PART 1: COURSE INFORMATION

SW 8010 Foundation Field Practicum
6 credits (must be distributed across both semesters)

Faculty contact:
- Name:
- Email:
- Phone:
- Office Location:

Course descriptions:

Short Description:
This course consists of the foundation field placement which allows students to put into practice what they are learning in the classroom. The accompanying field practice seminar provides the opportunity to fully integrate field and classroom learning.

Long Description:
This course offers field practice and immersion into social work process under direct supervision of an M.S.W. social worker. The field placement offers students the opportunity to engage in professional tasks in various types of professional practice. Students are also expected to develop professional identity, and increase their understanding of social justice as integral to our profession. A field practice seminar is completed concurrently with the placement.

The foundation field placement (and accompanying integrative seminar) is designed to support students in integrating practice skills and knowledge learned in foundation coursework into their own evolving social work practice. The basis of foundation field placement learning is critically examined and refined social work practice experience within settings offering broad learning opportunities, ideally at micro, mezzo and macro levels of social work practice. The foundation placement requires a student to spend a minimum of 420 hours in a field agency.

Each student is expected to assess her/his social work learning needs and to plan and complete, with the help of the agency-based field instructor (and task supervisor, if dual supervision arrangements exist), activities that will support achievement of structured learning goals. Student progress in learning is monitored throughout the field placement using a competency development model. Two formal student evaluations are completed, at mid-placement and at end of field.

Students are also required to attend an integrative practice seminar that meets 7 times per semester (roughly every other week) throughout the course of the field placement. Seminars are co-facilitated by a member of the field faculty and a community practitioner. The accompanying integrative seminar serves as a professional learning support group focusing on:

- Development of skills for lifelong professional learning
- Practice in applying a critical thinking process to field practice
• Exploration of personal and group privilege (and oppressions) and the ethical mandate for empathic, respectful, and socially just actions towards all client systems
• Challenge and support for deepening self-awareness related to professional social work identity
• Practical problem-solving around school and field issues

Note: Students will receive a copy of the integrative seminar syllabus and calendar in their first seminar meeting.

Note:

All students who are enrolled in SW 8010 – Foundation Field Practicum are also enrolled in a practice seminar. This syllabus addresses some of the assignments and topics of discussion that will be covered in your practice seminar. While the topics will be covered in each seminar, the actual product for each assignment will vary, depending on your seminar instructor. Additionally, your instructor may add assignments as she/he sees appropriate to promote the learning and practice behaviors necessary for competent practice. These may vary cross seminars.

Pre-requisites:

This course must be taken concurrently with, or after, the foundation coursework which includes SW5051, SW5801, SW8151, SW8152, and SW8153.

Clinical Content for MN Social Work Licensure:

This course contains some clinical content, as required by the Minnesota Board of Social Work for eligibility for the Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker (LICSW). The number of hours in each required category is listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Differential Diagnosis &amp; Bio-Psycho-Social Assessment 108 hours</th>
<th>Assessment-Based Clinical Treatment Planning 36 hours</th>
<th>Clinical Intervention Methods 108 hours</th>
<th>Evaluation Methodologies 18 hours</th>
<th>Social Work Ethics and Values 72 hours</th>
<th>Culturally Specific clinical Assessment 18 hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hours</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
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Up to 36 hours of didactic training in the field placement may be counted towards the 360 clinical content hours if certain conditions are met. See the Clinical Content document on the School of Social Work web site.

Liaison Visits:

A faculty field liaison is assigned to every student in placement. In most instances, the faculty seminar leader is the field liaison for students in their field seminar and continues as field liaison in the second year placement for full-program students.
Liaison visits take place at the field agency and involve the student, field instructor, task instructor (if applicable), and liaison. Generally, there are one or two in-person conferences per placement period that are arranged by the student in consultation with the other participants. The first conference is scheduled around the time that the Learning Contract is completed and submitted to the field liaison and field instructor (during a summer block placement, there may only be one liaison visit). The second liaison visit is scheduled toward the end of the field placement, before the student’s final placement evaluation has been done.

The purpose of the first liaison visit is to discuss how the placement is proceeding, development of relationships, issues rising in field related to understanding organizations, communities, difference and diversity, social justice and supervision, as well as overall field placement learning objectives and to the student’s orientation and adjustment to the field agency.

