

**FONTBONNE UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK
FIELD EDUCATION POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL
BSW PRACTICUM**

INTRODUCTION

Fontbonne University's Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) Program revolves around the University's mission "to serve the dear neighbor without distinction". The Fontbonne Community welcomes you!

Students have full responsibility for:

- Fully informing themselves of and being responsible for all academic policies, procedures, regulations and requirements, such as general education, major, minor, concentration, certification and graduation requirements.
- Knowing with clarity their progress in their academic program by thoroughly reviewing their degree audit and by regularly scheduling meetings with their academic advisor.
- Fulfilling the general education, major program and graduation requirements identified in this manual and the University Policy Manual VI.

Mission Statement for Bachelor of Social Work Program

Fontbonne University's Bachelor of Social Work Program prepares students to utilize social work knowledge, values, and skills for generalist social work practice. We are a community of learners called to "serve the dear neighbor without distinction," according to the mission and heritage of our founders, the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Carondelet.

We seek to prepare social workers who are ethical professionals committed to social and economic justice as they serve and empower individuals, families and communities.

Program Values

The code of values brings meaning, purpose and direction for the Social Work Program.

Academic excellence through scientific inquiry, critical thinking and life long learning;

Service to others;

Unity in diversity;

Understanding the importance of human relationships;

Integrity and competence;

Social and economic justice;

Striving for Universal Human Rights; and

Dignity and potential of all human beings.

Fontbonne University Values and Mission Statement

Fontbonne University honors the values and heritage of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet by fostering excellence, integrity, respect, diversity, community, justice, service, faith and Catholic identity.

Fontbonne University is committed to:

1. Achieving academic and educational excellence
2. Advancing historical remembrance, critical reflection and moral resolve
3. Promoting dialogue among diverse communities
4. Demonstrating care and respect for each member of the community
5. Serving the larger community
6. Preparing individuals to be an ethical and responsible presence to the world.

University Mission Statement

Fontbonne University, a Catholic coeducational institution of higher learning sponsored by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, is rooted in the Judeo-Christian tradition. The university is dedicated to the discovery, understanding, preservation and dissemination of truth. Undergraduate and graduate programs are offered in an atmosphere characterized by a commitment to open communication, personal concern and diversity. Fontbonne University seeks to educate students to think critically, to act ethically and to assume responsibility as citizens and leaders.

Bachelor of Social Work Program Goals

The goals of the undergraduate Social Work Program are to prepare students with the knowledge, values and skills for generalist social work practice.

1. Prepare students for generalist professional practice and/or graduate studies in social work.
2. Prepare students to understand the values and ethics of the social work profession and how to integrate the values and ethics into practice.
3. Prepare students who strive for social and economic justice, defend human rights, and serve diverse populations.
4. Prepare students to use critical thinking and scientific inquiry to guide professional practice.
5. Prepare students to understand the role of social policy in advancing justice and the delivery of effective social work services.
6. Prepare students to develop and understand professional growth, competency and integrity.
7. Prepare students to function effectively within agencies and social services delivery systems by using field education for practice, supervision and consultation.
8. Provide students an educational heritage founded in the unifying values of the university's Catholic identity, the Charism of the Sisters of St. Joseph and the Mission of Social Work.
9. Prepare students to integrate the liberal arts perspective and respect science, faith, philosophical, and moral reasoning as they pursue knowledge and life long learning.
10. Respond proactively to the impact of political and economic trends, technological and biomedical advances, and issues of environmental sustainability on the future of the society.

CSWE Social Work Practice Competencies

Competencies represent a specified set of generalist social work practice behaviors that students will be able to perform upon graduation.

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Competency 4: Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

BSW CURRICULUM AND FIELD EDUCATION

The foundation social work courses at Fontbonne University build the knowledge, skills, values and cognitive/affective processes in generalist social work concepts and theoretical frameworks while the field education program allows students the opportunity to implement behaviors and tasks that represent and embody the nine competencies in a field setting through practica experiences. Moreover, students learn core social work models through: Introduction to Social Work, Human Behavior and the Social Environment, Diversity and Social Justice, Generalist Social Work Practice I, Generalist Social Work Practice II: Individuals and Families, Generalist Social Work Practice III: Communities, Groups, and Organizations, Social Work Policy, Spirituality and Professional Practice, Research Methods, and Professional Practice. Then students enroll in Social Work Field Education I and Social Work Field Education I Seminar and progress to Social Work Field Education II and Social Work Field Education II Seminar where they are given the opportunity to put their classroom education into action. With this coursework, students will be able to translate their knowledge, skills, values and cognitive/affective processes from the classroom environment to the real world setting.

In general, student will use the coursework to gain the necessary background education and the fieldwork is where they will apply and test that education. Students will be able to rely on both their field instructor for guidance and the seminar, along with their academic advisor and other social work faculty members. Their field instructor will meet with them every week and provide feedback on their behaviors and subsequent understanding of the competencies. The seminar class will enrich and expand their field experience by providing further individual and group projects. In addition, the seminar class will also serve as an informal evaluation to ensure students are reaching their goals and improving competency through the behaviors (even though there will be formal evaluations). Further, students can bring challenges to the class and exchange ideas with their peers.

