

The Power of Practicum

Practicum is a capstone course for education students. We are placed with mentor teachers for 40-50 hours over a 12-week period. Learning opportunities at all levels allow us to gain access into various content areas and experiences that enhance our professionalism as educators. This fieldwork allows us to blend the science of learning - our coursework, with the art of teaching - our fieldwork.

Being able to have hands-on experience in the classroom has allowed me to identify my strengths and weaknesses in the classroom. While studying under Mr. Gilman at Powell High School, I learned new classroom management skills and student relationship styles. The experience of practicum gave me a glimpse of what it will be like to work in a school environment and instruct various art techniques in a classroom. While at the high school, I was given the opportunity to instruct, oversee student projects and work with multiple grade levels.

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Aprilia Carmone

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During this practicum opportunity, I participated in an 8th grade Composition and Literature class at Powell Middle School. I engaged in hands-on teaching activities under the mentorship of an experienced Language Arts teacher. I prepared lessons to teach students about grammar and parts of speech. The first lesson was on adverbs and the second lesson focused on dependent and independent clauses. This experience allowed me to apply my knowledge in the classroom, through Kahoot reviews, creating content slides and exit tickets. Leading literature discussions and working with a small group added to my understanding of the curriculum. This field-based learning helped in developing essential teaching skills and preparing me for a future teaching career.

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Olivia Cottom

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I enjoyed learning from my mentor because it broadened my expectations of what a special education teacher does within the school. For my practicum placement, I am in a 3rd-5th grade resources classroom. I had the opportunity to participate in small group learning and one-on-one tutoring. I provided services for students in the regular classroom during math. I also pulled some students out for additional help.

While being a practicum student, I had the opportunity to go into schools in the community, and build relationships with students, my mentor, and paraeducators. These relationships have allowed students to respond to instruction, making it so we work well together, and learning happens.

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Agriculture education in a high school setting allows students to gain a grasp on different careers and topics in agriculture, while providing opportunities for students to connect with subjects that apply to their real life. Additionally, high school agriculture classes allow for extracurricular opportunities through FFA participation. I had the privilege to work alongside students and staff at Cody High School, where I focused on teaching about various industries and careers in agriculture. Freshman and sophomore high school students in my classes researched different agriculture-based careers and discovered current events in the expansive world of American Agriculture. Practicum also allowed me to view FFA club activities and competitions through the eyes of an advisor rather than a student. Practicum has allowed me to view agriculture education through a teacher's eyes by actually being in the classroom and experiencing teaching from a first-hand point of view.

Power of Practicum: Practice Makes Perfect

Hailee McClure

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Through practicum I practiced what I have learned over and over as a student. As a college student in education, I have learned that relationships are an essential part of being a teacher. In practicum I learned how truly important that really is. Through this practice I have been able to develop and become a better teacher. I learned how important it is to know the content well and present it in a way that is exciting for the students to learn. Not only have I used my previous knowledge in the classroom, I have also developed new knowledge to help me on my road to becoming a teacher. In the classroom I developed presentation skills, communication skills, and teaching skills that have been essential lessons. I observed how practice can make progress for students as well. I had the opportunity to practice specific words with a few students and develop their sight-reading skills. Each time we practice the students improved. Practice is essential for students as well as teachers!

The Power of Practicum:

Practicum is a capstone course that allows Education Majors to be placed with mentor teachers for 40-50 hours over a 12-week period. Learning opportunities at all levels allow us to gain access into various content areas, and experience professionalism as educators—not students. This fieldwork allows us to blend the science of learning, our coursework, with the art of teaching, our fieldwork.

For me, Practicum has been an amazing opportunity to step *out* of the student mindset and *into* the teacher mindset. Before stepping into the classroom, I could only *say* things about teaching—I didn't have any experience to fall back on. Throughout these 10 weeks, and with the help of my mentor, I've been able to actually apply all of the things I've learned about in class(es) so far through the two lessons I've taught so far. The two lessons I've taught not only have given me an idea of what *my* classroom will look like one day, but have taught me about smaller responsibilities of a teacher that only comes with hands-on experience as well. By attending a coaches clinic, and meeting a social-studies-teacher nominee, I've been able to develop my professionalism while also developing the sense of *being* a teacher. This class has been a great introduction to being in a classroom—that's the power of practicum!