

Experiential Learning is defined at Case Western Reserve University as an innovative approach to education that emphasizes hands-on experience. The Career Center 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 the Career Center (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 in a professional setting and does not take classes. During the fall or spring semesters, the student must work for a minimum of 14 weeks or 560 hours; during the summer, he or she must work for a minimum of 10 weeks or 400 hours. The student will maintain full-time student status during the experience. Part-time option is also available in the fall, spring, and summer - the student must work 20 hours per week.

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

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

*Note that the Practicum Program fulfills CPT requirements for international students. CWRU takes care of the paperwork necessary for employers to hire.

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 the Career Center 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 CWRULink , and include practicum student's supervisor as a contact
Meet with academic advisor to discuss how practicum would affect graduation timeline	Assist student with creating learning objectives, ensuring that they are specific and intentional	Ensure that the student has a supervisor who can provide information about company policies, expectations, key contacts, and consistent feedback
Visit Office of Financial Aid, Housing, and ISS (if applicable) to review logistics of participating in program	Review and approve learning objectives by signing and returning to Practicum Coordinator	Review the practicum student's learning objectives prior to the start of his or her employment with your company
Identify a Faculty member to serve as your advisor and to help you create appropriate learning objectives	Determine with student how reflection assignments will be designed and submitted prior to start of student's 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
Fill out Practicum Form in CWRULink	Provide feedback on reflection assignments throughout semester (or at end)	Support a possible site visit from the Practicum Coordinator during the semester. Coordinator will contact you to schedule the site visit
Create learning objectives and share them with your Faculty Advisor and Practicum Supervisor. Return a signed copy of the learning objectives form (available in CWRULink) to Practicum Coordinator in Career Center	Confer with Practicum Coordinator at the end of the semester to determine whether or not student should pass Practicum	Conduct a mid-point (week 7) and end-point (week 14) evaluation of the practicum student (evaluation will be sent to you by the Prac. Coordinator). Share your evaluation with the student so that he or she can gain valuable feedback
Turn in a copy of the offer letter from your employer to the Practicum Coordinator		
Register for non-credit practicum course and receive class permit from Practicum Coordinator(all done in SIS)		
Complete the mid-way point Self-Evaluation		
Discuss the possibility of an on-site visit with Practicum Coordinator at mid-way point		
Complete the final Self-Evaluation		
Fill out the Practicum Semester Report in CareerLink upon completion of practicum and upload reflection assignments		
Keep in touch with Faculty Advisor through reflection assignments		
Meet with Practicum Coordinator and Faculty Advisor to ensure that all steps have been completed and that you will receive transcript notation		

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Key Components of Practicum Program

- **Learning Objectives**—Under the guidance of the Faculty Advisor, student creates 3 learning objectives that reflect what the student wants to get out of the experience, the methods the student will use to evaluate whether or not the goals have been met, and how the student will present proof of their attainment. These goals must then be approved by the Faculty Advisor first and then 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, which will be sent to students at the appropriate times, contain questions designed to determine how successful the student has been in achieving the learning objectives and the extent to which the student has developed specific skills (i.e., problem-solving skills, teamwork, etc.).
- **Reflection Exercises**—Students must complete reflection assignments that are uploaded to CWRULink upon completion of the Practicum experience. The format, design, and content of these reflections should be determined together by the Faculty Advisor and the student. Some advisors ask students to submit weekly or monthly reports; others ask for a comprehensive reflection at the end of the experience.

Practicum-Internship Comparison Matrix

Criteria	Practicum	Internship
Eligible Students	Undergraduate students enrolled in the College of Arts and Sciences and/or the Weatherhead School of Management	All
Duration of Experience	Minimum of 14 weeks (full-time) or 560 total hours in fall or spring; minimum of 10 weeks (full-time) in summer	Minimum of 8 weeks (part-time or full-time)
Class Standing	Junior Status	None
GPA Requirement	Minimum of 2.5	None
Transcript Notation	Yes, upon completion	None
Registration	PRAC 001 or PRAC 002 (CAS students) / MGMT 001 or MGMT 002 (WSOM students)	None
Compensation Components	Paid or unpaid, but typically paid Learning Objectives, Mid-point and Final Evaluations, Reflection Assignments, Program Report, and Semester Report	Paid or unpaid Learning Objectives suggested

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