



STEPHEN F. AUSTIN
STATE UNIVERSITY

NACOGDOCHES, TEXAS

Human Sciences Practicum Handbook

Human Development & Family Studies

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What is a Practicum?

A practicum is a planned and closely supervised “hands on” learning experience providing the student with a wide range of actual work activities and opportunities to shadow or observe portions of operations or administration for which actual work experience is not practical or possible. The objective of the practicum is to give the student reality-based experience to balance (augment) the theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom.

Practicums are to be secured by the student and, in our program, are taken as concurrent placements. This means that you will be taking other classes while you complete your practicum and must be able to successfully balance your practicum, other classes, and your personal life.

General Practicum Information

1. All Human Development and Family Studies majors must complete HDFS 4319 (HMS 342): Pre-Practicum & HMSC 4320 (HMS 420): Practicum.
2. All paperwork for the practicum must be completed and approved during HDFS 4319: Pre-Practicum and HDFS 4319 must be completed with a grade of “C” or higher in order to be given a permit to register for HMSC 4320: Practicum.
3. In HDFS 4319 students must complete the following to be permitted into HMSC 4320:
 - A. Complete the HDFS 4319 Agreement in which you must agree to the following:
 - a. HDFS 4319 must be taken the Fall/Spring semester prior to a student taking HDFS 4320 Practicum.
 - b. If you do not earn a grade of at least “C” or higher in HDFS 4319, you will fail pre-practicum and have to retake the class prior to enrolling in HMSC 4320.
 - c. One of the main goals of Pre-Practicum is to find and secure a practicum site. During the semester you must be actively looking to find and secure a practicum site. If you are actively looking, but have not found and secured a practicum site by the end of finals week, you will receive a grade of Withheld in HMS 342. However communication is essential. If you do not share with the instructor that you are having difficulties securing a practicum site, it will be assumed you are not in the process of securing a site and you will fail the course.
 - d. When you receive a grade of Withheld, you must find and secure a practicum site prior to the next semester (Fall/Spring). If you do not have a site, you will not be allowed to enroll in HMSC 4320 the following semester and will receive a grade of “D” or “F” for the pre-practicum course.
 - e. You are required to complete a minimum 200 hours at your practicum location and 100 hours of course work to successfully complete HMSC 4320.
 - f. Some students desire to do their practicum site at their place of employment. In order for the HDFS 4319 instructor to approve your place of employment as your practicum site the following must be true:

- i. your place of employment must be in the field of human development and family studies
 - ii. you and your employment supervisor must develop a detailed plan of how your practicum will be different than your current employment at the agency/school you work for.
- B. Complete all necessary meetings with the pre-practicum instructor which are outlined in the pre-practicum course.
- C. Complete all necessary electronic paperwork which is outlined in the pre-practicum course and includes electronic paperwork for both the student and the supervisor.
- D. Upon successful completion of all necessary course work in HDFS 4319: Pre-Practicum, you will be granted a permit to register for HMSC 4320: Practicum for the following semester.
- E. Practicum hours may only be completed during the semester the student is enrolled in HDFS 4320.

Appropriate Practicum Sites

All sites must allow the student to directly interact with the operations of the organization. This may include support services like marketing and clerical work or interacting with children and families. Completing observations at a community-based program without directly interacting with the organization and their mission is unacceptable.

The goal of practicum is to allow students the opportunity to learn valuable skills and to test out the knowledge learned in the classroom to an actual population receiving community-based services. Thus, it is expected all internship sites affords students the opportunity to build skills, expand knowledge, and learn hands on prevention and intervention activities designed to improve the well-being of others.

You may complete your practicum at your place of employment if it is approved by the instructor. In order for the instructor to approve your place of employment, your employment must be in the field of human development and family studies. You and your supervisor must develop a detailed plan of how your practicum will be different than your current employment at the agency/organization at which you are employed.

Contact Information

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Pre-Practicum Checklist

- _____ Enroll in HDFS 4319: Pre-Practicum
- _____ Pass HDFS 4319 with a grade of “C” or higher
- _____ Meet with your site supervisor & develop goals for your practicum
- _____ Complete all necessary paperwork (outlined on the flowchart below)

Step 1: Student completes the Confirmation of Practicum Location Survey.

If student is completing Practicum at their place of employment, they must also complete the Practicum with Current Employer form and upload to Brightspace.

Step 2: Make sure your site supervisor receives and completes the Site Supervisor Approval survey by the due date. This survey will be sent *after* you have completed Step 1.

Step 3: Register for HMS 4320 *after* you have completed Step 1 and Step 2.

Expectations of the Student:

- Will complete all necessary paperwork in HDFS 4319 & HDFS 4320 as outlined in the course syllabus & online modules.
- Will secure an appropriate practicum location.
- Will be a good employee, ask questions, be observant, get involved and represent Stephen F. Austin State University in a professional manner.
- Gain firsthand knowledge and apply theory to analyze the practices of human development and family life education.
- Demonstrate an attitude and demeanor of professionalism.
- Will complete 200 hours of practicum and complete requirements outlined in the course syllabus.
- Will complete 100 hours of in-course class work related to the practicum experience in HDFS 4320.

Expectations of the Practicum Site Supervisor:

- Complete a survey acknowledging agreement to supervise the practicum student.
- Work with the practicum student to meet appropriate objectives that can be accomplished in a 200 hour period.
- Sign time sheets each month. Student is responsible for keeping up with hours and submitting monthly time sheets to faculty supervisor.
- Complete a midterm and final disposition report to faculty supervisor.
- Provide constructive verbal feedback to the practicum student regarding their work and progress.
- Contact the faculty supervisor or program coordinator directly if additional questions or concerns arise.

Expectations of the Pre-Practicum Faculty and Practicum Faculty Supervisor:

- Provides clear expectations and due dates of all assignments & paperwork.
- Meets with student about goals and helps guide student to an appropriate practicum.
- Sends & collects electronic student and supervisor paperwork as needed.
- Requests permits for HDFS 4320 registration.
- Provides feedback on supervisor midterm dispositions.
- Serves as the contact for both student and site supervisor concerns.