

# Student Affairs and Higher Education

## About the Practicum

The practicum enables students to acquire experience and competencies in various domains of higher education administration. The practicum plays a major role in bridging “theory and practice” but beyond that, it offers the context for students to develop their personal administrative and leadership style. It is through the practicum experience that students develop enhanced professional knowledge such as knowledge of people, knowledge of themselves, self-control and interpersonal sensitivity. In addition, the practicum reinforces other skills such as independent problem-solving, working collegially with fellow higher education administrators and developing professional values and attitudes. During practicum, students are mentored and guided by their Site Supervisor and the university faculty member assigned to the practicum course.

### Practicum Policies:

1. The student is responsible for securing his/her practicum site, the agreement of the site supervisor, and approval of such by the university faculty member assigned to the practicum course.
2. The practicum site may not be the current employing unit of the student unless it extends beyond the current job responsibilities.
3. The practicum site supervisor may not be the student’s immediate employment supervisor.
4. The practicum project must be substantially different than the current employment responsibilities of the student.
5. The practicum project requires 300 hours of work, with a minimum of 150 direct hours.
6. The practicum site supervisor must: a) have a minimum of a master’s degree relevant to the program emphasis area; b) have a minimum of two years of pertinent professional experience; c) understand the program’s expectations, requirements and evaluation processes; and d) be willing to take responsibility for the practicum consistent with these requirements.

### The site supervisor agrees to supervise the student under these conditions:

The student will be able to study the broad scope of and perform some of the usual activities or a special project that regularly employed Student Affairs personnel in the setting would be expected to perform. This will be accomplished through observation and participation in a variety of individual and group activities.

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## **Practicum Description and Requirements**

The Practicum requirement for degree completion is 6 credit hours. The six hours can be taken in one semester or divided over two semesters. The total number of required clock hours is 300, 150 for each 3 credit hours. Of those 300 hours, a minimum of 150 must be direct hours and 150 can be indirect. The identification of direct and indirect hours will be provided. All students must gain experience in a minimum of two areas of Student Affairs. If the student is currently employed in Student Affairs, the practicum experience must be beyond the current job responsibilities.

Students will identify a site supervisor within Student Affairs to oversee the practicum experience. You may have one supervisor for all practicum activities, or you may have a supervisor in each area (maximum of 2 supervisors). That will be dependent upon the site supervisor and how comfortable that individual is in supervising you in the identified areas.

### PART 1 – Contract

You are to create a course contract that will provide an overview of your practicum experiences along with additional activities that you will complete during the semester. The contract will need to be developed in consultation with your site supervisor.

The contract must be approved by the SAHE Program Director prior to beginning to accrue your hours. [Please note that your activities could require revisions before approval is granted.]

Your contract should include:

- A cover page with:
  - Student Name
  - Practicum Site (office name, institution)
  - Site Supervisor's name, title, phone number, and email address
  - Signature lines and signatures of both the Student and the Site Supervisor (your contract will not be accepted without the signature of your Site Supervisor)
- Practicum Information
  - Introductory statement
  - Describe the tasks and activities you will be involved with including:
    - Purpose
    - Steps to be completed
    - Timeline
    - Budget Considerations
    - How you will evaluate effectiveness
  - Explanation of how this practicum experience/site fits with your career plan and professional development needs
  - What skills or knowledge will be obtained, enhanced, or used during these tasks and activities?

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- List the outside areas and the activities you plan to engage in during the practicum (see guidelines for these activities on the following pages).
  - How does each activity relate to your career goals or professional development?
  - What skills or knowledge will be obtained, enhanced, or used during these tasks and activities?

### **PART 2 – Digital Portfolio**

Students will create a digital portfolio in LiveText to document the projects completed in the practicum experience. The portfolio will include any products that are created during practicum and/or a report on all projects completed.

