

## How to Develop your Practicum in Public Scholarship (PUBSCH 602)

### What is a practicum?

The Certificate practicum combines a practice- or project-based experience that includes scholarly reflection and production regarding that experience. It encompasses work “in the field” and a critical assessment of that work. The practicum should:

- be appropriate to the fellow’s educational and professional goals;
- be shaped with and overseen by the fellow’s practicum advisor, in consultation with his/her portfolio advisor;
- further the development of the fellow’s CPS portfolios by contributing artifacts to a rich archive of publicly-engaged work.\*
- occasion an articulation of and reflection on the stakes and significance of publicly-engaged and applied forms of research, teaching, and/or professional service.

All practica require documentation and assessment/critical reflection, as well as a moment of public presentation designed to engage other students enrolled in the certificate program, the university, and community members, as appropriate. *\*\*Fellows should create a PUBSCH 602 portfolio in their CPS workspaces, in order to frame the significance of the work evidenced by particular practicum artifacts for specific audiences and publics, and provide their practicum advisor access to this portfolio for collaboration, feedback, and assessment purposes.\*\**

*\*Examples of practica include:* the piloting and assessment of a community-engaged research project; the development and assessment of a community-based learning course; an internship with an academic component; or the launch of a digital form of research designed for a wider public, among many other possibilities.

*\*Examples of artifacts that document the processes and/or outcomes of practica include:* course websites, lesson plans, assignments, assessment or evaluation instruments, interview protocols, charettes, fieldnotes, reflective essays, video of a collaboratively-created performance, a qualitative GIS map, and an online exhibition, among many other possibilities.

Practica may overlap with theses or dissertations, but the artifacts they produce need to be distinct from them and self-contained. Fellows are encouraged to work together on collaborative projects. The 3-5 credit range for practica is intended to reflect differences among the goals and scope of various projects.

Practicum plans must be approved by (1) the practicum advisor and (2) the CPS directors before fellows can enroll in the practicum course, PUBSCH 602. *Fellows must submit a proposal and petition for approval the quarter before they intend to enroll.* Given the planning and development involved, it may behoove fellows to submit earlier.

## **Planning for your practicum: plan ahead!**

Because the practicum involves a fieldwork experience and scholarly reflection and framing of that experience for multiple audiences, it may make sense to do the “fieldwork” in one quarter, and the academic reflection and production in another. This division of labor can be helpful for fellows who have on-going organizational or community service commitments, but can also be true for students piloting a new course or website.

- *Fellows should enroll in PUBSCH 602 in the quarter in which they will complete the practicum, and in which the artifacts that document it will be completed and assessed.*
- *To enroll in PUBSCH 602, fellows need to submit a *Petition for Practicum Approval* in the preceding quarter, and have it approved by (1) their practicum advisor, and (2) the CPS co-directors.*
- *Fellows **should** submit their *Petition for Practicum Approval* before they begin their practicum fieldwork.*

This sequence allows you to map out the goals and intended outcomes of the practicum, as well as how you plan to document and assess your work. It’s important to have these plans in place before you begin your fieldwork, so that you collect the materials and data you will need to assess the project at its conclusion. While you might deviate from your original plans as your practicum evolves and unanticipated opportunities or obstacles present themselves, the petition/proposal creates a frame for learning from those deviations.

## **Scaling your practicum/project**

If you are involved in a long-term collaborative project, the challenge will be to define a discrete part of that project for your practicum. Remember that the practicum requirement is scaled at 3-5 credits. In other words, it should be clearly defined and delimited.

For instance, if you are collaborating on a multi-year research project undertaken with a local non-profit, your practicum could be a mid-term project assessment aimed at aligning the current course of the research with the originally-stated goals. That way the outcomes of the practicum are distinct from the outcomes of the final research project, possible to complete within the one-quarter timeframe, and scaled to the effort represented by 3-5 credits.

## **Questions to consider as you plan your practicum and draft your proposal**

- **Goals and Rationale.** What do you aim to achieve in this practicum/ project? Why undertake it? What do you want to learn from engaging in it? How do you understand its relationship to what you define as “public scholarship”?
- **Activities and Work Plan.** What will you do in this practicum/project? With and for whom? You may wish to include a timeline.

- **Outcomes and Impact.** What will the activities generate? Specifically, what *artifacts* will you produce? For whom will these artifacts be useful or meaningful?
- **Assessment Plan.** How will you document your work, and how will you assess the success of the practicum/project? Who besides yourself and the practicum advisor might contribute meaningfully to its assessment?

Your proposal might begin with an “Overview” that is your abstract, and then address these main areas in turn.