

MC 230 Mass Communication Practicum

This course in experiential learning may be repeated for a maximum of three academic credit hours. It is designed to provide students practical, real-life, hands-on experience in journalism and public relations at a supervised setting outside the traditional classroom.

Students enrolled in the course will receive credit for successfully completing a semester-long, supervised and goal-oriented working experience at *The Patriot*, its web page, Cable Access Channel 11, the FMU Office of Public Affairs, and Media Center as well as other appropriate on and off-campus sites. On-site supervisors will direct students in completing their assignments provide hands-on assistance and forward formal assessments of student performance and progress to a professor who will assign the grade. Subsequent enrollment in the practicum is designed to develop a different skill-set.

Differences between MC 230 and MC 498 Communication Internship

The internship, MC 498, is designed for the advanced student who has substantially completed the bulk of the Mass Communication curriculum at Francis Marion University. That student is required to be a senior and meet academic benchmarks. The objective of the internship is to allow the qualifying student to demonstrate what he/she has learned in the class room by applying the knowledge in the work place.

A practicum, in contrast, is part of the student's incremental learning experience which involves communication skill-developing activity apart from the traditional class setting. The practicum does not presume or require as much competency or skill sets nor requires qualifying academic benchmarks except successful completion of MC 201, News Writing. The practicum is available to a student as early as his/her sophomore year.

The internship provides a fuller range of professional activities and requires a student to spend at least 135 hours during a semester with the provider. The practicum requires less experience and requires the student to work for a minimum of 50 hours during the semester. The internship can be taken only once; a practicum may be repeated in a similar or entirely different setting and permits the student to earn up to three academic hours.

The Practicum student is expected to produce a tangible "product" that represents the work completed during the semester. Examples would include a video tape of stories/programs written, produced, photographed or researched for broadcast, a portfolio of photographs or stories completed for publication, or a selection of publications or other materials created during a public relations internship. Samples should be included in the final package submitted to the academic adviser.

Application for Practicum

The student wishing to participate in the Practicum must obtain approval from his/her faculty adviser prior to registering for the course. The student then must find a practicum, on or off campus, and meet before registration with the person who will serve as his/her on-site supervisor. Together they should work out a plan that will be put into writing and be mutually signed. That plan must be approved by the advisor prior to the beginning of the Practicum. The plan should briefly specify:

1) **Intention:** A narrative summarizing semester expectations including a statement of the knowledge that will be demonstrated, applied or result from the experience.

2) **Preparedness and Planning:** A narrative on the identified intentions, adhering to them as goals, objectives and activities. This plan should be referred to regularly during the Practicum and should be flexible enough for adaptations.

3) **Authenticity:** A narrative describing the real world work experiences and its potential benefit.

During the Practicum semester, a student and his/her on-site supervisor are obligated to complete two written evaluations; the first must be submitted to the student's adviser at mid-term and the second on or before the last day of the scheduled classes for the semester. The form is part of this brochure.

The student's progress should be discussed with the on-site supervisor periodically during the term. The student should routinely reflect on the activities accomplished throughout the Practicum. The reflective process is integral to all phases of experiential learning, from identifying intention and choosing specific experiences, to considering preconceptions and observing how they change as the experiences unfold. Reflection is an essential tool for adjusting the experience and measuring outcomes.

To this end, a student must keep up-to-date a log that identify specific activities and a journal that reflects on each. At the end of the semester, prior to the beginning of final exams, the student must complete on-line the Student Rating Form for Nontraditional Learning Activities. This 10-question survey may be found at <http://acsweb.fmarion.edu/qep/studentassess.aspx>. A printout of your responses to that form along with the log and reflection journal should be submitted to your adviser prior to the beginning of final exams.

If you have any questions about the course and program or would like to make some suggestions for its improvement, please contact Don Stewart, chair, Department of Mass Communication, (843) 661-1510.

Prerequisites for

Mass Communication Practicum

Mass Communication 230

GUIDELINES FOR REPORTS

Mass Communication 230

The work site supervisor is asked to complete at least two Student Practicum Evaluations contained in this brochure and return them to the student's faculty adviser in a timely manner. One should be returned before the semester midterm and the other at the completion of the course. More frequent written evaluations are welcome.

