PURPOSE OF THE COURSE

SOWK 615 Foundation Practicum & Seminar I will allow students the opportunity to integrate social work theory and practice knowledge, skills, ethics and values through advanced generalist social work direct practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and or communities. In addition, students will apply the social work theory and practice knowledge, skills, ethics and values learned at a foundation level to engage in culturally competent direct social work practice with people representing diversity of age, class, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, and sexual orientation. Each student will work with the field coordinator to locate agencies with opportunities for master’s level practice and supervision commensurate with their learning goals.

Foundation Practicum & Seminar I are required for all students admitted with traditional standing to the MSW program. Students will be placed in agencies, for a total of 460 hours during the spring and summer semesters, that can provide appropriate practice experiences and supervision. Some students may seek a field placement in their place of employment and that is permissible, with approval of both the field coordinator and field supervisor and/or the agency administrator, for either the foundation OR the advanced practicum, although significant opportunity must exist for new assignments that support the educational objectives of the student. Students are expected to apply the advanced generalist practice perspective to their experiences with individual clients, families, groups, agencies, and or communities while in their practicum setting. Seminar will provide an additional 27 hours for student opportunities to share with their student colleagues their experiences and challenges for problem-solving, consultation, feedback, and support. Specific foundation objectives appear in this document but are more fully discussed in the MSW Field Education Manual. Student will be expected to actively engage with their field supervisor for at least one hour per week.

SOWK 625 Foundation Practicum & Seminar II is required for all students admitted with traditional standing to the MSW program. Students will be placed in agencies, for a total of 460 hours during spring and summer semesters, that can provide appropriate practice experiences and supervision. Some students may seek a field placement in their place of employment and that is permissible, with approval of both the field coordinator and the practicum supervisor and or agency administrator, for either the foundation OR the advanced practicum, although significant opportunity must exist for new assignments that support the educational objectives of the student. Students are expected to apply the generalist social work practice perspective to their experiences with individual clients, families, groups, agencies, and or communities while in their practicum setting. Seminar will provide an additional 27 hours for student opportunities to share with their student colleagues their experiences and challenges for problem-solving, consultation, feedback, and support. Specific foundation objectives appear in this document but will be more
fully discussed in the MSW Field Practicum Manual. Students will be expected to actively engage with their field supervisor for at least one hour per week.

PLACE IN MSW CURRICULUM

SOWK615 Foundation Practicum & Seminar I is taken in the spring semester (5 credits) followed by SOWK625 Foundation Practicum & Seminar II in the summer semester. Students must have completed first semester foundation coursework SOWK601 Foundation of Generalist Practice, SOWK603 Human Behavior in the Social Environment I, SOWK605 Social Welfare Policy and Services, and SOWK607 Professional Competence Seminar I with a grade of B or above prior to enrollment. Foundation Practicum & Seminar I builds on first semester coursework and draws on concurrent enrollment with SOWK611 Foundations of Generalist Practice II and SOWK613 Human Behavior in the Social Environment II for information and opportunities for application in the field practicum setting.

SOWK 625 Foundation Practicum & Seminar II is taken in the summer semester (5 credits). Students should have completed first semester foundation coursework and SOWK 611 Foundations of Generalist Practice II, SOWK 613 Human Behavior in the Social Environment II, and SOWK 615 Foundation Practicum & Seminar I prior to enrollment. SOWK 625 Foundation Practicum & Seminar II builds on two semesters of coursework and draws on concurrent enrollment with SOWK 629 Applied Social Work Research for information and opportunities for application in the field practicum setting.

INSTITUTIONAL MISSION

This course contributes to the Minnesota State University, Mankato mission of promoting learning through effective graduate teaching, scholarship, and research in service to the state, the region, and the global community by providing access for students to agency based educational opportunities that will prepare them for social work practice. The College of Social and Behavioral Sciences is similarly supported in its promotion of the exploration, understanding, explanation, and transformation of the social world through graduate teaching and learning, research, scholarly activities, and service to local, state, national, and global communities.

