



Ministry Practicum Manual

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Ministry Practicum Process

Practicum Planning:

- PMT/Task Force identify Ministry Sites and Supervisors
- Students are assigned to Ministry Sites by leadership based on PDPs, site data and Mentor input
- Ministry Site Supervisor/Student Orientation
- Students meet with Site Supervisors to develop Learning Contract/Ministry Practicum Plan based on PDP goals and Ministry Site descriptions
- RTI leadership approves Learning Contract

Practicum Experience:

- Students begin the Ministry Practicum experience
- Students fulfill the goals and objectives of the Learning Contract/Practicum Plan
- Ministry Site Supervisors provide feedback throughout the course of the ministry practicum
- Ministry practicum experiences are completed

Practicum Reflection:

- Ministry Site Supervisors complete Practicum Assessment Report; Students complete Practicum Reflection Report
- Students and Ministry Site Supervisors meet and review reports
- Students upload artifact to e-portfolio
- RTI leadership validates student ministry practicum competencies in e-portfolios

I. Overview

RTI exists to develop highly-effective leaders through theological education and practical ministry experience for kingdom service, internationally and locally, at the lowest possible cost. Part of the practical ministry experience for students comes in the form of ministry practicums.

A practicum is an educational and experiential opportunity for RTI students to grow in ministry skills in “learning by doing” environments, while fulfilling C&MA district and national requirements for credentialing. It allows students to learn through participation in substantial ministry responsibilities. A practicum takes advantage of the unique match between Ministry Site Supervisor, student, site-specific resources, Mentor, and the Learning Contract.

Since all RTI students are based in ministry situations, there is ample opportunity to learn by doing. In fact, it is often a natural dimension of participation in church because ministry is viewed as the core of what it means to be part of a church. A practicum is based on a Learning Contract with a supervisor who monitors the experience, but also helps each student learn from it.

A practicum is not simply “credit for experience.” It is not an acknowledgment that previous experience necessarily means that credit is deserved. Many haven’t learned very much from past experiences. And a practicum is not credit for current experience, as if mere activity is the same as learning.

Rather, credit is given for experience where there is evidence of three things:

1. Preparation. Is there a plan for making the experience an effective learning opportunity?
2. Experience. Is there a report about what actually took place in the experience?
3. Reflection. Is there assessment of what was accomplished and learned through the experience (including what was learned about what still needs to be learned)?

We believe that experiential learning turbocharges education and that situated learning turbocharges experiential learning.

Nine ministry practicum credits are required to complete the RTI program. One credit hour is earned for each 45 hours of ministry completed. Ministry Practicums begin the first week of a term and end on the final week of the term. An academic term consists of 12 weeks. On average approximately four hours of ministry is required each week to complete the 45 hour practicum.

A. Core Experiences

Each RTI student will participate in a series of five core ministry experiences during the first two years of their program. These ministry practicums will give students a well rounded experience in ministry they will experience at both the local and international levels. The five core ministry practicums include Salem Free Clinics, Broadway Life Center, Community Impact Ministries, Student Ministries, and Group Life Ministries.

B. Customized Experiences

The last two years of a student's ministry practicum experience will be customized in consultation with mentors and Certified Leaders. These practicums can consist of:

- Repeating one of the core practicums at a deeper level
- Participating in another ministry area within the church that was not experienced as a core practicum
- Participating in an approved practicum experience outside of the church either locally or internationally.

RTI students have the unique opportunity to experience ministry across a wide variety of international settings through Salem Alliance Church partnerships and other approved organizations. Customized ministry practicums may be arranged in consultation with RTI Certified Leaders in coordination with international partners as students desire to explore missions and/or sense a calling to long-term cross-cultural service. It is expected that students who are called to the nations would experience at least one International Ministry Practicum before they graduate. International experiences will be treated as a World Impact trip.

II. Ministry Practicum Preparation

Although the bulk of a practicum is spent in actual ministry experiences, it is the planning for the practicum that really prepares the student for a powerful learning opportunity.

