

ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY		INSTRUCTOR:	Lisa Pieper
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK		OFFICE:	310 Rachel Cooper
Semester:	Fall, 2011	OFFICE HOURS:	By appointment
Course:	SWK 398.10	OFFICE PHONE:	309-834-5228
Section:	05	EMAIL:	lpieper@ilstu.edu

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE: FIELD INSTRUCTION I

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

Supervised field instruction and practice in social work methods with individuals, families, groups, and communities in a social welfare agency. 7 semester hours (Credit/No Credit).

Prerequisites: Completion of all major courses except SWK 398.11 and SWK 395; concurrent registration in SWK 394, SWK 337 and SWK 315 required; senior standing and formal admission to the major required.

Note: In order to proceed to SWK 395 and SWK 398.11, students must not only successfully complete SWK 398.10 but also must earn a grade of "C" or better in SWK 394.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

SWK 398.10 (Professional Practice: Field Instruction I) provides educationally-directed practice under the direct instruction and supervision of an approved agency-based field instructor and the oversight of a university-based Faculty Liaison. SWK 398.10 and the complementary and concurrent course, SWK 394 Field Instruction Seminar I, prepare students for generalist practice with individuals, families, groups, and communities. The field instruction courses assist students in consolidating their identification with the profession, integrating the knowledge, values, and skills acquired in classroom courses, applying that knowledge in the agency setting, and further developing generalist competencies.

SWK 398.10 requires a minimum of 300 hours of supervised practice in a field agency.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COURSES

The BSW field education courses provide the culminating experience for social work majors. The field courses assist students with the critical transition into professional practice. They build upon the knowledge, values, and skills developed during the previous foundation course work of the program. In conjunction with the field instruction seminar, these courses facilitate integration of foundation knowledge, development of generalist practice skills, and the development of a professional identity as a social worker.

COURSE GOALS

The goals for the course are to:

1. Facilitate integration of coursework with field education.
2. Enhance students' knowledge for generalist social work practice.

3. Promote development of professional behavior.
4. Increase identification as a social work professional.
5. Enhance awareness of the values and ethical principles for practice.
6. Develop comfort with clients from diverse cultural backgrounds.
7. Develop skill in establishing effective helping and professional relationships.
8. Foster acquisition of generalist practice skills
9. Increase awareness of the circumstances requiring client advocacy.
10. Develop skill in professional record keeping.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of the course, students will have achieved the following outcomes.
Students will be able to:

1. Apply social work values, ethics, and legal mandates in the practicum agency (e.g., limits to confidentiality, full disclosure, releases of information, mandatory reporting).
2. Behave professionally (e.g., maintain confidentiality, establish professional boundaries, maintain a professional presentation of self, establish collegial relationships, be reliable and diligent, give and receive constructive feedback).
3. Apply the primary practice approach(es) of the agency.
4. Critique professional/research literature relevant to the agency's field of practice.
5. Complete the stages of the casework/problem solving process with clients (i.e., intake/engagement, assessment, case planning, intervention, monitoring, evaluation, termination, and follow up) as conducted in the practicum agency.
6. Demonstrate verbal skills with clients (e.g., reflection, clarification, confrontation, reframing).
7. Engage community resources on behalf of clients.
8. Write the documents required in your placement following agency recording guidelines.
9. Advocate for the best interests of clients.
10. Assess one's responses to diverse clients.
11. Apply the policies and procedures of the agency.
12. Use field instructor's feedback to improve one's practice.
13. Assess professional development.
14. Plan for professional development.

REQUIRED READING

Main Texts

- Berg-Weger, M., & Birkenmaier., J. (2011). *The practicum companion: Integrating class and field work* (3rd ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- *BSW Field Manual*
<http://www.socialwork.ilstu.edu/programs/bsw/field/manual/index.html>

The manual provides a description of the curriculum, policies and procedures of the BSW field education program.

Required Reading from the Professional Literature

- Readings will be assigned by the field instructor and also may be identified by the student or the Faculty Liaison (see “BIBLIOGRAPHY AND FURTHER READINGS” below).

EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS

Self-directed Learning: As adult learners, BSW practicum students are expected to take an active role in planning, developing, and evaluating their field education. Agency-based field instructors and Faculty Liaisons are available as consultants in this process. Self-directed learning requires students to articulate their educational requirements and any concerns or difficulties they encounter in their placement.

Field students are expected to take an active role in planning, developing, and evaluating their field education. Students are expected to use agency field instructors and their faculty field liaisons as consultants in this process and to articulate their needs and any concerns or difficulties they experience during the field practicum. In addition, students are expected to act in a responsible and professional manner including keeping work commitments and notifying the field instructor of any absences in advance.

