

**University of Northern Colorado
Division of Special Education
Campus Box 141
Greeley, CO 80639**

Visual Impairment Specialist

**Non-Traditional Practicum Guidelines
EDSE 644**

Paula Conroy, Ed.D.
Associate Professor of SpEd
Coordinator
Visual Impairment Specialist Programs
970-351-1651
Paula.Conroy@unco.edu

Kay A. Ferrell, Ph.D.
Professor of Special Education
kay.ferrell@unco.edu

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The University of Northern Colorado has provided a foundation of theory and knowledge to prospective teachers of students with visual disabilities. The practicum experience offers a realistic teaching situation and is invaluable in transforming the teacher candidate into a certified teacher of students with visual disabilities with high-level teaching competencies.

The intent of the practicum experience is to give the graduate student as full and complete a picture as possible of the cooperating teacher's responsibilities on a day-to-day basis. This may include after school activities, meetings, and conferences that are a part of the cooperating teacher's professional responsibilities. The student in the non-traditional practicum is expected to fulfill these requirements as required by the paid position. During a non-traditional practicum placement, the teacher candidate is expected to be familiar with the students and the requirements of the position, so the traditional timeline of assuming responsibilities is not applicable.

The learning potential for the practicum student is directly related to the quality of supervision, suggestions, and input of the cooperating teacher. It should be noted that the practicum student's academic requirements have been incorporated into the practicum by UNC faculty and that further assignments such as projects and papers are not to be made by the cooperating teacher unless agreed upon by the university consultant.

The key to a successful practicum experience is an adequate understanding and fulfillment of the roles and responsibilities of each party concerned -- the practicum student, the cooperating teacher, and the university consultant. Toward this end we offer these guidelines to each member of the team. These guidelines are meant to be useful to all of us. We look forward to working with you.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRACTICUM STUDENT

It is recommended that the practicum student:

1. Initiate contact with the cooperating teacher and schedule an interview about the focus of the practicum experience.
2. Become familiar with the entire program and support services.
3. Follow established procedures, practices, and requirements of the practicum facility, particularly with regard to work times, inservice experiences, and extracurricular activities. During the practicum, the student teacher is subject to the same work hours as the supervising teacher.
4. Become involved in extra-curricular activities and other relevant functions of the faculty.
5. Take responsibility for learning about the background and individual characteristics of each child served.
6. Complete all tasks, which are assigned by the supervising teacher and by the university supervisor during the practicum experience.
7. Make arrangements for his or her own transportation to and from the practicum site and within the district when necessary.
8. Contact the university consultant in the event that problems arise that cannot be resolved at the practicum site. The first step, however, is to discuss the problems with the supervising teacher.
9. Conform to district or agency attendance policies. Please note more than two absences will need to be made up and may result in an extension of the practicum.
10. Complete a portfolio of the practicum experience that includes all required forms and assignments. This is to include information demonstration of how the teacher meets each of six teacher evaluation standards.
11. Complete a journal of self-reflection describing your daily teaching experiences. The student is to focus on a situation on which he or she will conduct an action research project.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COOPERATING TEACHER

It is recommended that the cooperating teacher:

1. Demonstrate, guide, supervise, and evaluate the school related activities of the practicum student. The practicum experience is the high point of the student's training. The practicum can provide a breadth of realistic experiences simply not available through course work.
2. Provide opportunities for the practicum student to review the needs, goals, and objectives for each child with visual disabilities, through discussions, conferences, records, and observations.
3. Familiarize the practicum student to the philosophy, policies, procedures, goals, and objectives of the school system or agency.
4. Provide opportunities for a variety of related experiences -- for example, observations in other classrooms, therapy sessions, meetings, conferences, and visits to local community resources.
5. Assist the practicum student in developing realistic and purposeful objectives and plans.
6. Provide teaching experiences in related areas upon agreement with the university consultant.
7. Provide for weekly formal and informal observations of the practicum student's activities and weekly conferences providing input to the practicum student.
8. Submit evaluation reports to the university of the practicum student's progress and recommend a final grade.
9. Notify the university consultant of problems that arise, particularly those that require immediate attention. Problems should first be discussed with the practicum student.
- 10.** Require that the practicum student follow university policies regarding absences. (More than two absences must be made up and may result in an extension of practicum).
- 11.** Be prepared to write a recommendation for the practicum student's placement file, if appropriate.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE UNIVERSITY CONSULTANT

It is recommended that the university consultant:

1. Initiate appropriate communication with the potential practicum facility prior to the assignment.
2. Ensure that the practicum guidelines and other pertinent information about the practicum student are clear with the cooperating teacher.
3. Initiate reporting procedures to facilitate appropriate reimbursement of the cooperating teacher (this necessitates securing social security number and home address of cooperating teacher).
4. Conference with the cooperating teacher throughout the practicum experience via email, phone, and in person (if viable).
5. Maintain open communication with the cooperating teacher and practicum student and assist in resolving any problems that may occur.
6. Evaluate progress reports and assign final grade with the recommendation of the cooperating teacher.
7. Distribute copies of the final practicum evaluation to the student's departmental file, special education office, and placement office.

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Provide an approximate schedule that you will follow. Please indicate arrival and departure times, school names, and telephone numbers. Send a copy of this form to your university consultant.

Name:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday

**FORMS TO BE COMPLETED BY THE
COOPERATING TEACHER**

University of Northern Colorado
 School of Special Education
 Visual Impairment Specialist

PRACTICUM STUDENT EVALUATION FORM

Maintain this form in your practicum portfolio for review by your university consultant(s).

