

The Catholic University of America  
202-319-5800

Department of Education

## **PRACTICUM: EDUC 561**

### HANDBOOK/SYLLABUS

Elsie T. Neely  
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#### **Course Description:**

Guided experience in observing and teaching in a classroom.

#### **Practicum Seminar Schedule:**

Wednesday 1:10 – 2:50 PM

#### **Practicum Days (Tuesday & Thursday)**

You must attend a minimum of 3 hours each day. Starting time depends on your cooperating teacher's day.

#### **Requirements:**

- Attendance & participation at seminar and practicum
- Complete an assignment for each seminar meeting, and be ready to discuss using the CUA reflective framework.
- Background check fingerprinting will be required for all field experiences.  
Information regarding the date and location is forthcoming.
- Inform cooperating teacher of the assignments that you are responsible for in your other classes during your first week of practicum.

#### **Practicum Seminar Tentative Schedule:**

Each seminar class will involve discussion about the events that occur in the classroom. After these discussions, we will complete in-class assignments in groups, and share the responses.

8/27/008      Practicum Seminar begins – Introduction to observing in the classroom

9/03/08	Seminar – First reactions to the classroom experience.
9/10/08	Seminar – Complete take home assignment comparing and critiquing lesson plans, bring to class on 9/17/08
9/17/08	Seminar – Discuss classroom experiences, First assignment due (goals)
9/24/08	Seminar – Discuss classroom experiences, Practice and dilemmas
10/01/08	Seminar – Discuss classroom experiences, Dilemmas and solutions
10/08/08	<b>Mid-term Evaluations Due</b> – in class presentation
10/15/08	Seminar – Discuss classroom experiences, in–class assignment, second assignment due (reflective assignment)
10/22/08	Seminar – Discuss classroom experiences, in-class assignment
10/29//08	Seminar - Discuss classroom experiences, in-class assignment
11/05/08	Seminar – Discuss classroom experiences, in-class assignment
11/12/08	Seminar - Discuss classroom experiences, in-class assignment
11/19/08	Seminar - <b>Final Paper &amp; Evaluations due (Hand in)</b>
11/26/08	No Class – <b>Thanksgiving Break</b>
12/03/08	Final Seminar Class – Discuss goals and ideas about teaching that have changed as a result of the practicum experience. Electronic Portfolio, time sheets, and final evaluations will be due.

***I will explain assignments and give handouts through out the semester.***

**\*\*\*\*Your grade will be affected if assignments, evaluations, and time sheets are not turned in on time\*\*\*\***

Note: The last day of *practicum* will be December 3, 2008. Final Evaluations will be held the same week, or you can schedule a time that is convenient for you, your supervisor, and cooperating teacher.

**Please be sure to note:**

**I will be randomly visiting the classrooms & meeting with your cooperating teachers weekly.**

Contents of handbook:

1. Goals and questions for cooperating teachers
2. Electronic Portfolio
3. Things to think about and remember concerning practicum
4. Grading Rubric
5. Practicum activity check list
6. Levels of adjustment
7. Evaluation packet

Mid-semester evaluations for each student

End of semester evaluations for each student

*(an extra packet will be given out to you for the cooperating teacher)*

8. Practicum attendance sheet

**Make sure you are up to date on CUA's new policy on Academic Dishonesty as well as the set of SPA standards (ACEI, NAEYC, etc.) together with CUA's new Conceptual Framework standards.**

**The policy is available at <http://policies.cua.edu/academicundergrad/integrity.cfm>  
The standards are available on LiveText.**

Appropriate attire is expected when attending practicum sites. Remember you are a professional working with young children. If you have any questions please ask your cooperating teacher about the dress code.

## **ELECTRONIC PORTFOLIO – due 12/03/08**

Student must create an electronic portfolio by the end of the semester. It entails 4 categories.

1. Observation Paper
2. Lesson Plan
3. Mini Action Paper
4. Tutoring Sample

All four components will come from the various classes you have taken, or will be taking this semester. The grade will be based on creating a basic electronic portfolio that I will be able to assess. You will not be graded on the specific papers or documents.

A class will be devoted to teaching you how to accomplish this task.

### **GOALS FOR PRACTICUM STUDENTS**

- A. Provide students with a coherent experience that will allow them to see the curriculum in action, the way learning experiences build upon learning experiences.
- B. Give students an opportunity to design and carry out a sequence of instruction.
- C. Give students an opportunity to learn instructional techniques from cooperating teachers and try out practices advocated in course work.

