

University of Nevada, Las Vegas School of Social Work

Master of Social Work MSW

Terms Used:

- **Directors of Field:** Includes Director and Assistant Director of Field Education

ASSIGNMENT TO A PRACTICUM AGENCY SITE

A Field Practicum is defined as **onsite (not remote)** experience in one (1) agency/ organization that has been contracted with the University and the School of Social Work. Because of liability insurance issues, Field Education is not capable of tracking or allowing students to be placed in multiple practicum sites simultaneously during the course of one semester.

Please follow these steps to secure a Practicum:

Step 1 – The Resume and Cover Letter:

Students entering a practicum search must first create a current Resume and Cover Letter describing their education, experience and objectives for field placement. Please contact UNLV Career Services at ~~892~~-3495.

Step 2– Sign-up for Handshake:

Please log in to Career Services at <https://www.unlv.edu/careerservices>. Click on Student Instructions and FAQ and follow the directions. Search for available practicums by clicking on jobs and in the search box type in Social Work Practicum. Available opportunities will be listed.

Please note: Only agencies that have an educational affiliation agreement (EAA) can be approved as a practicum site. If you encounter any problems with setting up an account or logging onto Handshake, please contact Career Services- ~~897~~~~32~~495.

Step 3- Searching for Placements:

In the search field, type in Social Work Practicum. This will bring up all of the practicum placement opportunities that are available. Once you locate an agency you are interested

directly to the Agency Field Instructor (AFI). You can check to see which positions you
-Campus Recruiting OCR

up a window with all positions you have applied to. Please make sure you include that you are a MSW student on

may not accept agencies to which they have been referred. If there are no matches (based on practicum position availability, incompatibility of goals or some other reasonable criteria), the student is advised to immediately contact their Field Education Department designated contact person.

Step 5 – Practicum Site Selection:

Once a student has been offered and has accepted a particular site, she or he is to notify the Field Education Department by submitting a **Practicum Selection Form** located on the Field Education website. Upon providing this information to the Field Education Department, the student is cleared to begin practicum the first week of the semester if the agency and Agency Field Instructor (AFI) have been approved.

Education Program policy mandates that agencies provide the School with, among other documentation, a description of their program and practicum activities to assist in appropriately matching students with the agency.

The following are examples of agency practice areas that currently available to MSW students:

- Child Welfare
- Abuse Investigation
- FosterCare/Adoption
- CommunityAction
- DomesticViolence
- Educational/School SocialWork
- ElderCare/Geriatric
- Health/Medical/Hospice
- Homelessness
- Legal/Forensic
- MentalHealth
- Inpatient and/oOutpatient
- SubstanceAbuse
- Social Service/CommunityResources

The criteria established for the selection of field agencies is as follows:

An established social welfare program with a clear sanction from the community.

Commitment to the goals of professional social work education objectives.

Commitment to and the ability to provide the resources (space, time, and othersupport)needed by agency staff and students involved in the activities of instructional field practice.

Reputation for professional competence.

Attitude of respect for students' competencies and needs.

Ability and desire to teach social work theory and its application in professional practice.

Demonstrated identification with the social work profession.

Thorough knowledge of the purposes, policies, and procedures of the agency.

Willingness to advance professional development as demonstrated by successful completion of the MANDATORY Agency Field Instructor (AFI) Orientation as well as participation in other continuing education opportunities.

Agency Field Instructors (AFIs) must have a current resume on file with the Field Education Department.

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK AND AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

The School of Social Work will provide at the request of the field agency, necessary and appropriate information about student(s) assigned to the agency, including academic background, previous social work and other work experience, career plans, and other relevant data if available.

Director of Field

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Providing supervision to students in the field.
Serving as one of the Field Liaisons.

