

School of Child and Youth Care

Master of Arts

CYC 553

Practicum in Child and Youth Care

(1.5 units)



University  
of Victoria

School of Child  
& Youth Care

**CYC 553**  
**Practicum in Child and Youth Care**

**COURSE INSTRUCTOR**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The purpose of the CYC MA practicum is to provide opportunities for students to extend their practice –based learning, integrate the new knowledge that they have gained from their other MA level course work, and implement some of their newly acquired skills in a specific CYC practice setting.

Graduate students are required to secure their own field placements in consultation with the faculty instructor and practicum consultant. Students are expected to bring a high level of maturity, professionalism, ethical sensitivity, and critical reflection to their practicum experiences. Adopting a “learner stance,” that is rooted in curiosity, openness to feedback, and a willingness to take risks, is essential for a successful field placement.

Practicum settings at the graduate level may include: early childhood care and education programs; child, youth and family counselling programs; community- and hospital-based child and youth mental health treatment settings; therapeutic adventure programs; child protection teams; group care/residential treatment programs; hospital-based child life programs; educational and teaching contexts; Aboriginal communities and organizations; support and advocacy programs for persons with disabilities; policy settings; schools and/or community-based organizations.

Practicum activities may include: program planning and evaluation, teaching and curriculum development, assessment and counseling for individuals, families and/or groups, parent education, interdisciplinary collaboration, case conceptualization and goal setting, record keeping and clinical documentation, integrated case management, crisis response and outreach, youth advocacy and support, professional development activities, community capacity building, international development, research, project planning, and evaluation.

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**COURSE RATIONALE**

The practicum placement/course provides an opportunity for students to develop new knowledge and skills in a safe and supervised setting that facilitates exploration, consultation, reflection, and critical analysis. This course requires a minimum of 150 hours in activities directly related to the student's learning goals for the placement. An additional 15 hours of direct supervision by the field supervisor are required.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Upon successful completion of this course students will:

1. Have demonstrated an understanding of the specific practice context, including agency goals, mandate, philosophy, client population, services provided, and relevant policies.
2. Have shown a flexible, strengths-based, collaborative, and research/theory-informed approach to working with children, youth, families and communities.
3. Have shown an ability to plan, conceptualize, implement and evaluate programs and therapeutic interventions.
4. Have demonstrated openness to receiving feedback and/or constructive criticism provided by the supervisor and/or instructor.
5. Have successfully met the established expectations, learning goals and standards of the agency.
6. Have acted in an ethical and professional manner at all times during the field placement.

**EVALUATION**

The practicum course is graded as **satisfactory (“complete”)/unsatisfactory (“fail”)**.

Satisfactory performance in the practicum is based upon:

- a) The ability of the student to effectively organize the practicum experiences necessary to meet the identified learning goals.
- b) The satisfactory involvement in a minimum of 150 hours of practicum activity plus participation in 15 hours of direct supervisory contact with the field supervisor. A final time sheet signed by the student and the field supervisor must be submitted at the conclusion of the practicum.
- c) A satisfactory midpoint evaluation conducted at the halfway point, that is, when approximately 80 hours of the practicum have been served.

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- d) A final practicum evaluation form attesting to the satisfactory completion of the established learning goals signed by the student and the field supervisor must also be submitted at the conclusion of the practicum.
- e) The submission of a final report that documents the overall practicum experience. The report (8-10 pages, double spaced) should contain the following:
- i student learning goals and outcomes
  - ii description of practicum activities
  - iii summary of significant personal and professional learning
  - iv identification of areas for future growth and development

A failure to meet the expectations, resulting in an overall rating of 1 or “far below expectations” from the field supervisor, will result in a failing grade in CYC 553. Under such circumstances, and in keeping with the policy of the Faculty of Graduate Studies, this will trigger an automatic academic review. Specifically, every grade of B or lower in a course taken for credit in the Faculty of Graduate Studies must be reviewed by the student’s supervisory committee or the departmental graduate committee, and a recommendation must be made to the Dean of Graduate Studies. Such students will not be allowed to register in the next session until approved to do so by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

**DETAILED DESCRIPTION**

**1. Practicum**

The MA program in Child and Youth Care includes one practicum (CYC 553) that is mandatory for all students. Students are also offered the option to take a second practicum (CYC 563) as an elective. The optimal time to take the required practicum is in the 4<sup>th</sup> term of the program but arrangements can be made to begin a practicum as early as the 3<sup>rd</sup> term. Normally, students identify their own practicum sites, rather than being assigned these by the course instructor, however, all practicum sites and plans must be approved by the course instructor before the practicum begins.

