The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Practicum Education Program 2023-2024

Frequently Asked Questions

HOURS and SCHEDULE

1. When is the first day of practicum education?
   The official first day of practicum education for Specialization Students is Wednesday, August 23, and for Generalist Students is Wednesday, August 30, 2023. However, we recognize that some students and agencies may need flexibility. We expect that each student and practicum instructor/task supervisor match will negotiate the start date of the practicum placement in concert with their assigned practicum faculty member.

2. Can students begin their practicum placement early?
   Specialization year students may begin their practicum placement after August 1, if:
   - The practicum instructor agrees and is prepared to accept an early start.
   - The student has completed all Student practicum Placement Agreement Requirements (SFPA) and has signed the SFPA in the UNC-School of Social Work (SSW) Information System (SSWiS).
   - Any required agency onboarding documentation (varies by agency)

3. How many practicum education hours do students need to complete for this academic year?
   For the academic year 2023-2024, the UNC practicum Education Program requires that Generalist year students complete a minimum of 400 hours of practicum education and Specialization year students complete a minimum of 600 hours of practicum education. We understand that some agencies/programs may require students to complete more hours due to student stipends or other factors. We also know that some students may choose to complete additional hours. Students who plan to complete more than the minimum number of hours should document this on their Learning Agreement and Competency Evaluation (LACE). More information about hours in practicum for this academic year can be obtained here: https://fieldeducation.web.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/23165/2022/03/2022-2023-Hours-in-practicum.pdf

4. What if the student does not complete the required number of hours of practicum education at the end of each semester?
   Students who do not complete the required number of hours at the end of each semester will receive a grade of Incomplete (I) which will change to a final grade once
the hours and competency evaluations are complete. The student is required to work with their practicum faculty member to develop and sign an incomplete contract.

5. **When is the earliest a student can complete their practicum placement?**
   Students may finish their practicum placement no earlier than April 1, 2024, with advance approval from their practicum instructor/task supervisor.

6. **Will there be alternative opportunities to accrue practicum hours if needed?**
   Yes. We understand that some students may start their practicum placements late or that there may be an interruption in their ability to accrue practicum hours due to quarantine, illness, or other factors. Students should work with their practicum instructor and practicum faculty member to identify and approve learning activities that may be completed outside of the agency setting, if necessary.

7. **Will students be completing their practicum placement hours remotely or in person?**
   Due to the fluidity of the COVID-19 virus, we understand that agency service delivery may be fluid and provided remotely, in person, or a hybrid of the two. We also recognize that this may change over the course of the academic year. In general, we expect students to work as the social workers in the agency are working. For example, if a practicum instructor is working part of their time remotely and part of their time in-person, we would expect the student to be doing the same, unless they have been provided accommodations through Accessibility Resource and Service (ARS).

8. **How will Practicum Faculty conduct their practicum visits with students and agencies?**
   Practicum faculty plan to conduct some visits remotely and some face-to-face. This is an individual practicum faculty decision made in concert with the practicum instructor.

9. **What training will students have on COVID-19?**
   Students are required to complete all practicum placement agency training requirements.
10. How will students who are working remotely ensure confidentiality with clients?
   Students will be required to use their agency’s approved telehealth platform for
   meetings with clients, co-workers, and community partners. If their practicum
   instructors prefer it, students may also request a HIPPA Compliant Zoom account by
   contacting the SSW Information Technology (IT) program: citu@listserv.unc.edu

11. Who should I communicate with for additional assistance?
   By separate email, you have been assigned a member of the practicum faculty, please
   contact them for assistance. If you are unsure who to contact, you should contact
   Andrea Murray-Lichtman, Director Practicum Education at ajmurray@email.unc.edu,
   Denisé Dews, Assistant Director Practicum Education at ddews@unc.edu, Practicum
   Education Administrative Specialist, Carol Ann Hincy at chincy@email.unc.edu, All
   practicum program contact information can be found here: Practicum Education
   Program Contacts.