The enclosed forms are to be given to the work site supervisor by the student when the internship begins. It is the student's responsibility to remind the work site supervisor to submit the evaluation near the due date.

The written evaluation of the work site supervisor consists of a check-off to assess 10 categories of performance and a short narrative to summarize the student's exhibited strengths and weaknesses. This form should be shared with the student. These evaluations are given significant weight in the final determination of a grade for the course that will be assigned by the supervising professor.

Each Mass Communication 230 Practicum student is required to turn in two written reports concerning the experiential learning experience to his/her faculty adviser in accordance with the following guidelines:

FIRST STUDENT REPORT - Due at or before **midterm**. The report should be 3-4 pages of double-spaced, typed copy which contains:

1. A log of hours worked, signed by on-site supervisor.
2. A list and explanation of all duties assigned by the host.
3. A detailed explanation of the work completed.
4. A review/explanation of the challenges faced.
5. A discussion of the difficulties or problems faced and how they have been coped with.
6. Expectations for the remainder of the Practicum.

Report Deadline is Midterm.

FINAL STUDENT REPORT – When the Practicum is completed and no later than Reading Day. The report is to be 5-7 pages of typed, double spaced, copy which contains:

1. A log of hours worked, signed by on-site supervisor.
2. A summary of what you did during the internship.
3. An explanation of your professional advancements and accomplishments.
4. An analysis of differences between the internship and classroom experiences.
5. Your feelings about the value of the internship program and your experiences as part of it in relation to your career goals.
6. A printout of your responses to the Student Rating Form for Nontraditional Learning Activities that you completed on line.
7. Several samples of your work during the internship should be submitted with the report.

Report Deadline is Reading Day.

STUDENT PRACTICUM EVALUATION

(To be filled out by Student's Supervisor)

STUDENT NAME _____ STUDENT ID NUMBER _____
 EVALUATION PERIOD: FROM _____ To _____

Instructions: Place an "x" in one square for each category below the phrase which most nearly describes the person being rated. Carefully evaluate each of the qualities separately. In making choices compare the intern with other interns or those with comparable knowledge.

1. Quality of work:

Work is unsatisfactory

Work is often below average.

Work is above average

Work superior to that of others.

Work is of exceptional quality

2. Quantity of work:

Production is unsatisfactory

Production is very low.

Production is average.

Production is high.

Production is exceptional.

3. Attitude toward criticism:

Negative reaction to criticism.

Takes some exception to criticism.

Accepts criticism.

Seeks criticism and instruction

Seeks criticism and immediately corrects weaknesses.

4. Cooperation with others:

Quarrelsome, surly, uncooperative.

Sometimes difficult to work with.

Exhibits an average level of Cooperation.

Always congenial and cooperative and promote morale.

Works hard to be cooperative

5. Dependability:

Works half-heartedly.

Sometimes acts indifferent to work.

Steady worker.

Hard worker.

Works exceptionally hard.

6. Attendance:

Often absent or late.

Sometime absent or late.

Usually present and on time.

Rarely late or absent.

Never absent or late without good reason.

7. Initiative:

Waits to be told
what to do.

Often waits
unnecessarily
for directions.

Works without
waiting for
directions.

Looks for
additional tasks
to accomplish.

Highly self-reliant.
Finds and completes
extra tasks

8. Appearance:

Untidy.. Poor
taste in dress.

Somewhat careless
about personal
appearance.

Satisfactory
personal
appearance.

Better than
average
appearance.

Very neat. Excellent
taste in dress.

9. Progress made:

Able to do little more at end of this period than at beginning.

Exhibited a minimal gain of knowledge/skill.

Progressed in skill /knowledge at an average rate.

Gained skill/knowledge at an above average rate.

Showed exceptional progress in skill/knowledge.

10. Overall assessment:

Unsatisfactory.

Below average.

Average.

Above average.

Exceptional.

Please discuss any other strengths or weaknesses exhibited by the intern below.

Please sign form, discuss results with the intern, and obtain his/her signature.

Supervisor's Signature Date

Intern's Signature Date