

FIELD PRACTICUM MANUAL

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM
BSW
2007 - 2008

UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA,
LAS VEGAS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	BSW Program Rationale, Mission and Goals	1
II.	BSW Program Objectives	2
III.	Field Program Rationale	3
IV.	Field Practicum Objectives.....	3
V.	Relationship of Field Practicum to the Total Program.....	4
VI.	Assignment to Practicum Agency Site	4
VII.	Field Practicum Settings and Selection Criteria.....	5
VIII.	Criteria for Selection of Agency Field Instructors	6
IX.	School of Social Work and Agency Responsibilities	7
	A. Field Director	7
	B. Field Associate	7
	C. Faculty Field Liaison.....	7
	D. Field Agency.....	8
	E. Agency Field Instructor.....	8
	F. Preceptor	9
	G. Agency Field Instructor/Preceptor Orientation Training	9
X.	Students in the Field Practicum	9
	A. Assignment to Agency.....	9
	B. Field Practicum Problems	10
	C. Personal and Professional Development	10
XI.	Field Practicum Seminar	11
XII.	Field Practicum Requirements	12
	A. Class Attendance and Participation	12
	B. Learning Agreement.....	12
	C. Schedule of Field Practicum Hours and Activities.....	12
	D. Experiential Journal.....	12
	E. Field Practicum Evaluation.....	13
	F. Format for Submitting Mid-term and Final Documentation	13
XIII.	Evaluation	14
	A. Review of Evaluation Process.....	14
	B. Criteria for Grading.....	14
XIV.	Field Practicum Policies	15

XIV.	Supervision	15
XV.	Field Practicum Policies	15
	A. Hours Required	15
	B. Compensatory Time	16
	C. Field Practicum Days	16
	D. Transportation	16
	E. Liability	16
	F. Holidays.....	16
	G. Absences.....	16
	H. NASW Code of Ethics	17
	I. Administrative Responsibility.....	17
	J. Disability Accommodations	17
	K. Mental Health Supports	17
	L. Petition Requirements	17
	M. Previous Experience	18
	N. Counseling Out Policy	18
	O. Other Policies	18
XVI.	Appendixes	19
	A. Student Application Forms	
	B. Education Affiliation Agreement	
	C. Agency/Program and Field Practicum Description	
	D. Petition Form	
	E. Learning Agreement Form	
	F. Schedule of Activity/Time Sheet	
	G. Field Practicum Evaluation Forms	
	H. Field Contact Form	
	I. Field Incident Report Form	
	J. Feedback on Teaching/Seminar	
	K. Feedback on Faculty Field Liaison	
	L. Student Evaluation of Practicum	
	M. Student Evaluation of Agency Field Instructor	
	N. NASW Code of Ethics	

I. BSW PROGRAM RATIONALE, MISSION AND GOALS

The rationale of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Bachelor of Social Work program is to prepare students for beginning level generalist social work practice. Generalist social work practice is defined as practice with all client systems from community to individual using multi-methods, multi-level approaches based on an open assessment, not tied to a particular theoretical approach (Landon and Feit, 1999).

The program conceptualization of generalist social work practice is based on the view that clients have problems of living that are multiple caused, and that their behaviors are multiple determined by social as well as personal factors. Therefore, beginning level social workers must be educated to intervene at all system levels from individual, family and groups to larger social systems and communities. Not only do we wish to educate beginning level social workers to be capable of practicing social work at all system levels, we also want students to take into account all system levels as a context for intervention targets. For example, practice at the individual level, students must assess the family, group, community, organization, policy and the socio-economic context in which the individual is situated, and how these contexts affect the individual's behavior. Practice will also engage program development and research. Students must assess the responsibilities for the organization's behavior, as well as the impact of the organization's behavior on individuals, families, groups and communities. The normality of human behavior is stressed, as well as the view that social workers must often be advocates for their clients.

In addition, the program emphasizes that social workers build on their clients' strengths and empower clients to deal with their environments. To accomplish this, the strengths, ecological and empowering perspective is integrated in the curriculum by emphasizing that social work practitioners must form relationships with clients that are client-centered and respectful of their perspectives and views. Also, the BSW program stresses nonjudgmental assessments with a problem-solving approach which assumes that clients' problems rarely reside solely within the clients' themselves.

Mission

The essential mission of the UNLV School of Social Work's BSW program is to provide a generalist social work education for beginning level social workers who will deliver human services to diverse urban populations. The mission is carried out through the education of students who will practice at the micro, mezzo and macro levels using a generalist perspective.

Goals

The goals of the Bachelor Program are:

1. To educate students for beginning level generalist social work with diverse urban populations and client systems at all levels (individual, families, groups and communities) based on knowledge, values, ethics and skills of social work practice built on a liberal arts foundation through classroom and coordinated field experience.
2. To identify and understand the factors that affect human beings throughout the life cycle, with emphasis on diverse urban populations. To use the bio-psycho-social theoretical frameworks (i.e., systems theory, problem-solving model and the strengths/empowerment

perspective) to understand the dynamic and changing context of interaction between individuals, families, groups and communities. To use this knowledge for assessments and problem-solving with all client systems.