MSW PROGRAM GOALS

The Foundation Practicum & Seminar I and II contribute to the following goals of the MSW program, specifically: 1) to prepare competent and effective graduates to be advanced generalist social work practitioners with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities, emphasizing rural and small community areas, 2) to prepare graduates who apply and promote at an advanced level the values, ethics, theory, and perspectives of the social work profession, 3) to prepare graduates who promote at an advanced level social and economic justice in a diverse society within a global context, and 4) to promote scholarship, professional development, and community involvement of faculty and graduates within the local, region, state and global communities.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
Given regular attendance, appropriate participation, and successful completion of assigned tasks and activities, students will:

1. Practice at micro, mezzo, and macro levels, including with populations-at-risk, using theories of human behavior in the social environment (MSW 1.2, 2.2).

2. Apply knowledge and research about diversity, including diversity of age, class, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation, and to use practice methodology that celebrates differences and affirm social and economic justice (MSW 1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 2.2, 3.1).

3. Understand the needs of clients and client systems, knowledge of community resources and service delivery systems, and the ability to obtain services for clients and client systems within agency policy (MSW 1.6).

4. Practice according to the NASW Code of Ethics (MSW 2.3).

5. Differentially apply skills related to interviewing, building relationship, assessing, intervening, and evaluating micro, mezzo, and macro systems (MSW 1.5).

6. Understand and analyze service delivery systems from a social and economic justice and ethical perspective in order to begin to learn to apply the equitable distribution of services, resources, and supports for all micro, mezzo, and macro systems (MSW 3.1, 3.2).

7. Evaluate through supervision and self-reflection one’s practice in relation to personal values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors (MSW 1.7, 4.3).

8. Use knowledge from policy, research, and human behavior and the social environment to engage in generalist and improve generalist practice (MSW 1.3, 2.1, 3.2, 4.1).

9. Understand the use of inter-professional collaborative approaches to obtain and provide services that are integrated, coordinated, and identified as helpful by micro, mezzo, and macro systems (MSW 3.2).

10. Understand unique opportunities and barriers that are present in rural and small community social work practice settings (MSW 1.1, 3.1, 3.2).

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS AND READINGS


(Previously used in SOWK607)

*MSW Field Education Manual*, Minnesota State University, Mankato, Social Work Department


Note: Other readings may be assigned by the course instructor.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

1) *Field Hour Log*

A regular schedule negotiated with the field instructor should be maintained. The field hours are to be spread over the weeks allotted for field and seminar, with the student typically in field approximately 20 hours per week during the spring semester and 16 hours per week during the summer semester. Students will log the number of hours in field and a summary of weekly activities. The log will be submitted by email bi-weekly in the D2L dropbox. The log can be written in paragraph form or as a bulleted list of activities. This document should include reactions, thoughts, and questions related to the activities. This is the only official documentation of hours required. Your agency may have additional requirements to which you will need to adhere. Accuracy and integrity count.

2) *Learning Contract (See Appendix 10 MSW Field Education Manual)*

Develop and implement, a learning contract, in collaboration with field instructor and field director/coordinator that integrates experiences in the practicum setting with the seminar, and draws on generalist information, skills, and knowledge gleaned from the classroom. The learning plan must integrate the following categories and the course objectives (syllabus p.3). Seminar assignments can be used to partially meet learning contract goals.

- **Professional Learning** includes the development of professional identity, incorporation of the NASW Code of Ethics into practice, the ability to reflect on and critically analyze one’s practice, taking active responsibility for one’s learning and performing in a professional manner.

- **Direct Social Work Practice** includes the development of knowledge and skills to work effectively with individuals (micro), groups and families (mezzo) and to engage in culturally competent direct practice, utilizing theoretical knowledge to understand the client system, assessment of strengths the client system brings to the situation as well as barriers clients face in obtaining their goals.

- **Community and Organizational Social Work Practice** includes developing the knowledge and skills to understand the organization and the community both as the context for culturally competent practice with individuals, families, and small groups, as well as to understand community organizations as macro level client systems in and of themselves. This includes mezzo level practice with boards of directors, task groups and community collaborations.
• *Research and Policy* includes the development of knowledge and skills needed to utilize the research literature for effective, generalist social work practice and to analyze the impact of social welfare policies on client systems, workers and agencies.

