



PSYC-525
Practicum in Industrial-Organizational
Psychology

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Office Hours: By appointment

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Prior to the start of the semester, students must have secured a practicum position at a site approved by the director of the Industrial-Organizational (I-O) master's program.
- The number of hours to be completed for the practicum experience should be agreed upon between the student (in consultation with the I-O program director) and the practicum site prior to the start of the practicum experience.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

The practicum experience is designed to provide graduate students in I-O psychology with an opportunity to develop and practice their professional skills in field settings under the supervision of experienced professionals in the areas of I-O, organizational behavior (OB), organizational development (OD), human resources (HR), or related professionals. Students are specifically encouraged to apply the knowledge gained from formal academic training to their practicum site setting. To earn 3 credit hours, students must complete a minimum of 150 hours of experiential work.

While working at the practicum site, students are expected to work toward one or more of the following objectives:

- To obtain further supervised experience in the application of psychological methods in a field setting. Examples include: (a) developing, administering, scoring and interpreting tests and measurements (e.g., job analyses; work samples, employee satisfaction surveys, performance appraisals, selection exams); (b) assisting in the recruitment and selection of new employees; (c) developing and conducting employee training and organizational development programs; (d) collecting and analyzing statistical data; or (e) designing studies to address specific organizational problems and recommending solutions (e.g., employee turnover).
- To gain an understanding of the structure and functions of organizations and their subsystems.
- To develop an understanding of the various roles and functions of I-O Psychologists.
- To consider the professional issues, ethical problems, and legal aspects of functioning as a psychologist in businesses and other organizations.

PRACTICUM PLACEMENT

As noted above, prior to start of the semester, students must have secured a practicum position at a site approved by the director of the Industrial-Organizational (I-O) master's program. Students are ultimately responsible for finding, applying for, and securing a practicum position. However, program faculty—and particularly the program director—provide a substantial amount of assistance with finding practicum positions for students. Regardless of how a practicum position is found (e.g., independently found by student, opportunity sent by program faculty), the identified practicum site must be approved by the program director (there are legal processes and documents that must be completed to get a site approved). Students must have approval from their practicum site to complete no less than 150 hours of experiential work within the duration of the semester. Note that students who complete two practicum experiences can do so either by working additional hours at the same, original site, or by finding a new site for the second practicum experience.

COURSE STRUCTURE AND EVALUATION

As a practicum-focused course, there are no regularly scheduled class times since students engage in experiential learning with or on behalf of the practicum site organization. Students are expected to coordinate and communicate with the course instructor as needed throughout the semester. Course announcements, assignments, and other postings will primarily be managed through Blackboard, so students must ensure that their Blackboard settings are set so that they receive communications from Blackboard. Grades in this course will be based on the following:

- 1. Practicum Information Survey (2 points).** During the first week of the semester, students must complete a brief practicum information survey that gathers and verifies basic background information about their practicum site. By 11:59pm on the first Friday of the semester, students must complete the survey found at this link:
- 2. Statement of Objectives for Practicum Experience (8 points).** Within the first two weeks of the semester, students should coordinate with their practicum site supervisor to establish specific objectives/projects to be completed by the end of the semester. Although the specific nature of the objectives will vary depending on the practicum site and work to be completed, it is expected that students will have somewhere between 1-5 objectives, depending on how large and time-consuming each objective is. If students are completing a second practicum at the same organization, the objectives can be a continuation of work from the prior semester, if this is approved by their practicum site supervisor. By 11:59pm on the second Friday of the semester, students must submit on Blackboard a document that summarizes their objectives for the current semester's practicum experience. There is no specific format requirement, but students are encouraged to be as specific as possible regarding (a) clearly defined outputs that the student must complete and (b) clearly articulated target deadlines for completion.
- 3. Midterm Practicum Report (30 points).** Approximately midway through the semester, students must submit a midterm practicum report. At a minimum, the report must include (a) an overview of the practicum site organization, including its products, services, and/or mission, (b) a description of your role/position within the organization, (c) a narrative summary of your objectives/projects for the semester, (d) an update on progress for each objective, and (e) a self-reflection on your areas of strength and areas

in need of improvement regarding your work at the practicum site. By 11:59pm on the fifth Friday of the semester, students must submit on Blackboard their midterm practicum report. There is no specific format requirement, but the report must address the points listed earlier in this paragraph.

