



MASTER OF ARTS IN DISABILITY MANAGEMENT

A Guide to the Practicum Option DISM 795-6

**Disability Management Program
School of Health Sciences**

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The contents of this document are subordinate to the Regulations of the Office of Graduate Programs, and, the Regulations of the Office of Graduate Programs take precedence over this document, see www.unbc.ca/graduateprograms.

For further information about the Master of Arts in Disability Management please access our Website: <http://www.unbc.ca/health-sciences/disability-management> or for any further enquiries, after studying this guide, please contact:

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*** Attachment “A”**

A template for a Practicum Learning Contract. It is also available in MS Word at [Practicum Learning Contract](#)

MA IN DISABILITY MANAGEMENT PRACTICUM

A. DEVELOPING A PRACTICUM

The development of the practicum with the MA in Disability Management will be initiated by the student. The student is responsible for finding a suitable agency and a Practicum Supervisor at the proposed placement who meets the standards as outlined under “Practicum Supervisor”, section B.1 below. The student must have finished all core courses before the start of the practicum.

Once an organization and Practicum Supervisor have been secured, the names and descriptions (i.e. CV or resume, organization description, etc.) must be submitted to the student’s Academic Supervisor for approval. The Academic Supervisor must consult with the Chair of the Program or designate and obtain approval of the placement. Pending approval, the student can develop the practicum proposal, but the practicum cannot begin until all approvals are obtained, including completed signatures on the Educational Institutional Affiliation Agreement, item 3 below.

The duration of this component is equivalent to three months of full-time employment (to total of 13 weeks or normally about 455 hrs.) Some flexibility to the above will be considered in special circumstances.

1. Practicum Proposal

The practicum proposal must include an introduction to the specific area of practice and a description of the proposed practicum experience including: its duration, the administrative arrangements, the learning goals, and suggested criteria for evaluation. Normally the practicum experience will not be remunerated as this may create a potential conflict of interest. The proposal must be approved by the Academic Supervisor before formal involvement of an agency.

2. Agency or Organization Approval

An executive officer or manager from the organization must provide written approval and authorization for the practicum. This approval will highlight any conditions or requirements of the organization.

3. Educational Institutional Affiliation Agreement

A standard contract, called an Educational Institution Affiliation Agreement, must have been signed by the University and the organization before the student commences the practicum. It is the responsibility of the student’s Academic Supervisor to ensure that the contract is signed. This contract form is used by Disability Management, Social Work, Nursing, Education and Psychology. It has been developed by the University to cover issues of liability and responsibility.

4. Orientation to the MA in Disability Management Practicum

It is the responsibility of the Academic Supervisor to provide all information necessary to the Practicum Supervisor so that the Practicum Supervisor clearly understands all requirements the Program has for the Practicum placement.

B. CONSTRUCTING A PRACTICUM COMMITTEE

The Practicum Committee must be formed by the student and the Academic Supervisor prior to the commencement of the practicum and consists of three members:

1. Practicum Supervisor (who is normally organization based and external to the University)
2. Academic Supervisor
3. Faculty Member of the Disability Management Program

In constructing a Committee there are usually a number of factors that students will wish to consider. They are noted below.

1. Practicum Supervisor

First, it is vital that the Practicum Supervisor have demonstrated knowledge, skill, and experience in the practice area that is being used for the practicum experience. This is of obvious importance in facilitating and promoting a productive learning experience.

- Normally supervision will be provided by a person with a Masters degree in a related field from an accredited university program.
- The Practicum Supervisor must have at least two years of relevant practice experience.
- It is expected that the Practicum Supervisor will have a clear understanding of disability management and its professional application.
- The student's Academic Supervisor will play a more direct role when a non-disability management worker is providing the practicum supervision. This will ensure that the Disability Management Program's ethics, standards and expectations are met.
- Usually the Practicum Supervisor will be part of the organization in which the practicum is occurring. If supervision is to be provided from outside the organization, then signed approval of the relationship must be provided by the organization. Lines of authority and responsibility must be clearly stated in the statement of approval.
- The Chair of the Program determines if the Practicum Supervisor meets the required criteria.

2. Academic Supervisor

The Academic Supervisor will assume the role of Committee Chair.

- The Academic Supervisor is assigned to the student at the entry into the Program
- Often the Academic Supervisor is selected by the Admissions Committee on the basis of practice expertise in the student's area of interest. Second, the Academic Supervisor

may be selected based upon particular knowledge that can be applied within the practicum setting.

