

**GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE**  
**EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

**CD1145**  
**ON-CAMPUS**  
**PRACTICUM II DESCRIPTION AND GUIDE**

**Revised February, 2003**

## **CD1145**

### **PRACTICUM DESCRIPTION**

The practicum component of the Early Childhood Development programme consists of practical experiences in community services such as day care centres, playschools, kindergartens, and special placements from Monday to Thursday of designated practicum weeks. Students must successfully complete time and task requirements as well as demonstrate a rapport with young children and a growing knowledge of, and willingness to assist with, routines.

During Practicum II, the student is required to complete a minimum of 32 days of practicum for a minimum total of 224 hours. The student must complete the time commitment to receive credit. Absences from practicum must be made up prior to the end of the semester.

The student must notify the practicum supervisor and the practicum instructor prior to, or as early as possible, regarding absences.

The Early Childhood Development Department observes all statutory holidays as well as College Reading Week (see college calendar for specific dates). Closures in the school system will not be considered as absences in applicable practicum placements.

In order to integrate the practicum experience with class content, and to share and expand experiences, students will regularly meet for scheduled practicum seminars.

## **GUIDELINES FOR PRACTICUM SUPERVISORS**

Practicum provides important learning experiences for each student in our programme. We ask that supervisors share the philosophy of their programme with the student and give the student an opportunity to fulfill all expectations and to challenge individual capabilities. To guide supervisors, we offer the following suggestions:

1. Delegate responsibility according to the level of the student's experience. The experienced student should be ready to take on large groups and/or increased responsibilities.
2. Assist the student to be aware of the rules and procedures in the centre/programme. The student will need clear direction regarding her/his role in all routine activities.
3. Discuss the student's written plans prior to, or on the first morning of each practicum week. The student is responsible for coordinating practicum assignments with the centre's schedule. The student is also expected to provide a variety of experiences for the children, usually one planned experience a day. Written plans should be initialled and dated by the supervisor upon presentation.
4. Provide support, encouragement and on-going feedback. It is important that you interpret incidents to students as they occur whenever possible. It is strongly recommended that you and the student arrange time for regular discussions of daily events. This will help the student feel involved with the programme and promote opportunities for learning. Discuss the student's progress on an informal daily basis.
5. Keep a detailed record of student attendance on the provided time sheet. This record will be submitted to the instructor at the end of the practicum placement.
6. Students should not be left alone with a group of children nor should they be used as substitutes for regular staff. This helps to ensure that students are given appropriate supervision and feedback regarding their interactions with children. This also ensures compliance with Alberta Provincial licensing requirements.
7. Provide the student with a comprehensive verbal evaluation midway through the practicum. A written evaluation at this time is recommended. At the end of the practicum, the student and the supervisor should discuss in-depth the final written evaluation of the student's overall growth and development. The evaluation is then submitted to college instructor.

## **GUIDELINES FOR PRACTICUM INSTRUCTORS**

1. The college instructor will visit the assigned student for at least eight hours throughout the practicum placement.
2. The instructor's role will be to observe the student, discuss individual progress, and identify the needs of the student in consultation with the supervisor. The instructor is a consultant for both the student and the supervisor. A written evaluation will be completed by the instructor at least twice during the semester and a copy will be given to the student.
3. The instructor is always available to both student and supervisor should any questions or concerns arise.
4. The final evaluation of the student will be determined by the instructor with input from the practicum supervisor.

## GUIDELINES FOR PRACTICUM STUDENTS

1. The student will become familiar with the philosophy, policies, routines, and methods that are used in the practicum setting.
2. The student will demonstrate a professional attitude with regard to attendance, punctuality, dress, confidentiality and feedback.
3. The student must contact the practicum supervisor and the instructor prior to being late or absent.
4. The student will share plans with the practicum supervisor on the Monday morning of each practicum week and have them initialled by the supervisor.
5. The student will share all written plans and submit these on a regular weekly basis and as required by their supervising college instructor.
6. The student will inform the supervisor of scheduled visits by the practicum instructor.
7. The student is expected to consult with room supervisors for informal feedback at the end of each day.
8. The student is expected to consult with the supervisor to discuss plans prior to the following practicum week.
9. The student will take equal responsibility with the supervisor in initiating ongoing communication.
10. The student should display a desire to learn.
11. The student is expected to spend time assisting with the day to day operations of the programme through preparation, clean up, assistance with routines, etc.
12. The student is expected to assess personal progress in working with children, and to act upon this assessment. This process of self-evaluation is an important part of learning and personal growth. This evaluation will occur orally in informal discussions with the practicum instructor and the practicum supervisor.

**CD1145**  
**PRACTICUM II EXPECTATIONS**

This semester students will develop a growing self-confidence in working with larger groups of children and display greater understanding and skill at programming for young children.

