**Prerequisite: Department Head Approval**

**Application Process:**

A. In the semester prior to the semester that they would like to do their practicum, students will begin to explore potential sites and volunteer opportunities.

B. After finding a site and securing a site supervisor, students will select a faculty mentor who will approve their site and guide them through the practicum experience.

C. Students will submit the following to the department head prior to registration:
   1. a completed application form with the information about the site and their faculty mentor's signature
   2. a professional resume approved by the faculty mentor
   3. a job description
   4. a checksheet, printed from the RMU website

**Faculty Mentors:**

Dr. Min Lu  
lu@rmu.edu, Nicholson 441  

Dr. Brian O’Roark  
oroark@rmu.edu, Nicholson 445  
Areas of Interest: Economics of Pop Culture, Economics of Information Security, Sports Economics, Law and Economics

Dr. Zhou Yang  
yangz@rmu.edu, Nicholson 461  
Areas of Interest: State Business Taxes, Tax Competition among U.S. Governments, Innovation Policies

**Department Head:**

Dr. Kathryn Dennick-Brecht brecht@rmu.edu  
Wheatley Center 312
Economics Practicum Application

The purpose of the Economics Practicum (ECON4803) is to provide Economics majors with a relevant career learning experience and enable them to combine academic study and practical experience for academic credit. Students interested in registering for the Practicum must submit a completed application, current resume approved by the faculty mentor, a checksheet printed from the RMU website, and a job description to the Department Head.

Please print clearly or word process. Date: _______________

Name: ____________________________________________________________
(Last) (First) (Middle Initial)

Student ID: __________________________ Email Address: __________________________

Address: __________________________________________________________

Telephone: __________________________

Cumulative Grade Point Average: ____________ Cumulative Credits Completed: ____________

Anticipated Graduation Date: _______________

Term in which you plan to do the Practicum: _______________________

Practicum Placement Information:

Agency/Organization: ________________________________________________
Contact person at site: ________________________________________________
Address: __________________________________________________________

Job Title: __________________________________________________________

Faculty Mentor:

Faculty Mentor: ____________________________________________________
Faculty Mentor Signature: ____________________________________________

I understand my responsibilities for the Practicum as described in the Economics Practicum Syllabus and agree to comply with them.

Student Signature __________________________ Date ______________________

Faculty Department Head Signature __________________________ Date ______________________

□ Approve □ Disapprove
ECONOMICS PRACTICUM (ECON4803)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

ECON4803 Under the guidance of an economics faculty member, the student will complete 120 hours of documented experience of a practicum at a university-approved site. The student's experience may be a volunteer or paid position that is directly related to the field of economics. Participation in professional activities allows students to experience the work environment in their chosen field, make informed career choices, and enhance their employment credentials. These experiences reinforce the connection between the classroom and the diverse workplaces that employ economists through the application of classroom theories to actual occupational problems. This course requires 120 hours on site, as well as the completion of the academic requirements established by the Department of Social Sciences.

3 credits
Prerequisite: 90 credits, Department Head Approval

COURSE OBJECTIVES/GOALS

Upon successful completion of this course, each student will have the ability to:

1. acquire specialized information, both theoretical and practical, about topics of particular interest to economists.
2. apply knowledge gained in the classroom to diverse social responsibilities and situations.
3. develop an awareness of and appreciation for the diverse and multiple employment opportunities provided by a Economics major.
4. develop a professional network.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance Policy:

Students are required to complete 120 hours of documented experience in a university-approved volunteer or paid position. Students must establish a schedule with their site supervisor and report to the site on EVERY agreed-upon day. Students are to maintain a record of completed hours by completing the Economics Practicum Timesheet(s). In the event of illness or emergency, it is the responsibility of the student to notify the Site Supervisor and the faculty advisor. It is also the responsibility of the student, in consultation with the Site Supervisor, to schedule additional visits to fulfill the 120 hours required for the Practicum.