3. To demonstrate basic knowledge and develop skills in social research and statistics for the evaluation of professional practice at all system levels. To conduct ethical research with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.
4. To understand social welfare policies and services from history to identification of social problems; policy analysis implementation and evaluation; to analyze the effect of social policies and institutions on diverse urban populations, with a focus on oppression and discrimination and promotion of social and economic justice.
5. To prepare the student for graduate school and continual professional growth.

II. BSW PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of the Bachelor of Social Work degree, BSW students will be prepared to:

- 1a. Conduct skilled generalist social work practice with client systems at the micro, mezzo and macro levels with awareness and utilization of social work values and ethics, use communication skills differently with a variety of constituent groups within all levels of practice, promote change within the structure of service delivery systems.
- 1b. Demonstrate knowledge, critical analysis and application of the overarching frameworks such as social systems, problem-solving model and the strengths/empowerment perspective.
- 1c. Conduct social work practice demonstrating the professional use of self and supervision without bias and with respect and appreciation for the dignity and unique characteristics of each individual and for the diverse client groups present in the urban Las Vegas area.
- 2a. Identify, apply and critique bio-psycho-social theories and factors that affect individual and family behavior throughout the life cycle.
- 2b. Identify, apply and critique group, organizational, community and cultural theories and factors that affect human behavior in these larger systems.
- 3a. Understand research methodology and statistics and apply them in an ethical manner, with supervision, for the evaluation of professional practice at all system levels.
- 3b. Seek out and link current social science research to practice at all client system levels as well as critique current research for scientific and ethical soundness.

- 4a. Demonstrate understanding of social welfare institutions, their history and development, and the impact of the social welfare on individuals, groups, families, organizations and communities.
- 4b. Analyze the social policy process from social problems to policy implementation with a focus on the promotion of economic and social justice, the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and the mechanisms of change.

III. FIELD PROGRAM RATIONALE

The field practicum experience provides the opportunity for students to realize the goals and objectives of the School through concrete, practicum, and community-based interactions with clients and practicing professionals. It is, therefore, regarded as an integral component in the process of the student's professional development. The field practicum courses are designed to provide a unique opportunity for each social work student to develop and apply the skills, knowledge, and values acquired in the classroom to practice in local social service agencies. It is through the two field practicum experiences (SWK 419 and SWK 429) that the student begins to integrate theory and its practicum applications; sharpen awareness of personal values, attitudes, strengths and limitations; and develop and enhance skills which result in successful social work practice.

IV. FIELD PRACTICUM OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the BSW field practicum are derived from the mission, goals, and objectives of the BSW program and reflect an emphasis on critical thinking, professional mentoring, and respect for human diversity. The practicum, seminar, and course assignments will allow students the opportunity to achieve the following foundation objectives.

1. **Understanding and Application of Generalist Social Work Practice Skills:**
BSW practicum students will be able to apply bio-psycho social, strengths and systems oriented frameworks to practice with multiple levels of client systems including individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities; will be able to effectively apply principles of generalist practice in working with diverse populations; will be able to effectively execute a variety of social work roles (e.g. clinical, case management, administrative) using the generalist perspective.
2. **Professional Development:**
BSW practicum students will model the values and ethics of the social work profession by demonstrating competence, self-awareness, objectivity, accountability, and respect for the right to self-determination; will actively participate in the learning process by making use of the constructive feedback available through supervision and other field support mechanisms.
3. **Culture and Society:**

BSW practicum students will be able to identify how factors such as economics, social policies, and oppression impact the functioning and well-being of client systems; be able to apply practice skills and methods in dealing with a spectrum of cultural factors (e.g. gender, age, sexual orientation, racial-ethnic, spiritual).

V. RELATIONSHIP OF FIELD PRACTICUM TO THE TOTAL PROGRAM

Students will have completed the following social work courses prior to acceptance for field practicum placement: Introduction to Social Welfare (SWK 101), Social Work Practice I (SWK 410), Social Policies and Services (SWK 401), Human Behavior in the Social Environment 1 (SWK 315), Human Behavior in the Social Environment II (SWK 425), Skills Lab II (SWK 411S), Experience in Human Service Agency (SWK 411L) and if not concurrently, Social Work Research 1 (SWK 416). In addition to the social work prerequisites, students will have completed liberal arts courses in related disciplines including: Composition I and II (ENG 101, ENG 102), Oral Communication (COM 101), Human Biology (BIO 101), Economics of Discrimination (ECO 180), Introduction to Sociology (SOC 101), General Psychology (PSY 101), Cultural Anthropology (ANT 101), and two ethnic, multi-culture or cross- culture classes. These courses are essential in providing students with a liberal arts perspective and the orienting theories on which to build and apply social work knowledge, values, and skills in the field practicum. These and other courses are required to be completed prior to the student making application for Field Practicum I (SWK 419) (see Appendix A). The field practicum courses must be taken in succession with the corresponding practice methods courses (SWK 420 and SWK 430).

Activities provided by the wide variety of field agencies and professional networks within and beyond Clark County allow students to integrate and apply increasingly complex concepts from the practice courses to experiences in the field. Integration of theory and practice is facilitated through faculty review and feedback in the development of learning agreements and journals, course assignments drawn from the practice experience, and weekly field seminar classes that focus specifically on integrating students' field experience with curriculum content. Each student's course syllabi are distributed to agency field instructors to enhance integration of course work in the field. In addition, as students begin the second practicum course, Field Practicum II (SWK 429), they are assisted in developing activities that reflect growth and increased levels of complexity, skill, and autonomy.