1. Students will continue to develop the skills identified in Practicum I.
2. The student will demonstrate increasing skills in developing rapport with children as well as demonstrating a supportive and accepting attitude toward all children in the programme regardless of ethnicity, religion, economic situation and family lifestyles.
3. The student will begin to demonstrate skills in setting and maintaining appropriate limits. The student will learn to anticipate problems, constructively redirect children, and help children cope with and address problems in a positive manner.
4. The student will demonstrate the ability to interact spontaneously with individual and small groups of children with a growing awareness of how to facilitate, extend, and enrich children's play in a variety of play areas.
5. The student will demonstrate initiative in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of daily experiences and routines.
6. The student will plan and implement small group experiences using information obtained from observations. These child-centred experiences are to be based on the developmental needs and interests of the children.
7. The student will begin to demonstrate skill in using questioning techniques which promote curiosity, enhance language development, and encourage children's problem-solving.
8. The student will begin to demonstrate a developing understanding of the techniques and skills involved in working with larger groups of children.
9. The student will begin to demonstrate a growing awareness of how the use of time, space and materials affect the child's learning experiences.
10. The student begin to demonstrate an awareness of the nutritional, health, and safety needs of young children.

## CD1145 PRACTICUM II STUDENT PRACTICUM TASKS

### WEEK 1

During this week, you are expected to interact informally with the children in all aspects of the programme. You should be establishing a rapport with the children and adults in the programme. Opportunities to observe the children should be included in this week as well as throughout the semester. The programme philosophy, rules, regulations, routines, procedures and goals should be clarified this week.

### WEEK 2-8

In consultation with the practicum instructor and supervisor, the student will plan and carry out learning experiences for the children in their care. **All planned learning experiences should reflect careful observation of the programme and the children's needs, abilities, interests, backgrounds, personalities, and stages of development.**

- a. Plan and set up a learning centre in your practicum placement. This learning centre will be based on the children's interests as determined through observations and in consultation with your practicum supervisor and instructor. The student is responsible for assisting in gathering the necessary materials, and assisting in setting up the centre for a minimum of one week, interacting with the children in the centre, and submitting written plans, observations and evaluation.
- b. Plan and carry out three group times. Students are encouraged to make the group time relate to what is happening in the program and /or be based on their observations of the children.
- c. Plan and prepare, in consultation with the supervisor, a minimum of two nutritional snacks for children. Children must assist with the preparation of at least one snack.
- d. Based on observations of the children, provide materials/resources which will extend the children's play in several of the following areas :

water/sand/mud

music/movement

construction play

manipulative play

sensory (touch, taste, sight, smell, hearing)

sociodramatic play

two and three dimensional art

health/safety/nutrition

language/literacy

puppetry

outdoor play

gross motor

PLEASE NOTE:

All written plans for the week are to be discussed with the supervisor on Monday morning of each practicum week. These are to be initialled by the supervisor. Both the supervisor and the student should have an in-depth verbal evaluation of progress, midway through the semester. At the end of the final week the student and supervisor should discuss the supervisor's written evaluation of the student's overall practicum progress during the semester before giving it to the College instructor.

## SEMINAR DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the seminar which accompanies the practicum is to allow students to integrate the theories they are being introduced to in their course work with their own emerging practices.

As well, since some of the practices which students will observe are different from the philosophical approach espoused by the Early Childhood Development program, it is necessary for students to understand some of the reasons for this discrepancy. Seminar, then, should serve both short term and long term needs.

1. Students should have an opportunity to examine their own assumptions, biases and personal history and to determine the impact of these factors on their current and developing beliefs and practices in terms of their work with young children.
2. Students can critically examine their own belief in relation to practices to which they have been exposed and explore the reasons for different styles of and approaches to working with young children.
3. The above mentioned topics may be discussed on an on-going basis throughout practicum. Other issues which will no doubt arise during consideration of the above items may include: advocacy not only for young children, but for the early childhood professional; professionalism and continued peer support after graduation; and guiding children's behaviour.
4. Regular journal entries **may** assist the student in reflecting on their beliefs and behaviours and their own learning and development.

Seminar should not only provide a time for students to discuss their immediate concerns, but it should also develop a spirit of critical inquiry. Preparation in the form of reading, thinking and writing will constitute a vital component of seminar.

## SEMINAR GUIDELINES

Seminar provides students with the opportunity to integrate practicum with class content and to share and expand experiences. Students must fulfill the requirements for seminar in order to receive credit. **Attendance at seminar is compulsory, make up work will be assigned for all absences.**

Seminar will focus on the needs and interests of practicum students and will also include:

1. Sharing and analysing experiences in practicum settings.
2. Continued enhancement of communication skills. Students will augment and practice skills in interacting positively with adults and children.
3. Discussion and collaboration with peers relating to curriculum planning including observing and interpreting children's behaviour, managing transitions and routines, planning child-centred experiences and extending children's learning opportunities.

The above mentioned topics may be discussed on an on-going basis throughout practicum.. Additional topics for discussion may include: professional and ethical issues; partnerships with families, co-workers and community support services; and advocacy.

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