Field Liaison

A Field Liaison provides the link between the School, the student and the Agency Field Instructor. Students are assigned to a Field Liaison that is available for consultation around field issues that arise on the part of the student or the agency. For each assigned student, the Field Liaison is required to make at least two agency visits per semester to meet with the student and Agency Field Instructor. The focus of the visit depends on the needs of the student and agency, and involves consultation regarding the Learning Contract/Evaluation, problem-solving any practicum concerns, and clarifying any field education issues. In the c

work activities.

Special Note: Agencies must have a **safety plan** in place for students in case of emergencies such as fire, police, medical, and any possible unruly/violent client issues.

Agency Field Instructor (AFI)

Assign written work (process and summary recordings, psychosocial summaries, case notes, etc.) and review them with the student.
Encourage the student to participate fully in the life of the agency.
Provide feedback to the student on a regular weekly basis to performance.
Communicate with the student, Director of Field, and/or Field Liaison any unusual opportunities, conditions, or problems as soon as they are evident.
Participate with the student in the preparation of the Field Practicum Evaluations during the semester.
Participate in training seminars for all agency-based field instruction.

Preceptor

In recognition of the fact that a student's experience in an agency can be enhanced by interaction with non-MSW human and social service professionals, some Agency Field Instructors (AFIs) may assign some supervisory responsibilities to a Preceptor. The Preceptor is selected by the Agency Field Instructor (AFI) based on very. The Preceptor may be from professional disciplines other than social work such as marriage and family counseling, psychology, occupational and recreational therapy, etc.

The involvement of a Preceptor is at the discretion of the Agency Field Instructor (AFI). Both the Preceptor and the Agency Field Instructor (AFI) are encouraged to develop clear avenues of communication as it relates to the student's progress through the practicum. Ultimately, the Agency Field Instructor (AFI) remains primarily re

Agency Field Instructor (AFI) / Preceptor Orientation

The School of Social Work provides an Orientation that is mandatory for all new Agency Field Instructors (AFIs). Training is Tm [1.55 231.e ion Isi

STUDENTS IN THE FIELD PRACTICUM

Assignment to Agency

Assignment to an agency is the responsibility of the student through the completion of the tasks located in Section V of this manual. The Directors of Field Education are always available to assist the student in this responsibility. Students can not complete a practicum at an agency that they have received services from or a family member or close friend is employed.

Field Practicum Challenges

The Field Education Department promotes the view that problems encountered in the field practicum can be opportunities for learning, expansion of awareness and professional development. When a student encounters problems at the practicum site, the following procedures are to be followed and can be initiated either by the student, Preceptor, Agency Field Instructor (AFI), Faculty Field Liaison, or field or social work faculty as appropriate:

1. The problem should initially be addressed between the student and Agency Field Instructor (AFI) preferably in the course of supervision. The Agency Field Instructor (AFI) is advised to keep a record of observed problems and A

mezzo or macro practice base on their own career goals. Upon mastering the generalist skills and knowledge of the foundation curriculum, placements and

exercises will provide students with opportunities to demonstrate the development of analytical and practice skills. Students do not receive additional credit, nor do they register separately for the field seminar classes. Student attendance is mandatory for each class. Regular attendance and participation is mandatory and is viewed as professional behavior. Students may be dropped or receive a failing grade if they miss more than one (1) class session.

Students are expected to:

Attend all classes in their entirety
Participate in class discussions, exercises, activities, and assignments
If students miss one class they will be given the opportunity to still receive participation points by completing ALL activity questions assigned by the instructor from in class discussions. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor for the activity questions and due dates.

While the content of the field practicum seminars may address a range of personal professional issues, these class sessions are not in any way to be construed as a forum for sharing information to promote professional growth is appropriate, however, students are expected to demonstrate an understanding of appropriate boundaries within an educational context. Additionally, by enrolling in field practicum courses including the seminar component, students are consenting to abide by the NASW Code of Ethics. In seminar, this is interpreted in part to mean that all students will protect the confidentiality of others. For example, if required to present case presentations, adequate attention must be given to securing the identity of clients. Also, relevant personal issues presented by other fellow students are not to be discussed or debated outside of the seminar class.