A. Site Selection

Ministry sites are identified through a process of surveying all ministry areas within Salem Alliance Church. Core ministry sites are selected based on the potential learning experiences within them and the needs of the various ministries of the church.

B. Site Assignments

Students will be assigned to ministry sites by RTI leadership and be notified of their practicum placement prior to the beginning of the term.

Ministry Practicum placements are driven by four important perspectives:

- *The perspective of the student.*

A student's opinion matters. Each student knows his/her strengths, skills, talents and giftings. The Personal Development Plan (PDP) completed by the student early in the program will be used as a point of reference in determining each practicum experience.

- *The perspective of the Mentor and/or Certified Leader.*

A Mentor's view is also a critical component of determining a student's practicum needs. The perspective of the Mentor regarding a student's leadership capacity and potential areas of growth directly connects to the development of the student Learning Contract.

- *The perspective of RTI leadership.*

There are times when the needs and opportunities of a specific ministry within the church or partner align with the long-term growth needs of the student. A Mentor and/or Certified Leader may assign a student to a specific ministry when the anticipated outcomes are perceived to contribute significantly to the long-term development of the student.

- *The perspective of the Ministry Site Supervisor*

A Ministry Coordinator is the person who oversees a particular ministry area within the church. A Site Supervisor is the person who will directly oversee the student during the practicum experience (this could be the Ministry Coordinator, or another person assigned to the student). Site Supervisors know the needs and potential for leadership development in their ministry areas best.

Practicum selection should address the following needs:

- Developmental needs of individual students
- Requirements for Alliance credentialing
- Compelling needs at Salem Alliance Church or broader networks in Salem
- Ministry Strategy Plan
- Personal Development Plan
- Ministry Skills Acquired: specific skills will the student come away with

C. Student Orientation

An orientation will be provided for students after the assignments have been made and prior to the beginning of the ministry practicum experience. The orientation will provide a time for students who have completed a practicum to debrief their experience, time to review the ministry practicum process and manual with students just entering the practicum experience, time to begin work on the new learning contract, and time to answer questions.

D. Ministry Site Supervisor Orientation

An orientation will be provided for new Ministry Site Supervisors after the assignments have been made and prior to the beginning of the ministry practicum experience. The orientation will provide a time to review the ministry practicum process and manual as well as answer any questions.

E. Developing the Practicum Plan

Once students are assigned to a ministry site, they are asked to develop the first draft of a Practicum Plan based on their Personal Development Plan (PDP) goals and ministry site descriptions provided to them, along with input from their Site Supervisor. After the first draft is completed, students refine the Practicum Plan in consultation with their Mentor and Ministry Site Supervisor that describes in detail the goals and objectives of each serving opportunity.

Each Practicum Plan should include goals and objectives that are related to each student's PDP. Each goal should have 2-3 objectives that are specific and measurable describing hoped for outcomes.

SMART Goal Summary

Specific (and Strategic): Answers the questions – Who? and What?

Measureable: How the specific goal statements will be measured.

Attainable: Goals are realistic and can be achieved in a specific amount of time and are reasonable

Relevant (Results oriented): The goals are aligned with expected practicum tasks and activities and include the expected result(s).

Time Framed: Goals have a clearly defined time-frame including a target or deadline date.

Examples:

A. Not a SMART goal: I will improve my writing skills.

Does not identify a measurement or time frame, nor identify why the improvement is needed or how it will be used.

B. SMART goal: The administrative office will improve communications with administrative staff by implementing an internal departmental newsletter. The administrative secretary will complete a business writing course by January 2014, will request articles from each department by February 2014 and will publish the first monthly newsletter by March 2014.

F. Learning Contract/Practicum Plan Final Approval

Once signatures of the Ministry Site Supervisor and Mentor are secured, students turn in a signed copy of the Practicum Plan to the academic office for RTI Leadership approval.