Ethical Practice: Students are expected to function as responsible professionals in their placement agencies. Professional behavior includes keeping work commitments and notifying the field instructor of any absences in advance. Students are expected to adhere to ethical standards of practice as explicated in the NASW Code of Ethics and in Section 6369 of the Illinois Clinical Social Work and Practice Act. Serious breaches of these standards may result in failure to receive credit for the practicum and/or other disciplinary measures.

Attendance and Participation: Students are expected to attend and participate in all field assignments. A student should not be enrolled in a field practicum if other obligations will interfere with getting to the field placement regularly and punctually.

Assignments: Promptness in completing assignment is a requirement. However, circumstances may arise which make it impossible to complete assignments on time. When such circumstances occur, appropriate arrangements must be made in advance whenever possible.

Written Work: Your written work should show thoroughness, accuracy, clarity and professionalism. Such writing generally requires first writing, then review, then editing and rewriting. All work should be carefully proofread and corrected; free of errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Nondiscriminatory Language: Oral presentations and written work should use non-sexist, non-racist, and non-stigmatizing language. Faculty may return papers for revisions in language prior to grading. Be sensitive to your use of language.

Missed or Late Work: If you miss a designed field practicum day, you are responsible for making up the time and the missed assignments. You are expected to complete all assignments in a timely manner. If you have any questions, contact you agency field instructor and Faculty Liaison immediately.

Special Needs: Students with special needs should notify the instructor immediately so that available accommodations can be made. Any student needing to arrange a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability should contact Disability Concerns at 350 Fell Hall, 438-5853 (voice), 438-8620 (TTY) or <http://www.disabilityconcerns.ilstu.edu/>.

Academic Misconduct: Plagiarism, cheating, and all other forms of academic misconduct are not only considered a violation of university regulations, but are also a serious breach of the ethical code of conduct for the social work profession. Students are expected to abide by the ethical standards of the profession. The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics is available on the Internet: <http://www.naswdc.org/>.

ASSIGNMENTS

The following three assignments are designed to facilitate and measure progress on the learning objectives for this course. Development and implementation of an *Integrated Learning Contract and Evaluation* document, completion and documentation of required hours in the agency, and evaluation of your practicum experience, are required. Written instructions are provided for all assignments.

Assignment #1: Integrated Practicum Learning Contract and Evaluation

Draft due: September 19, 2011

Completed version due: October 3, 2011

In collaboration with your agency field instructor and with consultation from your ISU Faculty Liaison, develop an Integrated Practicum Learning Contract and Evaluation that specifies the practicum assignments through which you will accomplish the course learning objectives and the nature and sources of the evaluation data that will be used to grade your performance. Instructions and the rating scale for evaluating your performance is included in the learning contract.

The template for the Integrated Practicum Learning Contract and Evaluation for SWK 398.10 BSW Professional Practice: Field Instruction I, FORM A, is available on the School's website as part of the BSW Field Manual. Students make three (3) copies each of FORM A specifying the field instruction assignments and the nature and sources of evaluation data at the beginning of each semester. One copy is submitted to the agency field instructor/task supervisors and one to the ISU Faculty Liaison. The third copy is retained by the student.

The learning assignments can be modified or added to at any time during the placement.

Practicum Evaluation: Formal evaluation of your performance on the practicum assignments will be made cooperatively by you and your field instructor using *the Integrated Learning Contract and Evaluation* at the conclusion of the course. The performance ratings are added to the original learning contract and any changes in the data used for evaluation are made in the contract. Your agency field instructor also provides a narrative evaluation of your performance.

These documents are reviewed by the ISU Faculty Liaison and provide the basis for discussion during the agency visit your Faculty Liaison makes at the conclusion of your field instruction course. The ISU Faculty Liaison meets with you and your agency field instructor/task supervisor to review your progress, determine your grade for the course, and plan for SWK 398.11. Evaluation of your performance on the assignments specified in your Integrated Practicum Learning Contract and Evaluation at the conclusion of SWK 398.10 provides the basis for developing your learning contract for SWK 398.11. The ISU Faculty Liaison has the ultimate responsibility for assigning the final grade for the course.

Required Field Learning Assignments: Field Instruction assignments create a structured learning experience conducive to acquiring professional competence. All assignments should increase the student's competence, independent functioning, and development of a professional identity.

Each field agency offers a unique opportunity to experience the many facets of social work practice. Client population, staff expertise, and services provided will vary from agency to agency. However, in order to acquire the CSWE mandated competencies certain categories of experience and the related assignments must be available in the practicum and must be specified in the learning contract.

