OVERVIEW OF PRACTICUM COURSE
Ph.D. in Literacy Studies – LITS 7200

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Practicum in Literacy Studies is to apply knowledge and skills gained in the Core program to literacy issues found in field environments. To do so effectively, a student in the program should have completed a minimum of 20 credit hours of Core courses, excluding the Research component, and at least 6 credit hours in the area of specialization.

PREPARATION:

1) The student and faculty advisor will collaboratively agree on the specific type of practicum placement that will best meet the student’s career goals. The faculty advisor, in collaboration with the Program Director if needed, will identify an appropriate practicum site and will obtain administrative authorization for a practicum student to work in the setting. The faculty advisor will also identify a qualified on-site supervisor/mentor who is willing to mentor/supervise the student.

2) The student, in collaboration with the faculty advisor, will identify and record the specific goals to be accomplished through the practicum.

3) The student, faculty advisor, and on-site mentor/supervisor will, together, develop a clear and detailed description of the responsibilities the student will assume throughout the practicum. These responsibilities should bear directly on the goals established (item 2 above).

4) The schedule of days and times that the student will be expected to be on-site will be determined and recorded. Typically, the practicum experience requires 60 total clock hours in the field.

5) A formal statement of contract will be prepared and signed by all parties involved (see Practicum Contract attached). A copy will be sent to the Program Director for the Ph.D. in Literacy Studies.

STRUCTURE OF THE EXPERIENCE:

1) The student will be on-site and working with the mentor/supervisor on the dates agreed upon (item 4 above).

2) The student will maintain a log detailing the experiences engaged in for both the days spent on-site and for the time between when preparation for the next site visit is required. Each entry should end with a reflection on the quality of the experience, what was gained as a result (information, insights, skills, etc.), how (if) the experience contributed to meeting one or more of the stated goals for the practicum, overall.
3) The student will share and discuss the log with the mentor/supervisor at least once every three weeks (assumes a 12 week semester) or every two weeks if the practicum extends over an 8 week summer semester. The mentor/supervisor will comment and sign the log to verify that these discussions have taken place. This assures that the mentor/supervisor and the student are teaming to ensure that the student’s goals are being met. Adjustments to subsequent experiences planned might be made as a result of these discussions.

4) The advisor is responsible for verifying that the experiences engaged in are providing opportunities for the student to apply knowledge and skills gained in the program Core to issues(s) common to the professional field for which the student is preparing.

A) The student will meet with the faculty advisor at intervals established prior to the beginning of the practicum but not less than 4 times during the semester.

B) The advisor will review the log entries, discuss progress toward meeting the stated goals of the experience, offer guidance and support, if needed, to adjust the experiences so that the student will achieve maximum benefit from the experience.

EVALUATION:

Evaluation of the Practicum will be conducted by all three partners in the experience. The percent of the final grade contributed by each might be distributed as noted. However, the final decision regarding the allocation of percentages will rest with the faculty supervisor and this will be made known prior to beginning the on-site work.

1) At the start of the Practicum experience, the faculty advisor will provide a rubric for evaluating the log, planned meetings/discussions, on-site observations of the student in action, and the self-evaluation provided at the conclusion of the experience. (55%)

2) The student will submit a self-evaluation of the experience that should be guided by the goals established prior to beginning the on-site activities. It should conclude with a reflection on what was gained through the experience overall (additional knowledge, skills, insights, etc.). This will be submitted to both the mentor/supervisor and the faculty advisor. (20%)

3) The mentor/supervisor will provide written responses to a standard set of questions (see Practicum Supervisor’s Evaluation attached). This will be discussed with the student and the faculty advisor. (25%).