- The Academic Supervisor must always be a full-time faculty member of the Disability Management Program.
- Students may use the faculty member originally assigned to them as Academic Supervisor when they were first admitted. However, students should also feel free to select any faculty member who will best meet their needs. Students should be aware that faculty may choose not to accept this role. Should the knowledge base require a change it is possible to replace the Academic Supervisor.

3. Faculty Member of the Disability Management Program

The final member of the Committee is a Disability Management Faculty Member. In choosing this person the Academic Supervisor and student may also wish to look at the faculty member's areas of practice interest and experience as well as their particular research knowledge. Faculty members are listed under Disability Management Program description in the Graduate Calendar or at www.unbc.ca/disabilitymanagement under Faculty and Staff.

C. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Student

- The student is responsible for identifying a suitable practicum setting related to Disability Management, and a suitable Practicum Supervisor.
- The student will take primary responsibility for developing the practicum experience in accordance with University expectations. The student will write a proposal that clearly outlines the extent and expectations of the practicum.
- Together with the Practicum Supervisor the student will develop clear learning goals through Learning Contract, see item D.
- The student is responsible for participating in evaluation and review meetings as required and will produce a written report summarizing the practicum experience. At a minimum, this will include the Mid-Term and End-Term evaluation meetings, writing a report for the Committee, and defending the report in the final evaluation meeting.
- The student will ensure that all approval forms and requirements as set out by the organization and the Program are met.
- Upon completion of the practicum, the production of the report (see section H below) and successful completion of an oral examination, the student is responsible for completing all requirements as determined by the Office of Graduate Programs at UNBC.

2. Practicum Supervisor

- The Practicum Supervisor should submit a curriculum vitae or résumé to the student's Academic Supervisor.
- The Practicum Supervisor is responsible for developing the practicum learning opportunity together with the student.
- The Practicum Supervisor will participate in a review of the student's draft proposal before it is approved by the student's Supervisory Committee.
- The Practicum Supervisor will provide an orientation to the agency or organization and they will develop a learning contract together with the student. The learning contract will list a series of learning goals and specify knowledge and skills that the student hopes to acquire during the practicum experience, see item D.
- The Practicum Supervisor will normally manage the student's work assignments. The Practicum Supervisor must ensure that work assignments and the volume of work will support an educational experience for the student.
- The Supervisor will provide regular, scheduled supervision sessions. At the mid point of the practicum the Supervisor will provide a written summary of the student's progress in regard to the practicum and the learning goals. (See Learning Contract, Mid-Term Evaluation.) This summary will be delivered to the student's Academic Supervisor at which time the student's progress will be formally reviewed by the student, the Academic Supervisor, and the Practicum Supervisor.
- At the conclusion of the practicum, the Practicum Supervisor will produce a final summary report evaluating the student's performance in the practicum and their progress toward achieving the learning goals. (See Learning Contract, End-Term Evaluation.) This report will be sent to the Academic Supervisor and a formal review meeting will occur.
- The review meeting will include the student, the Academic Supervisor, and the Practicum Supervisor. The meetings do not need to be "face to face" and may be conducted by telephone conference. The Practicum Supervisor can recommend a pass or fail for the student.
- The Practicum Supervisor is expected to maintain regular communication with the Academic Supervisor so that any issues or uncertainties may be promptly addressed.

3. Academic Supervisor

- The Academic Supervisor will consult with the student regarding the practicum location and selection of a Practicum Supervisor.
- Once this has been completed the Academic Supervisor will be responsible for ensuring that all necessary contractual agreements are signed.
- The Academic Supervisor will coordinate evaluation meetings and review meetings, and ensure that all academic standards are met.
- The Academic Supervisor will enter the grade for the Practicum, based on the vote of the Committee members.

4. Faculty Member of the Disability Management Program

- The Disability Management Program Committee Member will participate in planning and review meetings as directed by the Academic Supervisor. These meetings may include initial planning around the practicum and the evaluation meetings.
- The Disability Management Program Committee Member will be expected to review drafts of the report and participate in the evaluation process.

5. Program Chair

The Disability Management Program Chair or designate approves the credentials of the Practicum Supervisor and the Practicum Learning Contract.