The required categories of practicum experience are:

- Orientation to the agency — includes introduction to staff, facility, office procedures, information management system, agency mission, funding, table of organization, service programs, client demographics, policies and procedures including safety guidelines, practice methods, agency's place in the social service network, etc.
- Behaving professionally - includes maintaining confidentiality, managing professional boundaries, working diligently, being reliable, presenting a professional demeanor, etc.
- Practicing ethically – includes gaining clients' informed consent, full disclosure, explaining the limits to confidentiality, obtaining signed releases of information, mandatory reporting, etc.
- Responding with cultural competence to diverse clients – includes assessing one's responses to diverse clients, educating oneself about the clients' experience, and developing helpful responses to clients.
- Applying the primary practice approach(es) of the agency – includes identifying the approach(es) used, observing/shadowing staff using the approach with clients, using the approach with clients under supervision.
- Completing the stages of the casework/problem solving process (i.e., intake/engagement, assessment, case planning, intervention, monitoring, evaluation, termination, and follow up) as conducted in the practicum agency.
- Writing professionally — includes all required documents (e.g., assessments, case plans, case notes and summaries, referral letters, court reports).
- Developing interviewing skills with clients — includes reflection, clarification, confrontation, reframing, etc. Observation, and tape-recorded sessions provide the field instructor with data to aid students in further developing interviewing skill.
- Advocating for the best interests of clients – includes presenting a compassionate and fact-based understanding of client circumstances and needs to the field instructor and other

agency staff; intervening on behalf of clients with doctors, schools, other agencies, etc.; suggesting changes in agency policy.

- Reading and evaluating professional/research literature relevant to the practicum — includes reading material assigned by the field instructor or Faculty Liaison, locating and reading relevant professional literature, discussing the usefulness of the information for practice in the agency.
 - Participating in weekly and ad hoc supervision and consultation on practicum assignments including behaving professionally. Learning to use the supervisory relationship effectively is central to the student's professional development.
- Mezzo and macro practice — includes observation/participation in staff meetings, funding hearings, public relations functions, budget planning, grant writing or reading grants already funded, lobbying efforts, board meetings, contracting requirements, etc.
- Group practice — includes observation, participation, co-facilitation, and sole facilitation of psycho-educational and support groups; observation and participation in agency task groups including case staffings; and community task groups.
- Engaging community resource for clients — includes orientation to the local community social service network including the specific services provided by each agency and identifying any gaps in service; identifying the field agency's role in the community, telephone contacts with other agencies providing support services to clients; scheduled visits to key agencies with whom linkage for clients is most common; learning procedures for effective referrals; negotiating services for clients.

Additional assignments of particular interest to a student can be incorporated into the student's *Integrated Practicum Learning Contract and Evaluation* at any time during the placement.

Required Interviewing Assignment: As a practicum assignment included in the learning contract, you are required to conduct a minimum of two interviews with an individual client, family, group or community. Your field instructor or designee must be present for at least two such interviews over the course of the semester. Your interviews should demonstrate relationship building and assessment skills.

After completing each interview, write a critique of the interview using the format provided to you in the BSW Field Manual, Form O. Your agency field instructor or designee must complete the skills check list, review your overall performance and offer suggestions for improvement. In order to verify that this assignment is completed, submit the completed checklist and narrative summary to your ISU Faculty Liaison by the end of the fall semester.

Assignment #2: Completion and Documentation of Required Hours in the Agency

Due: Documentation is due to the ISU Faculty Liaison monthly or at the end of each semester.

You must begin and complete the required minimum 300 hours in your placement within the semester calendar. Only under extraordinary circumstances will you be granted an incomplete and permitted to complete the hours during the winter break. You must continue in your agency placement throughout the semester even if you complete the minimum requirement of 300 hours before the semester ends.

Keep a daily record of your agency hours on the Cumulative Time Sheet, FORM K, provided by the School of Social Work, in the BSW Field Manual available on the School's website.

Assignment #3: Student Evaluation of Field Placement

At the conclusion of the field instruction course, you must complete an evaluation of your placement and your field instructor/task supervisor using Student Evaluation of Field Placement. FORM L is available as part of the BSW Field Manual on the School's website.

GRADING

Field instruction I is graded Credit (CR) or No Credit (NC). Students must receive credit for SWK 398.10 to proceed to SWK 398.11. In addition, a student must pass SWK 394 with a grade of "C" or better in order to proceed to SWK 395 and SWK 398.11.

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