**Practicum**

The practicum is a supervised practical demonstration of your spiritual leadership. The project may be offered within or outside your ordinary faith community. If the practicum is within your church or community of faith, you must speak with the pastor or governing body to obtain permission, support and counsel. The practicum should relate to your learning goals.

**What is a Practicum?**

The Certificate in Spiritual Formation intentionally incorporated a “Practicum” into the curriculum program. We hope that you will always return home with new ideas and ways to incorporate and new strategies to implement for ministry and mission within your faith community. However, the goals of the Certificate in Spiritual Formation are to:

* Encourage the spiritual life of participants
* Equip you for ministry in Christ’s church
* Empower you for mission in God’s world

The Practicum is designed to offer you the opportunity near completion of the Certificate to reflect on your own spiritual leadership with a supervisor and begin or continue to incorporate your learnings into vibrant Christian ministry. To this end, we hope that you will find encouragement, guidance and support from a trusted guide as you:

a. Reflect on your own gifts and leadership as a Christian leader (being)

b. Learn, plan, practice and reflect on a new act of ministry (doing)

## Prerequisites for the Practicum:

* Completion of *Seeking God*
* Completion of at least three of the elective courses
* Payment of tuition for the practicum

**Time Requirement:**

* About 20 hours, including preparation time and supervisory meetings.
* Three scheduled supervisory meetings, each approximately 1½ hour in length:

1) Before the act of ministry.

2) During or shortly after the act of ministry begins.

3) At closure of the supervisory process.

**Arranging for the Practicum for the Certificate in Spiritual Formation Program:**

When the prerequisites are satisfied (see above), you may proceed to formulate detailed plans for the practicum. The following is a summary of the process. **Note: The proposal, supervisor profile, and registration deposit mentioned below need to be received in the Spirituality Program Office at least one month prior to the proposed practicum event.**

**Step 1**

**Register online and pay the deposit or full course fee.** You will be assigned a Spirituality Program Practicum Advisor to assist you in the process. You will also be enrolled in the online course site which contains instructions for the practicum. You will submit your proposal and final assessments through this site.

You will be invited to:

**Submit a 3-page proposal defining:**

* 1. Your learning goals for this practicum (How will you reflect your own spiritual leadership and what new skill, process or format for ministry will be explored?)
  2. The program design and objectives, sample lesson plans, evaluation.

The proposal should detail the goals, the content of and time allotted for each session and activity, the process to be used (small groups, discussion, one-on-one), and how presentations will be made (lecture, movies, slides, etc.) Other than your supervisor’s evaluation, what form of evaluation from participants might you incorporate to know how effectively you met your practicum and personal goals?

*Please be sure that your name, e-mail address and phone number are included with your proposal.*

**Step 2**

***Secure a Supervisor*** who has the expertise needed to be able to evaluate your event and leadership ability. You are welcome to secure a supervisor in your local community. Supervisors are asked to read and follow the guidelines in this handbook. The [Supervisor Profile](https://form.jotform.com/81276653131959) along with a W-9, found online at <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf>, is to be completed and mailed to the Spirituality Office. **The participant is responsible for providing the supervisor with the guidelines found in this document on page 4. The forms are also available on the course site.**

**The Proposal and Supervisor Profile are due in the Spirituality Program Office at least one month prior to the practicum event***.* This will allow time for an advisor to be appointed by the Director of the Spirituality Program, for the advisor to review the proposal, and for the participant to make any necessary revisions. Therefore, the date(s) of the event should be tentative until the participant receives *written approval of the proposal and the supervisor* from the advisor. Once written approval is given, the participant may proceed with the event.

***You need to receive a written approval*** of both the proposal and the supervisor from the practicum advisor. The advisor will assist, encourage, and offer advice throughout the course of the practicum and will read and approve all final papers.

**Step 3**

**Completing the Practicum for the Certificate in Spiritual Formation Program:**

When the practicum is complete, you will engage in a time of reflection and evaluation. This evaluation is accomplished both with the Supervisor and with persons who participated in your project. Finally, you submit a final 7 to10 page report with three sections:

* Personal reflections on what transpired in the practicum (3 pages).
* Self-evaluation (2 pages).
* What you learned from the practicum (2-3pages)

The **Supervisor Evaluation** (2-3 pages) will be submitted along with your final report.

