

PSY 490: Practicum
Course Syllabus
1 to 6 credits, pre-arranged

Course Objective:

This course is designed to provide students with opportunities to expand their awareness and understanding of the various fields of work and study that are impacted by the psychology discipline and in which students with bachelor's degrees in psychology often develop careers. Students will engage in supervised work within the field of psychology at a professional site of their choosing. They will coordinate their work with the practicum coordinator and worksite supervisor. Students will spend approximately 3 hours per week per registered credit hour at their worksite (or approximately 45 hours per credit hour per semester). Students will also attend a bi-weekly, two hour group meeting with the practicum coordinator and other students enrolled in the course. This course is aimed at students who may not know what they would like to pursue in terms of a career or possible graduate education, because it offers an opportunity to get real-world experience in the broad field of psychology in addition to developing skills that will help them in their future career.

Prerequisites: PSY 101 and permission of the instructor

After successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Use strategies they developed for networking, communicating, and managing conflict with professionals in the field and within the workplace.
2. Identify the role that diversity, ethics, and their own self-care plays in their relationships with others in the workplace.
3. Assess their professional skills and competencies.
4. Plan future steps for their career goals.
5. Relate the knowledge gained in psychology courses to specific professional contexts, agencies, and/or organizations.

Course Requirements:

1. Students must be accepted into a practicum/internship site prior to enrollment in the course. In addition, an application outlining the planned work conducted at the professional site must be submitted and approved prior to enrollment into the course. The application includes a plan that outlines the scope of the work to be conducted, goals/learning objectives for the student, and expected benefits from the work. This plan must be approved by both the practicum coordinator and worksite supervisor. This plan will be used as the basis for the worksite supervisor's evaluation of the conducted work.
2. Students will meet bi-weekly as a group for group discussion and content discussion (content detailed below). These meetings are mandatory, and only excused absences per the GVSU attendance policy will be permitted (i.e., intercollegiate events, religious holidays, military duty, documented medical conditions, birth/adoption of child, attendance at an academic or professional conference). Documentation is required of any excused absence. **More than one unexcused absence will result in an automatic grade reduction. More than two unexcused absences will result in failure of the course.**

3. Students are required to obtain mid-semester feedback from their worksite supervisor and end of semester feedback from their worksite supervisor. Students are also required to provide their own feedback of their experiences at both time points.
4. Students will engage in a series of assignments (detailed below) pertaining to their experiences and various topics (also detailed below) that will be discussed during the bi-weekly meetings.

Assignments/Methods of Evaluation:

Assignment:	Total Possible Points:	Percentage of Grade:
Supervisor/Student Evaluations	100	20%
Journal Reflections	150	30%
Log of Hours	50	10%
Resume/CV	50	10%
Final Paper	150	30%
Total	1000	

1. **Supervisor/Student Evaluations (25 points each, 100 points total):** At the mid-semester, students are required to complete an evaluation of their practicum experience and they must obtain an evaluation of their work by their worksite supervisor. These evaluations will be obtained again at the end of the semester. Each evaluation is worth 25 points each.
2. **Journal Reflections (25 points each, 150 points total):** For each bi-weekly meeting, students will be required to submit a 300-500 word journal reflection discussing their experience at their practicum site during the prior two weeks. Students can write about anything regarding their experience, including but not limited to the functioning of the office (e.g., work-supervisor relations, leadership and management practices, interactions with outside agencies), what they have learned in the field or about themselves, what they have found either easy and/or challenging, what they have liked/disliked at their site, their feelings about the work they are doing, how the work has made them think about future careers). Students can also integrate course readings into their journal reflections. Entries should be typed and printed with a word count at the bottom of the entry.
3. **Log of Hours (50 points):** At the end of the semester, students must turn in a log of all of the hours they completed at their practicum, detailed by each week and with a total number of hours.
4. **Resume/CV (50 points):** At the end of the semester, students must integrate their practicum experience into a resume or curriculum vitae that also includes their professional objective(s), educational information, and other relevant experience.
5. **Final Paper (150 points):** At the end of the semester, students will be required to write one final paper (1500-2000 words) that integrates their practicum experience with courses they have taken while earning their degree. That is, students will be required to discuss either how their work relates to what they have learned in courses or how what they have learned in courses relates to the work they have done. Students should focus on links between their work and psychology specific courses, but they can also integrate any material they have learned in non-psychology courses. This paper should be typed, double-spaced, and must include a word count

at the end. If any references are cited, students must adhere to APA style and include a references page.

Grading Scale:

	PASS		FAIL
93% and above	A	70-72%	C-
90-92%	A-	67-69%	D+
87-89%	B+	60-66%	D
83-86%	B	59% or below	F
80-82%	B-		
77-79%	C+		
73-76%	C		

The final grade for the course will be calculated by dividing the total points obtained by the total points possible in the class (500 points). Given this course is pass/fail, students must obtain at least a C (73%, or 365 points) across all graded assignments to pass the course.

Course Policies:

1. Assignments with due-dates listed in the course schedule will be subject to a 10% penalty per day they are received late. More than three days late will result in a zero for that assignment.
2. Termination from the practicum site is automatic grounds for failing the course. Failing to complete your agreed upon hours in your contract can also be grounds for failing the course.
3. This course is subject to all standard GVSU course policies which can be found at <https://www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies/>

Topics Covered:

Below is a list of topics we will cover in this course. Please see the course schedule for a list of when specific topics will be covered and the reading(s) assigned for that topic.

- Ethics & workplace communication (Objectives 1-2, 5)
- Managing conflict and other problems in the workplace (Objective 1)
- Diversity, inclusion, and cultural competency (Objectives 2, 5)
- Self-care (Objective 2)
- Writing resumes, CVs and cover letters (Objectives 3-4)
- Careers in the field of psychology (Objectives 4-5)
- Finding, applying, and interviewing for a job or graduate school (Objectives 4-5)

Sample Readings:

- APA Ethics Code: <http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/ethics-code-2017.pdf>
- Pipas, M. D., & Jaradat, M. (2010). Assertive communication skills. *Annales Universitatis Apulensis Series Oeconomica*, 12, 649-656.
- Paluck, E. L., & Green, D. P. (2009). Prejudice reduction: What works? A review and assessment of research and practice. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 60, 339-367.

- Hays, P. A. (2001). Addressing cultural complexities in practice: A framework for clinicians and counselors. Washington, DC, US: American Psychological Association. (ADDRESSING FRAMEWORK)
- Phillips, K. W. (2014, October 1). *How diversity makes us smarter*. Retrieved from <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-diversity-makes-us-smarter/>
- White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack Peggy McIntosh
- Myers, S. B., Sweeney, A. C., Popick, V., Wesley, K., Bordfeld, A., & Fingerhut, R. (2012). Self-care practices and perceived stress levels among psychology graduate students. *Training and Education in Professional Psychology, 6*, 55-66.
- Southard, S. G. (1990). Interacting successfully in corporate culture. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication, 4*, 79-90.
- Job Search Strategies - Boston University Career services
- Appleby, D. C., & Appleby, K. M. (2006). Kisses of death in the graduate school application process. *Teaching of Psychology, 33*, 19-24.
- <https://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2017/02/27/502445571/hey-students-5-things-that-are-wrong-with-your-cover-letter>
- <https://www.thebalancecareers.com/get-along-with-boss-1919375>