Specifically, the student will be able to understand the history of social work, develop a commitment to social work values and learn to advocate for vulnerable populations. Then, as the student progresses through the foundation courses, s/he will begin practicum work where they may translate their knowledge into the field. Students will assume the role of a social worker and carryout social work roles and responsibilities. Students, with the help of the field instructor, will further be able to assess, analyze, and problem-solve in the field. Students will also use the practicum setting to better understand how social systems impact an individual's behavior and choices. Through practica, students also learn to embrace diversity and treat all individuals with respect. Further, students promote human and civil rights and advocate for social, economic and environmental justice while at practicum sites. Students in collaboration with their field instructor incorporate research into their social work practice while engaged in practicum work. Students learn about what policies impact the clients their working with at their practicum sites and discuss pertinent policy issues in the Field Seminar classes. Moreover, students recognize the important influence of context and adjust their social work practice accordingly. Students continually engage, assess, intervene and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities throughout their practica experiences collaboratively with their field instructor and with feedback from both their peers and instructor in their field education seminar classes.

Along with both the coursework and fieldwork, there are other layers of structure to help students succeed as generalist social workers at Fontbonne University. In field education, there are course instructors, field instructors, seminar instructors, guest speakers, staff members, peer

groups, library resources, and internet resources that work together to ensure students are learning how to effectively implement evidence-based practices in the field. Furthermore, at Fontbonne, we not only want to teach our students how to implement evidence-based practices, but we want to teach them the over-arching method of how to be an evidence-based practitioner.

The practicum experience is the fundamental foundation of the bachelor's of social work degree focused on creating competent generalist practice social workers through the application of knowledge, skills, values and cognitive/affective processes bridging the classroom with the field. In the field, students will learn to apply relevant social work theories and research while developing and honing their abilities through the quintessential educational experience of practica.

In practica, students are actively learning and are expected to be translational thinkers – applying their classroom knowledge to the field and integrating all aspects of learning, focusing on critical thinking, affective reactions and exercising judgment. Both the coursework and field enrich the students' academic experience through their practice sites, field instructors, faculty advisors and department members all contributing and working together to create competent generalist practice social workers. To assure students are capitalizing on all opportunities available through the practicum experience, the program is competency-designed with specific behaviors and associated tasks/activities that will be developed and measured through the field experience. Moreover, goals, objectives and competencies of the practica experience have associated behaviors that will be evaluated with the practica behaviors assessments and formal evaluation process.

PRACTICUM PROCESS

When a student decides to declare a social work major, they must be admitted into the program. Upon acceptance into the social work program, students may begin completing the core social work classes. Once the core social work courses are satisfactorily completed, students must complete an orientation to field education workshop, meet with the Director of Field Education and then may begin to complete their practicum and practicum seminar classes. Social work majors are required to complete two practica experiences along with concurrent seminars. Each practicum is a minimum of 240 hours in the field for 4.0 credit units and each seminar meets for 2 hours a week during the 16-week semester for 2.0 credit units. Collectively, there are 12.0 credit units of practica and practicum seminars that social work majors complete, typically during the fall and spring of their senior year.

Students are first introduced to field education through their Generalist Practice I course when they receive a brief orientation, take field trips and tours to local social service agencies, and collectively complete 100 hours of exposure to the social work field. These exposure hours give the students an idea of the different areas of social work and where they may want to complete their practicum experience; the course incorporates agencies that serve a diverse population from older adults to young children and several distinct areas of social work practice, including, but not limited to: gerontology, child welfare, homelessness, faith-based organizations, school social work, domestic violence, victim services, administration, as well as other social work practice areas. When students are enrolled in their first practicum course, they will receive a 3-hour orientation workshop prior to placement in conjunction with advising and will be followed up through their concurrent practicum seminar class. After a student has completed their prerequisites (the introduction and core social work courses, student field orientation, and meeting with the Director of Social Work), they may enroll in Practicum I and Practicum Seminar I. When enrolling, their faculty advisor will inform the student about the general field education policies and procedures and show student where additional resources are available on the social work field

education web page where the Field Education Policies and Procedures Manual is posted which includes details about the process. Moreover, the faculty advisor will outline the roles and responsibilities of the student, along with the self-selection process used to determine a practicum site. Details of this process are outlined in the role of the student section that follows.

ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS IN FIELD EDUCATION

Role of the Student

The Social Work Department incorporates a student-driven structured model for practicum site selection. While relying on social work faculty and on-line resources, students are granted the responsibility to select their own unique practicum site. At a practicum site of their choosing, they can develop generalist practice competencies for their educational goals. Students use their self-determination in conjunction with Departmental resources to create an optimal learning environment. This student-driven structured model begins with students participating in a 3-hour field education orientation and subsequent enrollment, after submitting a request for practicum form to the Director of Field Education. The Director then notifies students and their academic advisor their form has been successfully submitted and the student may proceed to schedule an initial planning meeting with the Director of Field Education. After their initial planning meeting, students may proceed to contact potential approved practicum sites (organizations and institutions within the community that have successfully applied and been approved) and participate in interview protocols with the professionals employed by the practicum site who would serve as their trained field instructor. (Training process for field instructors is outlined in the field instructor section of this manual).

Selecting a site is similar to gaining employment. The student arranges both informal and formal interviews to gather information about the potential site and to determine if there is an appropriate fit between the student, field instructor, and agency. The student should prepare by gaining background information on the organization, its mission and goals and formulating any questions they have for the interview process. They should also have a resume that outlines their prior work experience and academic achievements along with areas of interest. In the actual formal interview with a field supervisor, students should highlight their strengths and explain what they hope to learn from the practicum experience with this organization. The potential field instructor will cover expectations and will explain what tasks the student would be doing while on site to develop their competence. At this point, the student may begin to negotiate what tasks will develop their competency and associated behaviors with the field instructor to determine if this particular practicum site could offer what the student needs to accomplish their individual goals. In addition, students should verify that the potential field instructor is certified or willing to become certified through the St. Louis Field Education Collaborative.

