

PRACTICUM FAQs

When will I begin practicum?

Please check your degree plan. The start date will vary for each student based on their enrollment model and program timeline.

My degree plan states that I will begin practicum in Fall 2024. When will I receive my curated practicum match as a generalist student for Fall 2024?

August 1st

What is the difference between a liaison, practicum instructor and preceptor?

Practicum Liaison (a member from the UH GCSW Practicum Team) This is the agency and student's primary contact at the College for all practicum related questions, assisting with any needs around practicum from an educational and enrollment standpoint. The liaison may act as a mediator, support, guide, and facilitator of the timeline and experience. This person can help with forms, remind about important dates, and collaborate should issues or troubles arise that aren't solved between the practicum instructor, preceptor, and student. The liaison can also answer questions about being connected to an agency, enrollment/timing of practicum and issues around placement. This is the primary contact for agency and student throughout placement for practicum specific questions.

Practicum Instructor (a member from the agency that you will complete your practicum at) a social worker that serves as the leader for providing practicum education and weekly supervision; must be two years post MSW; The practicum instructor's primary role is to facilitate the learning experience through weekly instruction/supervision, checking in about tasks for the week, providing feedback, monitoring the completion of the forms in the online IPT system and helping the student grow in social work practice competence. Practicum instruction is not clinical supervision for licensure. The student is not operating under the practicum instructor's license and the focus is on student growth versus client consultation. The practicum instructor is the one who counts and supervises what counts towards practicum hours. It is encouraged that the forms and tasks be checked in about monthly and any tasks or areas that are ready to be completed/provide ratings and feedback be done so (this eliminates leaving all the grading and form for the end of the semester).

Preceptor ALL STUDENTS WILL NOT HAVE A PRECEPTOR Some agencies do not have an MSW on staff and are willing to work with an external MSW to act as the Practicum instructor. The agency can designate this person directly or can approve the student/Practicum office locating someone. (As the practicum instructor is external (not directly a part of the department or agency where the student is engaging in practicum) there is preceptor. This person's role is to be the direct agency contact for the student. This person can assist with goals (using the attached form as a guide), determine what opportunities are available in terms of schedule and tasks, give guidance about activities the student is engaged in and give feedback about performance and completion of tasks. Preceptors should also provide adequate training and oversight support. Sometimes the preceptor and the practicum instructor speak to discuss the student's progress, any concerns, and collaborate on the forms.

How many hours do I need for practicum?

Generalist Practicum 1 200 hours

Generalist Practicum 2 200 hours

Advanced Practicum 1 250 hours (clinical or macro)

Advanced Practicum 2 250 hours (clinical or macro)

What logistical questions should I discuss with my practicum instructor prior to beginning practicum?

Attire, Onboarding Tasks, Equipment/Keys Assigned

Weekly schedule: Outline the student schedule for achieving weekly hours.

Plan for weekly supervision: Outline the schedule for weekly supervision between student and practicum instructor, include expectations for student and practicum instructor.

Practicum setting requirements: Outline specific practicum setting requirements that have been discussed and should be adhered to by the student.

Time Away: Describe the process to request time off from practicum, policy for university closures, and weather related closures, and how to communicate during emergencies

Wellness Plan: Describe ways to promote health, wellbeing, and harm reduction for the student

What topics should I discuss with my practicum liaison?

Questions regarding practicum supervision, practicum hours, monthly supervision logs (P1 & P2 only) contracting phase, evaluation phase, MOPO, challenges in practicum, accessing IPT, practicum instructor changes, practicum agency changes, incompletes, practicum grades and/or starting practicum should be discussed with your practicum liaison.

How often should I receive supervision?

Once a week

When should I identify my learning goals for practicum with my practicum instructor?

At the very beginning of the term. Please identify your learning goals for practicum using the contracting phase of the practicum form. After completing the form, you and your practicum instructor will both sign the form.

What is the practicum site visit?

A 30-minute meeting that allows you to discuss your experiences and progress in practicum. I like to refer to it as a “temperature check”. Is your learning progressive? Are you getting weekly supervision? Are you able to link what you are learning in class to practicum? Are there any barriers to obtaining your practicum hours? How does your agency incorporate the social justice principles and/or the mission and vision of the college? Are there any concerns that need to be addressed? Does your practicum instructor allow any practicum hours for self-care? What else do you need to feel prepared to be a social worker?

When should I complete the practicum safety checklist?

At the beginning of practicum.

What is MOPO?

Mandatory Online Practicum Orientation is a virtual orientation that all practicum students must complete prior to beginning practicum. This orientation does require you to upload a copy of your completion certificate in IPT.

What is IPT?

Intern Placement Tracking is an online database that allows you and your practicum instructor to complete and submit practicum documents online. Common forms consist of generalist form, clinical form, macro form and monthly supervision log

Can I do practicum at my place of employment?

Have you worked there a minimum of 6 weeks? Is there a two year post MSW staff member willing to serve as your practicum instructor? Is the work social work related? Have I notified the practicum team of my interest in this path?

I am a distance student. How do I find a practicum agency?

Make a list of agencies in your home community that you are interested in. The distance process is a way the Practicum office supports students to locate agencies in their local area, seek opportunities, secure placement and complete affiliation/connection processes with the University of Houston and Graduate College of Social Work. The process has some steps and tips and your Practicum faculty liaison can assist you with generating ideas of agencies that could meet the requirements for a Practicum sit

What types of grades do you get in Practicum?