G. Background Checks

Due to the nature of some of the ministry sites, students must have an updated background check processed through the church. It is the student's responsibility to make sure they have a current one on file with the church. This can be done by checking with the RTI Coordinator, or with Darlene Britton at 503.581.2129 x204.

III. Ministry Practicum Experience

A. Student Responsibilities

During the ministry practicum experience, students are to complete the activities, fulfill the responsibilities and meet the time commitments outlined in the Learning Contract. They will arrive at the ministry area on time, attentive, coachable and prepared to be flexible. If a situation arises where the student is unable to fulfill practicum requirement (due to illness or emergency), he is to contact the Site Supervisor at their earliest convenience and make arrangements to make up any needed time. It is also the students' responsibility to keep a log of their ministry practicum hours to ensure they are meeting the required 45 hours.

B. Ministry Supervisor Responsibilities

The value of a ministry practicum is determined in large part by the relationship between the student and Ministry Coordinator and/or Site Supervisor(s). Ministry Site Supervisors are to provide students with a supportive environment, monitor practicum activities, and guide/mentor students through the experience. A midterm evaluation provided by the RTI Coordinator is to be completed by the Site Supervisor monitoring the students' progress and letting the RTI office know of any issues/situations early on that need to be dealt with.

IV. Ministry Practicum Reflection & Assessment

A. Assessment Reporting –

The Ministry Practicum is to be completed by the last week of the academic term. During this week, assessments are completed of the practicum experience.

1. Ministry Site Supervisor Assessment Report (see Appendix: RTI Practicum Report)

The Ministry Site Supervisor completes the RTI Practicum Assessment Report, which assesses the practicum experience, student growth, skill acquisition, and character development, as well as identifies any areas that need further development.

2. Student Ministry Reflection Report (see Appendix: Practicum Reflection Report)

Students complete the RTI Ministry Practicum Reflection Report which assesses the practicum experience, indicates how the goals and objectives of the Practicum Plan were met, and provides some indication of what else could be done (next steps) if there were an additional practicum in this ministry area.

3. Assessment and Reflection Review Meeting

When the reports are completed, it is the student's responsibility to arrange a meeting time between the student and the Site Supervisor to review and sign each other's report. This meeting is a time of shared reflections and insights between the student and Ministry Site Supervisor, especially focusing upon successes, challenges and next steps. Following this meeting students then arrange a time to meet with their mentor to discuss all aspects of the practicum. The mentor provides the final signature for the assessment report.

B. Receiving Credit

1. Posting Assessment Reports

Academic credit is earned by RTI students through Antioch School as they show evidence of ministry competency. Students are to post their Ministry Practicum Plan, Practicum Assessment Report and the Practicum Reflection Report in their e-Portfolio. When a Certified Leader approves the reports and an Antioch Associate Faculty member validates findings, the student is awarded academic credit.

2. Submission of Paperwork

At the end of each practicum it is the student's responsibility to bring signed copies of the Practicum Assessment and Practicum Reflection report to the Academic Office.

V. Glossary of Terms

Core Practicums: the first five RTI practicums. Each of the five is required of each student – though the order they are completed in will vary. The five core practicums are: Salem Free Clinics, Broadway Life Center, Community Impact Ministries, Student Ministries, and Group Life.

Customized Practicums: the last four RTI practicums. These can be with ministry sites within the church that a student would like to pursue further, or with a site outside of the church that has been approved by RTI leadership.

Learning Contract: A document written/completed before each practicum begins. It is an outline of the roles and responsibilities to be fulfilled during the practicum. The contract portion requires multiple signatures in order to be completed.

Mentors: Assigned individuals who walk alongside the Students as they attend RTI

Objective: Each SMART goal should have two to three objectives under it. These are specific statements explaining how each goal will be attained.

Practicum: A 45 hour service ministry experience. Each student needs to complete nine RTI practicums.

Site Supervisor: The person who actually oversees the student during the practicum. This may be the same person as the Ministry Site Coordinator or it may be a different person designated by the Ministry Site Coordinator.

