



*SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK*

**SWK 553: Field Foundations Practicum**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This first field practicum builds on the experiences acquired in the prerequisites classes, while it provides the students with the opportunity to learn theories, knowledge and skills required to engage individuals, families (or household), small groups, organizations and communities. Students enrolled in this educationally-directed field practicum experience, which is under supervision in a social services agency must work towards developing skills which will merge into the AGP Field I requirements. Students must complete a total of 260 clock hours in the field agency, under the supervision of an MSW.

Prerequisites: First full Semester of Foundation Courses completed.

**GOALS AND COMPETENCIES:**

**1. Prepare MSW graduates for professional advanced generalist practice that reflects application and integration of critical thinking, theoretical frameworks, and differential interventions. Students will be able to reflect the following competencies:**

F 1.1 Demonstrate critical thinking and effective communication (2.1.3)

F 1.2 Demonstrate research-informed practice and practice-informed research (2.1.6)

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F 1.3 Demonstrate knowledge of HBSE and its application to practice (2.1.7)

F 1.4 Engage in change strategies with individuals, families, groups, organizations & communities (2.1.10)

**2. Enable MSW graduates to apply ethical reasoning to advance equality, justice, and social change. Students will be able to reflect the following competencies:**

F 2.1 Engage in policy practice (2.1.8)

F 2.2 Apply social work ethics & principles (2.1.2)

F 2.3 Engage diversity in practice (2.1.4)

F 2.4 Promote human rights and social and economic justice (2.1.5)

**3. Promote leadership and service that is relevant to individual contexts of practice and enhances well-being and quality of life. Students will be able to reflect the following competencies:**

F 3.1 Engage as professional social workers (2.1.1)

F 3.2 Respond to professional contexts that shape practice, demonstrating qualities of leadership for the profession. (2.1.9)

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

1. To help students demonstrate familiarity with human behavior concepts and the bio-psycho-social perspectives as they apply at all levels of systems.
2. To help students learn and demonstrate practice skills necessary for effective intervention at all levels of systems in order to enhance the well-being of people and work towards the amelioration of adverse environmental conditions in rural and urban settings.
3. To help students demonstrate productive use of supervision to enhance learning.
4. To help students develop an awareness of self in the process of intervention from a generalist prospective of social work practice, which will prepare the student to move into the advanced generalist field practicum.
5. To develop students' ability to understand and utilize research and critical thinking to acquire knowledge relevant to practice and for evaluation of their practice in field with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities, as it may relate to rural social work practices and services.

- 6 To develop students' ability to work effectively with clients who are diverse in ethnicity, culture, gender, social class, sexual orientation physical and psychological disabilities and environmental living deficiencies in rural settings.
- 7 To enable students to examine practice dilemmas from the perspective of different value systems, including personal, client, societal, and professional orientations.
- 8 To help students demonstrate the application of social work values and ethics through their professional behavior in accordance to NASW Code of Ethics.
- 9 To help students achieve an understanding of the community resources which impact their client populations in rural and urban settings.
10. To help students demonstrate familiarity with professional roles and functions within the agency setting and understand the agency, the assessment, implementation, and evaluation of agency policy within ethical guidelines.

## **STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

By the end of the semesters, students will demonstrate:

1. familiarity with human behavior concepts and the bio-psycho-social perspectives as they apply at all levels of systems.
2. the practice skills necessary for effective intervention at all levels of systems in order to enhance the well-being of people and work towards the amelioration of adverse environmental conditions in rural and urban settings.
3. the productive use of supervision to enhance learning.
4. an awareness of self in the process of intervention from a generalist prospective of social work practice, which will prepare the student to move into the advanced generalist field practicum.
5. the ability to understand and utilize research and critical thinking to acquire knowledge relevant to practice and for evaluation of their practice in field with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities, as it may relate to rural social work practices and services.
6. the ability to work effectively with clients who are diverse in ethnicity, culture, gender, social class, sexual orientation physical and psychological disabilities and environmental living deficiencies in rural settings.
7. the ability to examine practice dilemmas from the perspective of different value systems,

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including personal, client, societal, and professional orientations.

- 8 the application of social work values and ethics through their professional behavior in accordance to NASW Code of Ethics.
- 9 an understanding of the community resources which impact their client populations in rural and urban settings.
10. familiarity with professional roles and functions within the agency setting and understand the agency, the assessment, implementation, and evaluation of agency policy within ethical guidelines.

**RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COURSES:** This course prepares the student to move into the advanced generalist field practicum.

**TEXTS:**

Sweitzen, H, Frederick, & King, A., *The Successful Internship, (2nd ed.)*, Thomson, 0-534-55879-8.

**GRADING:**

Students will receive a letter grade determined by the Field Faculty Liaison. By the end of the Foundation Field Practicum, students will be expected to have completed:

- Learning contract
- Strengths-based assessments
- Professional interactions and interventions with individual, family, group, organizational and community systems. Documented as per Field Faculty request.
- Weekly attendance and participation in field seminar

Documentation of these activities will be provided as per field faculty requirements. The documentation must be available for the Field Liaison's review at the mid-semester and final semester visits. **STUDENTS MUST TURN IN FIELD TIMESHEETS EVERY WEEK.**

There are two written evaluations of student progress in the field practicum. Through the use of the "Evaluation of Field Practicum Student" form, an evaluation will be completed twice during the semester by the field instructor (in conference with the student) -- once at mid-term and then at the end of the semester.

