

University of Wisconsin-Green Bay  
Social Work Professional Programs



BSW Field Education Handbook

PERIODICALLY UPDATES ARE MADE TO THIS HANDBOOK. A CURRENT VERSION OF THE  
HANDBOOK CAN ALWAYS BE FOUND ON THE SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM WEBSITE:

<http://www.uwgb.edu/socwork/>

Bachelor of Social Work Program  
2010 - 2011 Edition

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## Introduction to BSW Field Education

*In field instruction the students are expected to begin the extremely difficult task of recognizing, understanding, and utilizing their total experience to engage completely in helping relationships. Yet, this experience must also be cast into the appropriate parameters of social work. The field instruction experience, then, must yield more than skilled helpers. It must also help to prepare committed professionals who function within the scope and expertise of social work, understand its expectations for ethical conduct, and plan to contribute to the improvement of the social work profession. © (Sheafor & Jenkins, 1982:xii)*

As the above quote indicates, BSW field education is a critical component of the curriculum of a social work educational program. It is when students apply and integrate knowledge and values with the development of skills essential to professional practice in social work.

The field manual (since retitled the BSW Field Education Handbook), which details the objectives, policies, processes and procedures for implementing and maintaining a high quality BSW field education program was first developed by the University of Wisconsin - Green Bay, Social Work Professional Program prior to the program's initial accreditation in 1985. That work was carried out in conjunction with the newly developed BSW field education Advisory committee, now known as the Program Advisory Committee. The faculty and Advisory committee regularly reviews and revises the entire handbook to make it user friendly to students at the junior and senior levels and useful to field supervisors, field instructors, and faculty. Field instructors are highly knowledgeable about the Program. A working relationship, characterized by honesty and respect for varying points of view, exists between faculty and field personnel. Many valuable suggestions have been made by Advisory committee members. Faculty have made every effort to incorporate these into the material which follows.

## **BSW Field Education Philosophy**

The philosophy that guides the organization of the BSW field education program is consistent with the overall Social Work Professional Program's philosophy incorporating the Program themes of : utilization of a strengths perspective, teamwork, critical thinking and andragogy/adult learning. Some of the basic principles that flow from this philosophy are as follows:

1. A sound BSW field education program is a mutual endeavor on the part of faculty and field instructors/supervisors. It is a team effort with faculty and field working together in a cooperative, collaborative relationship in the development and implementation of the total program. The different roles played by the educational team: faculty; faculty field liaison; and field instructor/supervisor, must be understood and each must support the other.
2. All aspects of the required University of Wisconsin-Green Bay Social Work curriculum are focused on the outcomes also referred to as "practice competencies", of the educational program. The practice competencies delineate the knowledge, values, and skills that must be achieved by all graduates of the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay baccalaureate Social Work Professional Program. Thus, curriculum, including field assignments and assessment materials, are derived from the practice competencies. The practice competencies are drawn from the purposes of the social work profession and elaborate the knowledge, values, and skills appropriate to the baccalaureate level of practice.
3. Curriculum, as defined by the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, Social Work Professional Programs includes the environment in which students learn how to become competent social workers. The program subscribes to principles of learning drawn from adult learning (andragogy) theorist Malcolm Knowles (1970). Modeling professional behaviors, collegiality and teamwork, treating all persons, including students, with respect, and expecting students to be actively involved in their own learning are all essential to the development and maintenance of a learning environment that supports the achievement of the practice competencies and critical to the development of compassionate, humane social workers.
4. Concepts are taught and built upon sequentially throughout the Social Work Professional Program curriculum and opportunities for application of these concepts are sequenced throughout the upper level courses. Thus, application of knowledge and the development of skills begins at the junior level continuing throughout the student's tenure in the Program.

The above principles are reflected throughout the material in this manual.

## **Mission of the BSW Professional Program**

Mission Statement  
BSW Professional Program  
2006- 2010

The Social Work Professional Program at the University of Wisconsin –Green Bay provides a learner-centered, competency-based, interdisciplinary program, which (1) prepares Baccalaureate-level social workers for generalist practice with vulnerable and diverse individuals, families, groups and communities and (2) enhances the development of social work education and practice.