If this process yields a positive fit, then the student proceeds by completing the Practicum Registration Form and submitting it to the Director of Field Education through the online system available with a link on the social work department's web page. The Director of Field Education will then contact the organization to verify the placement. The Director of Field Education makes the final decision of approval of practicum site and field instructor. If the student chooses to complete a practicum with a field instructor that has a non-social work degree, then their next practicum must be completed with a field instructor that has a social work degree. The student then proceeds to complete the Practicum Learning Agreement form with their field instructor that outlines the nine competencies and specific behaviors with associated tasks and activities for the

practicum experience. The Practicum Learning Agreement is due to the Director of Field Education within the first 4 weeks of the semester, regardless of when the student starts practicum.

The student is expected to following the protocol and policies of their practicum site. If the student has any challenges or concerns, the student should contact their advisor and the Director of Field Education. Any issues, problems, or questions should be addressed immediately with the Director of Field Education.

Summary of Steps for the Student and Practicum

- 1) Attend the Field Education for Student Orientation Workshop and Submit a Request for Practicum Form (completed during the Orientation Workshop)
- 2) Enroll in Social Work Field Education I/II and Social Work Field Education I/II Seminar
- 3) Schedule a meeting with the Director of Field Education
- 4) Prepare by researching potential practicum sites, contact potential sites, and schedule interviews
- 5) Interview at a minimum of 3 sites for Practicum I or 2 sites for Practicum II
- 6) Discuss your interviews with the Director of Field Education, Departmental Academic Advisor or Practicum Seminar Faculty Instructor
- 7) Select a Site
- 8) Begin practicum and collaboratively work on your Practicum Learning Agreement with your Field Instructor
- 9) Begin tracking your practicum hours with the TimeSheet form available through the Field Education web page.
- 10) Submit your Practicum Learning Agreement online to the Office of Field Education within the first 4 weeks of the semester via the Field Education web page
- 11) Schedule a site visit with your Field Instructor and the Director of Field Education or Practicum Seminar Faculty Instructor to be completed during the middle of the practicum placement
- 12) Mid-semester evaluation form will be completed by the site visitor after the mid-term site visit has taken place (the exact date will be determined in the seminar class)
- 13) Final evaluation form need to be completed by your field instructor, reviewed together, and submitted online to the Office of Field Education by end of the semester (the exact date will be determined in the seminar class) along with your practicum timesheet via the Field Education web page
- 15) Student evaluation of Practicum Experience form needs to be submitted online into the Office of Field Education upon completion of the practicum via the Field Education web page

Role of Field Instructors

The following eligibility requirements are used to determine who qualifies as a Field Instructor at the selected and approved participating organizations:

- 1) A Bachelor's in Social Work degree from a CSWE accredited school or related field;
- 2) Three years of successful practice in the social work field following the completion of the degree;
- 3) Employment at the agency for at least one year;
- 4) Willingness and availability to meet with a student for a minimum of one hour per week of face-to-face feedback and supervision;
- 5) Support and permission of agency's administration for student practica;

- 6) Commitment to completing the Field Instructor Certification Program through the St. Louis Field Education Collaborative (Collaborative) as a new field instructor (sessions 1 and 2 must be completed before working with a student);
- 7) Commitment to attending one Collaborative event each year once certified;
- 8) Commitment to becoming re-certified as necessary by attending 15 hours of continuing education in the area of practice every three years;
- 9) Understanding of generalist practice and the 9 competencies of foundation level social work;
- 10) Willingness to help the student integrate theory and classroom learning through developing behaviors in the field;
- 11) Familiarity with community resources;
- 12) Ability to work cooperatively with the Department; and
- 13) In good standing with the professional community.

Individuals who meet the guidelines (above) may assume the role of field instructor; the status within the University is that of a volunteer. Individuals interested in becoming field instructors may complete an application found on the St. Louis Social Work Field Education Collaborative website (www.fieldedu.com). As a Fontbonne University field instructor, individuals may: attend the annual appreciation event in March, use the University library, receive continuing education credits, and audit classes/workshops at discounted rates. Field instructors may contact the Office of Field Education at Fontbonne University to use any of these privileges. Field instructors may also serve on committees or task forces within the University to assist the Office of Field Education.

The field instructor's primary role is to provide guidance to the student during her/his field experience regarding the knowledge, skills, values, cognitive/affective processes of a generalist social work practitioner and associated behaviors, tasks, and activities to help establish a level of competency as a generalist social work practitioner. The field instructor acts as a mentor at the practicum site and helps the student connect theory learned in the classroom with application techniques in the field. The field instructor is required to assist the student in creating a practicum learning agreement which outlines activities that the student will complete to explore, understand, improve and establish a level of mastery of the nine competencies through practicing specific behaviors that allow the student to use critical thinking, affective reactions and exercise judgment regarding said competencies through engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. The details of the practicum learning agreement are explained on the agreement and through the field seminar I class with the student. It is required that the field instructor meet face-to-face with the student each week for one hour to discuss progress towards achieving the nine competencies; the field instructor is expected to give the student feedback, encouragement, and guidance.

Field instructors will receive support from the Office of Field Education through the St. Louis Social Work Collaborative's educational seminars, which field instructors are required to complete over two years time. This Field Instruction Certification Program is for all field instructors who want to be affiliated with the University. Specifically, Fontbonne University participates with the "St. Louis Collaborative Social Work Field Education Project" along with Saint Louis University (SLU), Washington University in St. Louis and the University of Missouri-St. Louis (UMSL). The Collaborative is designed to certify social work field instructors who work with students from one of the aforementioned social work programs. The main goal of the Collaborative is to improve the quality of social work field education for students and field

instructors. As previously mentioned, all field instructors must become certified and the certification process requires completing five half-day educational seminars offered at Saint Louis University (SLU), University of Missouri-St. Louis, Washington University, or Fontbonne University. Once a field instructor is certified, then they must become re-certified every three years. The program focuses on various topics that impact social work field education – ethics, cultural competency, and professional development are some of the topics addressed. The Collaborative also focuses on developing the relationship between the field instructor and student with sessions focused on learning styles and effective mentoring techniques. Each session is developed collaboratively by the various Directors of Field Education and implemented collaboratively by all four schools. Please see our website at www.fielddedu.com for more information.

