ARCH4/609 PRACTICUM - OFF-CAMPUS EXPERIENCE

PRACTICUM  (variable credit (2-6), prereq: ARCH 4/584, pre-auth to register, P/NP)

Graduate and undergraduate students pursue participatory learning experiences off campus in professional practice settings. These variable credit courses fulfill major subject area electives. The practicum provides opportunities to explore aspects of professional practice within design firms or other entities engaged in activities that shape the built environment or contribute environmental design education. Mentors guide students’ learning by inviting them to observe their professional activities and giving assignments that develop professional skills. Students are not paid for practicum hours.

Instructor    Amy Miller Dowell AIA, amillerdowell@me.com, 503-830-7227 c.

Distance Learning Format
Students submit weekly written reports by email. A minimum of four meetings with the instructor can take place individually or in a group format in person, by phone or teleconference with times to be arranged. First meeting of the practicum will be the first Tuesday of the term at 4pm.

Credit Hours
The appropriate number of credits is determined by each student in consultation with the mentor who is supervising the practicum, and the instructor. Each undergraduate credit hour is equivalent to 30 hours of effort. Each graduate credit hour is equivalent to 40 hours of effort. Approximately ten hours will be applied to written reflection, the remaining credits will be applied to work at the practicum site.

Identifying a Practicum Host
The process for identifying a suitable practicum host takes time and should begin at least one month before the start of the quarter for practicum placements in Oregon. Out-of-state or international placements may take longer. Prior to contacting potential hosts, interested students should meet with the instructor to discuss their practicum goals. Many potential practicum hosts, especially governmental agencies or non-governmental organizations, have an application process with specific requirements and due dates. International placements through the University of Oregon IE3 Program require a separate application available from UO campus advising at ie3@uoregon.edu. Students who volunteer for design assistance and education programs such as the Architectural Foundation of Oregon’s Architects in Schools Program, or Habitat for Humanity can organize a practicum around this work if a qualified professional participant is available to mentor the student.

ARCH 409: Undergraduate Practicum
Undergraduate practicum work is organized around the day-to-day activities taking place at the practicum site. Students are encouraged to try new skills under the close supervision of their mentors, and learn by observing professionals at work.

ARCH 609: Graduate Practicum
Graduate practicum work is organized around in-depth study of a subject identified by the student that can be pursued in a practice setting. Students can contribute to a project defined by their practicum host or propose their own study topic in consultation with their practicum mentor.
University of Oregon - School of Architecture and Allied Arts - Department of Architecture

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How to Enroll:
Interested students should contact the instructor with a resume and one or two examples of recently completed design work, to schedule an informational meeting. Those with appropriate background will be authorized to enroll and can seek a practicum placement. Instructor approval is required prior to starting practicum hours.

PRACTICUM Schedule and Assignments:
Hours spent in the practicum must occur during the quarter the student is enrolled.

No later than one month before the start of the quarter:
Meet with the instructor for pre-authorization to enroll
Instructor meetings can be in person or by phone and will determine eligibility, individual goals, potential host organizations or firms.

No later than the first week of the quarter:
Identify a host firm or organization and mentor (resume and portfolio due this week)
The instructor is available to assist with this process. The instructor will contact prospective mentors prior to the start of a proposed practicum to discuss the mentor’s role and confirm that there is a qualified individual available to fulfill the duties of the mentor.

Week 1 at the practicum:
Getting settled (practicum agreement due within one week of the practicum start)
Meet with your mentor to finalize your practicum agreement. Agreements should specify hours, schedule, number of credits and the types of activities planned for the practicum. Graduate students also submit a preliminary statement about possible topics for their in-depth study work.

Typical practicum week:
Practicum activity (log and weekly commentary for the prior week due Mondays at 5 pm) Prepare a log describing activities and hours for each day of practicum attendance. A weekly written commentary describing lessons learned, observations made or questions that have emerged should summarize your experience. If appropriate, include one or two images documenting practicum work.

ARCH 609: Graduate study meetings will be arranged with the instructor. Attendance can be in person, or by phone (students enrolled in international settings can substitute email if there are difficulties communicating by phone). In this meeting with the instructor and other graduate students, students discuss study topics and methods.

Final practicum week:
Prepare practicum report (due on the last day of UO scheduled final examinations)
The practicum report is prepared by the student and reviewed by the mentor. Mentors must sign the report or send the instructor an email to confirm that the report accurately describes the student’s work. Reports should explain the practicum context, the work undertaken, and what was learned from the experience. Undergraduate reports should be about 2 pages. Graduate reports should be about 4 pages and include a discussion of their in-depth study work. Attach an updated resume showing the practicum experience, a copy of the original practicum agreement, daily logs and weekly commentaries in an appendix to the report.

Grading criteria:
Practicum is graded pass/no pass by the Instructor. To receive a pass, students must complete all assigned work by the due dates, keep a practicum log, and receive approval of a final report from their practicum mentor. If any scheduled practicum hours are missed due to illness or other unforeseen conflicts, students are required to reschedule this time with their mentor and document any changes to their original agreement in their final reports. Weekly statements and final reports must be written clearly and concisely in a style that is appropriate for professional communications.
RECENT PRACTICUM PLACEMENTS

**Eugene City Planning and Development** ([http://www.eugene-or.gov](http://www.eugene-or.gov))

Since the May 2010 launch of the Envision Eugene project, practicum students have served this community–based process to create a comprehensive 20 year growth plan. They prepare density studies including a digital building form library, design scenario communications that support public discussion of sustainable growth, and provide assistance facilitating and documenting public meetings. (mentor: Patricia Thomas AIA, Planner)

**Shanghai Xian Dai** ([http://www.ffadesign.com/](http://www.ffadesign.com/))

Undergraduate students participated in a six–week summer practicum in Shanghai, China where they experienced the fast pace of Chinese design practice at Xian Dai, a large, comprehensive design firm. During the week they collaborated with young Chinese designers and interns as members of project teams on a variety of project types. Their practicum was supplemented by week–end excursions to architectural and cultural sites. (mentors: Raymond Cheng AIA, and Xian Dai architects)

**Skylab Architecture** ([http://www.skylabdesign.com/](http://www.skylabdesign.com/))

While developing models for an existing steel framed warehouse building from the 1920’s located in Portland, and illustrations of initial concepts for its proposed use as a 2,000 seat concert hall, a graduate student conducted interviews of architects at Skylab and two other small, “signature,” design firms in Portland to study how design intention is communicated between architecture staff and how design integrity is maintained during the design process. (mentor: Jeff Kovel, AIA)


The Architecture Foundation of Oregon matches architects and architecture students with 3rd through 5th grade teachers for a 6 week classroom residency that incorporates architecture into an existing curriculum. Practicum students work closely with practitioners who serve as mentors. The program is based on a curriculum guide that uses architectural concepts, including “green” building concepts to teach math, science, social studies, language arts and other disciplines. (mentors: Kim Knowles, AFO members)