The discovery of dishonesty in seminar (or inappropriate behavior in field practicum) gives the instructor the right to assign a failing grade for the entire practicum course.

FIELD PRACTICUM REQUIREMENTS

Class Attendance and Participation

As described in Section X. of this manual, students are expected to attend and participate in monthly field seminar classes (in person) that are designed to assist the student in integrating field practicum experiences with curriculum content. The seminar classes provide students the opportunity to broaden their own experience and knowledge through exposure to the experiences of other students. See Section X of this manual for more information on field seminars and refer to the class syllabus.

Learning Contract/Evaluation

The Learning Contract/Evaluation is a formal document that consists of three (3) parts which require three (3) submissions:

1. First submission(**Learning Contract**) The student must pick ~~specific activities~~ Practice Behaviors for each competency from the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS).
2. Second submission(**Midterm Evaluation**) The student is evaluated on each selected ~~activities~~ practice behavior.
3. Third submission(**Final Evaluation**) The student will be evaluated on completion of each ~~activity~~ practice behavior.

Special Note: There **MUST** be comments for each activity on the Midterm, and Final Evaluation explaining how the student will or has completed each practice behavior. T

Sheet.

Students are to email their Field Practicum Time Sheets to their Agency Field Instructor (AFI) and preceptor if one is assigned each week. Once the Agency Field Instructor (AFI) and preceptor have reviewed the activity sheet they will sign the timesheet and return it to the student. The student will electronically submit the document in their SW Field Supervision class in CANVAS by 5 pm on Monday.

<http://faculty senate.unlv.edu/students/dispute>.

In the case of serious

It is the student's responsibility to communicate any difficulties encountered in

generalist experiences. Students should be provided a comprehensive orientation to the agency. Experiences should include opportunities to work with staff from diverse backgrounds, to observe and eventually participate in the direct delivery of client services, and to attend staff development and other administrative and collaborative meetings. Students should also review program evaluation procedures, become familiar with social policies that impact on the agency and its client systems, and participate in planning and interventions targeted at multiple system levels.

Advanced Standing Practicum

The Advanced Practicums are designed to prepare students with demonstrated generalist practice skills for critically analyzed, advanced, and ultimately autonomous practice. The primary goal of the Advanced Practicum is the development of specialized skills in the area of Direct Practice with individuals, families, and groups, or in the area of Management and Community Practice with organizations and communities.

The Advanced Practicum student is expected to demonstrate awareness and the accountability use of the knowledge, values, and skills of the profession. Activities and performance in each succeeding practicum must exhibit new learning demonstrated by an increase in skill and autonomy. Concentration Practicum I and II each consist of 300 hours of experience in a social service agency and attendance in field seminar classes. Practice practicums are taken in succession and concurrently with corresponding practice courses.

Direct Practice – Field Practicum I and II

Field Practicum I (DP) (SW 739) and Field Practicum II (DP) (SW 749) each consist of 300 hours of experience in a social service agency and attendance in field seminar classes (person and online). The Direct Practice Practicums (SW 739 and SW 749) are taken in succession and concurrently with the corresponding practice courses (SW 740 and SW 750).

Students are expected to engage in a range of advanced direct practice experiences involve opportunities to observe and participate in the delivery of client services, including assessment, planning, and intervention with individuals, families, and groups. Activities should be designed to enhance therapeutic approaches and intervention strategies with client systems. In addition, students should attend staff development and treatment team meetings, review practice evaluation procedures, and become familiar with the broad range of roles and responsibilities of both the social worker and agency.

The objectives of the Direct Practice Field Practicum are derived from the mission, goals and objectives of the program, as well as the Foundational Program and field competencies with an emphasis on advanced practice knowledge, values and skills. The practicum seminar class, and course assignments will allow students the opportunity to build upon the foundation competencies and also achieve the following advanced competencies:

- The Direct Practice Practicum class student will develop a broad range of practice skills based on the generalist perspective and effective at multiple levels of client systems with particular emphasis on micro and

intervention.

