

# A Guide to Successful Practicum Experience Completion for School Media Students

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## The Purpose of This Guide

The School Media Practicum Guide is designed to assist students in the School Media program in selecting and completing practicum experiences which will lead toward their certification as Library Media Specialists. The requirements detailed in this guide are those which are above and beyond the standard IST Internship stipulations, such as meeting deadlines and completing the correct paperwork, to which all IST students are held.

Students in the School Media program should understand that completing the practicum experience as discussed here is only one part of the process of certification. Following this guide will ensure the practicum experiences are completed and documented correctly, but will not guarantee certification in any way. You must apply for certification through the School of Information Studies by contacting Rebecca Shaffer Mannion [rshaffer@syr.edu](mailto:rshaffer@syr.edu). This guide is not intended to be a complete explanation of the certification process, but only to introduce the role of the practicum experience, and how they add to the total program.

## Important Documents for School Media Students

*Last updated July 2021*

All documents can also be found in the School Media Forum on Blackboard.

### The Practicum Process

As a School Media student, you must meet New York State requirements for certification. The following requirements apply only to you, and are not required of other MSLIS students who are completing practica:

1. **You must complete 100 hours of [required fieldwork](#) before starting a practicum experience, including 15 hours minimum of working with students with disabilities.**
2. By the end of your program, **you must select and complete two practicum experiences \*** in different Library Media Centers, at the elementary and secondary levels. You must work with a Library Media Specialist who has been certified for at least 3 years, and you may not select a site that is in the school district in which you live or work (does not apply to residents of Albany, Buffalo, NYC, Rochester, or Syracuse). A total of 120 work hours on-site must be completed for each practicum experience. For each assignment, the paperwork discussed in the Checklist on page 3, including Proposal, School Media Learning Agreement, Student Evaluation, and Site Supervisor Evaluation must be submitted.
3. At each practicum site, **you must use the School Media Learning Agreement** to detail which specific competencies will be targeted by the work assignment. Determine your objectives and the methods you will use to meet these objectives on the School Media Learning Agreement.
4. **Keep a detailed daily journal** of activities in which you are involved at the site. Directions for submitting journals are detailed in the syllabus.

\* As of Fall 2008, students who have been continuously employed as teachers in a K-12 setting for at least three years may opt to complete one practicum of 120 hours. If this option is exercised, the student must complete the practicum in a setting in which they are not currently teaching (e.g. an elementary school teacher must do his/her practicum at a secondary school). Students must provide proof of qualifying teaching experience when they request to register for 972.

## Checklist of the School Media Practicum Process

- Complete the required 100 hours of [fieldwork](#) and submit Completion of Fieldwork in the School Media Forum
- Request Permission to Register for IST 972 from [onladvising@syr.edu](mailto:onladvising@syr.edu) who will set permission in MySlice for you.
- Register for IST 972 (School Media Practicum). You will be responsible for regular University tuition fees per credit hour.
- Select the Practicum Site and Site Supervisor. Arrange a face-to-face visit with the Site Supervisor at least one week prior to beginning at the practicum site.
- Submit the Proposal Form (s) in the appropriate section in the IST 972 course site.
- Submit the School Media Learning Agreement in the appropriate section in the IST 972 course site, by or before completion of 30 hours at the site.
- Submit your journals on a weekly basis as required by the Faculty Supervisor.
- Contact the Faculty Supervisor to arrange a mid-point evaluation, at approximately 60 hours into the practicum. This evaluation will consist of one of the following: (1) a site visit, during which time you will be observed providing instruction to students, (2) a phone call to your site supervisor, or (3) an email to your site supervisor.
- When the practicum is completed, submit the Student Evaluation Form in the appropriate section in the IST 972 course site.

- Ask your Site Supervisor to mail, email, or fax the Site Supervisor Evaluation Form to the Faculty Supervisor immediately following the end of your practicum.

## Roles of Individuals Involved with School Media Practicum

### School Media Student

Completing a school media practicum allows students to gain experience working in a school library. During the practicum, each student must present a plan for completing a major project or series of smaller projects that demonstrate your experience and growth in mastering competencies you targeted to strengthen after evaluating your Core Competencies.

School Media practicum students from the School of Information Studies have been involved in a number of interesting and exciting activities during their practicum experiences. Here are just a few projects that students have completed:

- Collaborating with teachers on special projects
- Teaching information literacy skills to groups of students
- Collection development and organization of a professional library
- Teaching students and staff to use new technology
- Creating a budget for a specific collection or using funds from a book fair, or other special project
- Writing a small grant for materials or services
- Developing a database or spreadsheet of resources (Internet, print, electronic, etc.) to supplement specific curricula
- Evaluating software for purchase
- Teaching Internet classes
- Presenting book talks to students
- Guiding a group of students as they develop a Web page
- Creating a library orientation video for new students
- Developing a database of web sites to supplement the curriculum
- Adding MARC records to a district wide union catalog

### Site Supervisor

Your site supervisor is the exemplary Library Media Specialist with whom you will work at the school or site. In order to qualify for this position, this person must be a certified Library Media Specialist working in a school or other educational environment for a minimum of three years, and must be willing to guide you and evaluate your work. The Site Supervisor's main responsibilities are to:

- Serve as a mentor
- Advise you in your work
- Orient you to the site
- Provide you with the necessary space and supplies to work
- Assist with completion of the School Media Learning Agreement and sign it
- Communicate with the Faculty Practicum Advisor in reference to your work
- Evaluate you upon completion of the assignment

### Faculty Practicum Advisor

Rebecca Shaffer Mannion [rshaffer@syr.edu](mailto:rshaffer@syr.edu) will observe you at your practicum site (or conduct a "virtual" observation if your site is further than 30 miles from Syracuse). She may also have suggestions as to places which would be appropriate for a School Media practicum, or may know individual Media Specialists you can contact to explore possible opportunities.