Information about the field practicum and its relationship to the total program is disseminated in a variety of ways. This Field Practicum Manual is available for all field practicum students, agency field instructors, and School of Social Work faculty. Faculty field liaisons meet at least twice each semester with students and agency field instructors to provide support and to clarify requirements of the program. Seminars for field instruction are established yearly to encourage ongoing dialogue between the School and agency field instructors and to facilitate communication around educational goals, instructional methods, and techniques.

VI. ASSIGNMENT TO A PRACTICUM AGENCY SITE

Step 1 – The Application:

Students entering either practicum must first complete and submit the appropriate practicum application to the Field Associate (Appendix A) with the following additional information: the acceptance letter into the BSW Program **and** a completed, current worksheet from the advising center or social work office. The application will then be given to the BSW Program Coordinator for final approval to enroll in the Field Practicum. Information from the applications is used by the field faculty to narrow down agency options.

Step 2 – The Field Consultation Session:

Once applications have been received by the Field Education Program, individual, face-to-face appointments are scheduled to further narrow down agency sites appropriate to the students learning and professional goals. During this session, students are provided with a list of agencies, contact personnel and telephone numbers (agency referral form). Students are advised to call and schedule appointments with agency personnel for interviews with agencies that have contracted, i.e. have Education Affiliation Agreements, with the University. Student may at this time suggest agencies that are non-contract, but these agencies must comply with new agency approval procedures before the site can be made official. If a student begins a practicum at an unapproved site, he or she runs the risk of not passing the practicum class. (Information regarding site approval can be obtained from the Field Education Program).

Step 3 – The Agency Interview:

The Field Education Program adheres to a “matching” philosophy; that is to say, practicum work best when agencies and students “choose” each other. At the agency interview, either party - the student or the agency - may choose to accept or reject the other. Students are advised to interview at multiple agency sites to facilitate an informed choice. Agencies are not obligated to accept any given student solely on the fact that he or she has been referred by the University. Similarly, after interviewing, students may not accept agencies to which they have been referred. If there are no matches (based on practicum position availability, incompatibility of goals or some other reasonable criteria), the student is advised to immediately contact field faculty for further consultation.

Step 4 – Practicum Site Selection:

Once a student has been offered and has accepted a practicum at a particular site, he or she is to return the agency referral form to the Field Education Program. On this form, the student is to indicate the agency they have selected and who will be their agency field instructor. Upon providing this information to the Field Education Program, the student is cleared to begin their practicum the first week of the semester if the agency and agency field instructor have been approved.

VII. FIELD PRACTICUM SETTINGS AND SELECTION CRITERIA

In order for the field practicum to be effective, it is imperative that the School of Social Work and participating agencies work together in planning and carrying out the educationally directed experience. At the same time, the School also recognizes the social responsibility of the agency

toward its clients and the community, and is aware of the necessity of the educational objectives to be complimentary to those of the agency. The relationship between the University, the School, and the agency is outlined in the Education Affiliation Agreement (see Appendix B) and is formalized by the signing of this document. While the School retains primary responsibility for the quality of the educational experience, it can only carry out that responsibility through cooperation and ongoing communication between the agency field instructors and the School.

Field Education Program policy mandates that agencies provide the School with, among other documentation, a description of their program and practicum activities to assist in appropriately matching students with the agency (see Appendix C). The following are examples of agency practice areas that currently available to BSW students:

Social Service / Community Resource
 Domestic Violence
 Health / Medical / Hospice
 Mental Health
 - Inpatient
 - Outpatient
 Child Welfare
 Educational / School Social Work
 Legal / Forensic
 Elder Care / Geriatric
 Substance Abuse
 Homeless

The criteria established for the selection of field agencies is as follows.

1. An established social welfare program with a clear-cut sanction from the community.
2. Commitment to the goals of professional social work education.
3. Willingness to support the School's educational objectives.
4. Commitment to and the ability to provide the resources (space, time, and other support) needed by agency staff and students involved in the activities of instructional field practice.
5. Availability of qualified staff to supervise BSW students.

VIII. CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF AGENCY FIELD INSTRUCTORS

Agency field instructors are vital members of the field training team and, with the support of the Field Director, are charged with the responsibility to assure that the planning, teaching, and evaluation components of students' field practicum experiences have a social work focus and are professionally sound.

The criteria for selection of agency field instructors are as follows.

1. Master of social work degree.
2. Two years post-master's experience in the field.
3. Six months experience with the current agency.
4. Licensed to practice professionally in the State of Nevada (preferred).
5. Reputation for professional competence.
6. Attitude of respect for students' competencies and needs.
7. Ability and desire to teach social work theory and its application to professional practice.
8. Demonstrated identification with the social work profession.
9. Thorough knowledge of the purposes, policies, and procedures of the agency.
10. Willingness to advance professional development as demonstrated by participation in continuing education and field instruction seminars as available.

Agency field instructors must have a current resume on file with the Field Education Program.

IX. SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK AND AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

The School of Social Work will provide at the request of the field agency, necessary and appropriate information about student(s) assigned to the agency, including academic background, previous social work and other work experience, career plans, and other relevant data if available.

