomore year, some students have found it useful to conduct their work during the summer between their freshman and sophomore years. Towards that end, we are providing this information on how to do that.

### STEP 1: IDENTIFYING A POTENTIAL SITE AND PROJECT

The Traditional Practicum: Your work must have some connection to STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics & Medicine (in other words, the natural and physical sciences, broadly defined.) Your work must deal with the generation, transmission, or application of natural and physical science. Examples include—but are by no means limited to!—the following:

- ❖ **Generation of natural and physical science**: working in a research laboratory; doing your own independent research
- ❖ **Transmission of natural and physical science**: mentoring students in math and/or science; working as a docent in a museum, zoo, or similar institution
- ❖ **Application of natural and physical science**: working in a medical facility; shadowing a physician, forensic scientist, field hydrologist; curation or preparation of fossils and artifacts in a museum; working as a volunteer behind the scenes at a zoo; etc.

Note that not all work at science-related institutions would count. For example, filing paperwork and entering insurance and social security numbers at a doctor's office would **NOT** fulfill our requirements; actually dealing with patients, medicine, and medical data (numbers such as heart rate, cholesterol levels, etc.) would.

In order to fulfill your Practicum requirements, your work must:

- **NOT** be for credit for some other class, or for fulfillment of some other University obligation (i.e., NO double dipping)
- **NOT** be working directly for a member of the immediate family. (It might be the place that a family member works, but the direct line of responsibility for turning in your evaluations must be from a non-relative)
- Will receive credit at the following rate:
  - 35 to <80 hours onsite (i.e., excluding travel time): 1 credit
  - 80 to <125 hours onsite: 2 credits
  - $\geq$ 125 hours onsite: 3 credits – **ONLY** the 3 credit version will count for Scholarship in Practice credit

**NOTE:** You may be allowed to use a paid internship or job for the project, so long as you are not also getting credit for it in another course.

**Alternative Courses:** Alternatively, there are a set (which changes from year to year) of Scholars courses organized, run, and graded by other Scholars faculty which will we regards as fulfilling the course component of the Practicum. The SGC faculty will inform you which of these can work as a Practicum course.

## STEP 2: GETTING A PROPOSAL APPROVED

Once you have discovered a likely site and project, send Holtz & Merck a **Practicum Proposal**. This is an email (if done before the Fall of your sophomore year) and a text on ELMS (in all cases) of about 1-2 paragraphs length, which tells us:

- Where you want to work (the institution)
- Who you would work for (your **site supervisor**)
- What you would be doing (NOTE: this might be vague at first)
- How many hours you would expect to work there
- What you would expect to learn about STEMM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics, or medicine) from doing this work

Submit a proposal to Holtz & Merck (again, this is something you type up on ELMS (and additionally as a email if done before Fall of your sophomore year): there is no formal form).

Alternatively, if you wish to use one of the pre-approved courses to complete the Practicum, submit on ELMS the text “I intend to use [course number and name] to complete my Practicum.”

(In the special case of CPSP 359S Discovery Research, you must additionally indicate the topic and question you intend to investigate; the topic must be a STEMM topic).

If they approve it, the next step is to set up a Learning Contract.

## STEP 3: THE LEARNING CONTRACT

**Traditional Practicum:** This form is downloadable from <http://www.geol.umd.edu/sgc/docs/learncontract.pdf>

It is signed by your and by your site supervisor, scanned, and uploaded onto ELMS ***BEFORE*** you start earning credit hours. (Note: if you are getting your Learning Contract signed before the start of CPSG 200, email us the scan, but keep a copy of the scan to upload when CPGS 200 begins.) Confirm with us that we have received your Learning Contract before you start to work.

Alternative Courses: If you are instead using one of the pre-approved courses to complete the practicum, you do not need to fill out a Learning Contract. Instead, get a screen capture from Testudo of your registration for that course, and submit that scan as your “contract.”

Alternative Courses:

Skip Steps 4, 5 & 6. Instead, complete the coursework for the class you are using to complete the practicum. You will still need to complete some additional items in the Spring of your Sophomore year (associated with the Academic Showcase) in order to fulfill the complete Practicum requirement. But you do not need to do the Steps 4 & 5 as outlined below, and the course you are taking will replace the traditional Practicum courses listed as Step 6.

Traditional Practicum:

STEP 4: WHILE DOING YOUR WORK

- Keep a **journal or log** of your work: this will not be graded, but it is a good idea to record your activities and thoughts about your work while you are doing them. Consider that you will be writing a poster and a reflection essay about your experience; having a journal or log will be a useful resource in completing this.
- Keep a **time sheet** of your work. After each session at your practicum, record your time spent on the form provided (or on an equivalent form if your site requires their own and they are willing to give us a copy). Your time sheet must be signed by your site supervisor to validate your hours.
  - The time sheet can be found at <http://www.geol.umd.edu/sgc/docs/practimesheet.pdf>
- We strongly encourage you to have someone take a **picture of you** while you are doing your tasks. This can make for a more interesting poster!

STEP 5: CONFIRM THAT YOUR WORK IS DONE VIA THE VERIFICATION FORM

When your hours are completed, download the Verification Form from

<http://www.geol.umd.edu/sgc/docs/verification.pdf>

And have your site supervisor sign it and mail or fax it to us.

STEP 6: SIGN UP FOR ONE OF THE PRACTICUM CLASSES DURING **SPRING SEMESTER** OF YOUR SOPHOMORE YEAR (regardless of when you do the work...)

For Spring of your sophomore year, you will register for one of the following classes:

- CPSG 230 for 1-2 credit Service-Learning projects
- CPSG 240 for 1-2 credit Internship projects
- CPSG 250 for 1-2 credit Research-oriented projects
- CPSP 359G for 3 credit projects (only this version earns Scholarship in Practice [DSSP] credit)