S – satisfactory
U –unsatisfactory
I -incomplete

Does the GCSW offer malpractice insurance?

Coverage is provided to all students from the start of enrollment until graduation.

When do I contact my academic advisor?

Questions regarding scheduling courses, new SCH changes, degree plans and graduation should be discussed with your **academic advisor** (swadvise@central.uh.edu).

Do I need to complete the monthly supervision logs in IPT?

As of Fall 2024, ALL practicum students will complete a monthly supervision log. The log is in IPT. It allows you to track your practicum hours and to connect your daily tasks with the competencies in your practicum form.

How do I complete the practicum form?

Each student and practicum instructor will log into IPT to access to the practicum form (generalist, clinical or macro). The practicum form does request some basic information (practicum start date, projected completion date, practicum setting mission statement and purpose, populations served, weekly schedule, plan for weekly supervision, practicum setting requirements, time away and wellness plan) at the very top. There are 9 competencies established by the Council of Social Work Education in yellow. There are several behaviors in gray (1A to 9C this may vary based on the form you are using). Under each behavior you will see several learning tasks that you can select from.

There are a couple of spaces that are blank so that you can add your own learning goals if you prefer. You can select as many goals as you prefer however you must select a minimum of one learning task per behavior. Contracting phase allows you to select your learning goals at the beginning of the term. After you and your practicum instructor have identified learning goals, you will both then sign the contracting phase of the form. The evaluation phase of the form allows you and your practicum instructor to rate your performance on each learning task that you identified at the beginning of the semester. Your practicum instructor will use the rubric on the top left side of the form to rate your performance for each learning task. There are some reflective questions for both the student and practicum instructor to answer under each behavior. After all learning tasks have been rated and all open-ended questions are answered, the practicum instructor will provide a grade for the term and a signature. If the student agrees with the information provided, the student will also sign the evaluation phase of the form.

I signed my practicum form and now I cannot edit it.

After a form is signed it is locked. Please reach out to your practicum liaison to unlock the form. Remember the signature is the final step on the practicum form.

I am locked out of IPT. How can I get back in?

Access IPT through www.runipt.com

Log in information is always case sensitive

The Organizational ID is always: uhsu

If you ever forget your username and password, you can retrieve it directly through the system by clicking FORGOT USERNAME AND PASSWORD on the IPT log on page. You will need to use the default email address that the system has for you. This is likely the email address you used to apply to the GCSW.

If I had a practicum site visit already, do I need another one?

No. Students will need one practicum site visit per year.

I will not complete my practicum hours on time. What should I do?

Communicate with your practicum instructor and practicum liaison regarding this concern. Please be prepared to share the reason for the incomplete and a tentative date of when all hours and forms will be completed.

PRACTICUM TIPS

- ☺ Log into IPT prior to starting practicum to become familiar with the tabs and online platform
- ☺ Determine which method you will use to track deadlines, appointments, meetings, ect. Outlook, cell, calendar ect.
- ☺ Add all time commitments and deadlines on your calendar
- ☺ Determine how you will realistically obtain the required number of practicum hours weekly
- ☺ Create a schedule with your partner/parents/children to timely divide tasks
- ☺ Schedule self care (some practicum instructors allow you to count self care towards practicum hours)
- ☺ Document all tasks completed in practicum daily.
- ☺ Do not wait until the end of the semester to begin the evaluation phase of the form.
- ☺ The practicum form does not allow you to save and return to the form. Please save your information in a word document.
- ☺ Come to weekly supervision prepared to discuss triumphs and challenges.
- ☺ Do not be afraid to ask questions or to make mistakes.

- ☺ Practicum is an opportunity to learn on the go.
- ☺ Put your best effort forward. Practicum can have lifelong benefits. (employment, recommendations, colleagues)
- ☺ Please be sure that you and your practicum instructor have completed all forms on or before the due dates.
- ☺ You selected this path for a reason. Have fun!

HELPFUL RESOURCES

Justin Dart, Jr. Student Accessibility Center

<https://www.uh.edu/accessibility>

In accordance with Section 504 and ADA guidelines, the Student Accessibility Center strives to provide reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids to students who request and require them. If you believe that you have a disability requiring an academic adjustments/auxiliary aid, in class or field please call the Justin Dart, Jr. Student Accessibility Center at [\(713\) 743-5400](tel:7137435400) or email them at JDcenter@central.uh.edu.”

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

http://www.uh.edu/caps/outreach/lets_talk.html

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) can help students who are having difficulties managing stress, adjusting to the demands of a professional program, or feeling sad and hopeless. You can reach CAPS by calling 713-743-5454 during and after business hours for routine appointments or if you or someone you know is in crisis. No appointment is necessary for the “Let's Talk” program, a drop-in consultation service at convenient locations and hours around campus.

The University of Houston Writing Center

234 Classroom and Business Building Phone

(713) 743-3016

<http://writingcenter.uh.edu/#services>

The Writing Center offers one-on-one consultations in which trained Writing Consultants assist students with various types of writing (available by appointment only). Students also have the option to meet online with trained consultants to discuss their writing from any location through our Online Writing Services.

Coogs Care

<https://www.uh.edu/coogs-care/>

ReShine Clothing Closet

2nd floor GCSW (in the student lounge)

Gently used clothing, shoes and accessories