S.M.A.R.T. goal: Each Practicum Plan requires two to three goals. Each goal should be written in SMART format: S = specific, M = measurable, A = attainable, R = relevant/results oriented, T = time framed. A goal is a broad statement of intent. (For further guidance see the last page of this manual)

Student Checklist of Ministry Practicum Events

Prior to the beginning of the term (Preparation) –

- Receive Ministry Practicum assignment
- Attend orientation
- Make appointment to meet with the assigned Ministry Site Supervisor to:
 - ___ develop the Ministry Practicum Plan
 - ___ exchange contact information
- Make an appointment to meet with mentor to discuss the Practicum Plan
- Finalize the Practicum Plan
- Secure signatures of Ministry Site Supervisor and Mentor
- Turn in signed copy of Learning Contract/Ministry Practicum Plan to academic office for RTI leadership approval
- Complete background check if needed

Ministry Practicum Experience

- Arrive to ministry area on time
- Be attentive, coachable and prepared to be flexible
- Complete activities, fulfill responsibilities and meet time commitments outlines in the Learning Contract

Last week of the Ministry Practicum (Assessment/Reflection):

- Complete Practicum Reflection Report
- Arrange a meeting with your Site Supervisor to review Ministry Practicum assessment reports, reflect on the experience and get a signature
- Meet with Mentor to discuss all aspects of the Ministry Practicum and get a signature
- Post assessment forms in e-portfolio
- Turn in all signed documents to the academic office
 - Practicum Reflection
 - Practicum Assessment

Ministry Site Supervisor Checklist of Ministry Practicum Events

Prior to the beginning of the term --

- Receive notification of assigned student(s)
- Attend orientation (if a new supervisor)
- Meet with assigned student(s) to develop the Ministry Practicum Plan and sign the Learning Contract

During Practicum experience --

- Provide students with a supportive environment
- Monitor practicum activities
- Guide/mentor students through the experience

Last week of Ministry Practicum experience --

- Complete Practicum Assessment Report
- Meet student(s) to review Ministry Practicum assessment reports and reflect on the experience

Learning Contract – RTI Ministry Practicum

Student _____ Term _____

Ministry Area: _____ Practicum Dates _____

Ministry Supervisor: _____

Practicum: Core 1 Core 2 Core 3 Core 4 Core 5 Elective 1 Elective 2 Elective 3 Elective 4
(Circle one)

We, the RTI staff, are deeply committed to the personal, educational, spiritual, and professional development of our future leaders. A dynamic partnership of RTI leaders, Salem Alliance Church staff, and mentors has been formed to walk with you as you prepare for full-time service.

We believe God has uniquely created each person to become someone special and to do something exceptional. A broad range of practicum experiences helps emerging leaders discern their unique callings and gifts, grow in spiritual maturity, and develop skills for future ministry.

Student Candidate Responsibilities

I pledge to complete the activities, fulfill the responsibilities and meet the time commitments outlined for this practicum in the ‘Practicum Ministry Plan’. I will arrive at the ministry area on time, attentive, coachable and prepared to be flexible. I will prepare myself through prayer and, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to share my gifts, talents and skills with a servant’s heart. At the completion of this practicum I will write a culminating report which I will then share with my Ministry Site Supervisor and mentor. I will seek to be receptive to encouragement, guidance and feedback.

Ministry Supervisor Responsibilities

I pledge to provide a supportive environment that involves minimal advice giving in order to equip the student to discover Spirit-inspired solutions. I will actively listen and ask reflective questions, challenging the student to become more like Christ in all areas of life.

I pledge to speak the truth in love, providing a candid assessment of growth, skill acquisition, and character development as a result of this practicum. I pledge to complete an ‘Assessment Review’ at the completion of the practicum experience and meet to review my assessment.