### **QUESTIONS FOR COOPERATING TEACHERS**

1. Do I accept the practicum student as a developing, professional colleague?
2. Do I solicit ideas and suggestions from the practicum student?
3. Do I show respect for the practicum student's decisions?
4. Do I ask the practicum student to assume responsibility?
5. Do I discuss my reasons for doing things with the practicum student?
6. Do I encourage the practicum student to analyze his/her own behavior? Lesson planning? Lesson implementation?
7. Do I seek feedback, critique or comments about my teaching from the practicum student?
8. Do I refrain from over reacting to mistakes of the practicum student?
9. Do I encourage the practicum student to share personal insights about professional decisions concerning pupils and methodology?
10. Do I check the practicum students' understanding of the rationale for what I am doing?

- | 11. Am I able to allow the practicum student to “make a mistake” - to try things even when I think I have a better way of doing something?
- 12. Do I encourage the practicum student to have confidence in her/his own ideas?
- 13. Do I refrain from giving advice to the practicum student to encourage her/his own problem solving skills?
- 14. Does my practicum student feel needed as an important contributor to the quality of the classroom climate?

### **TO DO LIST**

- 1. Ask how the teacher would like you to help in the classroom.
- 2. Learn how to contact the cooperating teacher at home and at school.
- 3. Learn the school schedules, calendar, class routines, and “school ethos”
- 4. Learn emergency and safety procedures (fire drill, etc.)
- 5. Learn to use the schools technology (e.g. computers & software, audiovisuals, and copier machines).

### GRADING RUBRIC FOR ATTENDANCE

Grade	Attendance		Prof. Behavior, Class Participation, Assignments		Cooperating Teacher Evaluations	
	<i>Field</i>	<i>Seminar</i>	<i>Prof.</i>	<i>CP/Assign</i>	<i>Midterm</i>	<i>Final</i>
<b>A</b>	Make up all missed days	Make up missed seminars	+	+	+	+
<b>B</b>	Missed 1	Missed 1	+	+	+	+
<b>C</b>	Missed 2	Missed 2	Mostly	OK	OK	OK
<b>D *</b>	Missed 3+	Missed 3+	-	-	-	-

\* **Anyone of the following**

**Attendance notes:**

- You will have to make up any day that you missed because of illness or any personal reason.
- You **MUST** call your cooperating teacher and liaison/supervisor (Elsie T. Neely) if you miss a day.
- If you make the missed day up, it will not count against you. However there must be **written documentation from the cooperating teacher stating the amount of time and day that was made up.**
- Seminar attendance grades also include **punctuality** and completion of **assignments. (Assignments must be turned in on time or there will be a 5pt. deduction in your grade for everyday it is late.)**

Any days missed because of the school, your school scheduled holidays, or at the direction of your cooperating teacher does not need to be made up and these will not count against you. For example: snow, loss of electricity, all day field trips, parent-teacher conferences. Please be sure these days can be confirmed.

**\*\*\*\*Please check the inclement weather policy for the school you are attending.\*\*\***  
Missed seminars because of illness or other personal reasons can be made up. This will depend on the topic missed.

**Punctuality notes:**

- If you are going to be late, call your cooperating teacher as soon as you can.
- If you have a **very good** excuse, this will not be held against you.

## PRACTICUM ACTIVITY CHECK LIST

(Date activity as you complete or participate)

- |  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| _____ meet your cooperating teacher(s) | _____ special educator         |
| _____ meet the principal               | _____ instructional assistants |
| _____ music teacher                    | _____ art teacher              |
| _____ PE teacher                       | _____ computer-instructor      |
| _____ nurse                            | _____ language teacher         |
| _____ school secretary                 | _____ other: _____             |
- \_\_\_\_\_ learn emergency and safety procedures (fire drill, etc.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ tour the school building and grounds
- \_\_\_\_\_ learn the school schedules, calendar, class routines, and “school ethos”
- \_\_\_\_\_ tour the library
- \_\_\_\_\_ become acquainted with the school’s grading and evaluation system
- \_\_\_\_\_ find out about provisions for family involvement
- \_\_\_\_\_ when appropriate, learn to use technology (e.g., computers & software, audiovisual, and copier machines).

## **THINGS TO THINK ABOUT AND REMEMBER CONCERNING PRACTICUM**

Read these ideas over at least once a week until you get adjusted. The practicum is a wonderful and yet awesome experience, at first, until you get adjusted.

1) Remember, you are there to learn.

Nobody expects you to be perfect. If you were, you'd be wasting both time and money taking these courses and participating in this experience.

