

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK
BSSW PROGRAM**

**SW480 – Field Practice Seminar
Fall 2005**

INSTRUCTORS:

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BSSW PROGRAM MISSION

The BSSW Program at the University of Tennessee exists to fulfill a need for disciplined, highly educated and trained generalist social workers to help people improve their social functioning in a technologically complex, culturally diverse, and rapidly changing society. There is a focus on the reciprocal relationships between persons and their environments. Social workers are doers; they are problem-solvers who are able to intervene in multiple-level systems and perform various professional roles. Their actions are guided and informed by a broad knowledge-base, code of ethics, and professional values. Social workers are educated and trained to do things right as well as to do the right thing.

The mission of the BSSW program is to develop generalist social workers who are strategic thinkers, life-long learners and opinion shapers. The knowledge-base, skills, and values necessary for generalist practice are taught in an environment that fosters professional development, critical thinking, and leadership and prepares students to take appropriate action guided by the best available scientific evidence. We are dedicated to preparing practitioners for the challenges of the twenty-first century. Since the amount of knowledge doubles approximately every five years, what is taught today may soon be obsolete. Our challenge, therefore, lies in the on-going development and implementation of a curriculum that prepares and energizes students for generalist practice today and in the future.

BSSW PROGRAM GOALS

Provision of education and training that enable students to become generalist social work practitioners who:

- are committed to advancing social and economic justice and the principles, values, and ethics that guide the social work profession.
- are committed to evidence-based practice.
- are grounded in systems theory and operate within a person-in-the-environment framework
- use the problem-solving process to intervene in multiple-level client systems
- have an understanding of human diversity and special populations that informs practice interventions
- use critical thinking, evaluative skills, and leadership skills to address the needs of a complex, changing society; and
- are committed to continuous development of professional self

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Sixteen-hour-per-week supervised agency field practicum for integration of theory and practice and critical examination of oneself as a professional helping person. Concurrent field seminar on integration of knowledge with practice experiences. **Prerequisite: Full progression.**

The two-hour weekly seminar is comprised of senior students and the seminar leader who also acts as consultant to the students' field practice agencies. The active participation of the student is required since

the seminar supports and supplements field instruction. Emphasis in the spring seminar is on the organizational context of practice, the community context of practice, the social work problem-solving process, and the professional context of practice.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

Garthwait, C.L. (2005) Third Edition. *The social work practicum: A guide and workbook for students*. Needham Heights: Allyn & Bacon.

SEMINAR RATIONALE

The seminar facilitates integration of classroom learning with the knowledge gained in field practice settings. The seminar encourages students to discuss their different agency settings, wide variety of client populations, and numerous field practice roles and field activities. The understanding of the professional role is strengthened and is enhanced beyond the individual student's own experience.

SEMINAR OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the seminar is to create a safe environment that fosters group collaboration/cooperation and provides students with opportunities to use critical thinking, self-reflection, and oral/written communication skills. Within this learning context, the objectives of this seminar are to promote an experiential understanding of:

1. the organizational context of practice
2. the community context of practice
3. the social work problem solving process
4. the professional context of practice

In this second field seminar, the expectation is that students will be able to demonstrate advanced ability to process their field experience.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVES

The behavioral objectives are found in the attached Field Practice Evaluation Form.

SEMINAR OUTLINE

- I. Introduction
 - A. Seminar structure and function
 1. review syllabus
 - B. Field Practice
 1. identification of field agency settings
 2. student concerns
 3. agency expectations
 4. learning plan
 5. behavioral objectives (see field evaluation form)
 - C. Field Practice Roles
 1. field consultant/seminar leader
 2. field instructor
 3. task instructor
 4. student
 - D. Review Field Manual
- II. The Organizational Context of Practice
 - A. Knowledge of the agency
 - B. Representing the agency
- III. The Community Context of Practice

- A. Awareness of the community needs and concerns
- B. Assessment of existing policies and programs
- C. Knowledge and utilization of community resources

IV. The Problem Solving Process

- A. Preparation for the client contact
- B. Relationship skills
- C. Clarification of role and purpose
- D. Interpersonal communication skills
- E. Information gathering and recording
- F. Definition of the problem
- G. Analysis of the information collected
- H. Contracting
- I. Termination of service
- J. Evaluation of the Intervention

V. The Professional Context of Practice

- A. Knowledge of the profession
- B. Handling of work expectations
- C. Use of supervision
- D. Integration of the professional role

ASSIGNMENTS

These assignments are designed to help the student integrate classroom learning with field. **Please keep in mind that writing quality, originality, creativity, critical thinking, clarity, and organization of ideas will be considered in the grading process of these assignments.** All assignments, with the exception of the field journal, must be typed and double-spaced.

