Information Professional Practicum
Faculty of Information, University of Toronto

INF 2173 Course Details

Winter 2020

Instructor: Vicki Whitmell **vicki.whitmell@utoronto.ca** 416-931-7709
(Always available before and after class and individual meetings can be set up at mutually agreeable times.)

Large and small group classes will be held in BL 538

Course Objectives

The objective of the Information Professional Practicum course is to prepare you for the professional workplace. The requirements, which include undertaking a practicum project under the direction of an information professional, will help you to supplement with hands-on experience the theoretical knowledge you have gained at the iSchool.

It is likely that each of you will have a very different experience in this course. Some of you will be working directly with other professionals and groups in the business, cultural or information work world. Others will be working as sole practitioners in a home office with more limited interaction with others. Whatever your work setting, it is expected that you will be learning about how others interact in a professional setting, observing the different management and leadership styles of your supervisors and others, and that you will be gaining a better self-awareness of your interests and abilities.

You are likely to all be experiencing a certain amount of unease as you begin. After all, for some of you, this may be one of your first chances to practice the theories and knowledge that you have been learning at the iSchool. Some of you may be uncertain about how the professional work world operates. What do you talk to people about? What do you do if you encounter a problem or setback? How do you communicate effectively with those around you?

The classroom and group meeting portions of the course are designed to assist you by providing support, insights into the work environment and a greater awareness of your professional and personal abilities and interests, strengths and weaknesses.

Course Learning Outcomes

At the completion of the course, you will have gained valuable knowledge about the professional work world and how you respond to it and how you are going to participate in it.

By the end of the course you should also be able have a growing awareness of what is expected of information professionals in the workforce and an increased self-awareness of how others perceive you as a professional and how you respond to them in your day-to-day work activities.

At the end of the course you should be able to:

- Prepare a basic work plan that will outline the expectations of a project and how it will be completed and communicated. You will consider possible obstacles that may arise and how they could be dealt with (demonstrated in work plan assignment, final report, and exhibit display).

- Determine your personal goals, motivations and ways of work individually and within teams within a professional setting (demonstrated through the completion of the practicum project, final report and group meetings).

- Put into practice effectively working in a professional setting (demonstrated through the completion of the practicum project).

- Create, display and present an exhibit of your project that accurately represents the work that was done, the benefits to the sponsoring organization and your learning outcomes (demonstrated through the creation of an exhibit display).

- Be more comfortable marketing your abilities, your work and networking with other information professionals and networking abilities (demonstrated through your participation in the class exhibition and group meetings).

Course Requirements

1. Practicum Project and Final Report (55%)

You must complete a project or work internship in an organization under the supervision of an information professional. The total number of hours for the project should be 105. Class work and the preparation of the work plan and final report are in addition to these hours.

- **Project to be chosen by January 15, 2020.**
- **Hours to be completed by April 1, 2020.**
- **Final Report to be submitted by April 3, 2020.**

2. Work Plan (15%)

You will prepare a work plan that outlines the responsibilities and duties of the practicum project, expected outcomes, timelines and how the work will be completed.

The plan should be reviewed with the practicum supervisor before it is submitted.

- **Work plan to be completed by February 5, 2020.**

3. Exhibit (20%)

Prepare and present a display on your project or work for the class exhibition.

- **The exhibition will be held on April 1, 2020.**

3. Participation (Classes and groups) (10%)

Participation is very important in this course. By keeping in touch with your classmates and the instructor and by discussing what is happening in your workplace, you will get the feedback and support that you will need to make sure that you are taking the right approach. This will help to build your self-confidence and ensure that you are successful. You will be expected to attend and participate in both the classes and group meetings.

COURSE TIMELINE

Activity	Date
Practicum projects available to view	January 8, 2020 9:00 AM
Choose project	Beginning January 9, 2020 9:00 AM
Set up meeting with project supervisor to get started	After receiving email confirmation to supervisor from Vicki Whitmell
Choose group	February 5, 2020
Work plan due	February 5, 2020 (submit via Quercus)
Class Exhibition	April 1, 2020 4 to 7 pm
Final Report	April 3, 2020 (submit via Quercus)

A. Full Group Classes:

Wednesday, January 8, 2020 6:30 p.m. This class will introduce the principal components of the course and its expectations and requirements. We will discuss how to make a good choice of a project that ties in with your interests and goals and review the key components of planning in preparation for beginning your practicum project.