2) Don't be afraid to take risks.

You will not harm a child for life if you make a less than perfect move. But, if you hold back, you may harm or at least hinder your own development and growth as well as rob a child of a more enriched experience.

3) Ask thoughtful questions.

Teachers are impressed when you ask thoughtful questions—not only about how to do things but also about why they are doing things... NOT TO ASK QUESTIONS IS TO GIVE THE IMPRESSION THAT YOU MIGHT NOT BE INTERESTED OR THAT YOU ARE NOT A CURIOUS PERSON OR THAT YOU ARE AFRAID TO MAKE A MISTAKE OR APPEAR STUPID...Of course, no one wants to appear foolish—and you won't — because you are not expected to know everything at this point! But you are expected to be eager to learn.

4) Be open and critical.

There are no absolute, black and white answers about the “best” way to teach or work with children. Many different techniques work more or less successfully for the teacher. Much depends on the type of student, the context, and the curriculum. Be open to the way your teacher is doing something but also assess things critically. Why did the teacher choose that method? (Ask him/her!) How else can the same thing be accomplished? What messages are the children receiving? Will a similar method work for you? Why or why not?

5) Experience all areas of the elementary curriculum.

Follow your students to their special classes rather than remaining with your “homeroom” teacher. If necessary, make special arrangements to observe these subjects.

6) Take initiative.

Teachers want you to pitch in and take initiative when it looks like an extra pair of hands is needed.

7) Follow through on responsibilities.

You can expect that your cooperating teacher will give you projects to prepare for the classroom. You will also have assignments from your classes to be carried out in the classroom. Be sure that your teacher is aware of them. The teachers and the students will be depending on you to carry through each week.

8) Communicate and collaborate.

Talk over these projects and assignments with your teacher. Evaluate and reflect on how they went and how they could be improved. The critical key here is *communication*. This is how you will learn best.

9) Teachers are there to take care of the children not to take care of you.

You are to be helpful and also contribute to the education of the children. Interact with the students as much as possible without interfering with their learning. Try to get at their thinking process and reasoning about what they are learning. Ask them to share with you what they are doing, to explain things to you, to tell you why and what they like about what they are doing.

10) Be prepared each week.

Each week, think about the experiences, topics, interactions with students and others- the commonplaces- you experienced. Prepare for the next week by looking up supplementary ideas about the topics being studied so you can intelligently contribute. Sometimes you might even be able to make suggestions to the teachers about content, methods, and materials. This is a great learning experience for both you and the teacher, so collaborate together.

11) Always come on time.

Be sure to check with the teacher: a) to find out what the plan is for the day for the children; b) to let the teacher know if you have projects or assignments that must be accomplished that day.

12) “The show must go on”- so take care of yourself.

Teaching is a strenuous occupation, and this year will often be stressful and somewhat overwhelming. You cannot afford to be sick— so eat right; get your rest, especially before practicum days; and get on a schedule so you maximize your time and reduce your stress

You must be well organized and should always be planning ahead. If you are ill and must miss practicum class, contact your cooperating teacher according to the arrangements you made. The time must be made up. Call your teacher later in the week to find out how you can make up the time and what you should prepare.

**THE MORE TIME YOU CAN SPEND IN THE CLASSROOM, THE FASTER YOU WILL BECOME COMFORTABLE AND CONFIDENT. THEN YOU WILL LEARN MORE.**

It has been our experience that the students who learned and enjoyed their experience the most were those who often spent extra time each week at the practicum site. So evaluate your own schedule and when you can, “hang out “at the school. Go back on other days and parts of days when you can. Do not however cut your other classes to do this. Keep your priorities in line.

A THOUGHT: WE NEVER LEARN TO TEACH...  
BUT WE CAN LEARN  
TO LEARN  
TO TEACH

**EVALUATIONS – included at the end of the packet**

There is an online Mid-term and Final Evaluation link that must be filled out by your cooperating teacher. Please ask your teacher to fill this form out 1-2 weeks prior to due date. I would prefer that this form is filled

<http://college.livetext.com/misk5/formz/public/5323/p37ABYMjfJ>

I have attached the mid-term and final evaluation forms for your convenience. This way you know exactly what you will be evaluated on prior to the meeting with your cooperating teacher.