Attendance at field seminars is mandatory. Three or more absences from the field seminar will constitute a grade drop. **Grades below B are not acceptable and the course will have to be repeated. See Student Handbook.**

**OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS:**

**EXAMINATIONS**

This class serves as part of the student comprehensive examination. Section VII of the

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paper must reflect an overview of course content from the social work curriculum.

### **A. Field Practicum Seminar:**

Each student enrolled in the field practicum is assigned a field liaison person from the social work faculty. The function of the faculty field liaison is to monitor the progress of the student in the field practicum, and to assist the student in the integration of classroom learning, theory, and field practicum application of content. Class assignments will be made.

The field liaison faculty member assigns the final grade for the student in the field practicum. This grade is based on the recommendation of the field practicum instructor (the agency-based field instructor) as well as the direct observations of the faculty field liaison.

Each faculty field liaison member is expected to visit the student's field practicum agency a minimum of two times during the semesters, or as needed on problematic issues.

All students enrolled in the field practicum are required to meet with the faculty field liaison and other students in a weekly field seminar meeting. The format of the seminars is left to the faculty field liaison, within the following guidelines:

- Field seminar meetings are scheduled at a time every week.
- All students are required to attend the seminar.
- Seminars are scheduled to last one hour.

The purpose of the seminar include:

- Orientation to field practicum expectations and record keeping
- Updates on practicum requirements or conditions.
- The opportunity for students to raise and share questions regarding the field practicum, assignments, or expectations.
- The opportunity for students to share with other students their learning experience in the field practicum; to begin the practice of peer consultation on professional problem solving; and to offer support and input to fellow students.
- Offer each student a chance to orient peers to their agency, its location, purpose, and procedures.
- Offers a chance to familiarize students and faculty with the services and referral processes of the field agency and rural resources available.
- Offer the student and agency mutual exposure to facilitate identifying future employment interests and opportunities.
- To allow agency field students to demonstrate or discuss their approaches to the design and practice of field learning.
- Allow faculty field liaison to observe students in a variety of professional learning settings.

## CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:

Students are expected to attend class, reflecting responsibility which is inherent in the development as a social work professional. Roll will be taken regularly. Students are expected to be on time and prepared to participate when class begins as well as be present throughout the entire class meeting. Classroom exercises, discussions, role plays, guest speakers and other in-class experiential exercises are essential for a student's professional learning and continued development of self-awareness. Tardiness (or early departure) of more than 15 minutes will count as .5 absence (2 tardies/early departures = 1 absence). A student is considered absent if he/she arrives more than 30 minutes late to class, leaves 30 or more minutes early or does not come to class.

The following penalties for absences (unexcused, or excused, according to university policy) will be administered:

Weekly	Up to 2 absences No penalty	3 absences 1 letter grade drop	4 absences Class grade of "F"	
Bi-weekly	Up to 3 absences No penalty	4 absences 1 letter grade drop	5 absences 1 letter grade drop	6 absences Class grade of "F"
Summer 10-week	Up to 1 absence No penalty	2 absences 1 letter grade drop	3 absences Class grade of "F"	

**ONLINE OR WEB-ENHANCED CLASSES:** Just as students are required to attend face-to-face classes, students are required to log in and participate in online components. To receive credit for attendance online via eCollege, students must log in and complete assignments in a timely manner. Not logging in to eCollege (which can be monitored by the instructor) and completing assignments online during the appropriate time is the equivalent of an absence for each week this occurs.

Final evaluation and grades depend on both presence and participation. Students' grades will be significantly impacted by inadequate participation or lack of required time commitment each week. Students are expected to spend a comparable amount of time in the online learning environment as they would in class (3 hours a week in the classroom). In addition, just as in traditional F2F classrooms, students are expected to spend time reading and studying class materials.

**NOTE: PROBLEMS WITH YOUR INTERNET CONNECTION AND/OR COMPUTER ARE NOT CONSIDERED AS REASONS FOR LACK OF PARTICIPATION.** You have access to the university's computer labs (in the social work department AND other campus facilities, including the library) as well as local libraries and other access to computers and ISPs. If you believe that you are unable to fulfill the requirements for the course you should talk with your instructor about the possibility of dropping or withdrawing.

Class participation has three components: (1) Appropriate interactions with classmates, (2) Attentiveness, and (3) Active involvement in class activities. Evaluation of class participation

is based on instructor observation. Students will be given feedback if problems are evident.

**POLICY ON DUE DATES: Students must turn in field timesheets every week, and facilitate the Learning Contract evaluation process in a timely manner.**

### **POLICY ON PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING:**

Every student is expected to do his/her own work. Law, ethical standards, university policy, and departmental policy demand that students refrain from plagiarism and any form of cheating. Plagiarism is the "Act of appropriating the literary composition of another, or parts of passages from of his [or her] writings, or the ideas or language of the same, and passing them off as the products of one's own mind." (Black's Law Dictionary, Abridged Fifth Edition, 1983). When using others' words, phrases, or ideas in writing, the original author should be given proper credit.