- 4. Final Practicum Report (30 points).** Toward the end of the semester, students must submit a final practicum report. At a minimum, the report must include the following sections: **(a)** an overview of the practicum site organization, including its products, services, and/or mission, **(b)** a description of your role/position within the organization, **(c)** a narrative summary of your objectives/projects for the semester. For these first three sections, you can build on and modify content written for your midterm practicum report. Following this, however, the remaining sections should be largely distinct from the midterm practicum report. Next, you should provide **(d)** a detailed summary of the work output, outcomes, and/or final products for each of your objectives/projects, including illustrative examples in tables, figures, and/or appendices. Finally, you should provide **(e)** a self-reflection on how this practicum experience fits with your longer-term career objectives, commenting on things such as what specific knowledge and skills you have gained from this experience, how this experience might help you achieve your career objectives, and what next steps/goals you hope to pursue on your career path. By 11:59pm on the Monday of Finals Week for the semester, students must submit on Blackboard their final practicum report. There is no specific format requirement, but the report must address the points listed earlier in this paragraph.
- 5. Supervisor Evaluation (30 points).** Toward the end of the semester, students must request that their supervisor complete a survey representing a formal evaluation of student performance (link provided below to be shared with your supervisor). It is the student's responsibility to make sure their supervisor completes and submits the evaluation survey. By 11:59pm on the Monday of Finals Week for the semester, supervisors must complete the evaluation survey found at this link:
- 6. Statement of Hours Completed.** To fulfill the requirements of 3 credit hours for this practicum class, students must complete no less than 150 hours of experiential work within the duration of the semester. Note that this is a *minimum* requirement, and often practicum sites may desire or require more hours than this (historically, students have completed approximately 200 hours per semester). Up to 50 hours beyond the initial 150 hours, if completed over the summer, can be applied toward credit for a second practicum class in the Fall semester. By 11:59pm on the Monday of Finals Week for the semester, students must submit the form on Blackboard that certifies the number of hours completed throughout the semester (see Blackboard for the required form). Although there is no point value for this item, failure to complete this item will result in either an "incomplete" grade, a failing grade, or a substantial grade reduction, depending on the specific circumstances.
- 7. Professionalism.** Students are expected to approach their practicum experience in a professional manner. This includes, but is not limited to, working the total number of agreed upon hours at the practicum site, showing up to work and meetings on time, ensuring work is completed in a conscientious and reliable way (e.g., proof reading and double-checking work products for typos and clarity), completing required assignment within the agreed upon timeline, dressing in a manner that is appropriate for the setting in question, being polite and respectful when interacting with others, and avoiding being

distracted by electronic devices/media that are not work-related. Although professionalism will be captured to some degree by the Supervisor Evaluation described above, repeated concerns related to lack of professionalism can result in either an "incomplete" grade, a failing grade, or a substantial grade reduction, depending on the specific circumstances.

- 8. Additional requirement for Applied Track.** If this practicum class is being taken to fulfill the requirements of the applied track of the I-O program, students must additionally complete an oral presentation. This additional requirement is intended to ensure that the requirements of the applied track of the program are comparable with those of the academic track, where students must complete an oral defense of their thesis. This additional requirement does not apply to those that are taking this practicum class as an elective. To fulfill this requirement, by 11:59pm on the Monday of Finals Week for the semester, students must upload a recorded video presentation to Blackboard that summarizes at least one of the objectives completed at their practicum site during the semester. The video should be approximately 20 minutes in length and should be treated like a professional presentation to a client summarizing (at a minimum) what was done, why it was done, and what the primary outcomes were. Although there is no point value for this item, failure to complete this item will result in failure to satisfy the requirements of the applied track of the I-O program.

SUMMARY OF SUBMISSIONS TIMELINE

The table below provides a summary of the submissions required as part of this practicum class, which are described in greater detail above. Although this table highlights the due dates for the submissions, students should be planning and preparing for these submissions (far) in advance of the actual due dates.

Week	Submission	Details
1	Practicum Information Survey	By 11:59pm on the first Friday of the semester, students must complete the survey.
2	Statement of Objectives for Practicum Experience	By 11:59pm on the second Friday of the semester, students must submit on Blackboard a document that summarizes their objectives for the current semester's practicum experience.
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5	Midterm Practicum Report	By 11:59pm on the fifth Friday of the semester, students must submit on Blackboard their midterm practicum report.
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Finals Week	Final Practicum Report	By 11:59pm on the Monday of Finals Week for the semester, students must submit on Blackboard their final practicum report.
	Supervisor Evaluation	By 11:59pm on the Monday of Finals Week for the semester, *supervisors* must complete the survey.
	Statement of Hours Completed	By 11:59pm on the Monday of Finals Week for the semester, students must submit the form on Blackboard that certifies the number of hours completed throughout the semester.
	Additional requirement for Applied Track (oral presentation)	By 11:59pm on the Monday of Finals Week for the semester, students must upload a recorded video presentation to Blackboard that summarizes at least one of the objectives completed at their practicum site during the semester (this *only applies* to students taking the practicum to fulfill the I-O applied track requirement).

**Note that the instructor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus as currently presented if extenuating circumstance arise or if otherwise deemed necessary.*