**2. Practicum requirements**

Students are required to document a minimum of **150 hours** in activities directly related to their placement related learning goals. An additional **15 hours** of direct supervision by field supervisors are also required. These hours should be used for goal setting, formative and summative evaluation and the discussion of practice and work site related issues.

If the practicum is completed in one term, this usually requires an average of 10 hours of practicum work per week (plus 1 hour of supervision) over 15 weeks. If the practicum is spread over two terms, this usually requires an average of 5 hours per week (plus .5 hour of supervision) over 30 weeks.

There is the option of doing a second 1.5 unit practicum (150 +15 hours) following the 5<sup>th</sup> term of the program. This requires separate registration in CYC 563.

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**For those students doing a practicum in a clinical/counseling/therapeutic setting, in order to qualify as a Registered Clinical Counselor, both CYC 553 and 563 are required for a total of 300 hours and 30 hours of supervision.**

**3. Practicum placement/employment conflict**

Normally, students are expected to undertake their practicums in a different setting from their agency of employment. In exceptional circumstances, students *may* be permitted to do a practicum in their place of employment if:

- a) The practicum takes place in a program that is different from program in which they have current or past work experience and involves different tasks and skill sets.
  
- b) The practicum supervisor is not a person who oversees, directly or indirectly, the student's current employment work in the agency.

The purpose of these two requirements is to create a learning space for the student that is free of potential conflict between the practicum learning goals and the employment responsibilities.

**4. Learning plan**

Once a placement has been agreed upon and arranged, it is the student's responsibility to work out a learning plan in conjunction with the field supervisor that covers goals, work place expectations, work schedules and on-site supervision. This learning plan is then submitted to the faculty instructor for approval.

**5. Requirements for professional registration**

Students interested in meeting the requirements for professional registration (e.g. B.C. Association of Clinical Counselors) are responsible for assessing and meeting the particular requirements for registration in consultation with the appropriate Association. Interested students should discuss directly with the Association the registration criteria, requirements and mechanisms. For more information on criteria for membership in the BC Association of Clinical Counsellors go to <http://www.bc-counsellors.org/files/2010CriteriaFaxableOct7.pdf>

**6. Practicum journal/log**

It is recommended that students keep a practicum journal/log. The practicum journal/log may contain reflections on practicum activities and on meetings with the site supervisor. It may also include documentation of hours spent on various practicum activities, notes on communications with the site supervisor, and notes on related readings. The journal/log may be an important document to bring to supervisory meetings. Students will not be asked to submit journals to the field or faculty coordinator. However, the journals/logs may serve as a useful documentation of progress in the practicum and can be a key source document for writing a final report about practicum activities.

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**7. Contact with the Course Instructor**

The course instructor will check in with the student and the field supervisor at various points during the practicum see how the student is doing. Should any questions/issues arise during the check-ins, the course instructor will offer facilitated assistance with working out any issues that may arise.

**8. Criminal Record Checks**

As of January 1, 2012 all post-secondary students enrolled in practica are required to have a Criminal Record Check (CRC).

For students completing their practica within BC, the following steps are required:

- (a) Students are responsible for filling out their own Criminal Record Check form (see below) and either mailing a copy of it, along with their payment, to the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General (Address is on the form) or bringing the original to Shelley Henuset in the Front Office at the School of Child and Youth Care and she will fax it in for you. Students are not required to complete Section B.
- (b) The approved Criminal Record Check will be sent directly to the School of Child and Youth Care from the Ministry. A copy will be emailed to the student and also placed in the student's file which is kept in a locked cabinet in the grad office.

For students completing a practicum outside BC, they will need to arrange for a CRC based on the requirements of the particular jurisdiction.