**The final report is due within two months following the conclusion of the practicum event. Your tuition balance ($350) is also required at this time.**

**Ideas, Themes and Suggestions for the Practicum:**

* The inward/outward journey: Christian response teams for natural disasters
* Introducing spiritual practices to youth grades 6-12
* Lenten study or at home retreat for a church whose focus is social justice ministry
* Introducing contemplative worship in the style of the Taize community
* Holy rest: a retreat design for spiritual support for care-givers
* Organizing a neighborhood prayer walk or walking group
* Saturday workshop for young adults: Art-making as lectio divina
* Building a prayer trail or labyrinth
* A mid-week Bible study: introducing the Christian spiritual journey through biblical journey stories
* Faith at work: noontime centering prayer groups at the office

**Questions to pray and ponder when preparing for the Practicum:**

* How might God be inviting me to share what I have learned through

courses I’ve taken in the Certificate in Spiritual Formation?

* What act of ministry might enable me to “work my opposite?” What would be challenging? Not within my comfort zone? To whom might God be

calling me to serve?

* How can I reach out beyond the current programs of my congregation and invite them to join me in discovering God in a new way?
* How can I reach out beyond the walls of the church and envision ministry and mission in other arenas in my life/in my neighborhood?
* How can I try a new way of leading in a familiar context? i.e. I have led a Bible study before, but how could I learn and lead in a new way?

# A Guidelines for Practicum Supervisors

Thank you for agreeing to be a Practicum Supervisor for the Certificate in Spiritual Formation program. You are an integral part of the learning and formation process for the participant you have agreed to supervise. We are ready to assist you in this important learning opportunity. Each participant (at the time of the submission of the proposal) is assigned a personal advisor to assist, encourage and offer advice throughout the course of the practicum. Advisors read and approve proposals and all final papers.

At the beginning of the practicum, please complete and submit an online Supervisor Profile:

<https://form.jotform.com/81276653131959>. To receive your honorarium, please send a completed W-9\* <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf> to:

Columbia Theological Seminary

Spirituality Program

701 S. Columbia Dr.

PO Box 520

Decatur, GA 30031

\*This form will be kept confidential and is for tax purposes only.

Most of us have a dominant model of supervision that may be unconsciously informing our understanding of the supervisory relationship. Some of these models come from previous experiences of being supervised by others. Some reflect different theological understandings about human relationships and Christian mission. Preferred styles of learning can also inform expectations about supervision.

Don Beisswenger’s *Models of Supervision* identifies seven different models that are frequently employed in pastoral supervision. For each model, the author has asked the following pertinent questions.

* What is the primary *goal* of supervision?
* What is the primary *task of the Supervisor* in this relationship?
* What is the general *focus of supervisory conferences?*
* What metaphor shapes the *relationship* between these two persons?
* Who, if anyone, should be in *control* in this relationship?

Since the participant has been working to grow in faith and ministry through the Certificate in Spiritual Formation program, we would like to encourage the practicum supervision to continue this process. Although you might include pieces of the other models of supervision, please seek to work out of the Spiritual Guide Model.

It is our hope that Supervisors prayerfully and intentionally companion the Certificate program participant through the practicum process.

Plan to have three face-to-face meetings during the practicum experience. One meeting should occur before the act of ministry so that you might offer support and guidance, one during the practicum so that you might observe the participant, and one after so that you might offer feedback and encouragement.

Consider how to include silence, prayer, scripture and ritual during your times together. Seek to listen for God’s voice and direction as you listen to the participant’s plans and stories.

**Feedback and Papers:**

At the conclusion of the practicum, please write a three- to five-page paper reflecting on how this experience was spiritually formative for the participant. In what ways did you see God’s tender teaching? How did the participant listen for God during the process? What growth areas do you see in the participant’s leadership? How has this process or the participant’s ministry affected you?

After you have written your paper, please share it first with the participant. Enter into conversation and prayer about the practicum and the participant’s leadership. When you have completed this conversation, please send your evaluation paper to your assigned advisor. It is the participant’s responsibility to finish his/her own reflection and evaluation when he/she has completed his/her work and again send it to the assigned advisor.

**Honorarium:**

We are grateful for your willingness to provide spiritual leadership for the Certificate in Spiritual Formation program. We intend the practicum to be a meaningful experience for both you and the participant.

We are pleased to be able to offer you a small honorarium of $100. Although this probably will not cover all the time you will invest in conversation, prayer and writing, we hope that you will see this as our way of saying thank you. If you would like the check made out to someone other than yourself, please indicate this at the bottom of your profile sheet. Your honorarium is sent to you when the Advisor notifies the Spiritual Program Office that the practicum has been completed.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please don’t hesitate to contact the Director of the Spirituality Program at Columbia Theological Seminary, (404) 687-4557.