A. Field Director

The Field Director will be responsible for:

- 1) providing the agency with the necessary consultation and support to carry out the educational program goals;
- 2) providing specific learning objectives to be used in planning the educational program for students;
- 3) providing guidelines for evaluation of students' progress;
- 4) screening and selecting students to be placed in the agency;
- 5) obtaining regular feedback from the agency regarding the field program's strengths and limitations and recommending suitable modifications when appropriate;
- 6) maintaining regular communication with agency directors and agency field instructors;
- 7) providing consultation around field practicum concerns;
- 8) providing continuing educational services including the field instruction training seminars.

B. Field Associate

The Field Associate will assist the Field Director in working with students who are conducting their field practicum at local child and family welfare agencies.

The Field Associate is responsible for:

- 1) assisting in the development of child welfare practicum within the community;
- 2) teaching the BSW field seminars;
- 3) providing supervision to students in the field;
- 4) serving as one of the faculty field liaisons.

C. Faculty Field Liaison

A faculty field liaison provides the link between the School, the student, and the agency field instructor. Students are assigned to a faculty field liaison that is available for consultation around field issues that arise on the part of the student or the agency. For each assigned student, the faculty field liaison is required to make two agency visits per semester to meet with the student and agency field instructor. Generally, one agency visit is scheduled before mid-term; a second visit is made before the end of the semester. The focus of visits depends on the needs of the student and the agency, and involves consultation around developing a Learning Agreement, problem-solving any practicum concerns, and clarifying evaluation issues. In the case of concerns or issues requiring immediate attention, the faculty field liaison will make additional agency visits or phone contacts as needed.

D. Field Agency

A field agency that agrees to participate in the education of social work students is responsible for:

- 1) providing an environment which is conducive to educational goals and objectives;
- 2) accepting the student as contributing services related to the function of the agency;
- 3) affording the student significant responsibility in assignments with clients, sufficient to enable meaningful learning opportunities appropriate to the field objectives and Learning Agreement;
- 4) making adjustments as necessary to enable the agency field instructor sufficient time for planning of the student's activities, regular weekly and emergency conferences with the student, meetings with the Field Director and/or faculty field liaison, writing of evaluations, and other duties connected with this responsibility;
- 5) providing the agency field instructor and student suitable physical facilities and work items including adequate desk space, telephone, supplies, clerical support, and privacy for client interviewing, group meetings, and supervision conferences;
- 6) assuring that a student is not, under any circumstances, left alone or solely responsible in an office, agency, or institutional setting. At least one agency staff member must be available at all times. This does not preclude a student making a home visit alone for example, if the agency field instructor believes the student is adequately prepared to do so.

E. Agency Field Instructor

An agency field instructor is an employee of the agency selected to be the primary provider of instruction and supervision for social work students. The agency field instructor should meet the criteria for selection as indicated above. Therefore, by definition the agency field instructor holds at least a Master's in social work and has 2 years post-masters' clinical and/or administrative experience. Additionally, the agency field instructor is required to submit a current resume. This document will be kept on file in the School.

Recognizing that the agency field instructor has other responsibilities besides student supervision, he/she should, however, allot a sufficient portion of his/her time for each student on designated field practicum days. This will include time for student instruction, program

development, and occasional meetings with the Field Director and/or faculty field liaison, program and student evaluation, and other related activities. ***The agency field instructor must schedule at least one hour of formal supervisory conference with the individual student on a weekly basis.***

The agency field instructor should monitor practicum related documentation particularly activity time sheets, student evaluations and documents specific to the student's role in the agency. He or she is responsible for making sure that the student has access to guidance and consultation by other agency professionals in the agency field instructor's absence (e.g., during vacation or illness). The agency field instructor is also expected to immediately notify the school if there is a significant change in the agency field instructor's availability due to a change of employment status, staffing, etc.

To provide a meaningful field experience, the agency field instructor should:

- 1) understand how the overall objectives and specific curriculum of the School relate to the objectives of field instruction;
- 2) integrate these objectives with those of the agency and its policies and procedures;
- 3) assist the student to formulate a comprehensive educational plan or Learning Agreement;
- 4) integrate the student into his/her practice unit and set up an orientation program that will present a total picture of the agency;
- 5) select appropriate cases, objectives, learning tasks, and assignments for the student;
- 6) plan conferences and unit meetings;
- 7) assign written work (process and summary recordings, psychosocial summaries, case notes, etc.) and review them with the student;
- 8) encourage the student to participate fully in the life of the agency;
- 9) provide feedback to the student on a regular weekly basis as to performance;
- 10) communicate with the student, Field Director, and/or faculty field liaison any unusual opportunities, conditions, or problems as soon as they are evident;
- 11) participate with the student in the preparation of the Field Practicum Evaluations during the semester;
- 12) participate in training seminars for all agency-based field instruction.

F. Preceptor

In recognition of the fact that the students' experience in an agency can be enhanced by interaction with non-MSW human and social service professionals, some agency field instructors may assign some supervisory responsibilities to a preceptor. The preceptor is selected by the agency field instructor based on the preceptor's experience or expertise in a particular area of service delivery. The preceptor may be from professional disciplines other than social work such as marriage and family counseling, psychology, occupational and recreational therapy, etc.

