7380 School Library Practicum (1-3 credit hours)

Course Description

Directed, inquiry-based experiences in school libraries; pre-service action research supports continuous evolution as an school librarian. Admission to MA or 24 LIS credit hours taken at MU; instructor permission required.

7380 School Library Practicum consists of a minimum of 12 full school days on site under the supervision of a fully qualified, experienced school librarian mentor. The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) requires a minimum of 2 credit hours of practicum in the content area for advanced school library media certification. The practicum may be divided and taken in 1 credit hour segments over two successive semesters.

- Minimum of 150 clock hours – equivalent to 3 credit hours of practicum
- Minimum of 100 clock hours – equivalent to 2 credit hours of practicum
- Minimum of 50 clock hours – equivalent to 1 credit hour of practicum

The LIS Program K-12 school library certification advisor must approve the student’s plan to complete the required hours before the student is granted permission to enroll in 7380 School Library Practicum. Written confirmation of the student’s Request for Placement form constitutes approval and permission to register for the course. In submitting the Request for Placement, students agree to accept the terms of the placement, and follow all policies and procedures, without exception.

7380 Course Prerequisites

1. Teaching Certificate or Substitute Teaching Certificate
   All 7380 students must hold a Missouri teaching certificate or a Missouri substitute teaching certificate. Copies of your certificate can be printed off using DESE’s Educator Certification System, http://dese.mo.gov/educator-quality/certification.

2. Background/Fingerprint Check
   All 7380 students must complete, or have completed, a Background/Fingerprint Check. Information on the process is located on the DESE Web site http://dese.mo.gov/educator-quality/certification/fingerprintingbackground-check. Be prepared to submit the original results to the Human Resources department in the district where you are placed.

3. Professional Liability Insurance
   All students MUST furnish proof of professional liability insurance. If you do not have professional liability insurance, you may purchase it through the Student Missouri Teachers Association (S-MSTA). Information on S-MSTA can be found at http://www.msta.org/s-msta/.

4. Professional Résumé
   Develop a professional résumé to share with your mentor at your first meeting. If you need assistance developing a professional teacher résumé, check http://education.missouri.edu/TDP/CAPS/tips/resume.php.
5. **Examples of Instructional Materials**
Submit two examples of previous coursework or materials prepared to support teachers and/or students in their information use. Examples may include lesson plans for information literacy instruction, plans for teacher in-service workshops, or lessons about using school-oriented databases or technologies.

7380 In-Course Assignments

6. **Instructional/Teaching Event Observation**
Practicum students will complete at least one instructional event during 7380, to be observed by the LIS faculty responsible for school library practicum placement.

   **It is the practicum student’s responsibility to schedule a minimum of one formal observation on a day and at a time that is mutually convenient for the mentoring school librarian, the LIS faculty or LIS faculty representative and the practicum student. Observations must take place during a teaching event.**

7. **School Library Problems of Practice Action Research Project**
All practicum students are required to complete a School Library Problems of Practice Action Research Project that investigates the effects of the school library program on student learning and/or on professional practice. Your Problems of Practice Action Research Project will be conducted at your practicum site.

   The Project will identify a problem of practice, gather background information on the topic, review current literature related to the problem, formulate appropriate questions, collect multiple kinds of data, organize, analyze and interpret the data, develop conclusions and design an action plan based on the research results (guide appended).

   The study should involve the ordinary activities that take place in the school library. Results will not be disseminated beyond class activities. Data and/or results may not be used for publication purposes.

   Students must receive topic approval before beginning the school library action research process.

8. **Work Journal Blog**
Work journals are informal accounts of the activities in which you participate on-site. Entries should be made on the 7380 Course Website where each student has a personal reflective Blog that acts as a journal. If something unexpected happens on a particular day, make a note of it so as to remember it when writing in the blog. At the close of each week, set aside time to reflect on the events and experiences in which you participated.

   - What do you want to make certain you will remember?
   - What did you observe? Did anything surprise you?
   - What was successful for your school librarian mentor? Is this a strategy you will adopt? If so, why? How might you make it work for you?
• What did you learn about student behavior management?
• What did you learn about working with culturally diverse students?

9. Time On-Site Log
The Time Log provides documentation of the time a student spends on-site. It will be kept in the student’s file in the Student Coordinator’s Office and may be used as part of program accreditation. Time on-site includes before and after school hours, time spent on technical support, etc., under the direct supervision of the mentoring school librarian. Both student and mentor must sign the Time Log. It is the student’s responsibility to submit the Time Log for review every two weeks.

Students may not earn additional points for time in excess of that required on-site.

Points will be deducted for required time not spent on-site at the rate of 5 points per clock hour missed

Selecting Practicum Site(s)

Contact the SISLT faculty advisor and notify the advisor you are interested in scheduling your practicum. You must complete a Request for Placement form. Forms MUST be received in the Student Coordinator’s Office by the following deadlines:

• Deadline for Fall semester placements – April 1
• Deadline for Spring semester placements – October 1
• Deadline for Summer semester placements – March 1

Work with the faculty advisor to identify one or more potential school sites. The LIS certification faculty advisor makes the final decision regarding practicum placements.

