

Ultimate Guide to Building an Awesome Teaching Practicum

If you're a teaching educator, your students need teaching practicum hours out in the field. Below is a collection of helpful resources, tips, and FAQs to help students get the most out of their field experience.

Student Teaching vs. Practicum

As you're preparing your students to enter the classroom, it's important for them to know the difference between teaching practicum experiences and actual student teaching.

Simply put, practicum is any training pre-service teachers complete in the classroom to prepare them for independent student teaching. These experiences are designed to give them a taste of teaching before they're given the responsibility of running a class themselves. It's almost impossible to recreate a true classroom experience secondhand, so practicum activities are invaluable for pre-service teachers.

These activities are usually part of a university class on teaching methodology. To give pre-service teachers hands-on experience, they are typically required to complete a certain amount of practicum hours during the semester in an environment that matches their specific teaching area (early childhood education, special education, physical education, ESL, etc.).

At the end of the day, practicum is an opportunity for pre-service teachers to get their feet wet in the classroom. Later when they become full-time student teachers, their field experience becomes more involved as they take on the full range of classroom responsibilities with less supervision.

Typical Practicum Experience Activities

- Observing one or more professional teachers
- Assisting in a classroom
- Watching a classroom function
- Working directly with students
- Teaching a specific lesson
- Asking cooperating teachers questions outside of class

Top Resources

[Designing Educative Practicum Experiences for Prospective Teachers](#)

Kenneth M. Zeichner from the University of Washington outlines three different teaching practicum structures, the common obstacles of field experience, and how to overcome them.

[Creating a Positive Practicum Experience](#)

Teacher magazine walks us through the best ways to organize a practicum experience that for pre-service teachers. Learn how both you and your students can develop healthy communication and share feedback in the most positive way possible.

[Sample Practicum Experience Objectives](#)

The Child Development Training Consortium shares their outline of practicum experience goals, objectives, and outcomes.

[Practicum Observation and Activity Log](#)

Grand Canyon University has shared their practicum log document where students can log their activities and practicum hours throughout the semester.

[Frequently Asked Questions for Field Experience](#)

The State University of New York has compiled a collection of questions that most pre-service teachers want to know. These FAQs are about practicum experiences and field experience in general.