• *Engagement in Seminar*: including the active engagement in discussion of direct and indirect practice, participation in all assignments, and evaluation of one’s practice.

This assignment is due the third week of the spring semester. A second learning contract *if needed* for the summer semester will be due the third week of the semester.

3) *Two Case Assessment and Intervention Plans*

This is a two-part assignment. Each student will choose one micro or mezzo case, *and* one macro case to post. Due dates for each part of this assignment appear on the class schedule.

It may be useful to think about this assignment as an ‘on-line case consultation’. First, the student will post the answers to as many questions from the list below as they can (Case #1, posting #1) and state what feedback, assistance, or other contributions they want from their student/colleagues. All students must respond to two of the cases posted in the D2L discussion forum based on the feedback, assistance, or other contributions requested.

Second, the student will complete the remaining answers to the questions that could not be answered in the first posting (Case #1, posting #2) and state how feedback, assistance, or other contributions from their student/colleagues was used or considered. All students will again respond to two cases posted in the D2L discussion forum with feedback, assistance, or other contributions requested.

Each student will do the same for a second case (Case #2, posting #1) and (Case #2, posting #2).

The posting should include the following:

• List the presenting problem(s).
• Provide the problem(s) as defined by the client/family and/or organization.
• Describe human development, cultural, economic, social, gender, racial, and/or ethnic issues that must be considered in addressing the issue.
• Outline issues related to rural social work practice that must be considered.
• Describe agency, local, state and/or federal policies that could potentially impact this case.
• Note ethical issues could be present in this case and how you would address them.
• Describe in what ways your responses and choices might be influenced by personal factors including biases and prejudices and how you will address them.
• List interventions that you considered utilizing in this case.
• Note theory (theories) you utilize in developing the interventions.
• Outline the support you found from the literature/foundation course textbooks for your interventions.
• Provide a description of interventions the client chooses to utilize.
Describe the role other community agencies played in the interventions.

• Define the role you played with each agency involved in the intervention plan.
• List any needs that could not be met with current resources that require further investigation or action.
• Share whether or not the outcomes thus far were as you anticipated or intended. Why or why not?
• List factors you think contributed to the outcomes.
• Describe how you will evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention.

4) Current Topics in Social Work

Each student will be asked to choose a current issue in the field of social work applicable to their field practicum setting and lead a discussion on the topic during face to face seminar. Students are asked to provide their classmates with a brief summary of the topic with references to at least 3 supporting articles, documents, books or news releases (written within the last two year). When applicable, the impact that rural social work has on the topic area should be addressed. The following are a list of suggested topic areas that students might consider choosing for this assignment.

**Topic Suggestions:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethics Of Direct Practice</th>
<th>Intervention Planning And Goal Setting – Direct Practice</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethics Of Indirect Practice</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Implications Of Policy On Direct Practice</td>
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<td>Use Of Evaluation Instruments For Direct Practice</td>
<td>Implications Of Policy On Indirect Practice</td>
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<td>Use Of Evaluation Instruments For Indirect Practice</td>
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**Successful Completion of the Course**

Successful completion of the seminar will include the following components:

• Active engagement in direct and indirect social work practice and supervision.
• Active, prompt engagement in the seminar activities and assignments.
• Presentation of cases for consultation – direct and indirect cases.
• Participation in case consultation.
• Current topics and supporting articles, documents, books, or news releases to share with colleagues related to practicum setting at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.
• Accurate accounting of time spent in agency via annotated time logs.
• Participation in weekly supervisory meetings including assessments midway and at the end of each semester with the field instructor and the field coordinator.