D. PRACTICUM SITES

A practicum site can be any place where Disability Management takes place. Examples include, but are not limited to, Workers' Compensation Boards, Insurance Companies, Disability Management companies, Rehabilitation Clinics, and employers that provide such services to their employees. Non-governmental social service agencies that provide employment and job placement services to persons with disabilities may also be appropriate.

Normally a practicum will not take place at a student's place of employment. However, if a student wishes to pursue a practicum at their place of employment they must clearly demonstrate in writing, and with the employer's support, that their practicum experience will be substantively different from their regular job duties.

The Practicum Placement should carry liability insurance or demonstrate that their organization is able to provide coverage in the case of any litigation.

A practicum site must be willing to provide direct supervision to the student, and engage in the evaluation process as outlined below. If there is no qualified supervisor on site, the practicum site must be willing to work with a supervisor assigned by the Disability Management Program.

E. PRACTICUM LEARNING CONTRACT

- It is important that the MA in Disability Management Program Practicum Learning Contract be clear and unambiguous.
- The Contract will be typewritten and it must be signed by the student, the Practicum Supervisor, the Academic Supervisor, and the Program Chair.
- The basic outline for the Practicum Learning Contract is below and a sample template is attached as an Appendix A.

MA in Disability Management Program Practicum Learning Contract

(Please use Appendix A as your Template. It is also available in MS Word at http://www.unbc.ca/disabilitymanagement/disability_management_guides.html)

Name and contact information of Student

Name and contact information of Practicum Supervisor

Name and contact information of Academic Supervisor

Name and address of the Organization:

Length of Placement: Dates

Hours of Work:

Learning Objectives:

List what you hope to achieve given the opportunities available within the organization and your needs and interests. The learning objectives must be clearly stated.

For each learning objective, specify:

- i. how you will achieve it
- ii. what will be the evidence of achievement

Signatures:

Student

Date:

Practicum Supervisor

Date:

Academic Supervisor

Date:

Program Chair

Date:

F. PRACTICUM EVALUATION

The Practicum Learning Contract, developed at the onset of the practicum, will identify the learning objectives on which the student will be evaluated.

The practicum will be evaluated at two points:

1. Mid-point evaluation (Learning Contract, Mid-Term Evaluation, section D)
2. Final evaluation (Learning Contract, End-Term Evaluation, section E)
 - All evaluations will include the student and the Committee members.
 - The practicum evaluation is Pass or Fail.
 - The Practicum Supervisor will produce a mid-term evaluation report and a final, end-term evaluation report. The reports will be in narrative form but must include a clear description of the learning goals, a Pass/Fail indication, and the basis for the evaluation results.

The interim and final practicum evaluations will be constructed in narrative form under three specific sections:

1. The first section will address the knowledge goals stated in the Learning Contract.
2. The second section will address progress toward completion of the tasks listed in the learning contract.
3. The final section will be a summary of the student's overall performance. In the interim evaluation report this section will also list any changes to the stated knowledge and task goals outlined in the original learning contract.

G. EVALUATION PROCESS

1. The Practicum Supervisor is responsible for the ongoing daily/weekly supervision of the student and will give regular feedback on the student's progress.
2. At midpoint, a written, graded summary by the Practicum Supervisor will form the Mid-Term evaluation of the student (see Learning Contract, Mid-Term Evaluation, section D). This evaluation is to be reviewed by the Academic Supervisor.
3. The final, End-Term Evaluation includes a written report by the Practicum Supervisor (see Learning Contract, End-Term Evaluation, section E), the written Practicum Report by the student and the final review meeting involving all parties.

H. PRACTICUM REPORT

The practicum leads to a written report by the student that reflects the student's critical analyses of their practice setting. The report further demonstrates a deepening of professional competence, analytical skills, and professional judgment, and represents a contribution of the knowledge and skill base of the profession. In particular the student should comment specifically on the results of the learning outcomes. This report is to be reviewed by all the Committee members prior to the examination meeting.

I. FINAL EXAMINATION

The End-Term Evaluation and the Practicum Reports are the basis for a final review of the student by the Committee members including the Practicum Supervisor. The Academic Supervisor is to coordinate this meeting.

J. GRADING

The final grade will be assigned following this final meeting. The grade of Pass or Fail for DISM 795-6 will be determined by a simple majority of the Committee. The student can appeal the final grade as per the procedure outlined in the current UNBC Graduate Calendar.