### **OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES REFLECTION PAPERS:**

You are required to submit a reflection paper upon the completion of the four activities that are approved in your Course Contract. Using the “reflective” mode, prepare a 2-3 page paper describing the activities, the date and place of each activity, key players, primary issues or concerns, any unusual circumstances or conditions, and your opinion about the activities. Your opinion should include any theory or concepts you learned or identified during the experience. The opinion piece should encompass the majority of your paper. It is the primary reflection (by you) of this experience and how it contributes to your learning and development. These papers are to be included in your digital portfolio. Students are encouraged to begin writing the paper as soon as the activity is completed.

### **Direct and Indirect Hours**

Direct hours will include the time that you spend directly engaged in practicum activities to include:

- Time spent in the office
- Attending program activities
- Shadowing
- Interviewing
- Attending meetings

Indirect hours include:

- Researching information
- Reading materials related to the program area
- Writing reflection papers
- Preparing digital portfolio
- Preparing project materials

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## GUIDELINES FOR OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES

Part of your practicum requirement is to have experiences in each of the departments within the five major higher education administration units:

- 1) Leadership and governance
- 2) Student programs and services
- 3) Academic affairs
- 4) Planning and assessment
- 5) Resources

In addition to the two projects completed in the primary practicum areas, you are required to engage in one activity in each of the remaining higher education administrative units. You **may not** complete an activity within the unit where you are currently doing the practicum or where you are currently employed unless it extends beyond your current job responsibilities.

Outside Activities can encompass things such as:

- Attending a meeting on a particular topic (e.g., budget, job search, accreditation, strategic planning, etc.) or with a specific group (e.g., Board of Regents, Faculty Senate, IT Planning, Curriculum Committee, etc.)
- Shadowing a specific leader in higher education (e.g., campus security officer, director of disability services, etc.)
- Participating in a special activity (e.g., police ride around, disciplinary hearing, developing a new course proposal, student newspaper work project, etc.)
- Interviewing a specific leader on a selected topic (e.g., Director of Human Resources about legal issues of hiring, Athletic Director about NCAA requirements, Chief Financial Officer about funding sources, President about open meetings regulations, etc.).

When choosing your outside activities, ask yourself:

- How does each activity relate to your career goals or professional development?
- What skills or knowledge will be obtained, enhanced or used during these tasks and activities?

Here is a list of potential areas in each higher education administrative unit:

### Leadership & Governance

- Board of Regents
- THECB (for Texas students)
- State legislature and/or state educational board
- Faculty Senate

## **Student Affairs and Higher Education**

- Legal Council
- Public Information Office
- Staff Council
- President's Council
- Campus Security

### **Student Programs and Services**

- Student Organizations
- Veterans Affairs
- Financial Aid
- Co-curricular Advising
- Residence Life
- Bookstore
- New Student Orientation
- Recreational Sports
- Student Health Services
- Alcohol Education Programs
- Greek Societies
- Student Rights and Responsibilities
- Spirit Programs
- Campus Activities
- Disability Services
- Counseling Services
- Multicultural Services
- Parent and Family Programs
- Career Services
- Athletics

### **Academic Affairs**

- Admissions
- Academic advising
- Articulation Agreements
- First Year Experience (FYE)
- Curriculum Planning/Evaluation
- International Student Services/Study Abroad
- Core Curriculum
- Registrar
- Enrollment Management
- Transfer
- International Education
- Student Athletes
- ROTC
- Testing Services
- Library

## **Student Affairs and Higher Education**

- Distance Education
- Developmental Education
- Faculty Tenure/Academic Freedom/Professorial Rank
- Honors Students Programs
- Teaching
- Developmental Education

### **Planning and Assessment**

- Institutional Research
- Institutional Effectiveness
- Accreditation
- Crisis Management
- Strategic Planning

### **Resources**

- Budgeting
- Facilities/Physical Plant
- Staffing/Human Resources
- Grants
- Alumni
- University Advancement
- Continuing Education/Noncredit courses
- Technology/IT Management
- Dining Services

Please consult with your Site Supervisor to develop your outside activities.

