

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

**Field Practice Seminar
Social Work 380
Spring, 2003**

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 and prepares students for critical thinking throughout their careers. 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 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, and leadership skills to address the needs of a complex, changing society
- are committed to continuous development of professional self

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Eight-hour-per-week, supervised field experience with practice situations for developing professional skills, values and attitudes. Concurrent seminar focuses on integration of knowledge with practice experiences. **Prerequisite: Initial Progression.**

The two-hour weekly seminar is comprised of junior 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 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

Horejsi, Charles R. & Garthwait, Cynthia L.(2001). The Social Work Practicum: A Guide and Workbook for Students. Needham Heights: Allyn and Bacon Publishing Company.

SEMINAR RATIONALE

The seminar facilitates integration of classroom learning with 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 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:

- the organizational context of practice
- the community context of practice
- the social work problem solving process
- the professional context of practice

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

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVES

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

PERSONAL SAFETY TRAINING

Training for personal safety will occur early in your seminar. The seminar leader will announce the time. Read chapter 6 from the text.

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. competency contract
 - 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.** Characteristics of the community
 - B.** Awareness of existing policies and programs
 - C.** Knowledge of formal and informal resource networks
- 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.** Preliminary contracting
 - I.** Termination of service

- 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

IENTS

These assignments are designed to help the student integrate classroom learning with field practice. 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. The field practice provides an opportunity for thinking and writing about your 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 you were in charge, what would you 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 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. **(10%)**

2. The second assignment is the construction of a montage that reflects and describes your field placement. Read chapter 8 in the text as you begin thinking about this assignment. A montage is a composite photograph made by combining several items that symbolically reflect the program. Arrange these items on a 20 x 20 board. Make sure the arrangement is logical. Photograph the arrangement. In at least 250 words and no more than 275 words discuss the photograph. Point out the importance of each item in understanding the program. An example of this

assignment will be discussed in class and a more detailed set of instructions will be given at that time. The montage is due **March 28. (10%)**

3. The third assignment is the completion of two Observation Report Forms. Your seminar leader will provide further information regarding these reports. One observation report must be written about a cultural or religious celebration/activity that you attended that would be unfamiliar to you. An Observation Report is due on the following dates: **February 21 and March 7. (5%)**
4. The fourth assignment is a process recording. Process record one interview with a client using a model to be presented in class. **Paper is due March 14. (5%)**
5. The fifth assignment is a self-reflection and assessment paper about your junior field experience this semester. The paper should be at least three but no more than five pages in length. The paper is due **April 11**. The paper will include the following components:
 - a. Briefly describe what you learned from this experience in terms of content, skills, and/or process.
 - b. Reflect and assess how your personal growth and professional development were affected by this field practice experience. Specifically, discuss one or two things that were of greatest value to you or had the greatest impact on you.
 - c. Finally, comment on how this experience has impacted your current relationship to the social work profession. How do you feel about being a social worker? **(10%)**

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. Punctuality, dependability, and willingness to engage in this experience are some of the basic expectations for performance. Read chapters 1-5 in the text to prepare for your field experience and your work on your learning plan.

Learning Plans will be completed by the student and field instructor, highlighting specific tasks which will facilitate the students's professional competence as designated by the plan. The Learning Plan will be collected on **February 7**. Column one should be completed. The plan will be collected again on **April 25**. At this time, column two should be completed.

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. Final Evaluation will be collected on **April 25**, the last day of seminar.

GRADING

The grade for SW 380 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 and/or tardy four or more times, your course grade will be lowered one letter grade level.

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

Jan. 17	First Seminar Meeting
Jan. 20	Martin Luther King Holiday - No Classes
Jan. 22	Field Practice Begins
Jan. 24	Seminar
Jan. 31	Seminar
Feb. 7	Seminar Learning Plans Due
Feb. 14	Seminar
Feb. 21	First Observation Report Due
Feb. 28	Seminar
March 7	Second Observation Report Due
March 14	Process Recording Due
March 21	Spring Break - No Seminar
March 28	Seminar Montage Due
April 4	Seminar
April 11	Seminar Self-Reflection Paper Due
April 18	Spring Holiday - No Seminar
April 25	Last Seminar Day Field Evaluations Due Learning Plans Due
April 30	Last Day of Field Classes End

INSTRUCTORS:

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By appointment

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Tuesdays 3:30 - 4:30

By appointment

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