Cheating may take different forms. These include, but are not limited to, copying others' answers during an exam, using notes or other forms of help during an examination or quiz, except when explicitly permitted by the instructor, giving or receiving help on exams or assignments, or submitting work for one class which has already been submitted for another class for credit. Use of citations from the Internet without paraphrasing content AND proper referencing is regarded as plagiarism. Professors have the right to use electronic review programs (such as Turn It In™) to identify plagiarism.

The department does not tolerate plagiarism or cheating. A student found to be engaging in such illegal and unethical conduct may receive a failing grade in the course and may be subjected to further disciplinary proceedings. Any assignment or exam that lacks honesty will be given a grade of "0".

### **ACCEPTABLE CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR:**

“Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to obey all federal, state, and local laws, in addition to the regulations of the University. The standards of Student Conduct including disciplinary rules and procedures are designed to provide and conform to the basic tenets of due process, as developed by institutions of higher education. As such, the University distinguishes these procedures and regulations as an educational and growth process which is not intended to conform to adversary proceedings as in a court of law. (Student’s Guide Book, 2011, p. 35).

### **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS**

The Department of Social Work expects all social work students to conduct themselves in an ethical, professional manner. Professional ethics are at the core of social work. The profession articulates its basic values, ethical principles, and ethical standards as set forth in the *NASW Code of Ethics* to guide social workers’ conduct. The *Code* is relevant to all social workers and

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social work students, regardless of their professional functions, the settings in which they work, or the populations they serve. Accordingly, we expect social work students to demonstrate courtesy, respect and support for fellow students, instructors, clients, and all other persons.

All students enrolled in BSW or MSW classes are expected to observe the tenets of the NASW Code of Ethics and the Social Work Student Code of Conduct. Our Code of Conduct is reflective of professional and academic expectations – a student who cannot demonstrate appropriate behaviors will not be appropriate for practice in the social work profession. Students who violate these Codes may be asked to meet with appropriate Social Work faculty (instructors or Program Directors). In addition, the department's Academic and Professional Issues (API) Committee is responsible for dealing with student issues when requested by faculty.

### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

It is the policy of Texas A&M University-Commerce and the Social Work Department to do everything we can to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal and state law, and the University's commitment to providing equal opportunities. Any student with a disability who needs accommodation, for example, in accessibility, seating placement or in arrangements for examinations should not hesitate to inform the instructor. If required, large type, Braille or cassette recordings of syllabus or assignments can be provided.

Students with conditions that require special attention or accommodation should contact the Director of Disability Resources & Services at 903-468-5150 (located in the Library, Room 132).

**COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to change)**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Text Chapter</b>
1/14	<b>Introduction and Overview</b>	
1/21	<b>No Class: Holiday</b>	
1/28	<b>Beginning the Journey</b>	Review Text Section 1: chps 1 – 4 Personal, Professional and Internship Goals
2/4	<b>The Anticipation Stage</b>	Chp 5: The Tasks at Hand, The Learning Contract Personal, Professional and Internship Goals
2/11	<b>Getting to Know Your Colleagues</b>	Chp 6: Getting the Most from Supervision, Co-Workers
2/18	<b>Getting to Know the Placement Site</b>	Chp 7: Lenses on Your Placement Site, Background Information, Organizational Structure, Human Resources, Organizational Politics, Organizations as Cultures, The External Environment, The Organization and Your Civic Development
2/25	<b>Getting to Know the Community</b>	Chp 8: The Community Context and the Civic Professional, A Community Inventory, How Do I Find All This Out? <b>Upload any practice (micro, mezzo, macro) forms that your agency is willing to share to Doc Sharing (Instructor Only)</b>
3/4	<b>Getting to Know the Clients</b>	Chp 9: Recognizing the Traps: Assumptions and Stereotypes, Acceptance, Personal Safety
3/11	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	<b>No Class</b>
3/18	<b>The Disillusionment Stage</b>	Chp 10: Growth, Progress, Challenges
3/25	<b>The Confrontation Stage</b>	Chp 11: Tasks You Face, Leading with Your Heart, A Metamodel for Breaking Through Barriers
4/1	<b>The Competence Stage</b>	Chp 12: Tasks, Taking Charge, Enjoying the Ride, Bracing for the Bumps, Preparing for the Preparation, Developing as a Civic Professional
4/8	<b>Professional, Ethical, and Legal Issues</b>	Chp 13: Internship and Professional Issues, Ethical and Legal Issues & Dilemmas, Managing a Professional Crisis
4/15	<b>The Culmination Stage</b>	Chp 14: Endings, Opportunities, Finishing the Work, Closure with Supervisors and Clients
4/22	<b>Self-Evaluation</b>	Chp 14: Self-Evaluation, Looking Ahead and Moving On Course Evaluation
4/29	<b>Next Steps</b>	CV Preparation/Interview skills, Personal, Professional and (next) Internship Goals

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