To this end, we achieve our mission through curriculum, scholarship, and community service activities by being:

### 1. Practice-focused

The Program advances the application of theory to practice by:

- maintaining a curriculum that engages learners in classroom, field, and community experiences that connect to real-life challenges
- allows faculty and students to utilize their knowledge and skills to improve the provision of services within the community
- encourages faculty and students to develop and disseminate practice knowledge
- benefitting human service organizations by virtue of their involvement with the Social Work Professional Program.

### 2. Social Justice/Change Oriented

The Program advocates for improved social conditions by:

- maintaining a curriculum that engages students in classroom and field activities and community experiences that are designed to increase their knowledge and ability to improve social conditions on multiple levels by addressing the region's social challenges and conditions
- promoting an inclusive model of social work practice that values all persons, groups and communities in society
- faculty and students' engagement in learning activities that promote advocacy for the establishment of basic human rights, opportunities and benefits
- faculty and students' promotion of the equitable distribution of social and economic resources based on the principles of distributive justice.

### 3. Quality-driven

The Program ensures high standards for social work education and practice by:

- maintaining ongoing Council on Social Work Education accreditation
- graduating students that are prepared for entry-level social work positions
- graduating students that are prepared for entry into advanced MSW level programs
- graduating students that are prepared to be certified as social workers
- ensuring that faculty and student activities represent the values and ethics of the social work profession.

### 4. Regionally-responsive

The program responds to the particular needs of residents, agencies, organizations and communities of Northeastern Wisconsin by:

- engaging in activities that advance the UWGB mission of “connecting learning to life;” maintaining a student body that includes representatives of diverse ethnic and cultural communities of NE Wisconsin
- graduating students that are prepared to meet the needs of the region’s diverse populations
- faculty members’ utilization of input from community practitioners to inform program activities.

Last Update: May 11, 2006

**Faculty Information :** The reader is referred to the UWGB Social Work Home Page ([www.uwgb.edu/socialwork/](http://www.uwgb.edu/socialwork/)) for professional biographical information about our faculty and instructors.

## **Role of the BSW Field Coordinator**

The field coordinator is a faculty person who has administrative responsibility for overall planning and coordination of the field practicum. The specific responsibilities of the field coordinator are:

1. To work with the Program Advisory Committee on an ongoing basis.
2. To develop field sites that meet the criteria for placement of students at the Junior and Senior levels, and are in compliance with CSWE Accreditation Standards.
3. To implement the program's approved policies and procedures for the placement of students.
4. To supervise the development and implementation of appropriate criteria for the assessment of student performance within the field experience and the field practicum.
5. To develop and implement criteria for the periodic adjustment of field practicum sites in relation to the program's stated objectives.
6. To organize and implement ongoing orientation and other educational opportunities for the program's field instructors and supervisors.
7. To develop and revise written agreements and forms used in the field experience and the field practicum.
8. To develop and update the BSW field education Handbook.

## **The Practice Competencies**

The purposes of social work provide the basis for the educational outcomes of the BSW Program of the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, Social Work Professional Programs . These outcomes are described as practice competencies expected to be mastered by all BSW graduates. The Competencies reflect the particular educational emphasis of the BSW Program of the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay mission. The practice competencies that the student is expected to acquire as he/she progresses through the curriculum are listed in the Student Handbook.

## **Junior Level Field Experience: Course Objectives and Field Activities**

All social work majors who are enrolled in the Spring semester, junior level courses, Social Work Methods I, Skills Lab II, and Human Behavior in the Social Environment, are also required to enroll in Field Experiences in a Human Service Agency.

Students will spend four hours per week in a human service agency for 13 weeks for a total of 52 hours. During this time, they will observe the agency and community as a context for practice, will serve as an administrative associate in carrying out various tasks and activities, as assigned by the field supervisor, and will shadow social workers as they function in direct service roles. Students will need to practice flexibility regarding how they schedule their four-hour time slot at the agency so as to maximize their learning experience.

### **Course Objectives**

At the conclusion of this course, students will have demonstrated:

1. Knowledge of agency mission, purpose, organizational structure, policies and procedures.
2. Knowledge of agency target population, programs and services.
3. Knowledge of roles and functions of social work professionals within the agency.
4. Discussion of application of classroom content with field supervisor.
5. Seeking and effectively using feedback from field supervisor.
6. An attitude of caring and commitment to working with people.
7. Knowledge of and respect for the NASW Code of Ethics.
8. Professional behaviors of attendance and punctuality; effective use of professional self; maintenance of agency standards of appearance and demeanor; follow-through

with commitments, completion of assignments; effective written work; self-direction and assertiveness.