# **Student Affairs and Higher Education**

## **Application Deadlines and Process**

You must return this application by:

November 1—Spring Practicum

April 1 – Summer Practicum

July 1—Fall Practicum

- You must complete all forms in the application packet in order to be considered for the practicum.
- Once your application is received you will be contacted through the email provided, and notified if there is any further information required.
- When your practicum is approved, you will receive a final copy of the signed forms for your records.

### **Internship Instructor**

Dr. Le'Ann Solmonson  
E-Mail: lsolmonson@sfasu.edu  
936.468-1065

### **Complete and return the application to:**

Dr. Le'Ann Solmonson

If you have any questions concerning the internship or the application you may call or email Dr. Solmonson.

# Student Affairs and Higher Education

## Student's Information:

<b>Name:</b>		<b>SFASU ID Number:</b>	
<b>Mailing Address:</b>		<b>Zip:</b>	
<b>City:</b>	<b>State:</b>		
<b>Home Phone Number: (    )</b>	<b>Cell Phone Number: (    )</b>		
<b>Email Address (primary):</b>			
<b>Semester in which you will enroll for practicum :</b>			
<b>Institution where you are currently employed (if applicable):</b>			
<b>Your current job title:</b>			
<b>Your current supervisor (first and last name):</b> Note: This is for information purposes only. We will not contact your current supervisor without your consent.			



## Student Affairs and Higher Education

### Course Requirements:

Please indicate below which courses you have taken. If you have completed the course, select "YES". If you have not taken the course, select "NO". If you are currently enrolled, please select "CURRENT".

Prefix and Number	Required Courses	When Offered	
COU 543	Theories of College Student Development	Fall	
COU 546	Ethical and Legal Issues in Student Affairs	Spring	
COU 519	Introduction to Student Affairs	Fall	
COU 581	Interviewing Skills	Summer I	
COU 536	Diversity Issues in Student Affairs	Summer II	
COU 551	Finance in Student Affairs	Fall	
COU 545	Leadership and Administration in Student Affairs	Spring	
COU 537	Organization and Group Dynamics	Spring	
COU 525	Vocational and Education Information	Spring, Summer I	
COU 585	Lifespan Development	Fall, Spring, Summer II	
COU 596	Practicum in Student Affairs* (6 hours)	Summer	
COU 544	Research and Program Evaluation in Student Affairs	Fall	
	Elective (i.e.. Crisis counseling, Mental Health Counseling) *For students who may pursue a PhD in the future, it is strongly recommended you take an additional research course as your elective		

# Student Affairs and Higher Education

## Cooperating Site Administrator Practicum Agreement

<b>Business/Institution Name:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	<b>Zip:</b>
<b>City:</b>	<b>State:</b>
<b>Phone Number:</b>	<b>Fax Number:</b>
<b>Cooperating Site Administrator:</b>	
<b>Phone Number:</b>	<b>Email Address:</b>
<b>Description of the Practicum (e.g., responsibilities, duties, etc.):</b>	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 150px;"></div>	

Please check the boxes below as you confirm each statement:

- I have a master's degree (or higher) relevant to my higher education functional area.
- I have a minimum of two years of higher education professional experience.
- I understand the practicum expectations, requirements, and evaluation processes.
- I am willing to take responsibility for the practicum consistent with these requirements.
- I will provide assistance and opportunities necessary in order to fulfill the practicum requirements.

Supervisor's Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\* If your cooperating site administrator changes please resubmit this page with the proper signature and information. \*\*\*

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## Practicum Agreement for Student

Please check the boxes below as you confirm each statement:

\_\_ I understand that I am participating in a practicum sponsored by the Student Affairs and Higher Education Program of Stephen F. Austin State University and

\_\_\_\_\_ (cooperating institution).

\_\_ I recognize that during the practicum, I am subject to the rules, regulations, and policies of Stephen F. Austin State University as well as those of the location listed above.

\_\_ I have read this agreement and understand the required guidelines of the practicum program.

SFASU ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Office Use Only

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Approved       Denied

Professor of Record: \_\_\_\_\_

Initials: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_