

University of Iowa
School of Social
1111 9th St., Des Moines, IA
Salome Raheim, Director

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Phone: 283-0833; 979-4481
Off. Hours: Tues. 2-5
Spring, 2003

Course Outline

I. Course Title and Number

Foundation Practicum Seminar

42:291 (1 s.h.) S/U graded

II. Course Description

The foundation Practicum Seminar is designed to assist students in integrating academic and experiential learning. The seminar will emphasize generalist practice experience in the following ways: a) awareness of the agency-community context of practice, b) the application of theory to practice issues, c) the use of professional journaling as a tool for self-reflection and professional development, d) the integration of professional ethics and cultural competencies into one's practice, and e) the use of consultation and peer support as an element of professional practice.

III. Course Objectives and Goals

A. Goals

1. Apply knowledge, values, and skills learned in foundation year classroom curriculum to experiential agency-based learning
2. Provide opportunity to learn about the organizational structures and processes of the placement agency
3. Increase student's ability to function within an agency in a way consistent with social work values and ethics
4. Develop skills for accountability in practice
5. **Build foundations for culturally competent practice, including working with the aged.**

B. Academic Outcomes

Students will:

1. Apply theory and knowledge to practice interventions
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the structure of organizations, service delivery, and necessary organizational change
3. Demonstrate practice within the values and ethics of the social work profession
4. Demonstrate responsibility for their own ethical conduct
5. Demonstrate the professional use of self

6. Build professional relationships on regard for individual worth and dignity, advance them by mutual participation, acceptance, confidentiality, honesty, and responsible handling of conflict
7. Respect the individual's right to make independent decisions and actively participate in the helping process
8. Demonstrate foundation skills in interviewing, recording, and case planning
9. Demonstrate responsibility for the quality of their own practice and documentation of interventions
10. Under supervision, evaluate their own practice
11. Demonstrate commitment to continuous professional growth and development in their own practice
12. **Demonstrate growth in cultural competency within the context of their particular field setting and specifically increase their knowledge of working with aging populations.**
13. Appreciate the importance of culturally competent practice, and the on-going nature of working toward cultural competency.

IV. Reading Materials (Available both from the web at www.lib.uiowa.edu/disted or on reserve in the office.)

- Curtis, L. & Hodge, M. (1994). Old standards, new dilemmas: Ethics and boundaries in community support services. *Psychosocial Rehabilitation Journal*, 18 (2), 13-33.
- Devore, W. and Schlesinger, E. (1991). *Ethnic sensitive social work practice* (3rd ed.; pp.98-115, and 165-182). New York: Macmillan.
- Kagle, J. & Giebelhausen, P. (1994). Dual relationships and professional boundaries. *Social Work*, 39 (2), 213-218.
- McIntosh, P. (1989, July/August). White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack. *Peace and Freedom*, 10-12.
- McInnis-Dittrich, K. (2002). *Social Work With Elders*, pg 17-23. Boston, MA.: Allyn & Bacon.**
- NASW. (1997). *The Code of Ethics*. Silver Spring, MD: Author.
- Proctor, E. & Davis, L. (1994). The challenge of racial difference: Skills for clinical practice. *Social Work*, 39 (3), 314-322.
- Rhodes, M. (1992, January). Social work challenges: The boundaries of ethics. *Journal of Contemporary Human Services*, 40-46.
- Saakvitne, K. & Pearlman, L. (1996). What is vicarious traumatization? In *Transforming the Pain* (pp.25-50). New York: W. W. Norton.
- Swenson, C. (1988, May). The professional log: Techniques for self-directed learning. *Social Casework*, 307-311.
- Wilson, S. (1978). *Confidentiality in social work: Issues and principles* (Chp. 1-2). New York: The Free Press.

V. Evaluation of Student Performance

A. Expectations:

Students will be expected to complete a combination of written and oral assignments which will be evaluated on a pass/fail (S/U) basis.

Written Assignments

1. Process Journal
2. Practice Overview: Field of Practice and Agency Assessment
3. Cultural Competence Assessment

Oral Presentation

1. Ethical dilemma

Students are expected to be in attendance for all class sessions. Missing more than one session may lead to a failing grade.

