Local training sites and Northwest University collaborate to develop leaders through the Church Partnership Program. Each semester students have the opportunity to earn up to three credits of Ministry Practicum through CPP sites that have approved ministry practicums. Because Northwest University awards academic credit for the satisfactory completion of ministry practicum learning experiences, local CPP sites must work closely with university leadership to ensure standards and requirements are understood and maintained.

The following characteristics and principles are involved in the practicum learning experiences.

1. **College-level.** The Church Ministry (CMIN) Practicums are college-level. Although a rather nebulous term, it entails:
   a. a broad application to topics rather than a narrow focus on skills applicable only to one ministry setting,
   b. the theory and principles of why things are done and are effective rather than merely the details of what to do,
   c. currency in the ministry topic and skill,
   d. contemplation balanced with action, where students reflect on ministry activities with leaders and peers.

2. **Begins broad – ends focused.** The Practicum experiences begin by covering all of the ministry’s programs and become progressively focused and specialized throughout the training program. This means:
   a. Students initially participate in all church ministries, including those to which they may feel no or little leading or interest. These initial experiences emphasize observation more than responsibility as they rotate through the available ministry venues and tracks. Observations and participation over several occasions are required to fully understand workers’ responsibilities and the ministry’s role in the total church program.
   b. Students who are already involved in particular ministries may need time off to be exposed to other ministries.
   c. It is critically important for church interns to understand the pertinent leadership, operational, and strategic aspects of each ministry. This involves interaction at all levels of the ministry from planning to action.
   d. Advanced students then focus their time and energies into one or two ministries where they develop the skills and competencies to become leaders.

3. **Accountability.** Practicums are structured with accountability systems. Ministry leaders provide activity outlines or syllabi describing student learning and participation expectations. Ministry leaders evaluate students on their skills and not merely on their attendance. Records are maintained through system such as weekly journaling, online posting, and/or regular interactions with leadership.

4. **Integration and Oversight.** Practicums are integrated with the program’s academic studies. The more familiar individual ministry leadership is with the degree requirements and courses, the better able they can help students apply their “book studies” to their “practicum studies.” Sites usually must designate a Practicum Coordinator to ensure integration and oversight.

5. **Students’ Personal Development.** Along with skill development, practicums focus on students’ personal, spiritual, relational, and character development. These very personal aspects of ministerial formation require students to be in an open and transparent two-way relationship with ministry supervisors or mentors who can observe students engaging in life and ministry over the length of the training program. Leaders help clarify students’ spiritual, personal, and professional giftings while identifying the strengths and weaknesses that will augment or impede their ministry effectiveness. Development leaders must have sufficient maturation and experience themselves to be able to speak into their students’ lives, usually requiring at least three to five years in active ministry. Students establish developmental plans early in their practicum sequence and site leaders regularly and honestly hold students accountable throughout their programs.

Site Coordinators: Submit your request for Practicum approval with the [CPP-Ministry Practicum Request](#) form.