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity Policy: The fundamentals of Academic Integrity are valued within the Robert Morris University community of scholars. All students are expected to understand and adhere to the standards of Academic Integrity as stated in the RMU Academic Integrity Policy, which can be found on the RMU website at [www.rmu.edu/academicintegrity](http://www.rmu.edu/academicintegrity). Any student who violates the Academic Integrity Policy is subject to judicial proceedings which may result in sanctions as outlined in the Policy. Depending upon the severity of the violation, sanctions may range from receiving a zero on an assignment to being dismissed from the university. If you have any questions about the policy, please consult your course instructor.
The Social Sciences Department strongly supports the RMU Academic Integrity Policy. Students should be aware that all violations, including minor infractions, will be reported to the Robert Morris University Academic Integrity Committee. Further, in compliance with the RMU Undergraduate Repeating Courses Policy, students who have not attained the minimum passing grade for courses required in their program of study after three attempts may be dismissed from the programs in the Social Sciences Department. Because the social science programs emphasize interactions with others, our majors represent and reflect a critical aspect of reputation for our department, our school, and more broadly, Robert Morris University. A large part of that reputation has to do with the ethical behaviors of our graduates which impact trust. Consequences of actions that violate the ethical and trust-based behaviors we expect of majors representing our department can range from counseling regarding issues of academic integrity to permanent expulsion from the program or the department.

**Plagiarism Policy:** Plagiarism, taking someone else’s words or ideas and representing them as your own, is expressly prohibited by Robert Morris University. Good academic work must be based on honesty. The attempt of any student to present as his or her own work that which he or she has not produced is regarded by the faculty and administration as a serious offense. Student academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to:

- Copying the work on another during an examination or turning in a paper or an assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- Copying from books, magazines, or other sources, including Internet or other electronic databases like ProQuest and InfoTrac, or paraphrasing ideas from such sources without acknowledging them;
- Submitting an essay for one course to a second course without having sought prior permission from your instructor;
- Giving a speech and using information from books, magazines, or other sources or paraphrasing ideas from sources without acknowledging them;
- Knowingly assisting others in the dishonest use of course materials such as papers, lab data, reports and/or electronic files to be used by another student as that student's own work.
- **NOTE on team or group assignments:** When you have an assignment that requires collaboration, it is expected that the work that results is credited to the team unless individual parts have been assigned. However, the academic integrity policy applies to the team as well as to its members. All outside sources must be credited as outlined above.

Students in this class and in all courses are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. Cheating, plagiarism in written work, receiving and providing unauthorized assistance, and sabotaging the work of others are behaviors that are inconsistent with standards of academic integrity. Students/candidates are expected to do their own work. Plagiarism is defined as using someone else’s work ideas, or words without giving the author credit for using them. This can mean many things, including downloading papers from the Internet, using a friend's paper, inaccurately quoting or paraphrasing ideas or words from a text. In the academic community, people earn their living through the use of their work ideas, and words. Their reputation is built, in part, by others using their ideas and giving credit to the author. Therefore, you have the responsibility, both legal and ethical, to cite their work properly. Plagiarism is a major offence in the academic community of which you are a part. Students/candidates who commit blatant acts of plagiarism will fail the course and may be required to present a defense to be allowed to continue in the department.

**Special Learning or Physical Accommodations Policy:** Students who may be eligible to receive learning support or physical accommodations must contact the Center for Student Success at 412-397-4349 to schedule an appointment with a counselor and to learn more about accommodation procedures. To receive accommodations in this course, arrangements must be made through the Center for Student Success (Nicholson Center, 2nd Floor).

**Course Requirements:**

1. **Journals**
   Students are required to keep a daily log of their experiences as well as compose a weekly reflection paper. Journals should be submitted via email or Blackboard at the end of each week.
   
a. **Daily Entries:** For each day, list the number of hours worked, a description of daily responsibilities and duties, and a brief paragraph reflecting on that day's experiences.
b. **Weekly Reflections**: How are your experiences consistent with or different from the content you learned in your course work? How has your understanding of economics evolved/changed/been supported by your experiences? What did you experience this week that was interesting? How have you grown professionally through this experience?

2. **Faculty-Student Conferences**
   Approximately three times during the semester, the student and faculty mentor will meet to review and process the practicum experience as well as evaluate progress toward completion of course requirements. These meetings will be based upon the student's practicum schedule and progress through the semester.
   The topics discussed will include, but not be limited to:
   a. Review of journal entries to date.
   b. Review of pre-planning and drafts for final paper.

3. **Final Evaluation Paper/Project**
   Compare and contrast your experience in the Practicum with the theories and information that you learned in relevant course work. Topics will be chosen in consultation with the faculty advisor and will be appropriate to the student's area of interest.
   a. Requirements: The paper must be a minimum of 10 pages with an appropriate list of citations correctly utilizing APA style of documentation.
      1. 1st page- Describe the site and why it was chosen
      2. Pages 2-8- Describe the type of experiences the practicum provided and how they connect to relevant theories, concepts, or other course-related information.
      3. Final 2 pages- How did this experience influence your current career path? Do you plan to continue pursuing a career in this area? Do you want to continue working with this population? If not, how did the experience shape your future professional choices?
   b. If appropriate, the student may be invited to make an oral presentation to a class. The presentation will be arranged and evaluated by the faculty advisor.