The involvement of a preceptor is at the discretion of the agency field instructor. Both the preceptor and agency field instructor are encouraged to develop clear avenues of communication as it relates to the students' progress through the practicum. Ultimately, the agency field instructor remains primarily responsible for the student's field training experience.

G. Agency Field Instructor / Preceptor Orientation Training

The School of Social Work provides, at various intervals, a training experience that is mandatory for all agency field instructors, voluntary for preceptors and open to all professionals wanting to work with social work students. The orientation provides an opportunity to:

- 1) promote general consistency in the training of students with regard to basic social work skills across agencies;
- 2) foster a network of communication between agency field instructors and the School of Social Work;
- 3) disseminate the most current information reflecting generally accepted principles of field supervision (including legal issues, examination of the supervisory relationship, promoting the optimal field learning experience, identifying and addressing student-agency problems, etc.).

X. STUDENTS IN THE FIELD PRACTICUM

A. Assignment to Agency

Assignment of a student to an agency is the responsibility of the Field Director/Field Associate. Such placement is based on an evaluation of the student's past work experiences, life experiences, academic experiences, and achievements, as well as the student's preferences, professional goals, and the learning opportunities available in specific agencies. Every attempt will be made to honor one of the top three placement choices of the student. In any case, if a substitution is made by the Field Director, that placement must be acceptable to the student.

B. Field Practicum Problems

The Field Education Program promotes the view that problems encountered in the field practicum can be opportunities for learning, expansion of self-awareness and professional development. When a student encounters problems at the practicum site, the following stepwise procedures are to be followed and can be initiated by either the student, preceptor, agency field instructor, liaison, or field or social work faculty as appropriate:

1. The problem should initially be addressed between the student and agency field instructor – preferably in the course of supervision. The agency field instructor is advised to keep a record of observed problems and interventions he or she has attempted.
2. If the student and agency field instructor are unsuccessful at arriving at a resolution to the problem, either should immediately contact the assigned faculty field liaison for consultation, mediation or other action. The liaison is required to document any problem-related contacts through the contact form or incident report form. Additional face-to-face meetings or other interventions may be mandated at the discretion of the liaison toward problem resolution.
3. If the problem cannot be resolved with the assistance of the liaison, the Field Associate or Field Director must be contacted immediately. The decisions of the Field Associate or Field Director are final. Intervention at this level could take several courses, but may include as a last resort, reassignment of the student to another practicum site.

C. Personal and Professional Development

Students must aim to achieve a level of maturity and ethical behavior that are in accord with their professional responsibilities. Self-understanding, self-acceptance, and acceptance of others are required in the helping professions. These qualities can be demonstrated by the students' awareness of how they are perceived by others; the ability to cooperate with clients and staff; and through the productive use of supervision. Students must also demonstrate respect for the individual's right to self-determination and the ability to work with people, not for people; the ability to see each person as an individual; willingness to recognize their own personal limitations; and openness to new ideas.

Professionalism requires taking the responsibility for one's own learning as demonstrated by the ability to carry out one's own workload effectively. Students must work collaboratively with others, and participate appropriately in conferences and staff meetings. Preparation of written reports and appropriate case recordings, along with dependability and punctuality, are also expected professional responsibilities.

Students develop an understanding of the helping relationship through experience, as well as skills and self-discipline in its use. In the practicum, students develop the skills to initiate contact with client systems; to maintain rapport without sacrificing focus or limits; to handle relationships with persons from a variety of age, gender, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds; to assist client systems in making plans and to modify those plans when necessary; to implement effective interventions at multiple client system levels; and to terminate the relationship based on an evaluation of one's actions and those of the client system.

Note that a "social work student" in a field practicum should NOT be referred to or sign any documentation using the title "intern". Currently, the term "intern" is reserved for post-master's professionals working on hours toward LCSW licensure in the state of Nevada and would constitute misrepresentation if used in reference to a BSW student.

XI. FIELD PRACTICUM SEMINAR

Field seminar classes are a component of the 6 credit field practicum courses. Students meet weekly for 50 minutes or participate in on-line assignments to clarify student responsibilities and requirements for field, to share practicum experiences and discuss concerns, and to relate course concepts with field experiences. Written assignments, readings, case studies, classroom discussion and interactive exercises will provide students with opportunities to demonstrate the development of analytical and practice skills. Students do not receive additional credit, nor do they register separately for the field seminar classes.

While the content of the field practicum seminars may address a range of personal and professional issues, these class sessions are not in any way to be construed as "therapy". Sharing information to promote professional growth is appropriate, however students are expected to demonstrate an understanding of appropriate boundaries within an educational context. Additionally, by enrolling in field practicum courses including the seminar component, students are consenting to abide by the ethics of social work. In seminar, this is interpreted in part to mean that all students will protect the confidentiality of others. For example, case presentations are to be presented with adequate attention given to securing the identity of

clients. Also, relevant personal issues presented by other fellow students are not to be discussed or debated outside of the seminar class.

