

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

**SW 380 - Field Practice Seminar
Spring 2006**

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By appointment

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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 world with out borders. 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 today's complex pluralistic world. 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, special populations, an domestic and international challenges, that informs practice interventions;
- use critical thinking, evaluative skills, and leadership skills to address the needs of a complex, changing global world; and
- 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 2 hr a week 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.

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 field manual on the Field Practice Evaluation Form(s).

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. (*Hilltopics, 2005*)

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 University of Tennessee Office of Disability Services at 2227 Dunford Hall at (865) 974-6087. This will ensure that you are properly registered for services. (*Hilltopics*)

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK -

***** This text is required for 380/480 and 481. Do not sell your book.*****

Garthwait, Cynthia L. (2005). The Social Work Practicum: A Guide and Workbook for Students. Needham Heights: Allyn and Bacon Publishing Company.

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 - **Chapter 1**
 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 - **Chapter 2**
 1. Field consultant/seminar leader
 2. Field instructor
 3. Task instructor
 4. Student
 - D. Review Field Manual

- II. The Agency Context of Practice - **Chapter 8**
 - A. Understanding the agency mission, goals and objectives
 - B. Understanding agency organization and administrative structure
 - C. Sources of funding and operating budget
 - D. Agency's history, structure and administrative procedures
 - E. Agency interaction with community and social welfare system

- III. Using Supervision - **Chapter 5**
 - A. Nature and Purpose
 - B. Types : Individual/ group, formal/ informal.
 - C. Levels of supervision within agency
 - D. Student responsibility in supervision
 - E. Styles of supervision

- IV. Diversity - **Chapter 12**
 - A. Adaptation of program practices to address concerns and needs of minority groups
 - B. Client experiences with minority status and discrimination
 - C. Legal and ethical prohibitions against discrimination
 - D. Personal beliefs and values and the impact on client relationship

ASSIGNMENTS

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 reflection, must be typed and double-spaced.

1. The first assignment is a weekly field reflection which provides students with an opportunity for thinking and writing about their field practice experiences. The reflection 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 reflection is NOT a log of tasks, events, times, and dates.**

The reflection entry includes a sentence or two describing the field practicum tasks/activities and answer at least one of the questions listed below. However, do not allow these questions to constrain your thoughts, excitement, and expressions.

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?

Each student will complete a weekly field practice reflection 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 reflection will be handed in to the seminar leader each week. These reflections are private and will only be read by the seminar leader. **(10%)**

Grading Information and Submission Information for the Weekly Field Reflection

This assignment is worth ten points or ten percent of the final grade for the course. Field practice extends over fourteen weeks but the journal grade will be based on the ten submission dates indicated as “graded”. On the first three submission dates, your entries must be submitted but will not be graded. This initial phase will be a time to practice reflective writing with feedback provided by your seminar leader. Students will not need to write entries for the last week of field in April. The entries for each of the ten submission dates will be worth one point. Point value will be determined as follows: one point for reflective and critical thinking (Answering one of the above reflective questions). Your entries must be reflective of your experience. Use the questions in the syllabus as a guide to assist you in this process. The seminar leaders will provide written comments on your entries when appropriate.

The following information further clarifies Weekly Field Reflection collection and grades.

<u>Field Days</u>	<u>Dates Submitted To Seminar</u>	<u>Grading Status</u>
January 18	January 20	Not Graded
January 23 & 25	January 27	Not Graded
January 30 & February 1	February 3	Not Graded
February 6 & 8	February 10	Graded
February 13 & 25	February 17	Graded
February 20 & 22	February 24	Graded
February 27 & March 12	March 3	Graded
March 6 & 8	March 10	Graded
March 13 & 15	March 17	Graded
March 20 & 22	Spring Break	No Entry
March 27 & 29	March 30	Graded
April 3 & 5	April 7	Graded
April 10 & 12	April 14	Graded
April 17 & 19	April 21	Graded
April 24 & 26	No entry needed for last week.	

2. The second assignment is the completion of two Observation Report Forms. Your seminar leader will provide further information regarding these reports. The first observation report is due on **February 24th** (5%). The second observation must be written about a culturally diverse experience/activity you attended. This assignment is due **March 31st** (5%). Each observation report will be graded as follows: 4 points for content; and one point for writing.
3. The third 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 preparation for this assignment. The 3-4 page report will be turned into the seminar leader with copies for all seminar participants on **March 10th**. (10%) Grading as follows; 8 points for content and 2 points for writing.

The oral presentations will be made throughout the semester and will be scheduled in class.

The presentations should include the following information:

- 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.

4. The fourth 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 14** (10%). 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?

The self-reflection paper will be graded as follows: 6 points for content, 2 points for reflective thinking, and 2 points for writing.

SEMINAR PARTICIPATION

Each student is expected to attend seminar every week and each is expected to actively and freely engage in seminar activities and discussions. Two points may be deducted from your final grade at the seminar leader's discretion due to a lack of participation.

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. The placement identifies specific tasks which will facilitate the students's professional competence as designated by the plan. The Learning Plan will be collected

on **February 3rd**. Column one should be completed. The plan will be collected again on **March 10th**. 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 21st**, the last day of seminar.

GRADING

The grade for SW 380 will be assigned by the seminar leader. 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 leader. 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

You are expected to **attend every session on time**. If you are absent two or more times, your course grade will be lowered one letter grade. Tardiness is defined as arriving 10 minutes after class scheduled start time.

SEMINAR CALENDAR

January 13	First seminar meeting Personal safety training will be scheduled during some of the January seminar meetings
January 16	Martin Luther King Holiday – No classes/field
January 18	Field practice begins
January 20	Seminar
January 27	Seminar
February 3	Seminar – Learning plans due
February 10	Seminar
February 17	Seminar
February 24	Seminar – Observation report due
March 3	Seminar
March 10	Seminar- Agency Paper Due -Mid-term evaluations due
March 17	Seminar

March 20-24	Spring Break & Spring Recess No classes or field practice
March 31	Seminar – Observation report regarding diversity due
April 7	Seminar
April 14	Seminar – Self-reflection paper due
April 21	Last seminar day Learning Plans and Field Evaluations due
April 26	Last day of field Classes end

Rev. 10/05