The purpose of the second liaison visit is to revisit the previous discussion in the light of the student’s growth over the internship, review the student’s progress in field, discuss closure and to discuss educational goals for the remaining months or weeks of the placement. It is the student’s responsibility to coordinate the scheduling of liaison visits.

Additional meetings can and should be scheduled if deemed necessary by any of the participants. Both student and field instructor are urged to contact the faculty liaison if there are difficulties or concerns encountered in the placement.

PART II: COURSE OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the foundation field placement and integrative seminar, students are expected to be able to competently:

1. Utilize field instruction and consultation appropriately by preparation, active participation and follow-up.
2. Use critical thinking skills in professional social work practice in assessments, interventions and evaluation with client systems of various sizes and diverse cultural backgrounds.
3. Practice in a manner consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics and the profession’s core values.
4. Practice with competence, and without discrimination, among diverse client populations. Practice with respect, knowledge, and skills related to clients’ age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, public assistance status, race, religion, sex and sexual orientation.
5. Understand social, economic and political systems of oppression - from local to global - particularly as they relate to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion and spirituality, social class, and physical and mental abilities, and employ advocacy strategies in field settings that will promote client empowerment and social justice.
6. In working with client systems of various sizes, apply the knowledge and skills of a generalist social work perspective across a range of settings.
7. Practice in a manner that supports client strengths, incorporates social justice and facilitates empowerment.
8. Critically use theoretical frameworks grounded in bio-psycho-social variables and best available evidence.
9. Analyze agency social policy at multiple system levels (including clients, communities, delivery systems, and individual practitioners) in order to create and/or advocate for policies to promote client empowerment and social justice.
10. Critically evaluate professional literature in social work and related fields and apply findings to field practice settings.
11. Assess their professional practice.
12. Demonstrate professional use of self in practice settings, including developing effective collaborative and collegial relationships and carrying out assigned tasks responsibly.
13. Understand theories of organizational structure and change in order to function within organizations and service delivery systems and to create and/or change organizational policy to promote client empowerment and social justice.

Competencies and Practice Behaviors:

All of the competencies and practice behaviors are fully integrated into the Learning Contract/Evaluation form used to guide the student's learning in the SW8010 foundation field placement. Students will begin their field placements by completing a baseline assessment of their competency in every one of the foundation practice behaviors as listed in the Council of Social Work Education standards. Before the end of the field placement, students will complete a final evaluation of competency measuring progress on the same foundation practice behaviors. The Field Instructor will also complete a final evaluation of the student's progress in each of the foundation practice behaviors. In addition, students will develop 5-7 individualized learning goals based upon practice behaviors that will be assessed by the student and field instructor at the beginning, middle, and end of the field placement.

PART III: COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Seminar Norms

The field practice seminars are structured to provide a safe atmosphere for open discussion of professional, academic, and personal issues which will lead to the development of a unique practice style based on the effective use of self. Safety does not necessarily mean comfort! Perhaps the most important element in creating a safe climate is open and direct communication. This is accomplished by listening with an open mind to what others have to share in the group and by being conscious of not monopolizing discussion and interrupting others.

Each seminar group will develop ground rules aimed at creating and maintaining a safe, respectful, enriching, and challenging learning environment.

Confidentiality is a hallmark of our profession and will be practiced in seminars. Members agree not to repeat what has been said in the seminar outside of it. Information shared in electronic discussion groups goes no further than the facilitators and students. Standard accepted practices (such as mandatory reporting, threat of harm, etc.) are assumed to be ethical imperatives and thus not subject to absolute confidentiality. Except for the above mentioned exceptions, confidentiality is maintained between student and faculty.

In the case of possible failure to meet the practicum requirements, information from Practice Seminar may be shared with the Director of Field or other faculty with a need to know (see “Policy Regarding Sharing Sensitive Information”).

The following guidelines will add to the richness of discussion and the development of professional values based on the organizing principles of our profession:

A. We acknowledge that systematic oppression exists based on privileged positions and beliefs specific to race, gender, class, religion, sexual orientation, gender expression and other social variables.
B. We understand that to arrive at an understanding of systems of oppression, and especially how oppressed persons contribute to their own oppression, a crucial element to consider is the misinformation that persons and groups have been taught about themselves and forced to internalize. The study of diversity is one of understanding rather than tolerance.