Specifically, the field instructor is required to help the student choose appropriate roles, tasks and activities that can be performed at the practicum site that will develop their generalist social work practice skills. Additionally, these roles, tasks and activities should revolve around defined practice behaviors aimed to develop the 10 competencies of a generalist social work practitioner. **Specifically, the field instructor should help the student to: (1) Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior; (2) Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice; (3) Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice; (4) Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice; (5) Engage in Policy Practice; (6) Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities; (7) Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities; (8) Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities; and (9) Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.**

The associated behaviors (completed with suggested tasks and activities) that stem from these competencies can be seen in the Practicum Learning Agreement which is developed in the first four weeks of the semester with your student. The field instructor is required to **meet with the student for a minimum of one hour a week** to provide feedback to the student on their behaviors and how they are achieving their overall goals. In addition, the Practicum Learning Agreement you create together in the beginning of the semester can be used regularly as a tool during the supervision hour and should be kept on-hand for reference. Along with assisting on the learning agreement, weekly supervision, and general mentoring, field instructors are also required to be available for a site visit during the semester and complete a final evaluation and review the final evaluation with the student. The site visit will take place during the semester while the student is completing their practicum hours. A member of the Office of Field Education will come to the practicum site and meet with the field instructor and the student together. The student is responsible for scheduling and arranging the visit. As a field instructor, a final evaluation must be completed, reviewed with the student, and submitted to the Office of Field Education; a field instructor should be available for the mid-semester site visit and evaluation, but the responsibility of completing the mid-semester evaluation form lies with the site visitor from the university. The student will provide forms, instructions, and deadlines. Typically, mid-semester is due in October for the fall semester and in March for the spring semester. The final evaluation is due one week before the end of the semester; typically, early December for fall semester and late April for spring semester. Field instructors are encouraged to contact the Office of Field Education or the Director of Field Education to discuss any questions or concerns regarding a student, the appropriateness of the setting, the learning agreement or any other issues.

In addition to the Collaborative events, the filed instructor may always contact the Office of Field Education with any questions or concerns. Along with the Practicum Learning Agreement, weekly supervisor, and the Collaborative educational seminars, the field instructor is required to evaluate the student regarding the development of competency. A pass/no pass grade is also elicited from the field instructor, which is considered when determining the overall grade for the practicum, which is assigned by the Fontbonne University faculty member facilitating the concurrent seminar class.

Role of Practicum Sites

Organizations seeking affiliation as a practicum placement site should visit the Collaborative website for an application and further information (www.fielddedu.com). Organizations may also contact the Director of Field Education to discuss the possibility of becoming affiliated with Fontbonne University. The social work program at Fontbonne University determines approved sites for which the following are present:

- 1) Compliance with recognized standards of practice;
- 2) Availability and willingness of social work degreed staff or staff with compatible social work backgrounds or experience to serve as field instructors (see qualifications above);
- 3) Commitment to the nine social work practice competencies;
- 4) Availability of a wide range of learning opportunities for students to demonstrate competency and associated behaviors;
- 5) Commitment to social work education that provides a professional atmosphere for student learning, growth and development;
- 6) Provision of support and resources that enables the field instructor(s) to complete the necessary Field Instructor Certification Program, associated orientation, and training, if necessary; and
- 8) Agency/organization is in good standing with the professional community.

Role of Director of Field Education

The Director of Field Education serves as a link between the student, organization, and social work program. The collaborative process of field education includes six phases: 1) Orientation and Training 2) Preparing and Interviewing 3) Selecting a Site; 4) Beginning Practicum and Learning Agreement; 5) Monitoring, (Weekly Supervision, Field Education Seminar, Site Visit, and Mid-semester Evaluation); and 6) Final Evaluation and Feedback. In the orientation and training phase, the Director of Field Education orients and trains both students and potential field instructors as to their roles and responsibilities. In the preparing and interviewing phase, the Director of Field Education uses knowledge of the mission of the social work program and goals for practicum in partner with the student's individual goals and community organizations with their potential learning opportunities to help facilitate a successful match between the student and their practicum site. The Director of Field Education and the student meet to discuss the student's professional goals, readiness for field, what areas of social work interest them, and the importance of fit between the student-field instructor-agency relationship. The Director of Field Education makes recommendations for placement to the student and the student is required to interview with a minimum of 3 organizations for practicum I (and 2 for practicum II) before selecting a site. The Director of Field Education is also available to students for interview coaching or will refer student to University career counseling services, if further resources are needed. In the third phase, the Director of Field Education must approve the site the student has selected by verifying there is a qualified field instructor and that there is a collaborative affiliated

relationship between the site and the social work program at Fontbonne University. In the fourth phase, beginning practicum and the learning agreement, the Director of Field Education is available for consultation as the student assimilates to their new environment. The Director of Field Education is also available as needed for the field instructor as well during this important beginning phase. Although, the learning agreement will be reviewed in phase one with both student(s) and field instructor(s), the Director of Field Education is also available for any questions or concerns relating to the learning agreement and will be reviewing and approving all submitted learning agreements. During the monitoring phase, the Director of Field Education plays a vital role as well. The Director will serve as the facilitator of the Field Education Seminar, will oversee the site visit, and will complete the mid-semester evaluation and follow-up with any students who are not making progress towards (or having any other challenges with) their progress towards competency in the nine arenas. The Director of Field Education will be on-hand to monitor throughout the Field Education process to ensure that all students are successfully integrating classroom knowledge into the field by practicing behaviors through tasks and activities that allow the student to display the knowledge, skills, values, and cognitive/affective processes learned throughout their education in both explicit and implicit curricular engagement. Furthermore, students will be taught how to effectively become evidenced-based practitioners where they will have the ability to incorporate research into practice. In phase six, the Director of Field Education will receive and review the final evaluations along with any feedback. Using the final evaluations, the Director of Field Education assigns a grade.