1. The first assignment is a field journal which provides students with an opportunity for thinking and writing about their field practice experiences. The journal offers glimpses of concerns, insights, doubts, and issues. Students ask and answer critical, reflective questions about events, persons, or themselves. This reflective process enables students to learn from themselves; to contemplate on what they have seen, felt, and experienced. Please remember that a field practice journal is **NOT** just a log of tasks, events, times, and dates.

Some of the questions listed below may assist you in your reflective, critical thinking. However, do not allow these questions to constrain your thoughts, excitement, and expressions.

Examples of Reflective Questions

- What have I learned about myself through this experience?
- How has this experience influenced my thinking about my values?
- How has this experience challenged stereotypes or prejudices I have?
- What realizations or insights were gained through this experience?
- Does the experience compliment or contrast what has been learned in the classroom?
- What have I learned about the agency, clients, and/or community through this experience?
- If I was in charge, what would I have changed or done in this situation?
- What are some of the broader social, economic, and political issues that are influencing this situation/problem?

Each student will keep a daily field practice journal which specifically discusses what was attempted, experienced, accomplished, discussed, read, etc. It should reflect the integration of social work course material and field practice. The journal should include a field practicum log of the student's daily field tasks/activities, the written agenda developed for the weekly supervisory

conference, and the amount of time spent for your weekly supervisory conference. The journal will be handed in to the seminar leader each week. Students must use a two or three-ring binder to hold their journal entries. These journals are private and will only be read by the seminar leader. **(20%)**

2. The second assignment is a written and oral presentation on the student's field practice agency/program. Read chapter 8, "The Agency Context of Practice", and chapter 12 "Cultural Diversity" in Garthwait in preparation for this assignment. The 3-4 page report will be turned into the seminar leader with copies for all seminar participants on **September 29th**. The oral presentations will be made throughout the semester and will be scheduled in class.

The presentations should include the following information: **(10%)**

- history and philosophy of the agency/program.
- mission and goals
- administrative structure and staffing patterns
- legal and/or policy mandates
- funding
- primary client group; voluntary or non-voluntary
- eligibility requirements
- description of available services
- program evaluation mechanisms
- community needs and linkages
- human diversity
 - ▶ accommodations for clients with a physical or mental disability, including vision and hearing impairments.
 - ▶ accommodations for clients not fluent in English.
 - ▶ specify racial composition of clients.
 - ▶ special efforts made by agency to reach out to minority groups.
 - ▶ minority group representation on agency board or advisory board.
 - ▶ agency features or method of operation that discourages minorities from using services (e.g., racial & gender make-up of staff, location, or hours of operation)
 - ▶ identify grievance procedures for clients who feel they have experienced discrimination by agency or staff.

3. The third assignment is a written and oral discussion of an ethical problem at your agency. Identify an ethical problem, or potential problem, that you have become aware of, affecting some aspect of service delivery at your agency. Read chapter 13 on "Professional Social Work", chapter 14 on "Professional Ethics" and chapter 15 on "Legal Concerns" from Garthwait in preparation for this assignment. The following issues need to be addressed; (1) the underlying personal and professional values in this situation; (2) specific issues related to the Code of Ethics; (3) identify any relevant legal codes and your own moral code pertinent to this practice issue; and (4) discuss how you would handle this situation if you were in charge. The purpose of this assignment is to encourage you to critically evaluate formal and informal policies and practices at the agency, and/or the behavior of individuals, that may represent ethical problems. This 3-5 page paper will be turned in to the seminar leader along with an outline of your oral presentation on **October 27th**. Seminar presentations of ethical problems will begin then. At the conclusion of the oral presentation, the student is expected to facilitate a discussion of the material presented and also provide an opportunity for questions and answers **(10%)**.

GRADING INFORMATION AND CRITERIA FOR SEMINAR ASSIGNMENTS

JOURNAL ASSIGNMENT

The journal assignment is worth twenty points or **(20%)** of the grade for the course. Field practice extends over fifteen weeks but the journal grade will be based only on the entries for the ten submission

dates indicated. The entries for the first three submission dates are a time for practice and will not be graded. Students do not need to write a journal entry for the last three days of field in fall semester. The entries for each of the ten submission dates will be worth two points. The point value will be determined as follows: 1 point for reflective and critical thinking; one half point for content; and, one half point for writing. Daily journal entries must be reflective of your experience. Use the questions in the syllabus as a guide to assist you in this process. The seminar leader will provide written comments on our journal entries when appropriate.

