



**Director of
Christian Education
(D.C.E.)**

**PRACTICUM
HANDBOOK**

2013-2014

**College of Education
Director of Christian Education Program
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Welcome to the Senior Capstone DCE Courses!!!

The REDU 4210-4211 DCE Ministry Seminar and Practicum sequence is a unique blending of:

- classroom instruction / field work experience
- student / professional relationships
- learning / mentoring
- college classroom / parish ministry

The purpose of this manual is to provide information to the DCE Student and DCE Mentors participating in the DCE Ministry Seminar and Practicum Sequence. It is written so that those who participate will have clear understanding of the expectations of all who are involved. It also provides one central source for forms needed to successfully complete the experience. All of these forms are available on-line at www.concordia.edu/dce. Hopefully, this material will contribute to an enjoyable and challenging learning/ministry experience for all involved.

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GOALS FOR DCE PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE: DCE Ministry Seminar & Practicum I – II are classes designed to give students on-site involvement with a practicing Mentor to acquire experience & skills related to ministry. This document is designed to give the student, the mentor and congregation needed information about this special field/classroom experience. The DCE Practicum Experience will enable them to:

1. Become acquainted with the DCE profession as a vital ministry of the Church.
2. Develop a professional relationship with a called church worker.
3. Work in a local ministry under the guidance of a Mentor for 8 – 12 hours per week.
4. Better understand the nature, work, & position of the ministry professional.
5. Engage in ministry observations & activities, learn & practice specific ministry skills, & gain a comprehensive ministry understanding through real life experiences.
6. Observe and experience a team relationship with the church's professional staff.
7. Develop a better understanding of self & reinforce his/her ministry vocation.

WHAT: DCE Ministry Seminar/Practicum is a year-long class/field experience that involves both on-site ministry experiences and classroom learning. Classroom time will be spent processing & sharing experiences, exploring issues and concerns of ministry, & in the development of ministry skills. It is expected that the student will spend 8 – 12 hours a week in the parish setting, under the supervision of the Mentor. Time management is crucial as students tend to be very busy. The weekly Sunday morning worship experience is required of the student unless special arrangements are made. The activities and events that the student is to participate in are outlined for each semester in this handbook. The student and mentor should meet to plan out the responsibilities. It is expected that the student will have a wide variety of ministry experiences, & the opportunity to explore their specialized gifts through: observations, assistance, co-leading, & full leadership responsibilities.

WHEN: An orientation meeting for mentors will be held on campus during the first week of school. Becoming acquainted with the congregation & mentor earlier is strongly encouraged! The on-site involvement should last from early September to April. At the close of each semester, a wrap up meeting will be held jointly between the student, the Mentor and the DCE Program Director. Students are allowed time off for holidays (Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, Spring Break, etc.) It is expected, however, that the student will work with his/her mentor in advance to make sure that responsibilities are covered and that both the student and congregation have a clear understanding regarding holidays and time away from the parish.

WHERE: Normally, the Practicum experience will take place at the congregation's facilities. There will be times when the experience will require involvement in another location (such as in youth ministry activities). The student may choose to use time on campus for planning and preparation. This will count as legitimate work time. Driving to the parish or related activity will *not* count as field work time. It is expected that the congregation will provide a workspace as well as access to a phone & copy machine for parish-related work. The student will meet with other students in REDU 4210 – 4211 on a 2-hour weekly basis with the Program Director.

WHY: For the sake of the Kingdom! The goal of the Practicum Experience is to equip students with the skills and experiences that will enable them to serve in full time ministry. This experience allows congregations to expand their ministry, with the help of a professional church worker, enabling the parish to better serve the needs of the Kingdom. May our Lord Jesus, His Church, and His people be served through our efforts!