Along with facilitating the day-to-day practicum program, the Director of Field Education also has various administrative duties and is responsible for the development, organization, and evaluation of Field Education in the social work program at Fontbonne University.

The Director of Field Education for Social Work must fulfill the following responsibilities:

- 1) Develops and oversees the practicum field education program in accordance with the Social Work Department's and University's missions;
- 2) Serves as the administrator of the Office of Field Education;
- 3) Designs the structure of practicum placement procedures and practicum seminars;
- 4) Develops necessary forms associated with Field Education and practicum placement and supervises subsequent revisions;
- 5) Organizes educational events, orientations, and seminars for field instructors to improve the practicum experience for students;
- 6) Fosters the development of new practicum sites;
- 7) Serves as the contact for community organizations that serve as practicum sites;
- 8) Approves organizations as practicum sites;
- 9) Monitors the learning process and verifies opportunities for competency-based practices offered by practicum sites;
- 10) Organizes the development of policies and procedures for practicum operation;
- 11) Serves on committees associated with Field Education;
- 12) Assesses and approves practicum placements, including place of employment practica;
- 13) Facilitates the evaluation of students and submission of grades for practicum and practicum seminar courses to the Office of the Registrar;
- 14) Assures that field education follows CSWE guidelines;
- 15) Seeks financial resources to support field education as necessary;
- 16) Networks with local and national field education programs within social work programs;

- 17) Attends local, national, and international conferences/workshops to improve field education, including, but not limited to, CSWE's annual conference, BPD's annual conference and NASW's local conference; and
- 18) Executes other duties as necessary to facilitate the successful operation of Field Education.

Role of the Practicum Seminar

The Practicum Seminar connects the student and their practicum agency with the Social Work Department. The seminar class helps with practicum placement, monitoring progress, evaluation, and forming a network with other social work students. The Practicum Seminar helps students live the mission of the University and program through their field education experiences. The seminar focuses on developing behaviors that reflect the knowledge, skills, values, and cognitive/affective processes necessary to use critical thinking, attend to affective reactions and exercise judgment in the field. In general, the seminar focuses on processing student experiences through the lens of competencies. Currently, The Director of Field Education serves as the Practicum Seminar Faculty Instructor. The Practicum Seminar Faculty Instructor is responsible for facilitating student translation of classroom to field through the site visit with mid-term evaluation and final assessment of both the Practicum and Practicum Seminar; in addition, the Practicum Seminar Instructor serves on the Field Education Committee and contributes to the development of curriculum through this committee.

Role of the Faculty Advisor

The faculty advisor supports field education by assisting the student with enrollment into practica and practicum seminars. The faculty advisor helps students with planning and scheduling, and, in this role, they reinforce field education procedures. Although the students participate in an orientation through their coursework, the faculty advisor provides supplemental information regarding practica and the related processes. The faculty advisor works one-on-one with students and answers any questions they may have in the planning and preparation stages of practicum placement. The faculty advisor helps the student plan an appropriate schedule that will allow time for practicum work. During the semester, the faculty advisor also encourages the student to discuss any issues or concerns with the Director of Field Education or the Practicum Seminar Instructor.

Role of the Field Education Committee

The Field Education Committee is comprised of Field Instructors, the Practicum Seminar Faculty Instructor, the Director of Field Education, and the Chair of the Social Work Department; together they assist the Office of Field Education regarding policies and procedures related to practicum and practicum seminars. They discuss current issues in the field and how to improve field education for BSW students. Along with policy and procedures, the Committee also provides feedback on practicum forms, site selection, implementation issues, field instructor education, and related issues. The Committee meets at least once every year.

PRACTICUM GOALS

Generalist Social Work Practitioner

The overall goal of practicum is to help develop students into generalist social work practitioners. In line with the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) standards, generalist

social work practitioners should display the following competencies and related behaviors:

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Social workers:

- make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context;
- use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations;
- demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
- use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

Social workers:

- apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels;
- present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences; and
- apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Social workers:

- apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels; and
- engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

Competency 4: Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

Social workers:

- use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research;
- apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings; and
- use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

Social workers:

- Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services;
- assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services;
- apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.

Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
Social workers:

- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies; and
- use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.

Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
Social workers:

- collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies;
- develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies; and
- select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.

Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
Social workers:

- critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies;
- use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes;
- negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies; and
- facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.

Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
Social workers:

- select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes;
- critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes; and
- apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

Moreover, it is the goal of practicum for students to engage in the above behaviors through activities and tasks that allow them to further explore, understand, grow and improve their mastery

of the outlined competencies. Practicum allows students to bridge the gap between the classroom and the real world. The Practicum Learning Agreement outlines the competencies, associated behaviors, and suggested tasks and activities.