Case presentations are integral to field seminar and most often scheduled in the Spring semester. In preparing for case presentations:

- Closely follow the outline and criteria provided by the seminar instructor
- Use only cases from field practicum – it is unacceptable to use family members, friends, non practicum work situations or other sources
- Always address any content or ethical concerns with the seminar instructor PRIOR to presenting the case.
- Maintain confidentiality, but do not falsify cases or their sources (for example making up all aspects of a case or using a family member and stating that it is about a client at your practicum site). There is a difference between efforts to maintain “confidentiality” and dishonesty.

Further, all assignments including “reaction papers” must conform to the standards of the University with regard to being original (not plagiarized from published material, or copied from peers).

The discovery of dishonesty in seminar (or inappropriate behavior in field practicum) will result in initiating the “counseling out” procedure, and the instructor has the right to assign a failing grade for the **entire** practicum course.

XII. FIELD PRACTICUM REQUIREMENTS

A. Class Attendance and Participation

As described in section XI. of this manual, students are expected to attend and participate in weekly field seminar classes that are designed to assist the student in integrating field practicum experiences with curriculum content. Weekly seminar classes provide students the opportunity to broaden their own experience and knowledge through exposure to the experiences of other students and practitioners in the field. See Section XI. of this manual for more information on field seminars and refer to the class syllabus.

B. Learning Agreement

The Learning Agreement is a formal document prepared early in the practicum, identifying the specific learning activities that will be accomplished throughout the field practicum experience which are designed to assist the student in accomplishing the course objectives. In developing the Learning Agreement, students are to follow the sample format provided and include the mandatory tasks listed, as well as generating additional tasks specific to the agency (see Appendix E). These tasks should be developed by the student and agency field instructor and should integrate course learning objectives with agency activities and goals. Revisions may be suggested by the faculty field liaison and should be resubmitted in a timely manner. The final agreement must be signed by the student and agency field instructor prior to its submission to

the Field Seminar Instructor. Once approved by the faculty field liaison, it will be submitted to the Field Director. Students are advised that if their practicum activities change at any point during the semester, they should submit an addendum to their Learning Agreement. The Learning Agreements **MUST** be typed. They may be accessed on WEB CT or on the computer in the Student Lounge.

C. Schedule of Field Practicum Hours and Activities

Students are required to maintain an accurate record of field practicum hours and learning agreement activities. Hours and activities such as supervision, reading, agency meetings, client interviews, training, and all other learning activities conducted during placement are to be recorded daily on the Schedule of Activity/Time Sheet (see Appendix F). Activity/time sheets are to be submitted to the agency field instructor for review and signature each week preferably during supervision. Time sheets need to be dated weekly and it is the student's responsibility to ensure that this happens. Recorded activities should relate to learning agreement tasks. Regular review of the activity/time sheet record will assist student, agency field instructor and faculty field liaison in monitoring the student's progress toward accomplishing these specific tasks. Activity/time sheets will be submitted to the seminar instructor for review by the field liaison at mid-term and semester end. Only one and one-half hours per week will be allotted for students' agency-related outside reading and journaling.

D. Experiential Journal

Each student is required to prepare a weekly experiential journal in order to communicate the student's progress towards goals of placement, and to demonstrate in writing practice skills, values, critical thinking, and an ability to analyze and evaluate personal feelings that impact practice. Students are encouraged to share their journals with agency field instructors, and in fact, many students find journaling helpful in their preparation for weekly supervision. Journal entries will be reviewed by the faculty field liaison at mid-term and final. Journals must be typed and must follow the format described below.

1. **Activities:**

Provide a brief narrative of all practicum activities accomplished throughout the week. Review your activity/time sheet and Learning Agreement to monitor progress toward goals and to develop plans for accomplishing tasks not yet completed.

2. **Feelings and Observations:**

First, describe your observations (favorable and unfavorable) about your experiences throughout the week in the field placement. Then, describe how your feelings, emotions and attitudes influence your perceptions and behavior in the field.

3. **Self Awareness and Professional Development:**

Describe how your practicum experiences and feelings and observations have led to changes in the way you integrate and apply practice skills. Review how supervision, reading, and/or concepts from course work enriched your practicum experience. How have experiences in the field enhanced your commitment to particular values of the profession or shaped your career goals and interests? Evaluate the need for developing new skills and knowledge.

E. Field Practicum Evaluation

Student progress and performance in the field practicum experience will be evaluated at mid-term and semester end by the student and agency field instructor, utilizing the Field Practicum Evaluation form (see Appendix G). It is the student's responsibility to initiate the evaluation by completing the form in pencil and submitting it to the agency field instructor who will complete the evaluation in ink. Student and agency field instructor are then expected to review the evaluation jointly during a weekly supervision meeting, using this opportunity to identify goals for strengthening skills. Mid-term and final evaluations are to be submitted to the seminar instructor by the specified due dates, along with activity/time sheets and journals.

The mid-term evaluation provides an opportunity for the student, agency field instructor, faculty field liaison, and Field Director to assess the student's progress towards goals and objectives of the field practicum as specified on the Learning Agreement. The final evaluation will assist the Field Director in determining the student's field practicum grade.