Wednesday, January 15, 2020 6:30 p.m. This class will consider the differences between writing for business and writing for academia. We will also talk about management styles and how your personality style impacts how you behave at work and the best work culture for you.

Wednesday, March 11, 2020 6:30 p.m. In this class we will discuss ideas for the class exhibition and the requirements for the final report.

Wednesday, March 25, 2020 6:30 p.m. In this class we will discuss the work completed and lessons learned. We will also discuss ideas for job applications and planning for interviews.

Wednesday, April 1, 2020 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Inforum
Students will present their practicum projects to members of the iSchool and the information community in the class exhibition.

B. Small Group Classes

You must enroll in one group (this is done on the course Quercus site by February 5, 2020. To sign up for a group choose "Tools" from the course main menu. Then choose "UT Group Self Sign Up."). Each group will meet with the instructor once over the course of the term. It is important to choose a group that fits with your schedule. The groups are:

- **Group A:** Meets February 19, 2020 from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.
- **Group B:** Meets February 19, 2020 from 8:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m
- **Group C:** Meets February 26, 2020 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m
- **Group D:** Meets February 26, 2020 from 8:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m

Playing an active role in discussions involves volunteering your opinion, asking questions, and listening carefully. The best discussions will be the ones that go beyond the simple questions and answers and you will be rewarded for bringing up more challenging ideas or questions and for trying to deal with them collaboratively with your group members.

It is also expected that you will show more comfort in discussing your issues and those of your colleagues as the term goes on. While it is recognized that many of you may be

naturally shy or hesitant, remember that in the work setting you will be expected to join in, voice your opinion and listen and respond to others. By being active and by gaining confidence in this course you will also be working to improve your ability to interact with others professionally.

Preparing for Group Meeting

Please come to the class prepared to discuss:

- What you are feeling about the work you are doing and the people you are working with
- What you have learned about how you like to work with others and how you like to do your work
- Any difficulties that you have encountered and how you are dealing with them
- Advice that you need from others.

Late Assignments

Because your work in the course is heavily reliant on the time and availability of your supervisor, assignment due dates are flexible. If you will not be able to meet the due date please let me know in advance. Generally penalties are not given for work plans or reports submitted late.

Although there is flexibility remember that meeting the due dates will help you to meet the time commitments for completing your practicum project.

The final report dates are tied to the deadlines from the University for the submission of grades.

No flexibility can be given for the date and time of the class exhibition.

Writing Support

As stated in the iSchool's Grade Interpretation Guidelines, "work that is not well written and grammatically correct will not generally be considered eligible for a grade in the A range, regardless of its quality in other respects." With this in mind, please make use of the writing support provided to graduate students by the SGS Graduate Centre for Academic Communication. The services are designed to target the needs of both native and non-native speakers and all programs are free. Please consult the current workshop schedule **http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/currentstudents/Pages/Current-Years-Courses.aspx** for more information.

Academic Integrity

Please consult the University's site on Academic Integrity http://academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/. The iSchool has a zero-tolerance policy on plagiarism as defined in section B.I.1.(d) of the University's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/ppjun011995.pdf. You should acquaint yourself with the Code. Please review the material in Cite it Right and if you require further clarification, consult the site How Not to Plagiarize http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize.

Cite it Right covers relevant parts of the U of T *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters(*1995). It is expected that all iSchool students take the Cite it Right workshop and the online quiz. Completion of the online Cite it Right quiz should be made prior to the second week of classes. To review and complete the workshop, visit the orientation portion of the iSkills site: https://inforum.library.utoronto.ca/workshops/orientation

Accommodations

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you have a disability or a health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the Accessibility Services Office http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as as soon as possible. The Accessibility Services staff are available by appointment to assess needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations. The sooner you let them and I know your needs, the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.