- Will be able to more thoroughly integrate psychosocial, strengths and systems oriented frameworks to direct practice; will be able to effectively apply principles of generalist practice, particularly in clinical, therapeutic, advocacy and case management work with diverse populations.
- Direct Practice Practicum class students will model the values and ethics of the social work profession by demonstrating competence, awareness, objectivity, accountability professional presentation/behavior, and respect for the right to self-determination; will actively participate in the learning process by making use of the constructive feedback available through supervision and other field support mechanisms.
- Will demonstrate advanced autonomy, increased responsibility, appropriate innovation and sound clinical judgment in working with clients.
- Direct Practice Practicum class students will be able to identify how factors such as economics, social policies, and oppression influence the functioning and well-being of client systems; will be able to apply practice skills and methods in direct work with clients and effective for addressing a spectrum of cultural factors (e.g. gender, age, sexual orientation, and racial-ethnic, spiritual).

Management and Community Practice - Field Practicum I and II

Field Practicum I (MCP) (SW 759) and Field Practicum II (MCP) (SW 769) each consist of 300 hours of experience in a social service agency and attendance in weekly field seminar classes, as well as specific required assignments requested by the Director of Field. The Management and Community Practice Practicums (SW 759 and SW 769) are taken in succession and concurrently with the corresponding practice courses (SW 760 and SW 770). Students are expected to engage in a range of advanced administrative practice experiences, involving assessment, planning, intervention, and evaluation at the macro level. Students should become knowledgeable of the service delivery system and organizational structure of the agency, attend staff development and administrative meetings, review program evaluation, procedures, and participate in collaborative change efforts at the program, organization, or community level. In addition, students should participate in a variety of experiences designed to increase supervision and management skills, while familiarizing the student with the broad range of roles and responsibilities of both the social worker and agency.

The objectives of the Management and Community Practice Practicum are derived from the mission, goals, and objectives of the program, as well as the Foundational Program and field competencies with an emphasis on advanced macro practice knowledge, values, and skills. The practicum, seminar, and course assignments will allow students the opportunity to build upon the foundation competencies and also

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- Any extraordinary tension in the agency that may affect student learning.
- Absence of the field instructor from the agency for more than ~~one~~ **one week**.
- Student absences for more than three days ~~per~~ **per**

Hours Required

The **Foundation** Practicum placements require **225 hours** while the **Advanced Standing and Concentration** Practicum requires **300 hours** in the field **each semester**. The **Non-Advanced Standing Concentration Practicum** students are required to be in the **same selected Practicum site** for two (2) semesters (Fall and Spring). Students are expected to establish and be accountable for a regular schedule in their practicum, generally 15 hours per week in the Foundation Practicum and 20 hours per week in the **Concentration** Practicum. The practicum experience must be distributed over a minimum of 15 weeks.

Accountability for hours is established through the accurate completion of the Field Practicum Time Sheet submitted by the student to the Agency Field Instructor (AFI), who then in turn signs it and returns it to the student to be submitted in the journal to the Field Liaison. Inaccuracies, inconsistencies, receipt by someone

Home visits are a regular part of most placements. Even if not, a home visit may be clinically indicated in certain situations. Agencies will be expected

Holidays

Practicum schedules are designed to follow the academic calendar. However, some agencies may not observe all University holidays and breaks. Therefore, scheduling of field practicum hours should be determined early in the academic year/semester in conjunction with the Agency Field Instructor (AFI). Students are required to complete practicum hours at the practicum site in order to count hours on an observed holiday.

Absences

The students should be allowed absence from field courses and practicum in cases of personal illness or when illness or death occurs in the immediate family.

At times the ability to balance the demands of a rigorous academic program, other life responsibilities and internal stressors may become difficult thereby requiring professional intervention. The Student Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) (702-895-3627) is available on campus to help students with concerns before these become more

practicum at an agency with an off site agency field instructor.
Students are unable to petition to do a practicum at an agency where they
have received services or a family member or friend is employed.