Career Development

Practicum is also designed to help students determine which area of social work is the best fit with their knowledge, skills, values and cognitive/affective processes as well as their diverse abilities regarding critical thinking, affective reactions, and judgment. As part of the orientation process, embedded within the Generalist Practice I course, students are exposed to 100 hours of field work at social work organizations in the local area. These “introduction” hours allow student to explore numerous areas of social work. Additionally, students are required to complete a minimum of three interviews for their first practicum selection and two interviews for their second practicum. Through these various practicum experiences students will be exposed to different aspects of careers in social work. Further, once a student is completing practicum, the concurrent seminars enhance career development through specific projects and assignments aimed at career development.

GENERAL FIELD EDUCATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Admission into Practicum

Students must fulfill the following before being allowed to enroll in practicum and concurrent seminars.

1. Students must be declared and accepted social work majors;
2. Students are required to complete the following courses before entering into practicum: Introduction to Social Work, Human Behavior and the Social Environment, Diversity and Social Justice, Generalist Social Work Practice I, Generalist Social Work Practice II: Individuals and Families, Generalist Social Work Practice III: Communities, Groups, and Organizations, Spirituality and Professional Practice, Research Methods and Policy;
3. After completing a Request for Practicum Form during the Student Field Education Orientation Workshop, students must meet with the Director of Field Education to evaluate how ready the student is to proceed. The Director of Field Education will help the student prepare for practicum and make tailored suggestions for practicum sites;
4. Students must be in good academic standing within the University and not be on any type of academic probation.

Further, the Director of Field Education in conjunction with departmental academic advisors verifies that students have fulfilled the criteria prior to enrolling in field education. If there are any extenuating circumstances where the criteria have not been met, then the academic advisor or the student should discuss the situation as soon as possible with the Director of Field Education so a plan/solution may be outlined as necessary. Ultimately, it is the Director of Field Education who is responsible for determining who may enter field.

Hours and Credits Associated with Practicum

Students complete 100 exposure hours as part of their Generalist Practice I course, which takes place at various practicum sites and serves as an introduction to practicum. Each semester long practicum requires the student to engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals,

families, groups, organizations and communities as well as develop a deeper understanding of how ethics and professionalism, diversity and difference, human rights & social, economic, and environmental justice, research and policy operate in a real-world setting. Each practicum experience is 240 hours for 4.0 credits. During the semester, a student should complete approximately 17 hours a week at their practicum site. Students should keep track of their hours using the Practicum TimeSheet form, which is to be submitted at the end of the semester via the online system. Students are to complete two practica typically during the fall and spring semesters of their senior year, for a collective total of 480 hours; along with their exposure hours, students will complete an ultimate total of 580 hours of practicum work. Each practicum seminar meets for 2.0 hours a week concurrently during the semester of practicum placement for 2.0 credits. In summary, students will complete 100 exposure hours as part of a 4.0 credit Generalist Practice I course; 240 hours at a specific practicum site for 4.0 credits for Field Education I; and another 240 hours at a specific practicum site for 4.0 credits for Field Education II. In addition, while enrolled in Field Education I, students will complete a concurrent seminar class for 2.0 credit hours (Field Education Seminar I); and while enrolled in Field Education II, student will also complete a concurrent seminar class for 2.0 credits (Field Education Seminar II). Therefore, introduction exposure totals 100 hours as part of a 4.0 credit course and specific placement hours total 480 for 8.0 credits and two seminar classes that total 4.0 credits. Although, students receive credit for exposure hours associated with Generalist Practice I, specific practicum placements with seminars total collectively 12.0 credits.

Practicum Hours Off-Site

Practicum hours may be completed off-site of the practicum placement agency as long as this arrangement has been negotiated with the Field Instructor/Director of Field Education/Seminar Instructor. Examples of off-site hours would include: research associated with the practicum work, attending conferences or workshops associated with the practicum work, meetings within the community related to the placement, or readings/webinars/TED talks related to the practicum for training purposes that assist in developing the nine competency areas. Activities that should not count towards practicum hours include: travel time to and from the practicum site, “on-call” hours, lunch or breaks during practicum hours, or after-hours gatherings for social purposes. Judgment should be used when tracking the practicum hours and Field Instructors should be consulted along with the Practicum Seminar Instructor or Director of Field Education.

In-person Contact Hours

Every placement, regardless of agency practices, must provide a minimum of 50 client contact hours for each Field Education I and Field Education II; collectively students will complete practica with a minimum of 100 client contact hours. Clients are defined as those directly receiving or indirectly being impacted by services provided at the placement site. Thus, clients also include agency constituents who may not directly receive services, but are those individuals within the community that are impacted by agency practices. These contact hours may be completed in the traditional face-to-face sense (or in-person); alternatively these client contact hours may be completed using digital technologies, including (but not limited to): social media, telephone, online applications, multimedia, productivity applications, cloud computing, interoperable systems and mobile devices. Therefore these client contact hours may be achieved using voice, text, audio, video, and other associated technologies.

Approved Practicum Sites and Field Instructors

Students use the self-selection model to determine their practicum site and field instructor. However, the Director of Field Education must approve of both the site and field instructor for practicum. The organization and field instructor must be affiliated with the University. In addition, the Director of Field Education will help facilitate a positive match between student, agency, and field instructor.

