

## Practicum Policy for Full-Time Professionals

All Public Justice majors are required to complete PBJ 397 in order to fulfill the requirements of the major. Students who are currently employed as full-time professionals in the fields of public or criminal justice are not expected to do a supervised fieldwork placement in addition to their employment. Such students are expected to advise the Department of their professional status in advance and will then be permitted to register for a three-credit practicum in which they will examine uses of theory and practice in relation to their own professional experience. The student must complete all other requirements for the practicum course, including a term paper, attendance at all classes, class presentations, and all other class requirements; however, evaluation by a fieldwork supervisor is not required. **Note: This policy applies only to those students who are currently employed as full-time professionals in the fields of public or criminal justice.**

## Intersession Fieldwork for Spring Semester Practicum

A student may request permission to complete the fieldwork component of the spring semester PBJ 397 course during the intersession period between fall and spring semesters. **Intersession fieldwork is permitted only upon prior approval of the Public Justice Department.** Students requesting permission to complete fieldwork during the intersession should note that fact on their practicum application form. In order to receive such permission, the student must:

1. Meet all other eligibility criteria for PBJ 397;
2. Satisfy the Public Justice department that the proposed fieldwork placement is acceptable;
3. Secure written agreement from the fieldwork supervisor for intersession fieldwork;
4. Meet with the PBJ 397 instructor to receive necessary materials and instructions;
5. Advance-register for the appropriate spring semester PBJ 397 section for three credits only;

These conditions must be met before the end of the fall semester in which approval is sought. No student may begin intersession fieldwork without being advance-registered for PBJ 397 and securing departmental approval.

**Please Note:** There is no intersession PBJ 397 course. A student who does intersession fieldwork is merely completing that component of the spring semester PBJ 397 during the intersession period. The student must complete all the remaining requirements of the practicum to receive a grade for the spring semester PBJ 397.

## Summer Session Practicum Course

PBJ 397 is also offered during summer session. The deadline for application for the summer session practicum is March 15th. Unlike the regular semesters, PBJ 397 in the summer session does not have regular class meetings on campus, since typically students choose fieldwork placements in various parts of the state. Students must obtain a practicum information packet containing course syllabus, schedule of assignments, 40 hour report forms, evaluation form, and other pertinent information, from the Public Justice Office before leaving Oswego to commence the fieldwork. Communication with the course instructor is principally by mail and telephone. **Summer Practicum students must register and pay for PBJ 397 as a SUNY Oswego summer session course even if they are not on campus during the summer. No student will receive credit for PBJ 397 in summer session if he/she fails to register and pay for the course in a timely manner.**

### *For information concerning:*

- Selection Process
- Fieldwork Evaluation by Supervisor
- Final Grade Information

Please refer to the Public Justice Handbook.

# PBJ 397 Practicum in Public Justice An Informational Brochure for Public Justice Students

The Public Justice Practicum course gives students a valuable opportunity to gain practical experience in an occupation of interest, to make professional contacts, and to prepare for their future careers.

### Nature and Purpose of Practicum Course

The principal purpose of the Public Justice practicum course is to provide an opportunity for students to relate theory they have learned in their course work to the way things "really work" in the field. PBJ 397 may be taken for 3 or 6 semester hours of credit, depending on the student's interests and the demands of particular placements. A student must work forty hours in his or her agency for each credit earned. In addition, students must write reports and meet with the course instructor (both in class and individually) to discuss the fieldwork experience and relate it to the students' studies. Please Note: PBJ 397 is not an internship. It is a course with a required fieldwork component. Class meetings and academic research and paperwriting are an integral part of PBJ 397.

Each practicum student must also write a paper relating theory to practice within the context of his or her fieldwork placement. Students taking PBJ 397 for 6 semester hours are required to complete an additional academic project to be determined by the instructor, such as a more detailed theory and practice paper, a second paper, or a demonstration project.

### Prerequisites for PBJ 397

1. Declared Public Justice major or second major; and
2. Completion of PBJ 101, PBJ 201, PBJ 301 with a grade of C- or better; and
3. Good academic standing (cumulative GPA of at least 2.0); and
4. Minimum of Junior status (56 s.h. completed); and
5. At least two semesters of coursework at SUNY Oswego; and
6. Prior department approval.

### Application Procedure

PBJ 397 is open to qualified students on a competitive basis only. Students must make a written application for admission to PBJ 397 the semester before the one in which they wish to take the course. Application forms are available in the Public Justice Department office, 446 Mahar Hall.

Application deadlines for PBJ 397 are as follows:

- Spring semester - October 1
- Summer Session - March 1
- Fall semester - April 1

Since space in the practicum sections is severely limited, late applications can rarely be accepted. Applications for PBJ 397 must be picked up, completed, and returned to the Public Justice office before the posted deadline. At the close of the application period, the Departmental selection committee meets to review applications and select the practicum students.

### Acceptance into PBJ 397

After the department makes its selections, a list of accepted students, and a list of alternates (if necessary), will be posted in the Public Justice Department office. It is up to the individual applicants to determine whether or not they are on the list and thus permitted to register (or pre-register) for PBJ 397.

### Orientation Meeting

When the list of accepted students is posted, that notice will also specify the date, time, and place of the mandatory Practicum orientation meeting. An accepted student must attend that meeting unless he or she has obtained a waiver from the Department Chairperson or the course instructor. If a student otherwise fails to attend the orientation meeting, the Department reserves the right to immediately remove that student from the accepted list and replace him or her with a student from the alternate list.

At the orientation meeting, students will receive information pertaining to registration, course format, and the process of finding a practicum fieldwork placement.

### Practicum Fieldwork Placements

It is primarily up to the *accepted* student to seek out and obtain a fieldwork placement with an appropriate office or agency. You may do this only after being formally accepted into PBJ 397. If you seek out placement before being accepted into the course and an agency supervisor informally accepts you, you will still not be accepted into the course until and unless you meet the requirements set forth by the department. *In other words, acceptance into an agency does not mean automatic acceptance into PBJ 397.*

Instructions and suggestions for obtaining a placement will be provided at the mandatory orientation meeting. It is highly recommended that the student prepare a resumé and practice his or her application and interviewing techniques as preparation. Information from the Career Services Office (Culkin Hall) may be helpful in this process. As students find placements they should immediately notify the course instructor.

Some agencies may require the student to provide a letter verifying that the student is, in fact, a bona fide, duly-registered practicum student, as a condition of acceptance. Students may obtain such a letter from the Public Justice Department secretary. Make sure to provide the Department with the exact name and business address of the person to whom the letter is to be sent. Since not all agencies require such letters, one will be sent only if the student requests it.

**NOTE:** Some agencies, particularly law enforcement agencies, require the student to provide evidence of liability insurance coverage. Because of the great expense involved, the Public Justice Department no longer carries an internship liability policy. Upon request, the department will provide a Waiver of Liability form for the student to complete. In addition, again upon request, the Vice President for Administration at SUNY Oswego will provide a letter to the agency explaining the College's self-insured status as an agency of the State of New York.