

DESIGN INSTITUTE OF SAN DIEGO

MID Professional Practicum



Standards and Guidelines

2020

I. PURPOSE

The Professional Practicum, a field experience supervised by a mentor and related to the student's professional goals, is an important component of the MID program. Working under the direction of the supervising faculty member and a qualified and approved field mentor gives students experience in their field of study and the opportunity to apply their academic knowledge to practice. Through the Professional Practicum, students make valuable connections within the field, learn to work with allied disciplines, and develop substantive material for a portfolio or resume.

II. PROCEDURES FOR OBTAINING A FIELD EXPERIENCE POSITION

MID students should seek paid field experience (internship) positions within established companies/firms, organizations or institutions and should begin preparing to apply for such positions by the end of their first semester of study. Field experience opportunities are available through a number of sources including but not limited to Design Institute's established list of companies/firms available through the Professional Practicum supervising faculty member, faculty referrals, job board announcements to graduate students, individual searches on appropriate websites, and personal contacts with targeted companies/firms, organizations or institutions.

Students enrolling in the Professional Practicum course must interview with the selected company/firm, organization or institution's officials (by telephone or in person); identify a qualified field mentor; discuss the terms of the position; and identify the projects on which they will work. Professional Practicum supervising faculty member will assist students in securing field experience (internship) positions and completing the necessary paperwork to receive course credit.

The Professional Practicum supervising faculty member and the Program Director must approve each qualified field mentor and proposed field experience application including company/firm, organization or institution; projects/tasks to be performed; and the timeframe for completion of the course. Students must complete all required paperwork prior to beginning their Professional Practicum hours.

III. REQUIREMENTS

MID students enrolled in the Professional Practicum course will engage in one hundred and fifty-three (153) hours of rigorous activity related to professional practice (or teaching) allowing students to apply what they have learned while guided by a qualified and approved supervising field mentor. An additional twenty-seven (27) hours will be spent on mentorship, preparatory work, logs, and reflection journals documenting the experience under the guidance of the Professional Practicum supervising faculty member.

Extensions of time to complete the field experience are only considered in cases in which a student is unable to fulfill the terms of the agreement due to reasons beyond their control, such as health issues or an unforeseen personal or family emergency. To be considered for an extension, the student must submit written documentation substantiating their request to the Program Director. All requests will be considered, but an extension will not be granted without good cause.

A final grade for the 3-unit Professional Practicum course will not be posted until the 153 hours of work in the field, 9 hours of mentorship and 18 additional hours of outside preparation have been completed and all the required Professional Practicum paperwork has been submitted.

Until all requirements for the Professional Practicum have been fulfilled, students will be considered In Progress (IP). Failure to complete all Professional Practicum requirements by the deadline outlined in the Professional Practicum Intent and Learning Objectives Form may result in an NCR and the need to repeat the course.

1. Credit Hour/Work Ratio

1 unit of MID practicum credit = [3.4 hours of work in the field per week x 15 weeks = 51 clock hours per semester of field work] + [1 hour of mentorship + 2 hours of outside preparation (reading, research, homework) per week x 3 weeks = 9 clock hours per semester of additional work] = 60 clock hours per semester

Example: 3-unit Practicum requires 153 hours of fieldwork, 9 hours of mentorship, and 18 additional hours of outside preparation for a combined total of 180 clock hours per semester.

2. Professional Experience

Professional Practicum must involve defined projects, engage specific methodologies, and involve professional work in the field. Work-study type positions and unspecified volunteer work do not qualify for Professional Practicum credit.

The roles of the participants:

When undertaking a field experience, students are participating in a three-way relationship with mutual responsibilities. The students provide the selected company/firm, organization or institution with their time and labor; the field mentors provide students with training and direction; and the Professional Practicum supervising faculty member evaluates students' success in the field experience and assigns academic credit.

Professionalism:

While placed in the field, students represent DISD and their behavior and work habits reflect on the reputation and credibility of the school. Students are expected to conduct themselves as professionals, which includes:

- adherence to the highest professional moral and ethical standards as outlined in the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct <https://www.asid.org/resources/about/ethics> or International Interior Design Association (IIDA) Code of Ethics https://www.iida.org/resources/content/6/3/6/0/documents/IIDA-Code-of-Ethics_Designer.pdf;
- reliable attendance and prompt arrivals;
- appropriate professional attire;
- courteous behavior;
- a direct and respectful approach to problems and issues; and
- a strong willingness to learn.

Confidentiality:

Students must respect the confidentiality of sensitive information encountered during a field experience and refrain from discussing it with others or sharing confidential documents with individuals outside the company/firm, organization or institution.

3. Required Documentation

Professional Practicum Intent Application

Students must complete the application that includes potential company/firm, organization or institution; projects/tasks to be performed; and timeframe for completion of the course. After the Program Director approves the application, students will be permitted to register for the Professional Practicum course.

Field Mentor Approval Form

It is each student's responsibility to ensure that the proposed mentor receives and completes the Field Mentor Approval Form. The Approval Form must be submitted to the Professional Practicum supervising faculty member and the Program Director for approval.

Professional Practicum Placement Agreement

The Professional Practicum supervising faculty member, qualified and approved field mentor, and student will execute a Professional Practicum Placement Agreement that stipulates the mutual obligations of each participant. The Placement Agreement will identify the field mentor and include a description of the projects in which the student will participate. Expectations of the student and the mentor will be clearly stated in the Placement Agreement. Students are not permitted to start their hours until the Placement Agreement is signed.

Field Experience Journals

Students are required to document their experience in the Field Journal I (first 75 hours) and Field Journal II (remaining 76 hours). The Field Journals can be filled out online and, once completed, returned to the Professional Practicum supervising faculty member for review and evaluation.

Field Experience Time Logs

Students are required to record the time they spent and activities/projects in which they participated in the Time Log I (first 75 hours) and Time Log II (remaining 76 hours). The Time Logs must be filled out each week. Once the first 75 hours are completed, the field mentor must approve the hours logged by reviewing, signing, and dating the Time Log I. Once the remaining 76 hours are completed, the field mentor must approve the hours logged by reviewing, signing, and dating the Time Log II.

Students must submit approved time logs to their Professional Practicum supervising faculty member for review.

Field Mentor Evaluation Form

At the completion of the 153 hours of field experience, the field mentor is required to provide a written evaluation of the student's performance. It is each student's responsibility to ask the Professional Practicum supervising faculty member to email the Field Mentor Evaluation Form directly to the approved field mentor within 10 -15 hours of completing the required 153 hours. The field mentor may complete the evaluation online or print out the form and complete it by hand. Completed Field Mentor Evaluation Forms must be sent directly to the Professional Practicum supervising faculty member by return email. As an alternative, completed hard copies of the form may be sent by mail or hand delivered. To be accepted as valid, the field mentor must seal the evaluation in an envelope and sign their name across the sealed envelope flap. The name and signature on the sealed envelope must match the signature on the evaluation.

It is the student's responsibility to make sure that the field mentor receives, completes and returns the Field Mentor Evaluation Form to the Professional Practicum supervising faculty member on or before the Professional Practicum completion deadline.

4. Final Grade

Once all Professional Practicum requirements are fulfilled and the Professional Practicum supervising faculty member receives completed, signed Field Mentor Evaluation Form, the Practicum is complete. At that time, the IP (In Progress) designation will be removed by the Registrar and will convert it to a final grade for the course.