The following information relates to journal collection and grades:

<u>FIELD DAYS</u>	<u>DATES SUBMITTED TO SEMINAR</u>	<u>GRADING INFORMATION</u>
8/29 & 8/31	9/1	No Grade
9/5 (Labor Day) & 9/7 - No field	9/8	No Grade
9/12 & 9/14	9/15	No Grade
9/19 & 9/21	9/22	Graded
9/26 & 9/28	9/29	Graded
10/3 & 10/5	10/6	Graded
10/10 & 10/12	10/13 (Fall Break - no seminar)	Graded
10/17 & 10/19	10/20	Graded
10/24 & 10/26	10/27	Graded
10/31 & 11/22	11/3	Graded
11/7 & 11/9	11/10	Graded
11/14 & 11/16	11/17	Graded
11/21 & 11/23	11/14 (Thanksgiving Break) (No Seminar)	Graded
11/28 & 11/30	12/1	Graded
12/5	----- No journal entry needed for the last day of field -----	

AGENCY PRESENTATION & ETHICAL PROBLEM

The written and oral presentations for the agency presentation and ethical problem will be graded as follows:

Coverage of Content	7 points
Writing Quality	1 point
Oral Presentation	2 points

Content will be evaluated based on how well the student has addressed all the items mentioned earlier in the assignment description. The agency assignment has bulleted items and the ethical assignment uses numbers.

Writing quality will be evaluated based on the organization and clarity of ideas, grammar, and punctuation.

The oral presentation will be evaluated based on the following; posture, engagement of audience

(including eye contact), volume of voice, and pace of speech. Students may use notes when presenting but may not read the prepared material (e.g. the actual paper). Use of multi-media is encouraged. This includes; handouts, power point, flip charts, and/or slides.

SEMINAR PARTICIPATION

Each student is expected to attend seminar every week and each is expected to actively and fully engage in seminar activities and discussions.

FIELD PRACTICUM

It is understood that each student is assigned to a specific field setting and is responsible for meeting with his/her field instructor in order to become informed of the specific parameters and expectations in this setting. For example, specifically clarify expectations regarding the agency's dress code. Punctuality, dependability and willingness to engage in this experience are some of the basic expectations for performance. If something occurs which causes you to be absent from field or late in arriving, notify our field instructor as soon as possible. Arrange to make up your missed field hours in a timely manner upon your return.

Learning Plans will be completed by the student and field instructor, highlighting specific tasks which will facilitate the student's professional competence as designated by the plan. The Learning Plan will be collected on **September 15th**. Column one should be completed. The plan will be collected again on **December 1 st**. At this time column two should be completed. ***Please keep a copy of your learning plan for your own records and use.***

The Final Evaluation will be completed by the field instructor with the student for the purpose of providing feedback to the student on his/her practice performance. Performance expectations may be discussed in class and students are encouraged to seek clarification when needed. It is advisable for students to review the evaluation form, with the field instructor, early in the semester.

Fall semester has 26 days of field practice or 208 clock hours.

GRADING

The grade for SW 480 will be assigned by the seminar instructor. Sixty percent (60%) of the grade will be based on the student's performance in field practice as evaluated by the field instructor in collaboration with the seminar instructor. Seminar assignments are worth forty percent (40%) of the final grade. The student may check with the seminar leader at any time to ascertain his/her standing. The following scale will be used for determination of the final grade:

A	100–90
B+	89–85
B	84–80
C+	79–75
C	74–70
D	69–60
F	59 and below

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Absences and tardiness are not permitted in this seminar. If you are absent or tardy **four or more times**, your course grade will be lowered one letter grade level. Tardiness is defined as arriving at seminar 10 minutes or more after class starting time.

HONOR STATEMENT

An essential feature of The University of Tennessee is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the University, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a documented disability or if you have

emergency information to share, please contact the Office of Disability Services at 191 Hoskins Library at 974-6087. This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

COURSE CALENDAR

8/25	First Seminar Meeting
8/29	Senior Field Begins
9/1	Seminar
9/5	Labor Day - No Field
9/8	Seminar
9/15	Seminar Learning Plans Due
9/22	Seminar
9/29	Seminar Agency Presentation Due
10/6	Seminar
10/13	Fall Break - No Field
10/20	Seminar Mid-Term Evaluations Due
10/27	Seminar
11/3	Seminar Ethical Problem Assignment Due
11/17	Seminar
11/24	Thanksgiving - No Seminar
12/1	Last Seminar For Fall Semester Learning Plans*/Final Evaluations Due*
12/5	Senior Field End for Fall

* Turn these items in to Gayle Lodato, Room 320 Henson Hall, who will forward to your seminar leader.