C. While one cannot be blamed for being subject to misinformation, one is responsible for coming to a critical understanding of information processed and is responsible for not repeating misinformation.

D. Assigning blame to persons in socially marginal positions is counterproductive to our practice. We can learn much about the dominant culture by looking at how it constructs the lives of those on its social margins.

E. We will assume that persons are always doing the best that they can.

F. While we may question or take issue with another member’s ideology, we will not demean, devalue, or attempt to humiliate another person based on her/his experience, value system or construction of meaning.

G. We have a professional obligation to actively challenge the myths and stereotypes about our own groups and other groups so we can break down the walls that prohibit group cooperation and growth.

Assignments Connected with Discussion Topics to Be Addressed in Seminar

The actual product of the assignment may vary across seminars, depending on the instructor.

Reflective writing: Reflective writing on a number of topics relevant to practice and the student’s field and professional learning will be a requirement in each seminar. The form of reflective writing will vary across seminars and may include journal writing and/or participation in electronic discussions through listserves or in Moodle.

A class presentation in multiple parts, which will include (each instructor will give further instructions for this assignment):

- A reflection on one’s own identity, history and lenses through which one view’s one’s work in field and other professional contexts.
- Presentation of a case/project/agency on which you are currently working, following a semi-structured format related to social work knowledge skills and values. A core part of this presentation is looking at the ethical dimensions of the work, utilizing established ethical decision making models and the NASW Code of Ethics.

Writing Professional Goals

- Students will learn about setting professional goals, and will create goals for themselves that will form the basis of the learning contract that they write in collaboration with their field instructor. Information on formulating and writing measurable, attainable goals will be covered in the seminar, and students will apply this learning in developing the learning contract that will guide the field placement.
- Each learning goal will incorporate one or more of the core competencies for social work practice, and will reflect the foundation practice behaviors that are associated with each competency. Students will assess their baseline on each foundation practice behavior at the start of the field placement. They will assess their progress toward their goals at the mid-point of the placement. Students and field instructors will assess their progress on the foundation practice behaviors at the end of the placement.
Burnout Prevention

All students will discuss issues related to burnout/vicarious traumatization/self and mutual-care in the seminar, and collaborate on developing strategies and approaches to cope and thrive.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS

In their field placements, students are expected to:

- Be active and self-directed learners.
- Read the School’s Field Manual and follow all policies and procedures contained in it.
- Read all correspondence, written and electronic, from the Field Office.
- Complete an initial learning contract and learning plan in consultation with their field instructor. The initial learning contract is due after 40 hours in field. The field competencies assessment and learning plan is due after 100 hours in field.
- Be reliable and responsible about field hours. Any changes in field schedules should be discussed ahead of time with the field instructor. Students are expected to notify their field instructor immediately of any absence from field.
- Document all hours spent in field placement.
- Complete all other required field placement evaluations.
- Maximize field learning by using field instruction actively and appropriately.
- Practice in a manner consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics.
- Consult with their assigned field liaison early, and regularly, if field concerns arise.

In field seminar, students are expected to:

- Attend all scheduled seminar sessions. As per University policy, attendance at the first session of any class is mandatory, and failure to attend the first session will result in a student being dropped from the class. (Attendance will be taken. If a student must miss a scheduled seminar, the student should contact the field liaison before the seminar meeting time to request an excused absence and make arrangements for submitting written assignments and for making up any other relevant seminar activities. Journal entries must be completed regardless of seminar absence. Students should expect that they may be asked to find another way to fulfill any seminar requirements that are not completed because of absence). Missing more than two seminar sessions during the course of the academic year may result in a grade of “N” for your field placement; students should inform the field liaison if special circumstances arise.
- Show respect for classmates and teachers by turning off all electronic devices. It is not appropriate to send or receive text messages while in seminar. In some circumstances, laptop computers may be used for class presentations.
- Complete all seminar assignments, including journal entries.
- Maintain high expectations for field learning – for self and for fellow students.
- Regularly give and receive thoughtful, constructive feedback.
- Monitor own participation. Be sensitive to either talking too much or too little and make adjustments in order to optimize learning for all.
- Demonstrate critical thinking and support critical thinking in others.
• Demonstrate principles for lifelong learning: humility, empathy, fairness, courage, honesty and integrity, clarity, precision, and accuracy, relevance, intellectual sophistication and logic (Cournoyer and Stanley, 2002).
• Participate in ongoing evaluation of field seminar methods and learning outcomes.

