ED 351/355
Practicum in Education
January Plan 2010

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Course Description

During the practicum, students serve as assistant teachers, tutor students, work with students individually, observe professional teachers, and prepare and present lesson plans to the whole class in an elementary, middle or high school located either in the Waterville area, which will be arranged by the professor, or in another area, which the student will be responsible for making the arrangements for placement. Nongraded. Prerequisite: Permission of the instructor.

Learning Goals and Expectations

In this course, students will:

- Obtain knowledge that is unique to the particular education of the practicum site;
- Have opportunities for teaching experiences in a school, work with students directly, and develop skills and knowledge for teaching;
- Examine and clarify attitudes and values about teaching, and practice teaching related skills;
- Gain experience in interacting with learners of different cultural, ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic backgrounds, with special problems and needs, and from varying communities;
- Develop skills in observation, teaching, guidance and discipline, classroom organization, assessment and evaluation, use of varied materials and equipment, and self-evaluation.
- Develop a questioning attitude of self and the environment to gain insights for growth;
- Appreciate individual differences and legitimate the individual experiences brought to the group setting;
- Develop positive working relationships with other staff members;
- Develop communication and leadership skills;
• Develop skills in finding resources for research.

**Students are expected to:**

• Keep in communication with the professor at least once a week during the practicum;
• Contact the professor immediately if there are any problems that occur during the practicum;
• Respect customary standards of personal dress;
• Arrive to the practicum promptly and stay the entire school day, be present at the practicum site every day unless given permission to be absent by the professor and the supervising teacher;
• Maintain the good relations that Colby College has built with the schools by being tactful in relationships with school personnel;
• Observe all of the rules and regulations of the school wherever they apply;
• Be aware of and sensitive to the mores and expectations of the community;
• Identify with the professional staff and exercise appropriate discretion;
• Observe standards of conduct as set both by professional ethics and the requirements of good citizenship;
• Set an example of effective communication (i.e., avoid inappropriate slang and profanity);
• Volunteer assistance;
• Give considerable attention to reflection and self-assessment.

**Portfolio Development**

Students who are seeking Maine certification are expected to engage in development of a portfolio to document their growth during the period of their professional preparation. In pursuit of this goal, students in the certification program should plan to collect and reflect upon at least one item from this course for inclusion in their portfolio. Students are encouraged to meet with the professor to discuss the details about the portfolio process at Colby. When appropriate, the professor has suggested a certification standard that could be documented through an assignment completed in this course.

**Assignments**

**Pre-Practicum Goals**

Before the practicum, you are expected to develop written goals for their practicum experience. What do you want to learn from your experience? What do you want to accomplish during your experience? What skills do you want to develop during your experience? These are some of the questions you will consider in developing their goals. These goals should be shared with the supervising teacher at the practicum site on the first day. You should also post your pre-practicum goals on the class Facebook Group to share with professor and fellow classmates.
Reflection Journal

You should keep an ongoing journal which contains an entry for every day you work at your practicum site. These entries should provide you the opportunity to record and reflect on your work in your classroom, and to reflect on the assigned readings for the course. Hopefully, you will find many interesting and enlightening connections between your reading, our seminar discussions (for the local group), and your teaching practice--your journal is the place to record those connections and the insights to which they lead. *(Maine’s Initial Teacher Certification Standards 2, 3)*

Here is a suggested format for your journal. You don't have to use this format, but students have found it to be quite useful in the past:

3-Part Journals

1. What happened? What did you see? What did you do? (one font or color)

2. How did you feel, react? What did you learn about yourself, your biases, your assumptions? (another font or color)

3. How can you better understand #s 1 & 2 using concepts from the readings and class discussions? (another font or color)

Facebook Posts

On-campus and off-campus students will join the ED 351 Practicum in Education Facebook Group ([http://www.facebook.com/#/group.php?gid=43656977922](http://www.facebook.com/#/group.php?gid=43656977922)) and will be required to make posts to the group each week during the semester.

For the first week, you are to post their pre-practicum goals on the discussion board under “Pre-Practicum Goals.” At the end of the first week of Jan Plan, you should also respond to the question already posted on the discussion board under “First Week.”

After the first week, each Monday, the professor will post a question on the discussion board. You should respond to that week’s question(s) by Wednesday. Then by Saturday of that week, you are to respond to at least one student’s post. You are encouraged to respond to more than one but at least one is required. Also, you are encouraged to respond to questions raised in the response(s) to your post.

During Jan Plan, you should post at least 1 reading to the wall of the group. You also should respond to at least 1 reading that is posted on the group during the term. There are already three readings posted on the wall.

In sum,

You have the following to complete during Jan Plan:
• Post your pre-practicum goals
• Write a post each week on the discussion board in response to the question(s) posed by the professor (a total of four posts)
• Respond to another student’s post for weeks 2-4 (a total of three responses)
• Post at least 1 reading on the wall
• Respond to at least 1 reading posted by another student or the professor

Always feel free to share photos and make additional comments on the wall. For example, if you have questions that you think others could help you explore then you could post them.

The professor will respond to at least one post for each student during Jan Plan.

(Maine’s Initial Teacher Certification Standard 5)

Research Project

Choose an issue for in-depth reading, reflection and qualitative data collection, and develop a final project that demonstrates your learning on the subject. Possible projects include: photo journal of learning with reflective/research-related narrative; visual arts representation of learning with reflective/research-related narrative; video documentation of learning with reflective/research-related narrative; detailed, comprehensive reflective journal with reference to readings throughout; research paper which includes observations and reflections. All projects must include a bibliography. For the first three examples of possible projects, the extent to which the narrative should be developed is dependent upon the level of creativity, detail, and analysis of the hands-on project. For the research paper, the extent to which qualitative data collection and reflections should be included is dependent upon the topic of the paper and the context in which the student is teaching. For ED 355 students, your research project should focus on an issue related to social justice. The projects are due the last day of January Plan. (Depending on the topic of your research project, this assignment could address any of the Maine’s Initial Teacher Certification Standards)
Colby College

Education Program

Practicum Expectations and Policies

1. The Colby student is enrolled in the practicum to meet course requirements for ED 351j: Practicum in Education, a 3-credit, non-graded course that serves as a "pre-student-teaching" experience for Education minors.

2. The Colby student is required to assist in the assigned classroom for the full school day, every day, for four weeks during the month of January. The target is 30 hours/week in school (120 hours/month).

3. The Colby student should have a preliminary interview with her or his supervising teacher before beginning the practicum. School policies and other essential information should be made available to the Colby student by the teacher and/or other school personnel.

4. Absence from the agreed practicum hours should occur only for valid reasons. The Colby student must immediately notify the school in all cases of failure to appear at the start of school. A second unexplained absence from school is sufficient grounds for cancelling the practicum.

5. The Colby student will work as an active assistant to the assigned teacher. S/he will behave in a professional manner, show appropriate initiative, and observe the confidentiality required of the teaching profession.

6. On-going evaluation of the Colby student by the supervising teacher will be given on an informal basis to the student, principal, and academic supervisor.

7. In a conference at the end of the practicum, the Colby student and his/her supervising teacher sign a "final evaluation form" which is then turned in to the Colby academic supervisor.

8. Any difficulties that hinder a Colby student from performing effectively as an assistant to the supervising teacher must be directly reported to the principal and to the Colby academic supervisor by the informed or concerned party. Problems will be resolved mutually by the school and by the academic supervisor.