

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

**SW 380 - Field Practice Seminar  
Spring 2008**

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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**

120 hours, supervised field experience with practice situations for developing professional skills, values and attitudes. Concurrent weekly seminar focuses on integration of knowledge with practice experiences.

**Prerequisite: Completion of SW 312 (Practice I)**

The 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** Upon completion of junior and senior field and seminar, students are expected to:

1. Assess the relationship between people and social institutions
2. Develop a goal oriented plan based on assessment and empowerment
3. Enhance problem solving, coping and development skills of population served
4. Link people to available services
5. Recognize the historical mission of social work with vulnerable populations
6. Advocate for social justice and equity
7. Use research and other evaluative measures to ensure effective interventions
8. Assess one's own skill, knowledge base and professional role
9. Identify and analyze policies impacting services
10. Utilize Person in Environment and theoretical knowledge in working with clients
11. Adhere to NASW Code of Ethics

### **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*)

### **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.

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOK -**

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

Garthwait, Cynthia L. (2008). Fourth Addition. The Social Work Practicum: A Guide and Workbook for Students. Needham Heights: Allyn and Bacon Publishing Company.

**SEMINAR OUTLINE**

- I. Introduction
  - A. Seminar structure and function
    1. Review syllabus
    2. Safety in Field
  - B. Field Practice -
    1. Identification of field agency settings
    2. Student concerns
    3. Agency expectations
    4. Competency contract
    5. Behavioral objectives (see field Learning Plan & Evaluation Form)
  - C. Field Practice Roles -
    1. Field consultant/seminar leader
    2. Field instructor
    3. Task instructor
    4. Student
  - D. Review Field Manual - on line - Website.
- II. The Agency Context of Practice
  - 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
  - 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
  - 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
- V. Preparing for Generalist Social Work Practice

## 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.**

1. The first assignment is a 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 answers 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 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. These reflections will only be read by the seminar leader. Confidentiality should be practiced

### Grading Information and Submission Information for the Field Reflection

This assignment is worth five points or five percent of the final grade for the course. Field practice extends over eight weeks and reflections must be submitted every two weeks in field seminar. The entries for each of the four 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. One additional point may be awarded at the discretion of the field consultant.

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 **March 6<sup>th</sup>** (5%). The second observation must be written about a culturally diverse experience/activity you experienced. This assignment is due **April 3<sup>rd</sup>** (5%). Each observation report will be graded as follows: 4 points for content; and one point for writing.
3. The third assignment is a black board assignment **due March 27<sup>th</sup>**. The focus of the assignment is on the student's field practice agency/program and the type of service(s) provided. Read chapter 8, "The Agency Context of Practice" in preparation for this assignment. You will post on blackboard a document outlining:
  - brief history and philosophy of the agency/program.
  - mission and goals

- administrative structure and staffing patterns
- legal and/or policy mandates
- funding source(s)
- primary client group; voluntary or non-voluntary
- eligibility requirements
- description of available services - Main method of service
- type of intervention - find at least one article that provides empirical evidence supporting or challenging the intervention.
- program evaluation mechanisms that seek to measure the effectiveness (or lack thereof) of Interventions
- community needs and linkages

(10%) Grading as follows; 8 points for content and 1 point for writing.

**An additional one (1) point will be awarded** for a one page sheet with the information below will be distributed to each of your classmates. This page will be given to all seminar participants as well as the leader to be included in your reference manual and practice guide. A table of contents will be completed in the end of the BSSW field seminar (SW 481) including the category of services and interventions broken down with tabs for future reference.

- Name of Agency
- Location(s)/Address(s)/contact information(s)
- Brief description of Services/Programs provided
- Funding/services/treatment criteria - referral process

4. The fourth assignment is a Professional self 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 17** (10%). The paper will include the following components:

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

- A. Include a copy of your senior field planning sheet - which will have been turned in to the Field Coordinator by April 3rd.
- B. Briefly describe what you learned from this experience in terms of content, skills, and/or process.
- C. 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.
- D. 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?

### **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. **A total of 5% of your grade is awarded by the Field Consultant based on Discussion Board and class 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 14th**. The middle Column should be completed. The plan will be collected again on **April 10th**. At this time, the third column 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 10 th**, your grade will be lowered one letter grade if the final learning plan is not submitted by the last day of seminar - April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

### **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 more than once, your course grade will be lowered one letter grade. Tardiness is defined as arriving 10 minutes after class scheduled start time.

### **SEMINAR CALENDAR**

January 11	First seminar meeting - Chapters 1-4 &6 in Garthwait Text Personal safety training
January 18	Second Seminar - Bio Hazzard Training - Chapters 1-4 &6 in Garthwait Text
January 25	Third Seminar - Learning plans and roles - Chapters 1-4 &6 in Garthwait Text
January 28 <sup>th</sup> and 30 <sup>th</sup>	Field Begins - two 4 hours days (8 hrs)

January 31st	Seminar - no reflection due
February 4&6 February 7th	two 8 hour days(16 hrs) Online Seminar - black board posting
February 11&13 February 14	two 8 hour days(16 hrs) Seminar - Learning Plans Due - Reflection Due (1 point)
February 18&20 February 21	two 8 hour days (16hrs) Online Seminar - Blackboard Posting- Chapter 8 in Garthwait Text
February 15&27 February 28	two 8 hour days (16 hrs) Seminar - Reflection Due ( 1point) - Chapter 8 in Garthwait Text
March3&5 March 6	two 8 hour days (16hrs) Online Seminar - Observation Report Due - Blackboard posting - Chapter 5 in Garthwait Text
March 10&12 March 13	two 8 hour days (16hrs) Seminar -Mid Term Evaluations Due, Reflection Due (1 point)- Chapter 10 in Ward/Mama (copied)
March 20	Spring Break No classes or field practice
March 14&26th March 27th	two 8 hour days (16hrs) Last week of Field Seminar - Third assignment - Field Agency Paper Due - Reflection Due (1 point) - Chapter 12 in Garthwait text
March 31 <sup>st</sup> & April 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Make up Field Days
April 3	Seminar – Chapter 13 in Garthwait Text, Chapter 11 in Ward/Mama (copied)
April 10	Online Seminar - Diversity Observation Due - Blackboard posting
April 17	Seminar - Professional Self Paper Due - Final Learning Plans and Field Evaluations Due