HOW: The DCE Program Director will make the assignments based upon students' learning needs and the appropriateness of the Mentor DCE/Pastor and congregation in meeting those learning needs. Input from the students and mentors are greatly valued! **First Semester:** Focus on **KNOWLEDGE** of the ministry and how it functions. **Goal:** That the student would gain insight and understanding of the congregational structure and organization. Supporting Activities:

- Observations of Teaching Ministries with occasional opportunities to teach/lead
- Develop a personal, professional, and spiritual relationship with a mentor
- Student observations of the mentor "in action" & assisting at various events

- General orientation to the congregation with regular participation in worship, Bible class, & church social events
- Observe Congregation boards/committee & staff, especially pastor & DCE relationships
- Getting acquainted with congregational leaders and members

Second Semester: Focus on exhibiting ministry **SKILLS**. **Goal:** That the student would exercise leadership in ministry, show capable teaching skills, and take on other tasks appropriate for a DCE. Supporting Activities:

- Execution of a long-term teaching project
- Leading of activities in areas of DCE ministry, as well as in one's area of specialization
- Anticipating the Internship and preparing for it with the Mentor
- Learning about closure regarding ministry
- Regular participation in worship, Bible class, and church social events
- Evaluation of the Practicum learning experience

WHO: DCE Ministry Seminar and Practicum I – II is for seniors who have been accepted into the CTX DCE Program. The class is designed so that a local DCE/Pastor can share his/her experience and skill in ministry with a student who is preparing to enter professional ministry. Practicum places the student in real life ministry settings, requires leadership on the part of the student, and provides the student with a professional role model who can guide and direct his/her growth & development. Practicum is a 3-way partnership of ministry training involving: DCE Students, Mentor DCEs/Pastors and their congregations, and the DCE Program of CTX.

THE STUDENT: The Practicum Student is the central focus of REDU 4210 – 4211. The subject matter in class, parish experience and skill development are centered on their development. To this end, the student plays a major role in their learning. The Student will:

1. Attend all class meetings of the REDU 4210 – 4211 class.
2. Attend all meetings with the parish DCE Mentor.
3. Be involved in worship and the life of the congregation for 8 – 12 hours per week.
4. Seek to develop a professional relationship with the assigned mentor.
5. Pray regularly for the ministry of the assigned congregation.
6. Turn in reports to the DCE Director regarding activities in the assigned congregation.
7. Communicate to the DCE Program Director any concerns regarding the congregation.
8. Attend the end-of-semester evaluation with the mentor & DCE Program Director.
9. Successfully complete a long term project with the aid and assistance of the mentor.
10. In all areas, seek to be a learner as well as a minister of the Gospel.

THE MENTOR: The Mentor DCE/Pastor is the key contact for the Student. The Mentor will be an experienced church worker willing to serve as a colleague of University Faculty in evaluating the student's work. The mentor will serve as a spiritual advisor to the student. In assigning duties and responsibilities, the Mentor will be conscious of the student's academic responsibilities, employment & other commitments. The mentor assumes the following responsibilities:

1. Assist in determining the student's expectations & provide a variety of experiences.

2. Help the congregation, boards, and committees understand the student's role & orient the student regarding parish functions, agencies, procedures, publications, etc.
3. Attend the Orientation meeting at CTX.
4. Guide the student in preparation of selected learning situations, administrative tasks, leadership functions, planning, & evaluation techniques.
5. Observe the student as they teach or lead, providing feedback on their performance.
6. Schedule weekly meetings with the student for reflection & evaluation.
7. Advise the Director of any circumstances negatively affecting the Practicum experience.
8. Set aside time for personal sharing and prayer.
9. Provide a work space, and access to a copy machine for the student.
10. Make arrangements for the ministry to cover student's cost to attend parish activities.
11. Attend the end of semester student evaluation meeting.

THE DIRECTOR: The DCE Ministry Seminar/Practicum course sequence REDU 4210 – 4211 is under the direction of the Concordia University Texas DCE Program Director and serves as the direct supervisor for both the Student & Mentor. The CTX DCE Program Director will:

1. Select the DCE Mentors and sites.
2. Host an orientation meeting & provide the necessary forms to the Students & Mentors.
3. Respond promptly to congregational and student requests.
4. Teach the 2-hour weekly class REDU 4210 – 4211.
5. Evaluate the work of the student in direct consultation with the Mentor & give the final semester grade to the University Registrar.
6. Reassign or terminate Practicum assignments, if necessary.
7. Meet with each student at least once during the semester to review the experience.
8. Make arrangements with the CTX business office to remunerate the Mentor.
9. Pray regularly for the ministry of the DCE Mentors, Students and Congregations.

Practicum I Requirements & Forms

Weekly Ministry Reports – 10 Required

- See instructions on page 9.

Board/Committee Meeting – 1 Required

- Attend a regularly scheduled church Board or Committee meeting. Acceptable observations would be the Board of: Elders, Education, Youth, Stewardship, Property, Evangelism, School Board, Fellowship, Worship Committee, etc.

