# LIS 799 - Practicum Application

**General Information**
The objective of the practicum is to provide students with an opportunity to apply principles learned in graduate study. It is a supervised, unpaid student fieldwork experience of 120 hours (approximately 10 hours per week for 12 weeks) in an approved library or information center under the direction of a full-time GSLIS faculty member. Individual hours are decided upon between the student and library site supervisor. The library supervisor, the faculty advisor and the student meet periodically to review the student's performance and progress.

The practicum (LIS 799) is generally scheduled during the student's final semester in the GSLIS program; however, exceptions may be approved by the dean. Upon successful completion of the practicum, the student receives three credit hours that are applied to his/her MLIS degree.

The goal of practicum field experience is to wed theory and practice in both cognitive and affective domains. This goal is achieved through quality professional experiences in library and information centers, coupled with reflective feedback from cooperating information professionals. Such field experiences allow library and information science students to:

- experience the professional world of libraries, information centers, and knowledge management in organizations
- observe a variety of role models within the profession
- apply and assess their own skills in library and information science, and receive professional input and feedback about their performance
- integrate theory and practice while examining their assumptions about the art and science of librarianship

**Prerequisites**
- completion of 10 GSLIS courses, including the core courses
- minimum GPA of 3.3
- interview with the Coordinator of Student Placement
- completion of practicum application, including essay, goals, and measurable learning objectives
- approval and participation of a full-time GSLIS faculty member
- approval of the dean

**LIS 799 Course Content and Assignments**
- orientation, observation, and analysis of the library/information center environment
- participation in selected activities (as agreed upon by the site supervisor and student)
- introduction to the elements of planning, programming, budgeting, and evaluating the library/information services provided
- completion of a research report or report resulting from a project
- regular student reflection and site supervisor feedback
- evaluation of experiences by both student and site supervisor

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**Practicum Timeline**
**Before**
- The student should schedule a meeting with Coordinator of Student Placement (at least one semester prior to practicum date) to discuss fieldwork placement guidelines and options.  Students are encouraged to discuss career interests, goals for the practicum, and potential scheduling arrangements.
- The student then meets with a full-time GSLIS faculty member to discuss his/her availability and willingness to serve as practicum advisor.  The plan for the practicum should derive from the course objectives and should consider both the needs of the student and the unique characteristics of the practicum setting.
- Due to the volume of practicums and the need to centrally coordinate them, all placements will be made by the Coordinator of Student Placement.*

*Students in the School Library Media Program (SLMP) should contact the Coordinator of Clinical Practice, who will coordinate placement for all school library practicums.

Once the student has received clearance from his/her practicum faculty advisor to proceed, the student must inform the Coordinator of Student Placement, who will then contact the practicum site on behalf of the student.  Afterward the Coordinator will share the site information and the student will schedule a practicum interview with the library/information center.

If after the interview both student and site supervisor are in agreement to move forward, they will report that information to the Coordinator of Student Placement and begin completing the practicum application process.  The student, site supervisor and faculty advisor will draft the details and finalize all paperwork at least six weeks before the practicum is scheduled to begin. Completed paperwork must be submitted to the Coordinator of Student Placement no later than two weeks prior to advance registration for the semester of the practicum.

**During**
The practicum student must complete 120 hours of work at the host site under the supervision of an on-site information professional.  The practicum is a core part of each student's experience, as it is the time when theory-to-practice and applied learning occurs. This may entail some routine tasks, but the majority of the time should be spent on higher level, professional activities. While each practicum student brings a different set of skills, a central goal is for the student to stretch in new directions and explore areas where there is a need to gain knowledge and practical experience.

During the semester the student's faculty advisor will make a site visit to assess the student's progress.  Site supervisors are expected to provide feedback and evaluation to their students during the course of the practicum, and faculty advisors are responsible for determining the academic component of the practicum.  This may include a reflective journal, class or individual meetings with faculty, and a paper or project report.  Students are expected to keep a log of dates, hours, and/or their daily activities.

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**After**

At the end of the practicum both the student and site supervisor will be asked to complete a short form describing the activities carried out during the practicum.  Final evaluation is based on fulfillment of both the on-site and academic components of the practicum.

**Guidelines**

- No more than one student at a time should participate in a practicum at a given institution within a given semester unless they are scheduled to work on different days.
- Final arrangements for a practicum (agreement and schedule) should be determined in consultation with the student, the site supervisor, and the faculty member no later than four weeks prior to the advance registration period for the semester in which the practicum is to be completed. The faculty member will review the practicum documentation, sign the appropriate forms, and forward all paperwork to the Coordinator of Student Placement, who will review the file and submit it for the dean's signature. The student will then be allowed to register (in person) for LIS 799.
- The site supervisor is encouraged to keep Work Progress Reports (see attached) or equivalent written documentation on activities performed by the student. The reports should be returned to the faculty advisor at regular intervals, with the first report submitted after the third week of the practicum.  Subsequent reports should be completed and submitted to the faculty advisor as arranged by agreement between the faculty advisor and site supervisor.
- A work log, journal, and a course research report, or report resulting from a project, is required of the practicum participant.