Student's name: _____
 Home telephone: _____

School/Agency of Placement: _____
 Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Cooperating Teacher's name: _____

Directions: Cooperating teachers are asked to complete this form at the end of Weeks 3, 6, and 9, using the following evaluation code:

1 = Proficient

2 = Developing

3 = Novice

n/o = no opportunity

An additional column is available if you wish to add comments.

	Evaluation				
	1	2	3		
A. PROFESSIONALISM: In relation to work responsibilities, student:					
1. Works independently/uses initiative.					
2. Respects confidential materials.					
3. Accepts responsibility for assigned tasks.					
4. Follows instructions.					
5. Recalls emergency procedures and precautions for setting and individual students.					
6. Makes arrangements when absent.					
7. Participate in the activities of professional organizations in the field of visual impairments.					

	Evaluation	
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Practicum Student Behavior	1	2	3		Comments
PROFESSIONALISM: In relation to others:					
1. Sticks to time schedule.					
2. Schedules activities that can be completed during allotted time.					
3. Remains calm.					
4. Can find materials when needed.					
5. Preparation is adequate.					
6. Asks for assistance when needed.					
7. Positive with peers and supervisors.					
8. Uses tact.					
9. Treats children with respect.					
10. Establishes favorable rapport with students/clients.					
11. Establishes favorable rapport with professional staff.					

PROFESSIONALISM: In relation to self:					
1. Changes own behavior in response to feedback.					
2. Accepts criticism in a professional manner.					
3. Is self-confident.					
4. Grooms and dresses appropriately.					

B. ASSESSMENT:					
1. Interprets eye reports and other non-vision related diagnostic information.					
2. Uses disability-specific assessment instruments.					
3. Adapts and uses assessment procedures when evaluating individuals with visual impairments.					
4. Maintains disability-related records for individuals with visual impairments.					
5. Gathers background information and family history related to the individual's					

visual status.					
6. Interprets and uses assessment data for instructional planning with individuals with visual impairments.					

C. TEACHING METHODS AND MATERIALS					
Preparation for teaching:					
1. Demonstrates knowledge of subject matter.					
2. Demonstrates knowledge of current trends in the field.					
3. Selects appropriate goals and objectives, based on students' needs.					
4. Writes behavioral objectives.					
5. Chooses appropriate tasks.					
6. Selects appropriate materials.					
7. Selects appropriate teaching strategy.					
8. Pre-plans correction procedure.					
9. Develops evaluation and/or data collection system.					
10. Adapts programs for individual child.					
11. Selects and uses technologies to accomplish instructional objectives for individuals with visual impairments.					
Sequences, implements, and evaluates learning objectives based on the expanded core curriculum for individuals with visual impairments.					
Obtains and organizes special materials to implement instructional goals for individuals with visual impairments.					

Teaching:					
1. Uses language appropriate to child's age.					

2. Uses effective cues/prompts.					
3. Uses effective rate of presentation.					
4. Length of session corresponds to child's attention span.					
5. Maintains high rate of pupil success.					
6. Uses effective correction procedures.					
7. Assures students' safety.					
8. Selects appropriate teaching environment(s).					
9. Enhance instruction for individuals with visual impairments through modification of the environment.					
10. Designs multisensory learning environments that encourage active participation by individuals with visual impairments in group and individual					
11. Creates learning environments that encourage self-advocacy and independence for individuals with visual impairments					
12. Teaches individuals with visual impairments to use thinking, problem-solving, and other cognitive strategies.					
13. Prepares adapted or modified materials in braille, accessible print, and other formats					
14. Transcribes, proofreads, and interlines materials in contracted literary and Nemeth braille codes.					
15. Uses braillewriter, slate and stylus, and computer technology to produce braille materials.					

Data:	
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1. Maintains data for students.					
2. Collects data accurately.					
3. Uses data to make decisions.					

D. SUPERVISION OF PARAPROFESSIONALS					
1. Structures the activities of paraprofessionals who work with individuals with visual impairments.					
2. Plans for best use of paraprofessionals.					
3. Supervises the activities of paraprofessionals who work with students with VI					
4. Gives paraprofessionals feedback on performance.					

E. INTERDISCIPLINARY INTERACTIONS					
1. Is current on therapy or related services programs for individual children.					
2. Carries out generalization from therapies or related services.					
3. Requests input from appropriate related services providers.					
4. Understands rationale for recommendations from therapies.					

F. COLLABORATION					
1. Helps families and other team members understand the impact of a visual impairment on learning and experience.					
2. Participates in IEP or IFSP meetings.					
3. Respects family values.					
4. Seeks family input.					
5. Maintains confidentiality of family interactions.					

Cooperating Teacher

Date

Practicum Student

Date

Please complete
And return to:

Dr. Paula Conroy
VISUAL IMPAIRMENT SPECIALIST PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO
Campus Box 141
GREELEY, COLORADO 80639

Special Education Major area _____

Accepted Assignment in _____ Public Schools

(Student's Name)

(Student Number)

(Semester Hours)

(Semester)

(Year)

Request for placement of _____ With

(Student)

(Cooperating Teacher) (School)

(Teacher's Home Address)

(Social Security Number)

School Address: _____

School City, State, Zip: _____

School Phone: _____

Cooperating Teacher's Signature

Principal's Signature