4. **Student Evaluation of Practicum Experience**
   The student will complete in detail the Student Evaluation of Practicum Experience form. The student will make recommendations for future students that may consider completing a Practicum at the same site.

5. **Submission of Evaluation Forms**
   a. Supervisor Evaluation Form
   b. Student Evaluation of Site Form
   c. Timesheet initialed by Site Supervisor

A grade will not be assigned for the Practicum if students fail to submit all completed forms.

**Grading:**

15% Required Conferences with Faculty Supervisor.
15% Site Supervisor's Evaluation.
30% Completed Journal.
40% Final Evaluation Paper/Project
Site: _________________________________________________________________________

Supervisor: ___________________________________________________________________

**Site Supervisor:** This form is intended to provide documentation about the dates and times that the Robert Morris University student spent at the Practicum site. Please sign or initial after each entry which the student makes.

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Site: _________________________________________________________________________

Supervisor: ___________________________________________________________________

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TOTAL HOURS
Robert Morris University  
Department of Social Sciences  
Student Evaluation of Economics Practicum Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RELATIONSHIP WITH SUPERVISOR</th>
<th>OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN NEW SKILLS</th>
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<td>☐ Greatly exceeded expectations</td>
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<th>INTERACTIONS WITH COLLEAGUES</th>
<th>LEARNING ENVIRONMENT (SETTING)</th>
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ACADEMIC INTERNSHIP PROGRAM - OVERALL RATING
☐ Very Satisfied ☐ Satisfied ☐ Somewhat Satisfied ☐ Not Satisfied

Would you recommend this Practicum position to other students? ☐ Yes ☐ No

What advice would you give to students considering a Practicum with this organization?
Robert Morris University
Economics Practicum
Supervisor's Evaluation of Student

Site: _________________________________________________________________________

Supervisor/Title: _______________________________________________________________

Telephone: ____________________________  E-mail: _________________________________

**Site Supervisor:** Please evaluate the participation of our student in your organization. Because the evaluation is an essential component in our assessment of the student, we would appreciate your completion and return of this form no later than ________________________.

**ATTENDANCE:**  □ Regular  □ Sporadic

**PUNCTUALITY:**  □ Regular  □ Sporadic

**ATTITUDE/APPLICATION TO LEARNING**
- □ Outstanding and extremely enthusiastic
- □ Interested and industrious
- □ Average
- □ Indifferent

**ABILITY TO LEARN**
- □ Learns very quickly
- □ Above average in learning
- □ Average
- □ Below average

**DEPENDABILITY**
- □ Completely dependable
- □ Above average in dependability
- □ Usually dependable
- □ Lacks dependability

**WRITING ABILITY**
- □ Consistently clear and organized
- □ Reasonably clear and organized
- □ Has some gaps in writing ability
- □ Lacks clarity in writing skills

**QUALITY OF WORK CONTRIBUTIONS**
- □ Excellent
- □ Very Good
- □ Average
- □ Below Average

**RELATIONS WITH OTHERS**
- □ Gets along with others exceptionally
- □ Works well with others
- □ Gets along satisfactorily
- □ Some difficulty working with others

**JUDGMENT/DECISION-MAKING**
- □Exceptionally mature/good decisions
- □ Above average maturity/decisions
- □ Usually makes good decisions
- □ Often demonstrates poor judgment

**COMMUNICATIONS ABILITY**
- □ Consistently articulate and coherent
- □ Reasonably articulate and coherent
- □ Has some gaps in speaking ability
- □ Lacks clarity in communication skills
OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING:
□ Exceptional □ Very Good □ Average □ Marginal □ Unsatisfactory

STUDENT'S STRENGTHS:

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/ASSESSMENT OF THE RMU PRACTICUM:

□ Yes □ No

This report has been discussed with the student.

Supervisor's Signature: ____________________________ DATE: ____________
RMU DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

MENTOR EVALUATION OF STUDENT AT SITE FORM

STUDENT __________________________________________________________

SUPERVISOR _______________________________________________________

SITE ______________________________________________________________

ADDRESS _________________________________________________________

ADVISOR/MENTOR _________________________________________________

DATE _____________________________________________________________

Briefly summarize the activities expected of the student.
Briefly summarize the quality of the student's performance at the site.

Are there any skills required which are not demonstrated by the student? How do you think the deficiency could be eliminated?

Additional Comments: