Dear Colleagues,

Brandeis offers a variety of Experiential Learning practicum courses across the disciplines that focus on both the theoretical and experiential realms of course topics, enabling students to develop skills, knowledge, and values from practical experiences and ongoing reflection. Practicum courses include projects that can involve research, lab work, community-based learning activities, theater, or art. Coupled with critical reflection, the experiential learning practicum projects facilitate personal, academic, and professional growth that will benefit students well beyond their time at Brandeis.

The enclosed documents are intended to assist faculty, staff, and student instructors in preparing for Experiential Learning practicum courses. The Guidelines document explains the different options and registration processes for practicum courses. Following the basic guidelines for regular courses, the syllabus template offers a checklist of items to consider throughout the practicum development process. This list is by no means comprehensive, but it should provide a helpful launching point for instructors to create thoughtful, effective practicum opportunities for students. The Tips document offers more detailed suggestions for course development and management.

We believe that successful EL practicum syllabi should1:

- Define experiential learning and explicitly state that experiential learning is used as one of the course teaching and learning strategies
- Explain how learning objectives are addressed through experiential learning
- Describe the nature of the practicum project, including students’ roles and responsibilities (time commitments, transportation, community contacts, etc.)
- Specify how students will demonstrate learning from the practicum (written reflections that link the project with base course content, presentations, class discussions, etc.)
- Emphasize the role of reflection in the course by defining reflection and explaining the
  - Specify how practicum assignments and learning objectives will be assessed and evaluated.

We encourage you to participate in periodic workshops offered by the Office of Experiential Learning and Teaching and to take advantage of additional resources available on our website. Please contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,

Daniel Langenthal and Alyssa Stalsberg Canelli

Director and Assistant Director
Office of Experiential Learning and Teaching

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1 Adapted from Heffernan, K. (2001). Fundamentals of service-learning course construction. Campus Compact. Providence, RI.