9. The capacity to relate to agency staff, collateral contacts and clients as a beginning professional.
10. Insight into values, feelings, and behaviors in interactions with supervisor, agency staff, clients, and collateral contacts.
11. Effective communication skills with agency staff, clients and collateral contacts; utilizes active listening skills, empathy and professional interviewing skills.
12. Sensitivity to racial and ethnic diversity within the agency, organization and community.

### **Junior Level Field Activities**

Below is a list of common macro-focused activities associated with the junior level field experience. These activities are listed in their passive and active forms to assist field supervisors in the structuring of the field experience. This list is not all-inclusive or in any order of priority, and only serves as a tool of suggestion. A combination of passive and active activities are encouraged under the direction of the field supervisor.

#### **Passive Activity**

Student attends agency related meetings and other relevant community human service meetings.

Student shadows workers/agency staff

Student observes types of groups

#### **Active Activity**

- Student takes minutes
- Student provides a brief report at the meeting
- Student is asked to gather information
- Student is asked to put together agenda for upcoming meeting
- Student is asked to describe how the worker fits into the agency context after shadowing sessions
- Student is asked to provide a verbal or written summary to the workers about observed interviewing skills and techniques
- Student is asked to offer analysis of worker interactions and functions (“Why did we do what we did?” and “Why did we do it in the way in which we did?”)
- Student raises issues about standards for practice, social work values, and ethics raised by observations.
- Student is asked by facilitator or leader to offer analysis of group after the group session is

	complete (“Why did we do what we did?” and “Why did we do it the way in which we did?”)
Student visits other community agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Student is asked to record group meeting</li> <li>– Student brings information back</li> <li>– Student provides a verbal report back to a staff member</li> </ul>
Student reviews written agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Student is asked to write agency correspondence and/or client files pondeance and to contribute to client files, if appropriate</li> </ul>
Student observes intake calls and phone interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Student is asked to take incoming calls, route to appropriate persons, provide agency information over the phone, etc.</li> </ul>
Student reviews agency policy and observes agency practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Student reads the policy and procedure manual for the agency/department and is asked to explain components and to follow protocol within respective practice limitations/ boundaries</li> </ul>
Student reviews agency information systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Student is asked to explain how client files are organized, how technology is used in the agency, how various records are kept, etc.</li> </ul>
Student reviews a federal/ state/local policy impacting practice within the agency/ program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Student can interpret and explain the policy within the agency context</li> <li>– Student identifies issues about standards for practice and social work ethics impacted by policy development/implementation</li> </ul>
Student learns about the agency’s organizational structure, its mission and purpose, population served, and how agency/program interfaces with other service providing agencies in the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Student studies agency’s organizational chart</li> <li>– Student interviews agency administrators</li> <li>– Student becomes familiar with the agency’s mission and purpose</li> <li>– Student understands the population served by agency/program and how clients come to access the services</li> <li>– Student seeks to discover how the agency/program works with other service providing agencies to coordinate delivery of services to clients.</li> </ul>

## **Guidelines for the Junior Level Field Experience**

### **Expectations of the Agency and Field Supervisor**

In accepting a student for the junior practicum, agency administration and the student's field supervisor understand that the agency will:

1. orient the student to agency expectations, nature of the student's role, availability and requirements of supervision, and other work details;
2. designate a field supervisor for the assigned student(s) to provide the required field supervision;
3. release the designated field supervisor to attend the orientation meeting conducted by the Social Work Professional Programs at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay;
4. provide an opportunity for the student to become orientated to the agency, its programs, and its relationship to the larger community network of services;
5. provide an opportunity for the student to shadow social worker(s) in their various roles;
6. expose the student to agency administrator tasks, when able, and assignment of administrative tasks;
7. provide 30 minutes per week of informal and structured supervision by the field supervisor, or a designee;
8. foster the student's development as a professional social worker;
9. be aware and supportive of academic assignments the student must complete in association with the placement;
10. be aware that, on occasion and with observance of confidentiality, the agency and client situations may be discussed in class for instructional purposes;
11. contact the faculty field liaison with any concerns in a timely manner;
12. complete a mid-semester review and a formal end-of-semester evaluation (evaluation tool is provided) with the student and return it to the faculty liaison.
13. promote the four purposes of the Social Work Profession
  - a. enhancing people's capacities to resolve problems, cope, and function effectively,
  - b. linking clients with needed resources,

- c. improving the social service delivery network,
- d. promoting social justice through the development of social policy and the six core values of social work “(1) service, (2) social justice, (3) dignity and worth of the person, (4) importance of human relationships, (5) integrity, and (6) competence (Loewenberg, Dolgoff, and Harrington, p. 20 & 21); and the NASW Code of Ethics.

