SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

SWK 426 Field Practicum II

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Students enrolled in this course participate in an educationally-directed field practice experience under supervision in a social service agency. Field II students must complete a total of 300 clock hours of field work in the field agency. Field hours completed during the summer (up to 30 hours) will count toward the total number of required field hours. Students must attend a weekly university instructed seminar on campus, which is designed to help students process and understand field experiences.

Prerequisites: Completion of all social work classes & successful completion of SWK 422 & SWK 425. Concurrent enrollment in SWK 424 and permission of the instructor is required. Restricted to Social Work majors. 6 semester hours.

PREREQUSITE EXPECTATIONS OF FIELD STUDENTS

Students must have completed all required social work courses and have successfully completed SWK 422 & 425. (Concurrent enrollment in the social work elective is permitted).

Students must have a general grade point average of at least 2.5, a grade point average of at least 2.5 in required courses for the major, and at least a "C" grade in all social work courses.

The student's advisor must find that the student has made up any deficiencies identified and that the student is not on probation. The student must have demonstrated good judgment, appropriate behavior, and emotional maturity during his/her previous coursework.

Students must be members of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW).

The university will provide liability insurance through a blanket school policy through the American Professional Agency.

GOAL & COMPETENCIES:

1. Prepare BSW graduates for entry-level professional social work practice that reflects generalist social work knowledge and skills. Graduates will be able to demonstrate the following competencies:

1.1 Apply critical thinking and effective communication (2.1.3)
1.2 Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research (2.1.6)
1.3 Apply knowledge of HBSE to practice (2.1.7)
1.4 Apply knowledge of policy to practice (2.1.8)
1.5 Apply change strategies with all levels of systems (2.1.10)

2. Enable BSW graduates to practice ethically and apply social work values to promote equality and justice. Graduates will be able to demonstrate the following competencies:

2.1 Apply social work ethics & principles (2.1.2)
2.2 Engage diversity in practice (2.1.4)
2.3 Promote human rights and social and economic justice (2.1.5)

3. Provide meaningful contexts through which BSW students engage in leadership, service, and professional excellence. Graduates will be able to demonstrate the following competencies:

3.1 Identify and respond as a professional social worker (2.1.1)
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 apply the principles of a problem-solving approach at the individual, family, group, organization, and community levels in a supervised practice setting.

2. To help students demonstrate familiarity with human behavior concepts and the bio-psycho-social perspectives as they apply at all levels of systems.

3. To help students demonstrate practice skills necessary for effective intervention.

4. To help students demonstrate productive use of supervision and self-evaluation.

5. To develop students' ability to 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.

6. To develop students' ability to work effectively with clients who are diverse in ethnicity, culture, gender, social class, and sexual orientation.

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.

9. To help students achieve an understanding of the community resources which impact their client populations in their field settings.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COURSES:

TEXTS:

1) Berg-Weger, M. and Birkenmaier, J. (2007). *The Practicum Companion for Social Work., 2nd Ed.* Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

2) Field Packet available online (www7.tamu-commerce.edu/socialwork/programs-field-bsw.htm

GRADING:

The Field Practicum is graded based on multiple outcomes. Each student will be evaluated by their Field Instructor, Task Supervisor (If required), Field Liaison and other Agency or TAMU-Commerce Faculty as assigned to the student. The grading will also include seminar/class attendance and participation based on input from the Field Liaison, as well as timely submission of required paperwork. Each of the above required factors will be used to determine a letter grade for the student's performance during the semester. The final grade shall be determined by the assigned Field Faculty Liaison.

If the final field evaluation is lower than a "C", then the field liaison is responsible for determining if the student will be allowed to pass the field practicum and continue into Field II.

***** Failure to complete the required 300 clock hours in the practicum setting automatically constitutes a failing grade. *****

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 again at the end of the semester. (See the Field Practicum Manual for more details. It is a very good idea for you to read it thoroughly before beginning the practicum experience.)

OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS

1. Weekly Time Sheets and Field Journal – due weekly at the ***beginning*** of class.
2. Schedule and Job Description due 2nd week of class.
3. Learning Contracts – due no later than 3 weeks.
4. Midterm Evaluation Visits – will be scheduled in advance.
5. Final Evaluation Visits – will be scheduled in advance
6. Class Assignments – due as scheduled during class.

FIELD JOURNAL

This log or journal is a tool to help you integrate your field experience and your classroom learning. This method of journaling will enable you to explore your reactions to the agency, to your clients, and to your professional development.

The journal is also a mechanism for two-way communication. It allows you to share information with me and for me to give you feedback directly. This information will not be shared with your Field Instructor (unless there is a concern and I ask your permission first).

You will not be graded on writing mechanics, but I may make corrections as a part of my feedback. The more descriptive you are, the more useful your journal will be. However, do not write "the great American novel". Be direct and succinct if possible! You should have an entry for each day you are in the field.

The following questions are intended to guide your thinking and entries into your journal:

1. Summarize the activities or tasks in which you participated during the week. Does this summary reflect tasks and goals established in your learning plan? Can you identify them?
2. Select a social work skill (eg listening, observing, record keeping, interviewing, problem solving, confronting, facilitating a group) discussed in class. Were you satisfied with your skill level? Explain.
3. What happened during the day that was important? Challenging? Forced you to use creativity or judgment?
4. What were your feelings about the day's events? Were there particularly strong emotions as a result of something someone said or did?
5. What questions do you have unresolved about the day? About a client situation, agency policy, or a value dilemma?
6. What did you discover about yourself – your strengths, weaknesses, skills, or personality?