Class Observations/Teaching – 2 Required, Two Different Levels

- Choose from the following areas: children, youth, confirmation and adult. These could be on a Sunday morning or during the week. (Observe the class in week one, teach the class in week two.)

Mini-Interviews – 1 required

- Go to each paid staff person in the church, 5 lay leaders in the church and 5 people in the community near the church and ask the following question, “What is this ministry known for the in the community?” Compare and contrast their answers.

Staff Meeting Observations – 2 Required: 1 Formal, 1 Informal

- Observe the parish staff in a regularly scheduled meeting. Attendance at a regular school faculty meeting or staff department meeting (such as youth) is also acceptable. You will be blessed by building bonds with the staff beyond your mentor!

Children’s Message/Chapel Talk – 1 Required

- Prepare and deliver a teaching message to children that will be given in a worship service setting or during a regular school chapel service.

Ministry Project Proposal– 1 Required

- Instructions for this project found on page 10.

End of Semester Evaluation Form– 1 Required

- Instructions found on page 13

For anything you observe you turn in an Observation Form (pg 7). For anything you lead you turn in a Leadership Form (pg 8) *and* an Observation Form (pg 7) completed by someone who observes you.

Practicum II Requirements & Forms

Weekly Ministry Reports – 10 Required

- See instructions on page 9.

Staff Meeting Observations – 2 Required: 1 Formal, 1 Informal

- Observe the parish staff in a regularly scheduled meeting. Attendance at a regular school faculty meeting or staff department meeting (such as youth) is also acceptable.

Leadership Activity – 2 Required

- Provide leadership to a specific demographic in the church. Choose from activities such as “regular” nights, or special social/fellowship events. *This is not teaching a Bible Study.*

Teaching Activity – 2 Required

- Teach the younger ones for a regular class in Sunday school, the religion class in the day school, or midweek school. Students must be 5th grade or below to meet this requirement. AND...
- Teach a regularly scheduled Bible class for youth. This could be a Sunday morning class or a Small Group. Confirmation is also acceptable.

Giving a Children’s Message/Chapel Talk – 1 Required

- Prepare and deliver a teaching message to children that will be given in a worship service setting or during a regular school chapel service.

Teaching an Adult Bible Study – 1 Required

- Plan and teach a regularly scheduled adult Bible class. This could be a Sunday morning or mid-week course or small group.

Parish Ministry Project – 1 Required

- Instructions for project completion and reporting are found on page 10.

End of Semester Evaluation Form– 1 Required

- Instructions found on page 13

For anything you observe you turn in an Observation Form (pg 7). For anything you lead you turn in a Leadership Form (pg 8) *and* an Observation Form (pg 7) completed by someone who observes you.

REDU 4210-4211 DCE Seminar and Practicum I & II

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY TEXAS

OBSERVATION FORM

Name _____ Date of Report _____

Church _____ Type of Activity _____

General Description of Activity: (Who, what, location, time, # involved, etc.)

Leadership Dynamic: (Observations of the leadership, teaching styles of the facilitator)

Group Dynamics: (Observation of participant involvement, group cohesion, & participant interaction)

Spiritual Dynamics: (How was Law or Gospel present? How were people fed spiritually?)

Summary of Learnings: (What would you do the same/different? What key learnings/insights about ministry did you gain from observing this event? Use back of form if necessary)

Signature of activity leader: _____

REDU 4210-4211 DCE Seminar and Practicum I & II

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY TEXAS

LEADERSHIP FORM

Name _____ Date of Report _____

Church _____ Type of Activity _____

General Description of Activity: (who, what, location, time, # involved, etc.)

Primary Goals of Event/Class: (what are your key learning outcomes?)

Outline of Activity/Class: (what was your plan, list key steps, or attach an outline)

Evaluation of Event: (objective description of the event/class)

Summary of Learning: (What would you do the same/different? What key learnings/insights about ministry did you gain from leading this event? Use back of form if necessary)

Signature of Event Supervisor: _____

REDU 4210-4211 DCE Seminar and Practicum I & II

Weekly Ministry Reports, 8-12 Hours Required Per Week

These questions need to be emailed to Dr. Youmans at jacob.youmans@concordia.edu and questions 1-5 need to be emailed to your mentor every Monday before 4pm.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Congregation: _____ Mentor: _____

1. Activities, Planning and Leadership/Summary: Hours worked this week: _____

2. Reflections: Based on the above experiences (yours, what you observed from your Mentor or volunteers), comment briefly upon insights, new understandings, successes, problems, and questions that relate to ministry in general, the role of a DCE, congregational style, structure, working with a group, etc.