Non-Social Work Degreed Field Instructors

Students may choose to work with a non-social work degreed Field Instructor for one of their two practica and should complete and submit a Non-Social Work Degreed Field Instructor Form. Because social workers typically collaborate with many related fields, it is important to understand and value their unique perspective that contributes to the overall field of social work. There also may be locations where social work is needed, but only those with related degrees are engaged in work. Therefore, to grow social work in those areas, it is important for students to understand the needs of the community through practicum work. One of the goals of Fontbonne University's Social Work Department is to grow social work in surrounding rural areas through practicum work and, ultimately, job placement for graduates. In order to achieve this goal, it is important that social work students be encouraged to complete practica in these rural communities. Moreover, it is essential to teach social work students to work effectively with other related disciplines and value the contributions of other related fields. However, because social work has a unique perspective, it is imperative that students working with non-social work degreed Field Instructors gain this perspective, in general, through their coursework, their interaction with social work faculty members, and their other practicum. Specifically and directly, students completing practica with non-social work degreed Field Instructors will be processing their experiences every week in their Practicum Seminar class to ascertain the social work perspective on the work their completing. Students completing practicum with non-social work degreed Field Instructors will be able to process their experience through two lenses and gain a rich understanding of social work and how social work collaborates with other related fields. In addition to all the resources ensuring the social work perspective at the University, the Field Instructor will have completed the certification process which will help them to be aware of differences and highlight these differences in feedback given to students during practicum. Through all these different mechanisms, students completing practicum with non-social work degreed Field Instructors will have a firm grasp on the social work perspective.

Place of Employment Practicum

Students may choose to complete a practicum at their place of employment when certain criteria are met. The following must met in order to qualify:

1. The student must work at a social service organization;
2. The student must be engaged in work that is different from their current position and is therefore learning and developing new behaviors that reflect different knowledge, skills, values and cognitive/affective processes;
3. The Field Instructor must meet the criteria and be someone other than the student's supervisor for employment;
4. A Request for Place of Employment Practicum form must be submitted and approved.

The Director of Field Education has final approval on place of employment practica.

Forms associated with Practicum

Student forms associated with practicum are found through a link on the social work department webpage specific to field education or at the Office of Field Education. If students are having problems locating forms, they should contact their Practicum Seminar Instructor. There are seven forms all practica must have:

1. Request for Practicum Form
2. Registration of Practicum Form
3. Practicum Learning Agreement Form
4. Practicum TimeSheet Form
5. Mid-term Evaluation Form
6. Final Evaluation Form
7. Evaluation of Practicum Site and Field Instructor Form

Other student forms associated with special circumstances may be ascertained by contacting the Practicum Seminar Instructor or the Director of Field Education. These forms include Place of Employment Form, Non-social work degreed Field Instructor Form, and Termination from Practicum Form.

Agency and Field Instructor forms may be found on the Collaborative website (www.fieldedu.com). These forms are applications to become associated with the University.

Criminal Background Checks & Drug Tests

Many practicum sites require students to have a criminal background check and a drug test before they are accepted and begin practicum work. Criminal background checks and drug tests may take as long as six weeks and students should make arrangements early. The practicum agency may pay for criminal background checks and drug tests and the student should discuss this during their interview. If the agency does not pay for the background check/drug test, but requires it, it is the student's responsibility to pay for these services. Typically, background checks and drug tests are coordinated through the human resources department of the agency; however, the student should discuss the process with their practicum agency.

If the student has a felony conviction on their record, they should discuss this with the Director of Field Education. Although it is not impossible to be a social worker with a felony conviction, it is very limiting and finding a practicum placement will prove difficult. Additionally, a felony conviction will potentially prevent an individual from becoming a licensed social worker.

Practicum Learning Agreement

The Practicum Learning Agreement is determined between the student and Field Instructor with final approval by the Office of Field Education. The Learning Agreement is a contract that outlines how students are going to achieve a level of competency in different areas through associated behaviors, tasks and activities. The nine competencies are operationalized through thirty-one behaviors and the learning agreement gives activity examples of each behavior that a student could potentially engage in during practicum. The student should negotiate with their Field Instructor which activities they will perform during the practicum. If there is no suitable example for a given behavior, there is an option to create a tailored activity that will fulfill the associated behavior. Practicum Learning Agreements are discussed in the Practicum Seminar class and Field Instructors receive training on the learning agreement through The Collaborative training sessions. Additionally, students or Field Instructors may always contact the Director of Field Education with any questions.

Practicum Learning Agreement Deadline

The student is responsible for submitting the completed Practicum Learning Agreement to the Office of Field Education through the online system. The Practicum Learning Agreement is due four weeks into the semester, regardless of when the student began the practicum. The learning agreement will be reviewed by the Office of Field Education. If there is any problem with the learning agreement, it will be returned to the student to revise. A student must have approval of their learning agreement for any practicum hours to be accepted. **If a student does not receive approval of their Practicum Learning Agreement, hours worked may not count toward practicum.** If there is any reason a student cannot complete the learning agreement within the time frame, the student should contact the Director of Field Education as soon as possible.

Activities and Tasks for Practicum

The activities and tasks for practicum are outlined in the Practicum Learning Agreement. Each competency is listed, along with the associated behaviors; examples of activities are listed for each practice behavior. Students and Field Instructors must select from the examples given, or create a different task that displays the behavior and will be performed during the practicum. Appropriate activities and tasks incorporate the student's ability along with opportunities available at the practicum site and aim to develop competent generalist social work practitioners.

Prohibited Activities and Tasks for Practicum

Students should not be asked to use any type of physical restraints on a client or distribute medication(s).

Cautious Activities and Tasks for Practicum

Students should not be required to drive clients in their personal vehicle. If students choose to drive clients in their personal vehicle, they should verify liability issues with their insurance provider and the practicum site. If an accident occurs while the student is transporting a client, the student's insurance would be used and the student would be responsible for paying their deductible. The University provides liability insurance, which is secondary to the student's primary insurance.

Site Visits

A mid-semester site visit and evaluation is schedule for each practicum to ensure the student is developing the nine competencies through applying their knowledge, skills, values and cognitive/affective processes through the associated behaviors, activities and tasks. The Practicum Seminar Instructor will conduct the mid-semester site visit and evaluation. The Field Instructor, Practicum Seminar Instructor, and student will meet to discuss progress towards developing competencies and strengths as well as any challenges or concerns.