Weather always presents possible difficulties for out-of-town people. I am concerned both about your learning and your safety. If weather is bad in your area, please call the Center (283-0833) to learn if class is cancelled, before embarking for Des Moines. The **DMACC Cancellation Hotline** is 244-4226.

Students are expected to read assigned materials, actively participate in discussions, and complete assignments on schedule. Points may be deducted for late assignments.

Written assignments should be double-space and typewritten or computer generated. All sources must be properly documented, using the APA style. Failure to document sources may result in a failing grade.

B. Evaluation

Students in the seminar will be graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory (S/U) basis, using the following criteria:

1. Criteria for evaluating written assignments:
 - a. completion of all elements of the assignment;
 - b. use of research literature/outside sources, as applicable;
 - c. evidence of analytical thinking and logical development of ideas;
 - d. proper format, spelling and grammar; and
 - e. proper documentation of sources.
2. Criteria for evaluating oral presentations and class participation:
 - a. regular and lively contribution to class discussions;
 - b. ability to analyze and apply concepts in clear and logical terms; and
 - c. willingness to analyze one's own knowledge, values and thinking and to give and accept input and feedback.

C. Blind Grading

When feasible and appropriate, the instructor will blind grade student papers, exams and other written work. Students should submit all such assignments with their social security number rather than their name.

VI. University and School Policies

A. Students with Disabilities

Federal Law requires that the University make reasonable efforts to accommodate students with disabilities. The student is responsible for arranging the accommodations. A student with a disability will bring the instructor a completed confidential form available from the Office of Student Disability Services, verifying the need for accommodation. If the student and instructor disagree on how course requirements may be altered without compromising the integrity of the course, the student will contact the Director of the School. The Director will work with the student, the instructor, and the Office of Student Disability Services to resolve such differences. Questions may be addressed to the Office of Student Disability Services, 319/335-1462.

B. Resources for Obtaining Additional Help

The School provides support and assistance to students who, for a variety of reasons, may be experiencing academic problems. Such students should speak with the Graduate Coordinator or the Director of the School.

C. Student Grievances

A student wishing to grieve a grade should discuss the matter with the instructor. If the grievance is not resolved, graduate students should use the School's appeal process as described in the Educational Handbook for the Master of Social Work Program (Appeals Committee, p. D-4). In the event that the grievance still has not been resolved, the student should send a letter describing the grievance to the Associate Dean for Academic Programs, who attempts to resolve the matter. The Associate Dean changes a grade only if it was assigned in violation of College or University policy and only after consultation with the School's Director.

D. Academic Misconduct

An incident of inappropriate citation (i.e., plagiarism) or other forms of academic dishonesty, such as the fabrication of research data, will result in a reduction of the student's grade for the course, at minimum, or a failing grade, depending upon the severity of the transgression. A graduate student's misconduct will also be reported to the Graduate Coordinator, at which point further disciplinary action may be taken. Please refer to the Educational Handbook for the Master of Social Work Program (Student Advancement Policy, pp. C-1 through C-6).

- April 7 **Cultural Competence and Ageism; Ageism Exercise**
 Small group: Present findings from cultural competence assessment
 Share experience re: visiting an organization that serves a population at risk
 Reading:
 McInnis-Dittrich, pg. 17-23
Assignment Due: Cultural Competence Assessment
- April 21 Vicarious Trauma and Practitioner Health
 Discussion:
 --- identify practice issues/experiences that put you at risk for vicarious
 traumatization and burnout;
 -- identify some techniques for dealing with these issues;
 -- how does your agency address this problem?
- Readings:
 Saakvitne & Pearlman, What is vicarious traumatization?
- May 5 Seminar Wrap Up
Assignments due: Process journal

VIII. Assignments

1. Process Journal

Prepare a journal to reflect on your *learning process*. Entries may address any practice issue relevant to the practicum, but they should not simply be a log of your daily and weekly activities. Instead, the journal should contain reflections and insights into your own knowledge and skills. The purpose of the journal is to provide a basis for self-reflection and to generate material for class discussion. Information should be recorded in a manner that limits identifying markers and affords an appropriate level of disclosure. One entry per week is required with a summary at the end semester.

2. Practice Overview Paper (8 pp. total)

Part A: Field of Practice (approx. 5 pp.)