ROLES OF AGENCY FIELD INSTRUCTORS, TASK SUPERVISORS, AND SEMINAR FACILITATORS

Agency field instructors are the primary guides in student field learning. Field instructors assist students through collaborative assessment of learning needs; identification and facilitation, as needed, of relevant field learning opportunities; provision of supportive and constructive feedback to student on field performance; evaluation of overall field performance at mid-year and end of placement; ongoing support and teaching related to professional social practice and identity. Field Instructors will have an M.S.W. degree plus a minimum of two years’ professional experience.

Task supervisors are persons who direct the everyday work of field students, and may or may not have a social work background. They may assist students in all of the activities above, but do not have primary responsibility for assessment of student learning needs and student evaluation. Task supervisors and field instructors coordinate their field student-related activities so to best support student learning in the agency.

Integrative seminars are co-facilitated by a field faculty member (the student’s field liaison) and a community practitioner who share responsibility for overall structure of the field seminar and for facilitating group learning in seminar sessions.

The Field liaison serves as the liaison between the School of Social Work, the student, and the field agency. The field liaison conducts Liaison visits at the field site, monitors the placement and completion of documentation, and provides guidance. Consultation and support to both student and supervisor/agency. The field liaison is also involved in training supervisors and developing new placements.

EVALUATION AND GRADING

Students and field supervisors are expected to incorporate mutual evaluative feedback into their regular supervisory meetings.

Student performance in the field placement is formally evaluated by the agency field instructor midway through the placement and again at the completion of the placement. These forms are retained in individual student files.

At the end of the first semester, students who have completed all expected field tasks in both their internship and seminar are given a grade of “X.” This includes all field documentation on the Intern Placement Tracking (IPT) website. Incomplete documentation or unfinished assignments will result in a grade of “I” being posted, and students must negotiate a signed contract for completion of unfinished field requirements (including documentation) with their field liaison. Evaluation of the seminar will be based on attendance and the completion of assignments.

At the end of the placement, the grades are changed to an S if the student completes all requirements for both the field experience and seminar, including all field documentation on the IPT website.
Student performance in field seminar will be evaluated by the seminar facilitators, based on student attendance, quality of seminar participation and assignments, and contributions to fellow students’ learning in seminar. Each student may miss one seminar meeting without penalty (though must complete any assignments for the missed session). If a student misses more than one seminar session, the student should discuss and complete a relevant make-up assignment with the faculty seminar facilitator.

Students also complete written evaluations of their field instructors and agencies upon completion of the placement. Students and field instructors sign all evaluation instruments before the documents are submitted to the field office. Students’ evaluations are retained by the Field Department.

Note: No final grades will be issued for SW 8010 until all requirements of the field internship and seminar, including all required field documents and seminar assignments, are completed and submitted to the faculty field liaison.

Policy on Incompletes

Field grades are assigned at the end of each semester. Students who have completed field tasks are assigned an "X" until they have completed all the field hours satisfactorily. When hours and all requirements are completed, grades are then changed to an "S." Grade changes are NOT recorded by the Graduate School until the end of spring semester (or the end of summer semester in the case of block placements).

An "I" grade means that the student has not completed field tasks expected by the field instructor and/or the SSW during the grading period. (See “Grading Policy in the Field Placement” for a more detailed explanation of grades.) If a student is unable to complete the field placement, the reason(s) should be discussed with the field liaison or director of field instruction. The student should read “Steps in Resolving Problems in Placement” which outlines the steps to follow. If a placement is ended before 480 credit hours are completed, the student is expected to consult with the field liaison regarding another placement, field seminar and field credits.

Seminar Calendar

Field seminar meeting dates and times will be communicated before the first field seminar meeting.