F. Format for Submitting Mid-term and Final Documents

1. The title page should contain the following information in the order listed below:

- a. Class (419 or 429)
- b. Student's name
- c. Practicum agency
- d. Agency field instructor (and Preceptor, if assigned)
- e. Date of submission (due date)
- f. Faculty field liaison's name

2. Activity Time Sheets and Journals

The activity time sheet and journals should be presented in chronological order in the packet. That is, the activity time sheet for week #1 should be immediately followed by the journal entry for week #1, which in turn is to be followed by the activity time sheet and journal for week #2 and so on. Do not group all activity time sheets or journal entries together.

3. Student Evaluation

The last section of the packet should contain the evaluation form (see below).

Mid-term and final packets must be submitted with heavy staples or binder clips. **No notebooks or folders will be accepted.** Mid-term packets will contain documentation from approximately the first half of the semester. Final packets will be cumulative with documentation from the entire semester.

XIII. EVALUATION

A. Review of Evaluation Process

The evaluation of student learning in the field practicum is an ongoing process and is the responsibility of the agency field instructor, faculty field liaison, and Field Director. Evaluation is based on completing field practicum hours, class attendance, successful completion of the responsibilities specified in the Learning Agreement, schedule of field practicum hours and activities, experiential journal, and the Field Practicum Evaluation.

Evaluation begins at the onset of the semester when the student and the agency field instructor review expected outcomes for the field practicum. At mid-term and semester end, the agency field instructor rates the student's performance using the Field Practicum Evaluation form. The student submits the completed evaluation along with activity/time sheets and experiential journal in the manner described above. These materials are reviewed and constructive feedback is provided to the student by his or her faculty field liaison.

The field program has ultimate responsibility for the assignment of grades. Students must receive a grade of C or higher in order to pass the course. If the student disagrees with the evaluation, a narrative statement specifying the reasons should be submitted to the agency field instructor, faculty field liaison, and Field Director within one week after the Field Practicum Evaluation is due. Students are advised to maintain a copy of the evaluation for their own records. The completed evaluation forms become a part of the student's file.

In the case of serious difficulties, the School's counseling out policy has provisions for addressing concerns about student performance raised by the agency field instructor or the faculty field liaison. The procedures for counseling out are described in the BSW Student Handbook.

Evaluation of the field program is also ongoing and occurs in a variety of ways utilizing the Field Contact Form, Field Incident Form, Informal Feedback on Teaching, Informal Feedback on Faculty Field Liaison, Student Evaluation of Practicum, and Student Evaluation of Agency Field Instructor (see Appendixes H - M).

B. Criteria for Grading

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| 1. Class Attendance and Participation: | 20% of grade |
| 2. Learning Agreement: | 10% of grade |
| 3. Schedule of Field Practicum Hours and Activities: | 5% of grade |
| 4. Experiential Journal: | 25% of grade |
| 5. Field Practicum Evaluation: | 40% of grade |
- Submitted assignments will be evaluated and graded on: (1) content, (2) clarity, (3) specificity, (4) understanding of social work concepts, values, and ethics, (5) personal insight, (6) originality, (7) grammar, (8) spelling, and (9) promptness.
 - All hours of field practicum experience must be completed, as well as all activity/time sheets, journal entries, and evaluation forms submitted, to fulfill course requirements for grade assignment. The practicum is a 15-week course. Practicum hours and weekly assignments are expected to be distributed throughout the semester time frame. Therefore, anything less than 12 weeks of practicum experience will result in a failing grade.

- It is the student's responsibility to communicate any difficulties encountered in this process to the faculty field liaison and/or Field Director.

XIV. SUPERVISION

All undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in field practicum must participate in formal, face-to-face supervision for a minimum of 1 hour on a weekly basis with the assigned agency field instructor. This may be clinical and/or administrative supervision as appropriate for the student's learning needs and the structure of the practicum site. While occasional supervision sessions may be missed (e.g. due to illness, vacation), the student's activity time sheets must collectively reflect a pattern of regular contact and consultation with the AFI. Note that agencies and individual AFI may request or require supervision requirements above and beyond those of the Field Education Program or the field faculty may institute additional supervision requirements if the student manifests a practice concern.

This requirement is for the protection of both students and agency field instructors. AFIs who take on supervisory roles assume **vicarious liability** with students and other supervisees, and may therefore be held legally responsible in some part for the performance of supervisees. AFIs who are, or become, unable to meet the supervisory requirement must notify the assigned faculty field liaison immediately. If as a student you believe your supervision falls below standards, first address the issue directly with the AFI and consult the faculty field liaison for guidance.

XV. FIELD PRACTICUM POLICIES

A. Hours Required

All students are required to complete 240 hours of field experience for Field Practicum I (SWK 419) and 240 hours of field experience for Field Practicum II (SWK 429). Students are expected to establish and be accountable for a regular schedule in their practicum, generally 16 - 20 hours per week. The practicum experience must be distributed over a minimum of 12 weeks.

B. Compensatory Time

The student's schedule should be in accordance with the agency's policy regarding normal working hours. Occasionally, agency programs require some appointments outside of regular hours. This is a professional obligation that should be met by arrangements planned in advance between the student and agency field instructor consistent within agency policy and field practicum perimeters. Occasionally, opportunities may arise such as special trainings, conferences or service events. If these are congruent with the services provide by the agency and social work practice, these may be considered for inclusion in practicum hours with the prior approval of the agency field instructor. Only contact hours (hours actually spent in the training, etc.) may be counted as possible practicum hours, NOT travel, meals or other secondary activities. It is advisable to present any unusual practicum activities or commitments to the faculty field liaison for feedback and direction.