3. Plans for Next Week:

4. Did you experience God in your congregation this past week? Where? What? How?

5. Issues/concerns needing discussion with my mentor.

6. Issues/concerns needing discussion with the DCE Program Director. (Optional)

Ministry Project Information Sheet

Purpose: The purpose for the Parish Ministry Project is to allow the DCE student to choose an area of ministry in which he/she would like to focus, learn more about and experience, so that they might become better equipped in their ministry skills.

Criteria: The Parish Ministry Project must be:

1. Related to DCE ministry (children, youth, evangelism, music, family, missions, etc.).
2. Of service to the mentor/congregation.
3. 30 – 40 hours of work above and beyond your 8-12 hours per week: planning, organizing, recruiting, promoting, hosting, evaluating, etc. If meeting weekly it must be a minimum of 4 weeks.
4. An original activity for the participants.
5. Approved by the mentor, appropriate congregational leaders & the CTX DCE Program Director.
6. Take place within the second semester of the academic year.

Parish Ministry Project – Written Report Guidelines: Upon completion of the project, write up the following report...

1. Title of Project
2. Rationale for doing this particular teaching project
3. Goals for the project
4. General description/overview of project
5. Process calendar/dates of lessons
6. Cost analysis /materials used to complete the project
7. Evaluative summary of completed project
8. Summary of learning
9. Addendum materials – flyers, bulletins/newsletter notes, handouts, schedules, etc.

REDU 4210-4211 DCE Seminar and Practicum I & II

MINISTRY PROJECT PROPOSAL FORM

Name: _____ Congregation: _____

Title of Project:

General Description – Overview of Project:

Age Group:

Hoped for outcomes (goals):

Step by step process by which the project will be accomplished:

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Target Date</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Materials Required:

Expected Cost (where will the money come from?):

General Comments:

Student Signature

Date Submitted

Mentor Signature

Date Approved

DCE Program Director

Date Approved

Evaluation of DCE Mentor: Please circle the response that most accurately describes the behavior of your Mentor. My Practicum Supervisor paid attention to:

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Usually	Always	Not Applicable
1. My learning needs	N	R	S	U	A	NA
2. My task assignments and performance	N	R	S	U	A	NA
3. My goals & vision for Practicum	N	R	S	U	A	NA
4. The effect of my work on the congregation	N	R	S	U	A	NA
5. My weakness rather than my strengths	N	R	S	U	A	NA
6. Helping me problem solve areas of concern	N	R	S	U	A	NA
7. My ability to be self-directed	N	R	S	U	A	NA
8. My professional growth and competency	N	R	S	U	A	NA
9. Campus commitments & its impact on my work in the congregation	N	R	S	U	A	NA
10. My personal problems and concerns	N	R	S	U	A	NA
11. My professional development	N	R	S	U	A	NA
12. Other _____	N	R	S	U	A	NA

My Practicum Supervisor was:

13. Dependable	N	R	S	U	A	NA
14. On Time	N	R	S	U	A	NA
15. Prepared	N	R	S	U	A	NA
16. Flexible	N	R	S	U	A	NA
17. Supportive	N	R	S	U	A	NA
18. Down to earth	N	R	S	U	A	NA
19. A Model of Professional Ministry	N	R	S	U	A	NA

20. Easy to relate to	N	R	S	U	A	NA
21. Honest, straightforward	N	R	S	U	A	NA
22. Clear regarding expectations	N	R	S	U	A	NA
23. An effective communicator	N	R	S	U	A	NA
24. Missional	N	R	S	U	A	NA
25. Other: _____	N	R	S	U	A	NA

Evaluation of Congregation: Circle the appropriate number for the church as a Practicum site.

Not a good place for a student to learn DCE Ministry 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 A fantastic place for a person to learn about DCE Ministry

Why or why not?