The journal entries should reflect thought and insights about yourself while clearly depicting professional growth through the learning experience.

SEMINAR COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Social work in the field is genuine social work practice with supervision from the agency/organization and the university. Prior to student placement, he/she is interviewed by the field coordinator and a prospective field instructor. Based on their mutual approval, the student begins professionally-focused field work at an active social work agency/organization.
2. This course is paperwork-intensive and requires that students utilize time-management skills. Students must keep a weekly time sheet file and social work journal. The purpose of this journal is to help the student and the faculty liaison analyze use of time and to evaluate experiences in the field. The journal is not only to be a list of the student's accomplishments and tasks but is expected to include student's feelings and thoughts about the daily experience. It may be hand-written or typed. It must be readable.

   The journal is a confidential document which will only be read by the faculty liaison; however, it is expected that students may need or want to discuss confidential information about the practicum setting during the seminar class.
   In class discussion, as well as in the journal, client and co-workers names are to be changed to protect their identity.

   The students received blank copies of the time sheet in "Field Orientation Packet." Students must complete a total of 300 clock hours during the semester. Journals and timesheets are to be submitted weekly at the beginning of each class period. Students are responsible for assuring that their field instructor's signature is on the timesheets and that they have a cumulative record of all previous hours on each. Students should keep a photocopy of their timesheets in a file at home for their reference.

3. Students' responsibilities and rights as field practicum students in their agencies are similar to those of any "regular social worker" in that agency. Dependability, reliability, appropriate hygiene, and professional dress are essential characteristics of professional agency practice and are expected. If, for any reason whatsoever, a student must miss a scheduled field time in the agency, he/she is responsible for making arrangements **in advance**. Remember, clients, as well as staff, will be depending on your presence and service.

4. Requirements also reflect the agency/organization in which the student practices. Students are expected to abide by the Code of Ethics (NASW, 1997) as well as Department of Social Work's (SWD) Code of Ethics.

5. Record-keeping procedures required by the agency will be outlined by the field instructor.

6. If questions arise about responsibilities, check with your field instructor and faculty liaison. It is imperative that students realize that they are responsible for making sure that their needs are being met in the field. Effective, on-going communication and feedback are essential to a successful practicum experience. Field students are required to assume an active role in their own learning process. **Faculty liaisons should be alerted immediately if problems arise which cannot be solved between the field instructor and the student. When in doubt, ask yourself, "Who else needs to know?"**
7. Students enter into a "Learning Contract" with the faculty liaison. Students are expected to utilize their experiences in the field agency/organization and in the field seminar class to fulfill the terms of the contract.

8. Each week, the seminar will cover a topic of relevance to the field practicum experience. These topics are discussed in the syllabus under "Semester Schedule" and will require that **each student come to class each week prepared to discuss the topic and to bring questions or comments about the topic.** This requirement will be included in the class participation grade for the semester.

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:

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 literacy 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 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

COURSE OUTLINE

(This schedule is tentative and subject to change as class discussion dictates and as determined by the instructor. Subjects of relevance based on students' field experience may take precedence in extenuating circumstances.)

Week 1 (Aug. 26) Review syllabus, Summarize Summer Field Experience

Week 2 (Sept. 2) Labor Day - university holiday.

Week 3 (Sept. 9) No class Monday but students will meet on ***Tuesday September 10th BSW ASSEMBLY, 10:00 AM at the SRSC. ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY!******

Week 4 (Sept. 16) Let's Revisit the Code of Ethics (Responsibility to Clients, the agency, other professionals, and society in general.

Week 5 (Sept. 23) Chapter 3 Safety in Social Work Settings. Each student should be able to identify areas of potential problems and develop a plan for addressing those problems.

Week 6 (Sept. 30) Review Chapter 4 Making the Most of Your Supervision How much supervision do you really get? Is it adequate? Is it helpful? What does the book say is your responsibility for making the most of your supervision time?

Week 7 (Oct. 7) Review Chapter 5 Organizational Issues. What issues are students identifying in the field that are pertinent to client services? How does these impact provision of needed services to clients?

Week 8 (Oct. 14) Mid-Term Evaluations & Field Visits

Week 9 (Oct. 21) Chapter 6 Social Work Practice in the Field. Expectations for student learning. How to self-evaluate and practice awareness.

Week 10 (Oct. 28) Chapter 7 GROUPS, GROUPS, GROUPS! How many of you actually work with groups? Teams? Committees?

Week 11 (Nov. 4) Chapter 8 Macro Practice Are you being exposed to community resources and agencies outside of the practicum setting? Are you involved in a macro oriented environment?

Week 12 (Nov. 11) Chapter 9 Legal Systems Our biggest fear and yet our greatest asset IF we follow the rules and DOCUMENT effectively.

Week 13 (Nov. 18) Chapter 10 Termination

Week 14 – (Nov. 25) Final Evaluations & Field Visits

*****December 2th is the first day Field may be completed*****

Week 15 (Dec. 2) Final Evaluations & Field Visits

Week 16 FINAL CLASS – LAST WEEK TO COMPLETE FIELD HOURS. FOLDERS WITLL BE REVIEWED AND AUDITED. ALL FOLDERS and FIELD HOURS MUST BE COMPLETE BY DECEMBER 13th, at 5PM.

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