

Purpose of UVU Family Science Practicum 481R “Community Practicum”.

As you consider your practicum (internship), you must be approved to complete a significant project in the field that improves the quality of family life. Meet with your [advisor](#) and the [internship coordinator](#). Your internship contract should reflect compelling connection to psycho-education or other professional endeavors related to *formal teaching, family intervention, curriculum and resource development, or most social services*. Watch the **four videos** at the bottom of [this page](#) for great information about the purpose of internships, how to get help to set them up, and university requirements.

How to Secure a Practicum Placement.

We advise you not to put all your “eggs in one basket” by applying to just one community agency if you don’t have a secure placement yet. This process is like pursuing a job and you’ll want to be proactive and keep your options open. Even if you apply by phone call or an online application, it is *vital that you visit the site in person* whenever possible. Meet the staff, tour the facility, and get a feeling for what it has to offer. *Be selective of only those places and people that will support and welcome you*. Also, when you apply, give the recruiter a timeframe confirmation to hear back in your communication. For example, “I need to know if I am able to be placed at X agency by X date” (*and make the date several weeks before the hard deadline listed on the UVU internship website for family science majors*). If you don’t hear back by the expected date (after sending them reminders), you should have other options in the meantime from other agencies you are also pursuing. You might also [consider applying](#) to the [UVU Stronger Families Project](#) if your schedule will allow. You will know within a week if you are accepted into that program.

What Qualifies?

The experience needs to reflect psycho-educational activities. The following are different examples of approved projects that students have done in the field. Each show how an intern gives **direct services**. Be clear, detailed, and specific as you list 4-6 internship duties on the application.

- Develop curriculum for parent education program materials
- Teach lessons or workshops such as pre-marital relationship classes, parenting classes, addiction recovery, family finance, or life skills to the disabled, teen mothers, or other at-risk groups
- Critique quality of programs/teaching and provide training for employees
- Interview participants to collect and determine legal actions for child safety and well being
- Work with unsheltered populations, immigrants, or refugees to gain employment skills and housing
- Home visits to determine suitability of foster care child placement
- Guardian Ad Litem liaison for court visits or custodial exchanges
- Liaison for juvenile delinquents or foster care
- Teaching emotional wellness and self-efficacy to victims of violence or with mental health disorders
- Track student school attendance and scholastic performance and conduct intervention programs

Every activity you do and record on your time sheet needs to reflect a direct tie to the psycho-educational goals of this class and apply what you’ve learned so far in the FAMS degree. Here is an example of responsibilities listed on a [good application](#) (detailed, robust, with clear outcomes) and here is an example of a [bad application](#) (vague, not tied to psychoeducation, incomplete sentences).

What Does Not Qualify?

What will **NOT** be approved are activities that are non-psycho-educational and non-specific that include (but are not limited to):

- **Transporting children/clients** and cleaning the bus (if that is your primary practicum responsibility). However, you may ride or drive them to and from a recreational/educational activity if the *activity* is the focus of your job duties, not transportation. *Furthermore, personal travel time to and from your internship site does not count.*
- **Serving or delivering food to clients** such as “Meals on Wheels” or being on lunch duty at elementary schools (psycho-educational or life skills must be taught like at a center for adults with disabilities).
- **Job shadowing, or observing a client in the field.** This one comes up quite a bit since you are not a licensed clinician. If you are doing a home visit, meeting with students in a school counselor’s office, participating in group, or attending court with another social worker, you cannot just sit and “observe.” These will not count toward your practicum hours. Instead, plan to be contributing in some way, such as taking case notes, assessments, writing recommendations based on observations, teaching a brief lesson (e.g. mental health, family finance, scholastic tips), or anything that would require you to be engaged rather than passively watching during that visit.
- **Office reception work.** This one comes up as well because some agencies want you as a front desk greeter/receptionist, answering phones, doing intake, and scheduling appointments. *Acting as a secretary or receptionist is not a family science practicum.* However, you can work in an administrative capacity doing case management, writing family policy legal briefs, teaching classes to clients, event planning, research and assessment, posting psychoeducation articles on the website/blog, creating training manuals, info sheets/brochures, and so forth. Be sure it passes the psychoeducation test!
- **Nanny, babysitting, or personal assistant to a disabled or elderly person.** The exception is you may intern with a contracted agency such as an assisted living center if your work shows clear involvement of families with their aging family member and direct socio-emotional, cognitive support in recreational activities. *You cannot serve in the capacity of a CNA, housekeeper, or physical therapist.*
- **Health coaching.** Personal fitness and health are wonderful activities but will not count for academic credit. You are a family science major, not an exercise science, nutrition, or health major. You can intern in the healthcare or medical industry **ONLY** if your projects *relate exclusively to psychoeducation* (e.g. teaching relationship skills, abuse/addiction recovery, mental, social/emotional wellness, etc.).

Employment or Long-term Volunteer as a Practicum

If you are in paid employment, the job may be approved as your practicum if it is *new to you, within two months of the first day of the semester you begin*. Either as a *volunteer* or *paid employee*, this must be a *new position to count for academic credit*. If you’ve been there longer than two months, the practicum may count if you have duties **IN ADDITION** to hours and/or duties you’ve been fulfilling. If a student wants practicum credit applied at long-term employment, the contract must show a clear description of professional contributions *beyond* regular job duties and be *tied to approved activities*. It can be a title change, a new project, or just additional responsibilities for about 10 hours/week. Before you do what’s comfortable to you by interning at your long-term job, please consider doing a separate internship. It will help expose you to new opportunities, new professional connections, learn new skills, and be another career experience to list on your resume. You never know what will be in your future!

Practicum Hours

Hours at the internship only count toward academic credit during the semester enrolled. Typically, the 120 hours of a 3-credit internship are spread throughout the semester to *coincide with the semester schedule, beginning to end, so you must be in field the full 14 weeks. Plan to be in the field 2-3 days a week, **NOT** one day a week.*

There are the **HARD** deadlines for having your **FAMS 481R application** **COMPLETED** if you want to be registered for the course and get credit. If this is not done in time, your application will be denied: **Dec 1 (Spring Semester); May 1 (Summer Semester); Aug 1 (Fall Semester).** *Plan accordingly!*