Required Signatures

Student _____ Date _____

Ministry Supervisor _____ Date _____

Mentor _____ Date _____

Certified Leader _____ Date _____

Ministry Practicum Plan

Student:
Practicum Area:
Site Supervisor:

Term:

Part A of this plan is completed with student and Ministry Site Supervisor sitting together.
The remaining sections of the plan are then completed by the student.

- A. Working with your new Ministry Site Supervisor, determine what he/she expects your primary “Roles and Responsibilities” to be for this practicum (maximum of three)

Description

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

- B. Personal Goals

Consider your own “Personal Development Plan” and compare it to the “Expected Roles and Responsibilities” listed above. Write 2 – 3 personal S.M.A.R.T. goals for this new practicum. (S = specific; M = measureable; A = attainable; R = relevant/results oriented; T = time constrained)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

C. Predicted Skill Development

Consider your expected “Roles and Responsibilities” for this practicum, the personal goals you wrote above, as well as your understanding of yourself – your gifts, your talents, your skills.

1. What will you be able to offer this ministry area?

2. How might this practicum help prepare you for future ministry?

D. Special Challenges

Explain any special challenges you anticipate for yourself this practicum. (For example: public speaking, physical demands, time commitment, balancing family needs, serving on weekends, etc.)

Please show your completed plan to your Ministry Site Supervisor and Mentor. Once they approve have them sign your Learning Contract for this practicum. Copies of the completed Learning Contract and Ministry Practicum Plans get turned in to the academic office.

Future Assessment

The assessment for each practicum is designed to be a time of review and reflection of what was learned, affirmation of what went well and evaluation of areas needing further growth.

You will complete a “Practicum Reflection Report”. An “RTI Practicum Assessment” report will be completed by your Ministry Site Supervisor. Then a “Post-Practicum Assessment Review” is held between the student and the Ministry Site Coordinator. It will be your responsibility to schedule this meeting and make sure it happens.

- cc - Student
- Student’s mentor
- Ministry Coordinator/Site Supervisor
- Academic Office

RTI Practicum Assessment

Ministry Supervisor,

Thank you for guiding our student candidate through this practicum. We desire that these practicum experiences prove valuable for the candidate's growth and development, as well as for your own ministry.

During the last week of the practicum please complete the following evaluation/assessment for our candidate. He/She will complete a self-reflection and then will contact you to schedule a time for the two of you to meet together. At that meeting please discuss your assessment and their self-reflection.

Student: _____

Ministry Area: _____

I. The Experience

How did it go? From your perspective were the goals and objectives, as stated in the learning contract, fulfilled. Please explain.

II. Growth

Based upon what you knew of the candidate prior to the practicum until now, and upon what the expected roles, activities and responsibilities were for this practicum, in what areas have you seen the candidate grow?

III. Skill Acquisition

What skills have you seen develop or emerge?

IV. Activity of the Holy Spirit

How have you witnessed the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit in this candidate?

V. Areas Needing Development

VI. Additional Comments

Ministry Supervisor _____
Printed Name

Signature

Date

Thank you so much for the time, energy and guidance you have invested into our future missionary.

My Ministry Supervisor has shared this assessment of my practicum experience with me.

Student _____
Printed Name

Signature

Date

Practicum Reflection Report

Student: _____ Mentor: _____

Ministry area: _____ Ministry Site Supervisor: _____

- I. Describe your practicum experience, focusing upon your roles, activities and responsibilities. (For example, what was enjoyable? What was hard? Why? How do you feel the Holy Spirit used you?)

- II. What were the goals/objectives for this practicum (A, B, C)? Explain how you did and/or did not fulfill the goals and objectives for this practicum.

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

III. What growth did you experience? What further growth would you like to experience?

A. _____

B. _____

IV. Were there any special challenges you confronted during this practicum and how did you respond?

V. If you were to spend more time in this ministry area what would be your 'next steps'?
What do you feel like you still need to learn and/or practice in this ministry area?

VI. Other Comments

This self-reflection has been shared with me and discussed.

Ministry Site Supervisor

Signature

Date

Mentor

Signature

Date