TEACHING METHODS

Practicum and seminar are highly experiential learning experiences. Teaching is conducted in the field site through the assignment of tasks and responsibilities in the agency by the field instructor as agreed upon in the learning contract and with the field director/coordinator. Teaching in seminar is grounded in theory that focuses on the adult need for experiential learning, problem solving, immediacy of application of new knowledge, and understanding and valuing what is being taught. Based on those assumptions, information will be provided in multiple ways. Students will facilitate group discussions based on individually prepared current topics related to practical setting. Additionally, the seminar instructor will facilitate group discussion of cases and practical experiences, web-based or face to face, and will provide individual consultation with students and field instructors as required. Seminar will be scheduled to meet face to face on at least 12 class days during the spring and summer semesters. Online assignments will be utilized to enhance learning.

EVALUATION OF STUDENT LEARNING

Note: The following is the Graduate College’s scholastic standards policy as outlined in the MSW Graduate Student Handbook.

Students will be evaluated in accordance with the following College of Graduate Studies scale:

A – 90% to 100% of possible points represents work of definitely superior quality (Pass)
B – 80% to 89% of possible points represents a level of performance that is above Average (Pass)
C – 70% to 79% of possible points represents a below-average performance (No Pass)
D – 60% to 69% of possible points represents unacceptable performance (No Pass)
F – 59% or below represents unacceptable performance (No Pass)

Note: While SOWK 615 and 625 are graded in a Pass/No Pass format, the MSW program grading scale will still be utilized according to program policy as noted above.

The course objectives and individual student learning goals of the foundation field practicum and seminar are grouped into five categories for evaluation:

• Professional Learning
• Direct Practice
• Community and Organizational Practice
• Research and Policy
• Engagement in Seminar

An evaluation matrix will rely on the following scale:

5 = frequently exceeds expectations
4 = generally meets, and/or occasionally exceeds, expectations
3 = occasionally meets expectations
2 = does not meet expectations
1 = not applicable (i.e., the student has not had the opportunity to develop this skills.
This rating should not be used past mid-term without narrative that specifies a reason.)

Evaluation will occur in collaboration with the field instructor, the field director/coordinator, and the student at mid-term and at the end of each semester (final evaluation). Although a student may not have the requisite ‘Pass’ at mid-term, successful completion of SOWK 615 will be based on the final evaluation of the accomplishment of the course objectives and individual student learning goals. Students may move into Foundation Practicum & Seminar II, SOWK 625 with a ‘Pass’ OR ‘In-progress’ grade but will not be allowed to continue in the MSW program without resolving the ‘In-progress’ by earning a ‘Pass’ at the conclusion of SOWK 625.
Additional detail regarding grading will appear in the MSW Field Education Manual.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Classification at Each Evaluation Point</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Majority of ratings of 5 and/or 4, and no ratings below 3</td>
<td>Pass (letter grade A, B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majority of ratings of 4 or higher, some ratings of 3, no ratings below 2</td>
<td>In-progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student has not been able to complete enough hours to finish the practicum and has discussed and documented an approved plan to continue with the field director/coordinator.</td>
<td>In-progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majority of ratings 3 or below; or if the student violates standards of professional behavior as outlined in the Code of Ethics.</td>
<td>No Pass (letter grade C, D, F)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COURSE, DEPARTMENT, UNIVERSITY POLICIES

NOTE: For complete policies please refer to the MSW Program Graduate Student Handbook as well as the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, College of Graduate Studies and Research, and Minnesota State University, Mankato policy documents for Graduate Students.

CREDIT FOR LIFE EXPERIENCE OR PREVIOUS COURSE WORK EXPERIENCE POLICY

Although previous work experience will support and enhance participation in the practicum experience, under no circumstances will previous life or work experience substitute for practicum hours. Refer to the Credit for Life Experience or Previous Work Experience Policy in the MSW Program Graduate Student Handbook.

STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The University and Department of Social Work is committed to providing equal education and employment opportunities to all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, veteran’s status. National origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, physical and mental disabilities, creed, status due to receipt of public assistance, or any other groups against which discrimination is prohibited by Title VII of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964, Title IX of the
Education Amendments of 1972, Minnesota Statute Chapter 363, and other applicable state or federal laws or State University System policy. Complaints of discrimination are filed with the Office of Affirmative Action located at 112 Armstrong Hall.

