Experiential Learning (EL) Practicum Options

Guidelines for Students

Brandeis offers a variety of Experiential Learning (EL) practicum courses in all disciplines that focus on both the theoretical and experiential realms of course topics. These courses enable 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. These projects must be relevant to the course material in the base course. In Community-Engaged Learning (CEL) practicum courses, activities are carried out in reciprocal partnership with local community organizations, generating civic learning and improved understanding of the social issues at hand.

Students interested in taking an Experiential Learning practicum can choose between two options:

1. **Two-credit EL Practicum**

2. **Six-credit EL Practicum**

### Two-Credit EL Practicum Course

The optional two-credit practicum is paired with a 4-credit base course. Students who are taking, or have completed, the associated base course in the last academic year can register for the practicum. The practicum course is for students who are interested in deepening their engagement with the subject matter.

The practicum should include:

1. Hands-on experiences relevant to the base course content that engage students intellectually, creatively, socially, physically, and/or emotionally. Practicum activities should present opportunities to observe, experience, or engage with the theories learned in class.
2. Structured reflection assignments and processes that enable students to think critically about their experiences and make nuanced connections between theory and practice.
3. Unknown outcomes allowing students to learn from natural consequences, mistakes, and successes.
4. Opportunities for students to take initiative, make decisions, and be accountable for the results.

Students enrolled in a practicum are required to:

1. Invest 6 hours per week, which will include class sessions, project work, assignments, and meetings directly related to the practicum project.
2. Attend all the practicum class sessions (recommended length: 50-80 minutes).
3. Complete all readings and assignments as directed by the practicum instructor.
Registration Process

Practicum courses are listed as either sections of EL 94a, or they have a permanent course number, e.g. EL 15.

To enroll in a practicum with a permanent course number, students will follow the regular course enrollment procedures. All practicums will have co-requisites or pre-requisites.

To enroll in an EL 94a course:

- Students must complete an [EL 94a Add Form](#) in conjunction with the practicum instructor.
- The EL 94a Add form should describe (a) the learning objectives, (b) the practicum project, (c) training and supervision and (d) reflection assignments.
- The base course must be listed on the EL 94a Add Form and will appear on the student’s transcript as a notation to the EL 94a course.
- Students may not enroll in EL 94a as a standalone course. Should a student drop/withdraw from the base class, enrollment in the associated EL 94a will be automatically dropped.
- Students must submit the EL 94a Add Form in person to the Office of the University Registrar (Kutz 121) before the add deadline at the start of the semester. Student, faculty sponsor and Experiential Learning Director signatures on the form indicate that all have read and understood the guidelines of this document.

### Six-Credit EL Course

This model recognizes experiential learning as an integral component of the course, using activities coupled with reflection as a driving strategy for student learning. In the six-credit EL course the practicum is required of all students. Through the multi-layered course experience, students are challenged to broaden their perspectives on practical issues related to the course and strengthen their academic, personal and professional skills.

Six-credit EL courses are listed on the Schedule of Classes. Students should enroll in these classes following the same registration procedures as any other regularly scheduled class.

**Notes:**
There is no limit to the total number of practicums that many count toward the 128 credits required for graduation. Individual academic departments and programs may decide whether or not to count practicum courses toward major or minor requirements.

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