**Communication**

A student's request for extraordinary time off from the arranged practicum, for whatever reason, should be cleared with both the site supervisor and the practicum faculty advisor. Arrangements must then be made to make up the lost clock hours.  Any serious irregularities in attendance, punctuality, attitude, or general professional behavior should be brought to the attention of both the student and the practicum faculty advisor by the site supervisor.

If the Work Progress Report listed above indicates that the placement is unsatisfactory or if either party consistently fails to abide by the agreements made, it is recommended that an early termination of the practicum occur. Participants should contact the dean immediately if termination of the practicum is sought. A 60 percent refund of tuition is issued to the student in this situation.

**Evaluation**

- All participants should review the practicum placement during the first few weeks of the semester and any necessary adjustments should be made.
- Unless restricted by significant geographic distance, the practicum faculty advisor will meet with the student and the site supervisor at least once during the practicum to review the student's progress.
- An evaluation of the practicum experience will be requested from both student and site supervisor at the end of the practicum.

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- The participating institutions are encouraged to provide the following to the practicum faculty advisor:
    - an oral or written summary analysis of the student's overall performance
    - strengths and weaknesses of the operational aspects of the practicum
    - suggestions for improvement of the program to the practicum faculty advisor
- The student should provide the following to the practicum faculty advisor:
    - a brief summary stating the value of the practicum
    - suggestions for improvements of the practicum experience
    - the course research report or report resulting from a project
    - a log of dates, hours, and activities

The practicum faculty advisor and the site supervisor will discuss and agree on the student's grade for the practical component of the practicum; the faculty advisor will be responsible for assessment of the student's research paper or project report and will submit the student's grade.

## GSLIS Practicum Application
(to be completed by student)

Student Name: _____

Email: _____

Proposed Semester of Practicum:
□ Summer        □ Fall        □ Spring    200_

**Student must prepare a 1-2 page, typed response to the following three questions:**

1. How does the practicum complement your course of study?

2. What area of study and practice would you like to emphasize in your practicum?   Why?

3. Do you have a preferred site in mind?   (If so, please briefly describe the library/information center in relation to your practicum goals.)

4. Indicate geographic preference for practicum site:  e.g.,   Chicago, Western suburban, North suburban

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**PRACTICUM AGREEMENT:  Student/Faculty/Site Supervisor Agreement**
**(To be completed by student with input and approval by site supervisor and faculty.**
**Requires site supervisor, faculty, and student signatures).**

Student Name: _____  Student E-mail: _____

Practicum Site: _____

Practicum Site Supervisor:  _____

Practicum to be completed during which semester:
　　　□ Summer 　　□ Fall 　　□ Spring 　　Year:  20___

List at least three measurable learning objectives that will be evaluated at the end of the
practicum:
　　1.　　What:

　　　　　How:

　　　　　By what date:

　　　　　How measured:

　　2.　　What:

　　　　　How:

　　　　　By what date:

　　　　　How measured:

　　3.　　What:

　　　　　How:

　　　　　By what date:

　　　　　How measured:

Student signature: _____Date: _____

Site Supervisor signature: _____Date: _____

Faculty Advisor signature: _____ Date: _____

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**SITE AGREEMENT for GSLIS PRACTICUM**
(to be completed and signed by the Practicum Site Supervisor)

Agreement between Dominican University and

_____
(Practicum Site/Organization Name)

concerning the practicum of _____
(Student Name)

The company/organization named above agrees to establish an orientation and training program for the student appropriate for an academic practicum for the designated number of credits. The company/organization agrees to provide the student with diversified professional responsibilities, including the following specific exercises.

Please attach a brief description of the Practicum site.   Printed website pages are acceptable.

**Practicum Site Information**

_____  _____
Practicum Site Name                                        Telephone

_____  _____
Street Address                                             City/State/Zip

_____  _____
Practicum Site Supervisor Name (print)          Practicum Site Supervisor Signature

_____  _____
Site Supervisor Title                                     Site Supervisor e-mail address

**Approved:** _____  _____
        **Dean, Graduate School of Library and Information Science**      **Date**

### PRACTICUM WORK PROGRESS REPORT
(for use by student and site supervisor to record student assignments and progress)

Student Name: _____

Practicum Site: _____

Department/Unit/area worked in: _____

Practicum Site Supervisor Name: _____

Total hours worked in week: _____ Date: _____

Supervisor:   List the specific activities completed in each area or department where training was supervised. Evaluate the degree of skill possessed by the student in each activity.

| Work Activity or Assignment | Check degree of skill possessed by student |
|---|---|
| 1. | □  1 =Superior performance<br>□  2 = Acceptable performance<br>□  3 = Unacceptable performance<br>□  4 = New skill/not yet possible to rate |
| 2. | □  1 =Superior performance<br>□  2 = Acceptable performance<br>□  3 = Unacceptable performance<br>□  4 = New skill/not yet possible to rate |
| 3. | □  1 =Superior performance<br>□  2 = Acceptable performance<br>□  3 = Unacceptable performance<br>□  4 = New skill/not yet possible to rate |
| 4. | □  1 =Superior performance<br>□  2 = Acceptable performance<br>□  3 = Unacceptable performance<br>□  4 = New skill/not yet possible to rate |

Site Supervisor signature: _____          Date: _____

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