

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

**SW 481 - Field Practice Seminar
Spring 2008**

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| Instructor: | Sharon Hammat | Instructor: | Heather Parris |
| Phone: | 675-5045 (H) 974-3352 (O) | Phone: | 974-7504 |
| E-Mail: | ghammat@aol.com | E-mail: | hparris@utk.edu |
| | Thursday - 5:15 - 6:15 pm | Office Hours: | Office Hours: Thursday 2:30-3:30 PM |
| | 310 Henson Hall | | 322 Henson Hall |
| | By appointment | | By appointment |

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 without 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.

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, and 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

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 weekly two hour 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.

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:

- a. the organizational context of practice
- b. the community context of practice
- c. the social work problem solving process
- d. the professional context of practice

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

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVES Upon completion of 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, 2007*)

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.

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

TEXTBOOKS

***** This text is required for 380, 480 and 481.**

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

SEMINAR OUTLINE

- I. Review of Syllabus
 - A. Assignments
 - B. Field Practice - Behavioral Objectives (see field evaluation form)
 - C. Learning Plan (Field Manual)
 - D. Purpose of Supervision - **Chapter 5**
 - E. Diversity - **Chapter 12**

- II. The Community Context of Practice - **Chapter 9**
 - A. The impact of the community on social functioning of clients served
 - B. Analysis of community resources and needs
 - C. Community forces that impede/support social change

- III. The Social Problem Context of Practice - **Chapter 10**
 - A. Conditions, needs and problems faced by clients
 - B. Human and social conditions that result in programs/services provided by various agencies
 - C. Various theories regarding cause of social problems
 - D. Influence of theories on policies and programs
 - E. Influence of theories on operation and administration of services
 - F. Political power and influence that elicit community efforts or minimize social conditions

- IV. Social Work Practice - Planned Change - **Chapter 16**
 - A. Fundamental beliefs about change guiding services and programs
 - B. Various perspectives, models and theories that plan/guide interventions
 - C. Data gathering and assessment tools used in agency
 - D. Effectiveness of social work interventions
 - E. Use of evaluation tools in field practice

- V. Merging Self and Profession - **Chapter 18**
 - A. Clarify motivation in choosing a social work career
 - B. Types of social work practice you prefer
 - C. Impacts of social work practice on physical and mental health of worker
 - D. Impacts of social work practice on family, friends and economic situation of worker

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 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 reflection is NOT a log of tasks, events, times, and dates.

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.

Reflective Questions:

A.

- 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?

B.

- 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?

Grading Information

The reflection 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 reflection will be handed in to the seminar leader each face to face seminar (bi weekly) except for the last week of the semester. These reflection are private and will only be read by the seminar leader. **(8%)**The seminar leaders will provide written comments on your entries when appropriate. An additional 2 points will be awarded at the discretion of the Seminar Leader.

2. As in SW 480 the second assignment is a required preparation and participation in treatment team during seminar sessions. Each seminar will be modeled after a traditional agency treatment team. Each student **MUST present 2 times during the fall semester** providing information in the provided format as well as provide feedback to peers weekly. Each week one sheet of paper should be provided to each seminar participant by the presenters with the below information. These should be kept in a three ring binder to provide resources along with assignment four in this seminar.

The presentations should include the following information:

- A. Previous treatment history - previous policy practice, previous services/interventions etc
- B. Presenting Problem - current dilemma, concern, struggle (desired area of focus for feedback)
- C. Knowledge of Current Best Practices - Literature/theory/HBSE/Micro/Macro or other sources (agency method) supporting current intervention/services.
* Other factors/resources to consider not supported by literature
- D. Track Feedback - provide follow up from previous week - review suggested literature - resources and give feedback as to whether intervention was effective.

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 practice questions, ethical problems or other considerations during implementation of practice. This assignment is worth **10%** of your seminar grade. 5% for your problem brought to team/5% for your

feedback to peers.

3. The Third Assignment consists of 6 online seminar sessions during which 5 postings will be submitted. This information can be located in your Garthwait text with in the assigned chapter. These 5 assignments are each worth 2 points ,equal 10% of your seminar grade. These assignments are to encourage your professional growth and use of social work terms and skills in your practice as well as further defining evidence based practice.
4. The fourth assignment is a self-assessment of your readiness for Professional Success. The UTCSW-BSSW Program is dedicated to preparing practioners for the challenges of today's complex pluralistic world. In order to maintain motivation, compassion, healthy emotional and intellectual well being it is very important to be self aware. Every individual has strengths and weaknesses, as well as activities we engage in to replenish and protect ourselves. Refer to the material in the reading from Alle-Corliss text, Keeping Alive in Agency Settings, Chapter 9 and use this as a guide to assess your readiness/preparedness for social work practice. Select at least five warning signs that you feel are indicators that you are crossing a professional boundary, working harder than the client, not taking care of yourself. Then select an equal number of strengths and skills that you currently are confident with that you can utilize to counter balance your personal/professional self. Personal development is highly critical in order for you to become a more effective social worker and avoid burnout. Give examples of persons/situations where you received feedback indicating these were areas that needed further growth and "proof" that the coping skills selected are helpful.
This 4-6 page paper is due by **April 10th. (10%)**

This assignment will be graded as follows: Insight and Reflection of personal self in practice = 8 points; and problem solving - solution focus model = 2 points.

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. Two points (2%) may be added or deducted from your final grade at the seminar leader's discretion due to a lack of participation.

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.

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 **January 24th**. Column one should be completed. The plan will be collected again on **April 24th**. 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 evaluations are due on **April 24th**.

GRADING

The grade for SW 481 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:

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

COURSE CALENDAR

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|-------------------------------|---|
| January 9th | Senior field resumes |
| January 10th | Field seminar resumes - Review Chapter 5 and Field Manual/Syllabi |
| January 14th | Martin Luther King Holiday – No classes/field |
| January 17 | Online Seminar - Census/Community Agency Assessment Chapter 9 Pg. 98-105 - Answer Questions 1,2,3,5,6,7, 13 &15 |
| January 24th | Seminar – Learning Plans due |
| January 31 st | Online Seminar Census/Community Agency Assessment Chapter 9 Pg 98-105 - Answer Questions 16,18,20,22,26,27,28,30, 33 &35 |
| February 7 | Seminar |
| February 14 | Online Seminar – Chapter 10 Pg 112-117 - Answer Questions 1,4,5,12,13,14,15,16,17,19,20 &22 |
| February 21st | Seminar – Mid-term evaluation due |
| March 6th | Seminar |
| March 13 | Online Seminar - Chapter 16 Pg 206-212 - Complete questionnaire and identify area(s) which you do not feel you have enough info-knowledge - Where will you go obtain this information? |
| March 17th-21st March 20 | Spring Break - No field No seminar |
| March 27th | Online Seminar - Read Chapter 18 and Alle/Corliss Chapter 9 - begin fourth assignment - Continue to complete questionnaire Chapter 16 |
| April 3 | No Seminar/ Research Fair |
| April 10 | Seminar Fourth Assignment Due - Self Readiness for Practice |
| April 17 | Online Seminar - Provide follow up to Chapter 16 unanswered/unknown questions and indicate whether this is now adequately answered or is there a further need for assessment/monitoring? |
| April 21 and 23 April 24th | Last Field Days. Last seminar day - Learning plan and Final Evaluation Due |
| April 25th | Classes End |