Concurrent Practicum Seminars

Students are required to enroll in concurrent practicum seminars to help them maximize their practicum experience and process their experience. Students will learn to develop a network with their peers and create additional support for the practicum experience. The practicum seminars are designed to improve practicum by providing another opportunity for students to reflect on the development of their knowledge, skills, values and cognitive/affective processes.

Additionally, projects and assignments are designed to develop competencies by focusing on critical thinking skills, managing affective reactions and exercising judgment. Self-care is also a focus of the seminar and students are required to engage in self-care practices while completing practicum.

Evaluation & Grading of Practicum and Practicum Seminar

The Practicum Seminar Instructor facilitates the evaluation and grading of each student. Students receive two grades – one for the practicum and one for the practicum seminar. The practicum grade is on a pass-no pass system and the practicum seminar is a letter grade. The mid-semester evaluation is conducted by the Practicum Seminar Instructor with the Field Instructor and student at the site visit. The final evaluation of practicum is completed by the Field Instructor and the grade for practicum is assigned by the Practicum Seminar Instructor. An evaluation of the practicum site and field instructor is completed by the student.

Problems at Practicum

If there is a serious problem that occurs at the Practicum site, the student should first address any concerns with their Field Instructor. If there is not an appropriate resolution, the student should consult with their Practicum Seminar Instructor and the Director of Field Education to resolve the issue. If it is determined that there is no appropriate solution, the practicum may be terminated.

Leave from Practicum

If there are extenuating circumstances, a student may take a leave from practicum, if they are taking a leave from school. The Office of Field Education encourages students to complete their practicum in a timely manner to assure consistency to agency clients and staff personnel. If a student is experiencing extenuating circumstances, they should discuss the situation with their Practicum Seminar Instructor/Director of Field Education and their department academic advisor and follow University protocols.

Termination from Practicum

If there are serious irresolvable issues, a termination from practicum may be required. The student or the Field Instructor may request a termination from practicum and must contact the Director of Field Education to discuss the situation. The student, Field Instructor, Practicum Seminar Instructor, and Director of Field Education will meet to determine appropriate actions. A termination from practicum may occur for different reasons – resources are lacking, availability of opportunities for practice behaviors, re-structuring of the agency, ethical breaches, or ideological differences between student and field instructor. If it is determined that termination from practicum is necessary, a Termination from Practicum form must be completed and all parties must agree and sign the document. When a termination occurs, the Director of Field Education will determine whether the student will receive any credit for the work completed, begin a new practicum, or transfer hours towards a different practicum. If the student is at fault and would have been assigned a non-passing grade, then the student will not receive any credit for the practicum hours. When a termination occurs, the practicum site and field instructor will also be re-evaluated to determine future affiliation.

Reimbursement to Organization

If anything is damaged or destroyed by the student at their practicum organization, it is the student's responsibility to reimburse the organization. The University does not reimburse organizations for any damages caused by students.

Evaluation of Field Education

The field education program is evaluated through several different mechanisms and is constantly aiming to improve the quality of field education provided. All of the evaluation forms are compiled, reviewed, and used to improve field education. This includes evaluations of field instruction seminars, field placement sites, and field instructors by students as well as evaluations of field education training by the field instructors. The Office of Field education also analyzes the evaluations of student learning regarding the competencies. Formal mid-term and final evaluations are used to determine how students are progressing, as well as informal methods during the concurrent seminar class to help determine where the program needs to facilitate further learning and how to improve the overall field education program from the perspective of the student, field instructors, field education office, and social work department.

Sharing Information

The Office of Field Education will share information about a student within the Department and with Field Instructors in order to facilitate an appropriate learning experience. Any information that will assist the student in placement, implementation, or evaluation will be shared as necessary with concerned parties.

Protection of Students

The University does not want to limit the education experiences of students, but it does want to enhance the safety of students while engage in practicum. As such, the Office of Field Education partners with Practicum sites to reduce the risk of harm to students. When appropriate, the Office of Field education encourages students and Field Instructors to discuss issues related to safety in the following manners.

1. Explain issues related to safety during the interview process. Information should be given on the probability of experiencing violence during the practicum activities.
2. Familiarize the student with the agency surroundings and the places students will conduct practicum activities.
3. Review agency policy and procedures regarding safety, security, and emergencies. Explain how to document an adverse event.
4. Provide staff members for the student to work with when working directly in the community or providing services in a client's home.
5. Connect the student to agency safety resources (cell phones, pagers, security personnel, etc.)

Liability Insurance

Every student engaged in practicum is required to pay a fee for liability insurance provided by the University that is charged as a course fee. The liability insurance covers malpractice, not auto insurance. Students may also purchase their own insurance through the National Association of Social Workers (NASW). Issues of liability should be discussed with the practicum agency especially if the student will be transporting clients. Questions regarding liability can be discussed with the Practicum Seminar Instructor or the Director of Field Education.

Harassment

The University's Harassment Policy (described in detail in the University's Policy Manual) applies to students at their practicum site. If students are experiencing any potential harassment, they should discuss their situation with their Practicum Seminar Instructor/Director of Field Education.

Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act

The 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) protects civil rights for disabled individuals on the basis of race, color, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, veteran status or disability. Students that require an accommodation for a disability should contact The Director of the Kinkle Center at the University.

Mandated Reporting

Although students are not legally required to report suspected abuse while at their practicum, it is encouraged that students following social work ethical guidelines. As such, if a student suspects that a client may harm themselves or someone else, they should contact their Field Instructor immediately and discuss appropriate procedures. Additionally, the same would apply if students suspected child or elder abuse or neglect.

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