

In-Person Practicum Placement Exception Process

Message sent on behalf of Professor Dionne Gesink, Acting Associate Dean, Academic Affairs

The Issue

Our professional masters programs (encompassing about 12 specific programs and fields across IHPME and PHS) have practicum placements as an important component. Placements are often completed in the first or final summer of study and many of these are disrupted by the COVID-19 events. Fortunately, many students are able to complete placements remotely, and/or will be able to do a practicum at a later date. However, for many students this will not be possible and their intended summer practicum placement has been suspended or cancelled.

The summer practicum placements are also, worth up to 2.0 credits (4 half courses) and this contributes substantially toward completion of the overall degree. Many students will want to make up these credits through coursework over the summer if they cannot do a practicum. Under normal conditions, we have very few summer courses, and fewer still open to all students. This creates a gap in coursework opportunities.

We will likely need to take a three-pronged approach:

- Open up existing summer courses to more students. Preference should be given to masters-level DLSPH students (PHS and IHPME)
- Offer existing elective courses in the summer
- Offer new courses in the summer

1. Opening Up Existing Summer Courses

Faculty teaching regularly scheduled summer courses are encouraged to open up their courses to additional students and to be as inclusive as possible, across our two graduate divisions (IHPME and PHS). Instructors who are willing to do so can request additional course support for larger class sizes, if necessary (see below).

1. Offering an Existing Elective Course to the Summer Term

There is, typically, no restriction on when electives can be offered and many of them can potentially be offered during the summer term. We encourage faculty to consider offering electives this summer term. **The minimum class size to run a course is 5 students.**

If you normally teach a more specialized elective course in the Fall or Winter term, such that there is not enough student demand to offer your course more than once a year or once every two years, then you can reschedule your course for the summer term.

If you normally teach a high demand elective course in the Fall or Winter term, such that you need to continue to offer your course in the Fall or Winter term, consider if it is feasible to offer the elective in summer as well as at its usual time, and determine what additional resources may be required to make this possible.

1. Offering a New Elective Course to the Summer Term

If you have been thinking about developing a new elective course, this summer is the perfect time to try it out as a reading course. If this new elective course is part of your intended workload, then you can reschedule your offering to the summer term. **Again, the minimum class size to run a course is 5 students.**

Faculty Workload

The Office of the Dean is very concerned about Faculty workload as we look for solutions to address student need for coursework this summer term.

If your appointment is in PHS: Please contact your Division Head to discuss your workload.

If your appointment is in IHPME: Please contact Audrey Laporte to discuss your workload.

Resources for Large Classes

Each course will be unique in its needs so it's hard to give firm thresholds but here are some guiding bits of information:

Class Size:

We need a minimum of 5 students enrolled in a course for it to run. This is basic economics. Classes up to 25 students are generally considered manageable with one Instructor.

Faculty person-power:

Co-teaching has certain advantages but is not always warranted from, strictly, a resource perspective. Core faculty are encouraged to involve status and adjunct faculty for diverse perspectives. Please contact Dionne Gesink () [if you need help identifying status faculty who may be available to support courses.](#)

Teaching Assistants and TA-hours:

TA hours (or additional TA hours) can be provided depending on the situation. Typically, we start to consider TA support for classes with 25 students or more, and where the burden of student contact and/or assessment warrants additional human resources.

One thing to keep in mind is that there is a hiring process to make this happen. Ellen Sokoloff, in the Graduate Affairs Office handles this. She and I are in conversation with the union about how to hire TAs, since COVID19 conditions may affect the typical hiring process.

Post-docs – there is a way to have post-docs be involved as instructors/co-instructors.

Timeline

Summer term course registration opened April 1, 2020 and will close May 4, 2020.

April 13, 2020 – I have asked all practicum programs to give me a sense of how many students will be looking for coursework by April 13 so we can make a decision about how many courses we might need for the summer 2020 term.

April 15, 2020 – Announce the number of anticipated courses needed.

April 20, 2020 – Post any additional course offerings to ROSI so students have time to learn about the course and enrol before the May 4, 2020 deadline.

May 4, 2020 – Final date to enrol in May-to-June or May-to-August session courses.

July 6, 2020 – Final date to enrol in July-August courses.

How to Offer a Reading Course

More information on how to offer a reading course can be found on our website at:
<http://www.dlsph.utoronto.ca/students/current-students/guidelines-for-reading-and-research-courses/>

In brief:

– Course requirements:

- o Pilot reading course should have 24 hours of contact time for a 0.5 credit course

- Submission process:

- o Submit a syllabus to Ellen Sokoloff

- Review process:

- o Ellen and Dionne will review and approved courses will be posted for student enrollment