C. Field Practicum Days

Field practicum days should not interfere with class schedules. It is the student's responsibility to arrange or negotiate field days/hours that are compatible with his/her school and work schedule. Moreover, if the best learning for a student is facilitated by a flexible scheduling of hours, this may be arranged between the agency field instructor and the student.

D. Transportation

It is the student's responsibility to secure transportation to and from the field setting. The University has no funds with which to reimburse students for the use of their private automobiles and for other expenses incurred in the conduct of agency business.

E. Liability

The University carries malpractice liability insurance that provides coverage for students during the practicum enrollment period. However, under no circumstances should a field practicum student be left alone and responsible in an office or agency setting. At least one agency staff member must be present and available.

Supervising agency field instructors may be subject to vicarious liability for the performance of the student like any other supervisee.

If the student travels for agency purposes in his/her own or agency vehicle pursuant to field course activities, he/she should be quite clear about the coverage by agency insurance and his/her personal liability in case of accident. Under no circumstances should students transport agency clients in their own personal vehicles.

F. Holidays

Practicum schedules are designed to follow the academic calendar. However, some agencies may not observe all University holidays and breaks. Therefore, scheduling of field practicum hours should be determined early in the academic year/semester in conjunction with the agency field instructor.

G. Absences

The student should be allowed absence from field courses and practicum in cases of personal illness or when illness or death occurs in the immediate family. The student is required to notify the agency field instructor and the field program immediately. All practicum hours missed must be made up before a final semester grade will be given. Barring such emergencies, the student is expected to follow the practicum time guidelines as set up between the student and agency field instructor and the tardiness/absentee policies of the agency. Students are to give early attention to accounting for personal vacations or other planned activities that may interfere with competing practicum course requirements and to make the appropriate accommodations.

H. NASW Code of Ethics

The Code of Ethics 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. Students should familiarize themselves with these principles (see Appendix N). **In particular, confidentiality should be adhered to in all written assignments and class discussions.** Violation of the Code of Ethics could be grounds for dismissal from the field course.

I. Administrative Responsibility

Students are expected to understand agency values, policies, and procedures. No activity undertaken by the student should be to the detriment of clients, nor to the agency when it is pursuing its proper functions in the community.

J. Disability Accommodations

If you have a documented disability that may require assistance, you will need to contact the Disability Services (DS) for coordination of your academic accommodations. The DS is located in the Reynolds Student Services Complex, room 137. The phone number is 895-0866 (TDD 895-0652).

K. Mental Health Supports

At times the ability to balance the demands of a rigorous academic program, other life responsibilities, and internal stressors may become difficult thereby requiring professional intervention. Student Counseling and Psychological Services (895-3627) is available on campus to help students with concerns before these become more serious problems and to address crises. As a part of being self-aware, it is incumbent upon each social work student to understand his or her personal issues and limitations and to seek assistance through SCPS or other community resources when these have the potential to interfere with appropriate social work practice. Field faculty or their designees who identify or suspect significant mental health issues are encouraged to direct students to appropriate resources.

L. Petition Requirements

Placement of a student in a setting where he/she is employed will be considered only if the educational objectives of the field practicum are assured. The agency field instructor must be different from the student's work supervisor, practicum activities must be different from the current work experience, and the schedule of field practicum hours/days must differ from the student's work schedule. Students must petition and be approved for placement in their place of employment and must document that these requirements are met. Clear delineation between the employee role and student role must be provided in writing (see Appendix D).

The student may be required to submit a petition per the Field Director if an unusual or extraordinary situation is requested. In such circumstances, the student must provide written documentation clearly illustrating how the placement request complies with field objectives, policies and guidelines. Such documentation (like the employment site petition) must be submitted with the original signatures of the student, prospective agency field instructor and other individuals that may be closely linked to the situation. **All petitions must be approved by the Field Director prior to the beginning of the field practicum. Failure to obtain this approval may interfere with the student's ability to successfully complete field requirements.**

M. Previous Experience

The Field Education Program will not, under any circumstances, credit a student for work or volunteer experience acquired prior to enrollment in practicum courses. The rationale for this policy is based on the philosophy that learning is a continuous process. Thus, even an individual with extensive experience in a particular area can still benefit from the learning opportunities available via monitored, supervised fieldwork.

N. Counseling Out Policy

In some cases, the student may be advised that participation in field practicum is contradictory to his or her welfare or that of the clients or population they serve. Circumstances or situations that initiate the counseling out process are available through the School of Social Work. As far as the Field Education Program is concerned, any field, other School faculty, or designee (e.g. preceptor, agency field instructor) may recommend the initiation of this policy based on reasonable information that indicates that the student is not able or willing to function in accordance with School or professional standards. The discovery of dishonesty in the educational context (i.e. falsifying case information, copying peer papers, etc) can result in the initiation of this policy. Outcomes can range from consultation to delay in field practicum, to participation in field practicum under specified conditions, assignment of a failing grade to dismissal from the social work program. Students are advised of each stage in the process according to School policy.

O. Other Policies

The field education program follows grievance, non-discrimination and sexual harassment policies as outlined in the BSW Student Handbook.