Provide an introduction and overview to the field of practice most closely associated with your practicum (use a minimum of 4 literature resources);

- a. discuss the historical origins of the field of practice;
- b. highlight the key developments in the evolution of the field;
- c. identify a theory that fits well with this type of practice
- d. discuss the agency's philosophical approach to practice and any connections you see to the theory you chose.

Part B: Organizational Structure and Function (approx. 3 pp.)

Briefly describe your practicum agency in terms of

- a. its history and mission, funding sources, and management style;
- b. the demographic profile of the client population;
- c. the type of services provided; and
- d. the issues currently effecting the organizational function (eg. funding, federal/state policies, service delivery issues, etc.)

3. *Cultural Competence Assessment Paper (approx. 5 pp.)*

In consultation with your practicum instructor and the social work staff, assess how well your practicum agency reflects cultural competence in terms of:

- a. agency decor;
- b. client and staff diversity;
- c. geographic location and accessibility of services;
- d. assessment and intervention instruments, practice modalities;
- e. opportunities for cultural competence training and skill building;
- f. provision of translation services/multi-lingual written materials;
- g. agency policies affirming diversity; and
- h. overall agency progress in moving towards cultural competence.

What guidelines/suggestions do your practicum instructor and the social work staff offer for culturally competent practice?

Identify a population at risk and make a visit to an organization that serves this population.

4. *Ethical Dilemma -- Oral Presentation*

Identify and briefly discuss an ethical dilemma which you directly (personally) encountered in your practicum placement. Your presentation should elaborate:

- a. the dilemma which you encountered (delete any identifying markers);
- b. the issues/values that are/were in conflict;
- c. the elements of the Code of Ethics or the Ethical Principles are/were relevant to the issue;
- d. your resolution/plan for resolving the dilemma.

Instructor and Student Guidelines for Classroom Discussions

The content of this course will be intellectually, personally, and emotionally challenging. In order to achieve the objectives of the course, the classroom environment must be a safe one where all can feel supported in discussing their thoughts and feelings, asking questions, and stating their opinions. It is equally important that all statements made are respectful and do not demean or humiliate any individual present or any group of people. The following guidelines for classroom discussions are adapted from materials written by the Center for Research on Women at the University of Memphis. We offer them here as a starting point for negotiating the ground rules we will adopt and agree to observe as a class to create a safe environment that will promote productive interaction.

1. Recognize that we are all at different stages of learning about and accepting the existence of prejudice and discrimination based on race, class, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, physical and mental differences and other characteristics.
2. Acknowledge that all of us have learned misinformation about our own group and about members of other groups, whether we belong to a majority or minority group.
3. Agree not to blame others or ourselves for the misinformation we have learned in the past, but accept responsibility for not repeating misinformation after we have learned otherwise.
4. Assume that people-both those we study and those in this class-do the best they can.
5. Recognize that social workers identify with different cultural, political, and religious belief systems, and are free to practice their beliefs within the professional guidelines described by the NASW Code of Ethics.

6. Never demean, devalue, or in any way "put down" people for their experiences, backgrounds, or statements. This does not mean that you can't disagree, only that you must do so respectfully, and be prepared to clarify your statements with specific information, experiences, and/or examples.

The following are example of statements that do and do not honor these guidelines.

Acceptable: I've thought about it a lot, and I really don't believe that gay men and lesbians should be allowed to marry and adopt children [because...]

Unacceptable: Gay lifestyles are totally immoral and inappropriate for children.

Acceptable: I have a hard time understanding how social workers can vote for Republicans who support policies like [give example] because [explain concern].

Unacceptable: I can't imagine that any social worker would vote for Republican candidates; Republicans only care about rich white men.

Acceptable: It doesn't seem fair that I have to wait until I'm financially secure to have kids, but mothers on welfare get my tax money to support their families and don't have to work.

Unacceptable: Women on welfare are just manipulating the system and having children to avoid working and get more money from the government.

Acceptable: My faith is important to me, and I don't know how my religious beliefs fit with what we're learning in class.

Unacceptable: I don't care what anyone associated with this class says; if my religion doesn't accept something (or some group of people), I don't accept it (or them) either.