ACCESS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES POLICY

In accordance with University Policy, the Department of Social Work is committed to ensuring equal educational opportunity and full participation for qualified persons with disabilities as is legally required under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 including section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. All students with a disability may request accommodation through the Office of Disability Services. Visit the Office of Disabilities Services at 132 Memorial Library or call 507-389-2825 (V/TTY). Student disability accommodations will be made by faculty based upon the advisement of the Office of Disability Services.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES POLICY AND ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

Students are expected to comply with the Student Responsibility Policy and Academic Honesty Policy stipulated in the MSW Program Graduate Student Handbook.

APA STYLE WRITING POLICY

Students are expected to comply with the stylistic guidelines of the American Psychological Association, fifth edition. The APA manual is available at the MSU Memorial Library reference desk, call number BF 76.7.P83 2001). The reference for the APA manual is:


An on-line source to help with using APA is located at: http://www.apastyle.org/

SPRING SEMESTER SCHEDULE

**Week 1**
Topic: Discussion of Seminar assignments and expectations
Ethics Of Indirect Practice/Ethics Of Direct Practice
Delivery Method: In-class
Required Readings
Assign Student Current Topic

**Week 2**
Delivery Method: Online
Field Log due

**Week 3**
Topic: Bio-Psycho-Social Assessment With Specific Populations
- Elderly
- Adults
 Adolescence
 Children
 Delivery Method: In-class
 Required Readings
 Learning contract due

 **Week 4**
 Delivery Method: Online
 Field Log due

 **Week 5**
 Topic: Implication Of The Rural Context Of Direct Practice
 Delivery Method: In-class
 Required Readings

 **Week 6**
 Delivery Method: Online
 Field Log due
 Case 1 - 1st Posting 1 due

 **Week 7**
 Topic: Implication Of The Rural Context Of Indirect Practice
 Delivery Method: In-class
 Required Readings
 Mid-term evaluation due

 **Week 8**
 Delivery Method: Online
 Field Log due
 Case 1 - 1st Response Posting 1 due

 **SPRING BREAK** (negotiable for completing hours – no seminar)

 **Week 9**
 Topic: Use Of Evaluation Instruments For Direct Practice
 Delivery Method: In-class
 Required Readings

 **Week 10**
 Delivery Method: Online
 Field log due
 Case 1 - 2nd Posting due

 **Week 11**
 Delivery Method: Online
Case 1 - 2nd Response Posting due

**Week 12**
Topic: Use Of Evaluation Instruments For Indirect Practice  
Delivery Method: In-class  
Required Readings

**Week 13**
Delivery Method: Online  
Field log due

**Week 14**
Topic: Intervention Planning And Goal Setting – Direct Practice  
Delivery Method: In-class  
Required Readings

**Week 15**
Topic: Intervention Planning And Goal Setting – Indirect Practice  
Delivery Method: In-class  
Required Readings  
Final field log due  
Final evaluation due

**NO CLASS BETWEEN SEMESTERS** (negotiable for completing hours – no seminar)

**SUMMER SEMESTER SCHEDULE**

**Week 1**
Topic: Innovative Interventions For Direct Practice  
- Elderly  
- Adults  
- Adolescence  
- Children  
Delivery Method: In-class  
Required Readings

**Week 2**
Delivery Method: Online  
Field Log due  
Case 2 – 1st Posting due

**Week 3**
Topic: Innovative Interventions For Indirect Practice  
Delivery Method: In-class
Required Readings
Summer Learning Contract due if applicable

Week 4
Delivery Method: Online
Field log due
Case 2 – 1st Response Posting due

Week 5
Topic: Implications Of Policy On Direct Practice
Delivery Method: In-class
Required Readings

Week 6
Delivery Method: Online
Mid-term evaluation due
Field log due
Case 2 – 2nd Posting due

Week 7
Delivery Method: Online

Week 8
Topic: Implications Of Policy On Indirect Practice
Delivery Method: In-class
Required Readings

Week 9
Delivery Method: Online
Field Log Due
Case 2 – 2nd Response Posting due

Week 10
Delivery Method: In-class
Final field log due
Final evaluation due
Agency Evaluation due

SUPPLEMENTAL BIBLIOGRAPHY