*If there are any questions or concerns please let me know as soon as possible.*

**MIDTERM COOPERATING TEACHER AND UNIVERSITY SUPERVISOR  
EVALUATION FOR PRACTICUM STUDENTS**

Student: _____	Grade Level: _____				
School: _____					
Cooperating Teacher: _____	Date: _____				
University Supervisor: _____	Date: _____				
<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">P-Proficient</td> <td style="width: 25%;">D-Developing</td> <td style="width: 25%;">B-Beginning</td> <td style="width: 25%;">N-Not Yet Evidenced</td> </tr> </table>		P-Proficient	D-Developing	B-Beginning	N-Not Yet Evidenced
P-Proficient	D-Developing	B-Beginning	N-Not Yet Evidenced		

Personal Qualities

<del>Cooperates with peers and supervisors</del>	P D B N
Is willing to assist others with a variety of school duties	P D B N
Demonstrates self-confidence and poise	P D B N
Is flexible in adjusting to new situations	P D B N
Is punctual and dependable	P D B N
Demonstrates emotional stability and maturity	P D B N
Speaks clearly and fluently	P D B N
Demonstrates a willingness to take suggestions to improve performance	P D B N
Asks for help when appropriate	P D B N
Communicates about university assignments	P D B N
Conveys a professional demeanor	P D B N

Comments:

Professional Qualities or Skills

Has a respectful and empathetic attitude toward students	P D B N
Is aware of and values cultural, ethnic, and developmental differences	P D B N
Uses positive verbal and nonverbal cues	P D B N
Monitors student understanding and provides appropriate feedback	P D B N
Is aware of student's feelings	P D B N
Initiates questions about the purposes of activities/procedures	P D B N
Offers to assume responsibility in the classroom	P D B N

Comments:

Teaching Knowledge and Skills:

Fosters group and cooperative learning	P D B N
Waits long enough for answers to encourage thinking and volunteering	P D B N
Keeps students on task	P D B N
Teaches to meet the needs of the students	P D B N

Tries new teaching strategies	P D B N
Able to manage small groups	P D B N
Has through knowledge of subjects being taught	P D B N
Uses well-thought-out written plans	P D B N

Comments:

| Please comment on the student's particular areas of strengths and weaknesses.

Teacher signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

University Liaison: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**FINAL COOPERATING TEACHER EVALUATION  
FOR PRACTICUM STUDENTS**

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade Level: \_\_\_\_\_

School: _____			
Cooperating Teacher: _____		Date: _____	
University Supervisor: _____		Date: _____	
P-Proficient	D-Developing	B-Beginning	N-Not Yet Evidenced
<u>Personal Qualities</u>			
Cooperates with peers and supervisors			P D B N

Is willing to assist others with a variety of school duties	P D B N
Demonstrates self-confidence and poise	P D B N
Is flexible in adjusting to new situations	P D B N
Is punctual and dependable	P D B N
Demonstrates emotional stability and maturity	P D B N
Speaks clearly and fluently	P D B N
Demonstrates a willingness to take suggestions to improve performance	P D B N
Asks for help when appropriate	P D B N
Communicates about university assignments	P D B N
Conveys a professional demeanor	P D B N

Comments:

Professional Qualities or Skills

Has a respectful and empathetic attitude toward students	P D B N
Is aware of and values cultural, ethnic, and developmental differences	P D B N
Uses positive verbal and nonverbal cues	P D B N
Monitors student understanding and provides appropriate feedback	P D B N
Is aware of student's feelings	P D B N
Initiates questions about the purposes of activities/procedures	P D B N
Offers to assume responsibility in the classroom	P D B N

Comments:

Teaching Knowledge and Skills:

Fosters group and cooperative learning	P D B N
Waits long enough for answers to encourage thinking and volunteering	P D B N
Keeps students on task	P D B N
Teaches to meet the needs of the students	P D B N
Tries new teaching strategies	P D B N
Able to manage small groups	P D B N

Has thorough knowledge of subjects being taught  
Uses well-thought-out written plans

P D B N  
P D B N

Comments:

| Please comment on the student's particular areas of strengths and weaknesses.

Teacher signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

University Liaison: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

August 26, 2008

Dear Cooperating Teacher:

I am looking forward to working with you through out this fall semester. I am sure that the practicum students will have a great learning experience while in your classroom.

This packet contains information that will be useful during your supervision. The two evaluation forms that will be used during this period are also included in this packet. I will be stopping in frequently to see how the practicum students are performing, and arrange a specific time to discuss their progress for mid-term and final evaluations. Also, please be sure to exchange contact information with your student. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call me at (202) 319-5819 or you can contact me by E-mail at [neely@cua.edu](mailto:neely@cua.edu).

Again, thank you for all of your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Elsie T. Neely

Practicum Liaison and Supervisor  
The Catholic University of America

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