Additional Comments:

Student Signature
Date

REDU 4210-4211 DCE Seminar and Practicum I & II

EVALUATION OF STUDENT: to be completed by the mentor

Student _____ Mentor _____

Congregation _____ Date _____

From your limited knowledge of this student try to answer the best you can. It is understood that some of these conclusions will be based on perceptions without any objective criteria:

7 = Exceptional 6 = Commendable 5 = Good 4 = Average 3 = Developing 2 = Marginal 1 = Unacceptable NB = No Basis for Evaluation

1. Personal and Professional Growth: The Student:

a. Seems to have a meaningful relationship with Christ.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NB
b. Demonstrated ability to make semester long plans.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NB
c. Is reliable at keeping appointments.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NB
d. Follows through on plans.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NB
e. Shows flexibility when changes in plans are needed.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NB
f. Shows persistence in fulfilling required observations.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NB
g. Demonstrates initiative and creativity.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NB
h. Demonstrates ability to follow directions.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NB
i. Level of personal and emotional growth is commensurate with his/her age and experience.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NB
j. Is realistic in thinking and planning	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NB
k. Appears appropriately and neatly dressed and groomed	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NB
l. Demonstrates tact and grace in social situations.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NB
m. Listens and communicates effectively.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NB
n. Is missional	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NB
o. Is relational.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NB

2. Relationships: How do you see the student relating to various people?

7 = Exceptional 6 = Commendable 5 = Good 4 = Average 3 = Developing 2 = Marginal 1 = Unacceptable NB = No Basis for Evaluation

a. Elderly	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NB
b. Adults	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NB
c. Youth	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NB
d. Children	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NB
e. Young Adults	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NB
f. Parish Leaders	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NB
g. Parish Support Staff (Secretary et. al)	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NB
h. Parish Professional Staff (Pastors, DCE, Teachers)	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NB

3. General Evaluation: Please write appropriate responses to the following:

a. In your opinion, what are the student's strengths?

b. In your opinion, what are the student's limitations?

c. Indicate your assessment of the student's performance & ministry abilities by checking the one word that most appropriately describes his/her work this past semester.

_____ Exceptional: distinguished performance, superior, of high professional quality

_____ Commendable: outstanding at times, above average in many areas

_____ Average: meeting expectations, no glaring weaknesses, no outstanding performances

_____ Developing: signs of growth in weaker areas, positive attitude of learning

_____ Marginal: less than expected, impeded performance, much improvement needed.

_____ Unacceptable: inadequate in skill areas, poor performance, inconsistent.

d. Would you encourage this student to continue their ministry preparation?

_____ Yes _____ No _____ Yes, with reservation

Please indicate why you have responded as you did.

e. Grade I give the student for work this past semester _____ (0 – 100 percent)

100 – 93 = A

92 – 85 = B

84 – 75 = C

74 – 70 = D

69 – 0 = F

g. Additional comments

Mentor Signature

Date

Personal Awareness Factors

1. Keep in mind that you are still a student, NOT a full-time professional DCE.
2. Convey a professional presence and attitude, i.e. dress appropriately, keep hair neat, call the Pastor/DCE by appropriate name or title, be on time, etc.
3. Keep the supervisor informed about your whereabouts, your weekly/monthly/semester goals, and significant congregational happenings.
4. Convey a willingness to take on new tasks and don't be afraid to make mistakes. Mistakes can be transformed into positive learning experiences when evaluated as such.
5. Collect resources & materials for your personal files, (i.e. Board/Committee guidelines, teacher training models, program resources, retreat ideas, games, music, etc.)
6. Avoid the temptation of developing or initiating a new program unless there is a built-in leadership to carry on after you leave.
7. As a student, you need to be:
 - a. Sensitive to other staff people, their roles and expectations
 - b. Aware of the congregation's expectations of you
 - c. Conscious of what you say to whom, when, and where (We are often evaluated more by what we say than by what we do.)
 - d. Aware of personal expectations
 - e. Aware of how you use your time, and being on time for events
 - f. Aware of personal strengths and limitations
 - g. Fully prepared (for teaching, leading a meeting, etc.)
8. What does it mean to be a professional in training? What is my personal concept of professionalism? Do my actions, words, leadership, attitudes, etc., convey a positive form of professionalism in parish ministry? Keep asking those questions that keep your vocational goals in perspective:
 - a. Why am I on this assignment?
 - b. What do I hope to gain/learn from this experience?
 - c. What do I hope to offer?
 - d. Do I really want to be a DCE?
 - e. Does my concept of ministry match up to the expectations of professional work in the church?