Practicum placement is generally arranged within a reasonable (30 minutes/30 miles) geographic distance to a student’s residential area when possible. However, students are not guaranteed practicum placement based solely on geographic location.

The school library certification faculty advisor is responsible for working with MU College of Education Field Experiences Office to request permission for the placement with schools’ and/or school districts’ administration.

In choosing a potential school for your placement, the following criteria must be met:

1. The mentoring school librarian must hold a master’s degree in library science or a related discipline (e.g., Education, Curriculum and Instruction, Education Technology) and the appropriate certification.

2. The mentoring school librarian must have a minimum of two years’ experience in an accredited public or private school, and must have at least one year of experience in the current school setting.
3. The mentoring school librarian must demonstrate a commitment to continuing professional development.

4. The mentoring school librarian must have the ability to make an impartial judgment regarding the student’s performance during the placement. Candidates will not be placed with relatives, in districts where relatives work, or with mentoring library media specialists who are friends or social acquaintances. These kinds of placements have the potential to create a serious conflict of interest and may have unintended consequences for both candidate and the school librarian. Nepotism and/or placements involving personal ties are considered a violation of professional ethics and dispositions.

5. If you are currently employed as a teacher or paraprofessional, the preferred placement is outside your current district, or outside your present building. Placement in an unfamiliar setting benefits you by providing new ideas and different perspectives.

6. Districts and/or schools that are not members of MPER, or where a student has not previously been placed, will be contacted and asked to respond to questions similar to the following:
   - What is the library media center schedule? Is the schedule flexible, teacher release time, or a combination of both?
   - Is the school librarian a member of school or district curriculum writing teams?
   - Is the short- and long-range development plan for the library media center program aligned with building and district CSIP? (A copy of the LMC’s short- and long-range development plans is required along with a copy of the most recent Core Data Report.)
   - When was the last time the information literacy curriculum was reviewed and revised?
   - What modifications were made based upon student and school data and needs assessment?
   - Do modifications include the AASL Standards for the 21st-Century Learner and, if so, in what specific ways?
   - How is student information literacy progress assessed, both formative and summative? How is the information used to assess the library media center program?
   - Which State Library of Missouri resources, or electronic resources from other vendors, are available for student use (either supplied via MOREnet or purchased by the school/district)?
   - Do students have access to the resources throughout the building and/or outside the walls of the school?
   - How are teachers involved in selecting electronic and print resources for the library media center program?
   - What kinds of reading motivation programs are provided for students? What kinds of formats are used for fiction and/or nonfiction?
   - What kind of performance evaluation form is used for the library media specialist? How does the form differ from that of a classroom teacher, if at all?
• How is the budget for the library media center program handled? Does the school librarian propose a budget to support the goals of the program?
• Are you related to or acquainted with the requesting practicum candidate? Are you acquainted with the candidate either personally or professionally? Is there a potential for a conflict of interest, or the appearance of a conflict of interest?

(Adapted from proposed MSIP 6.8; distributed January 2010.)

Once Your Practicum Site is Approved

After your placement has been arranged and confirmed, you may contact your mentoring school librarian and schedule an appointment to meet and to discuss work schedules, requirements, activities, etc. Make an appointment for a day and time that is mutually convenient. Avoid contacting the school librarian at the busiest times of the year – the opening and closing of the school year.

Remember that you are a guest in the hosting school and your school librarian mentor has agreed to the placement as a professional courtesy. Mentors are not provided an honorarium for practicum students.

This is the time to discuss specific learning needs you have identified and any personal situations that may affect your performance in the practicum. Ask if you must attend an organizational orientation prior to beginning the practicum, or other meetings at the beginning of the school year.

If you are a paid professional employee in the school that is your practicum site, it is essential that you obtain your principal's written permission. Practicum should not interfere with your usual work responsibilities. If you use your preparation time to count toward hours, then you are obligated to make up the missed hours on the job during your personal time. As a library science student at the University of Missouri-Columbia, you are honor-bound to be scrupulously honest in all matters regarding coursework; that expectation fully applies to accounting for your time to your employer.

Practicum Dismissal Policy

All LIS students, including candidates for certification, are subject to the following policy adopted by the faculty December 2010.

All MU library science students are considered guests of the libraries, information agencies and school districts in which they are placed. A practicum supervisor may, at any time, request that a student not return.

Incomplete: If a student must terminate a practicum for reasons other than cause, such as a student or host librarian illness, the student may be given an incomplete and placed in an alternate practicum or internship at the discretion of the LIS practicum supervisor.

Dismissal for Cause: A student who is dismissed for cause by a practicum or internship site supervisor will receive an F for the course from the LIS practicum supervisor and will not be placed in a second practicum.