### **Expectations of the Social Work Professional Programs and Faculty**

The faculty will:

1. provide an orientation-to- the-field experience meeting for field supervisors and be available as needed for consultation and problem solving;
2. emphasize the necessity for confidentiality regarding agency and client confidentiality in the classroom and in-class assignments;
3. foster a process insuring that information students acquire in the agency is treated with sensitivity and discretion;
4. oversee and grade the student’ s academic assignments;
5. initiate contacts with the agency when potential concerns with the placement are perceived;
6. provide opportunities for the student to acquire the knowledge and skills needed for success in the placement;
7. utilize the field experience as a catalyst for discussion regarding community, organizational, and individual dynamics; social work roles and practice issues; application of social work values; and assessment of problem situations;
8. contact supervisors at mid-term to evaluate student progress;
9. oversee the final evaluation and grading of the field experience (P/NP status).

### **Expectations of the Student**

The student will:

1. work in the field agency four hours per week for 13 weeks for a total of 52 hours over the Spring semester;

2. arrange a regular schedule of meetings, learning experiences, and tasks with the field supervisor, while maintaining a mutual flexibility to allow for unplanned learning opportunities as they present themselves;
3. maintain effective, open communication with the field supervisor regarding concerns, questions, challenges, necessary schedule changes, etc.
4. practice professional behaviors which include being on time, keeping appointments, and following through on tasks in a timely manner;
5. schedule and effectively use regular supervisory sessions;
6. become knowledgeable of the agency programs and services and agree to comply with all regulations and policies which directly apply to the scope of the learning experience:
7. act in a professional manner in accordance with the expectations of the agency, the UW- Green Bay BSW Program, and the Social Work Code of Ethics;
8. participate in the mid-semester and final evaluation with the supervisor.

## Procedures for Arranging the Junior Level Field Experience

The Field Coordinator will review the objectives and guidelines for the practicum with students in the Social Work Profession class and will discuss the range of placement opportunities. The following procedures for arranging the placements will be completed before the completion of the Fall semester.

1. Selection of the sites for junior level field placements will be based on the following criteria:
  - a. social service agency or agencies with a specific social service department;
  - b. agencies with direct service social workers who are able to have students observe and accompany them;
  - c. agency personnel available to instruct and supervise junior level students.
2. Students will complete an application describing interests, learning objectives, expectations for the field placement and prior employment history.
3. Faculty will assign a student to a placement site based on the student's application and faculty's knowledge of the student. Students who have a potential dual relationship with employees or clientele of the recommended agency, or who perceive that a conflict of interest may be involved, must call this to the attention of the Field Coordinator so that an alternative site can be selected. A student's request to work with a particular supervisor with whom they have a prior acquaintance will be denied.
4. Students will contact and interview with the potential field supervisor to determine the appropriateness of the placement. If either the student or the field supervisor determines that a particular placement will serve neither the student's and/or the organization's best interest, either or both should promptly contact the Field Coordinator.
5. Students and supervisors will finalize the placement by completing the Student Placement Confirmation form and returning it to the Field Coordinator. The student is responsible for returning the completed form.

## Supervision and Evaluation of the Junior Level Field Experience

The Introduction to the Field Experience course represents the student's first experience in a social service agency under the supervision of the Social Work Program at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. This experience provides the opportunity for students, faculty, and agency supervisors to assess the appropriateness and commitment of the student to the social work profession prior to the senior year. Hence, the supervisor's feedback to the student and faculty, along with the final evaluation, becomes critical to the student's self-awareness and development as well as to faculty's final assessment of the student. The process for assessment of the junior level field placement is as follows:

1. In accepting a junior student, the field supervisor makes a commitment to be available for regular supervision (about 30 minutes per week is recommended.) While the student is responsible for taking the initiative to arrange such supervision, experience indicates that supervision "as needed" has its pitfalls when compared to the practice of scheduling regular meeting times. Therefore, we recommend that the student and supervisor work out a supervision schedule early in the semester.
2. Supervisors are encouraged to consult with the faculty whenever questions or concerns arise. This is vital when any potentially serious problems (failure to meet commitments, breaches of confidentiality, inappropriate behaviors or other ethical problems) are observed or reported. It is the responsibility of the faculty to deal with such issues and assess the appropriateness of continuing the placement.
3. Supervisors are not responsible for making academic judgments or interpreting academic assignments to students. Any questions or concerns the student has about academic or Social Work Professional Program matters should be referred to the faculty.
4. Faculty will make contact with the supervisor by phone around mid-semester to discuss how the placement is proceeding. If there are concerns that the student is not aware of, the supervisor is expected to discuss these with the student. The faculty field liaison will make a follow-up call to the supervisor to discuss how the concern is being resolved.
5. At the conclusion of the semester, the agency supervisor and student will complete the evaluation form and discuss their mutual evaluations. Supervisors then return the completed form to the student, who will drop it off in the Social Work Program office (Cofrin 710). This evaluation is considered when assigning a final grade in Methods I and in the Junior assessment meeting.
6. The feedback from the evaluation forms and phone contacts will provide data in determining the student's final grade. The faculty field liaison is responsible for assigning the grade. Student concerns about grades should be referred to the faculty.

## **Senior Level Field Practicum: Participants and Responsibilities**

### **Student**

The senior-level student in the BSW program is sequentially enrolled in SOC WORK-402 and SOC WORK-403, Field Practicums I and II. The student is responsible for initiating and maintaining open communication with the field instructor and faculty concerning educational objectives and priorities. Specifically, the responsibilities of the student are:

1. To work in a field agency 16 hours each week for 15 weeks each semester for a total of 480 hours over the senior year
2. To keep the field agency informed of his/her schedules, interests, and background material relevant to the learning experience.
3. To be accountable for having knowledge of the field practicum objectives and act in a professional manner in accordance with the expectations of the agency, the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, Social Work Professional Programs, and the Social Work Code of Ethics.
4. To become knowledgeable of the agency programs and services and agree to comply with all regulations and policies which directly apply to the scope of the training experience.
5. To develop and implement a learning agreement with the field instructor and methods instructor in which the learning outcomes for each competency area are described.
6. To document the learning activities in a daily or weekly log indicating how the learning experiences apply to the competencies of the program. The logs are submitted to the field instructor and to the Methods instructor.
7. To assume responsibility for amending the contractual agreement with the field instructor and methods instructor when necessary.
8. To initiate discussion with the field instructor and/or methods instructor when the learning agreement is not being met.
9. To participate with the field instructor and methods instructor in an assessment of performance and development at the end of each semester.

## Field Instructor

The field instructor will hold a CSWE-accredited baccalaureate or master's social work degree. In situations where a field instructor does not hold a CSWE-accredited BSW or MSW degree, the Program will assume responsibility for reinforcing a social work perspective, and, when indicated, a faculty member will be appointed to provide the necessary oversight to the student.

The field instructor or team of field instructors will be responsible for the following:

1. To enter into an agreement with the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay Social Work Professional Program as the designated agency representative who will provide students in placement with educationally guided experiences appropriate to the baccalaureate level of social work education.
2. To assume responsibility for implementation of learning activities with agency staff.
3. To develop a learning agreement/contract with the student and the faculty field liaison.
4. To complete a Program-sponsored orientation session(s) within the first year of field instruction as well as attend the annual *Welcome to the New Year* workshop and the annual Program-sponsored workshop scheduled during the year or documentation of attendance at an equivalent workshop.
5. To provide the instruction and opportunities necessary for the student to complete the contracted learning activities and assignments within the field agency.
6. To assure that at least one hour per week of face-to-face supervision is provided to each student by the field instructor.
7. To assure that the student has access to the necessary resources appropriate to the level of social work practice expected of the student.
8. To adhere to the affirmative action guidelines in the selection of student(s) for placement (available in the appendix).
9. To monitor the progress of the student and provide ongoing feedback to the student and faculty field liaison.
10. To notify the faculty field liaison of problematic student performance in the field that requires faculty attention and action.
11. To assess the performance and development of the student placed in the agency with the student and the faculty field liaison at midterm and the end of each semester.

## Faculty Field Liaison

The faculty field liaison is an MSW credentialed professional, licensed or certified by the State of Wisconsin as a social worker, with at least two years of practice experience post graduation. This faculty person is designated to instruct the two courses, SOC WORK-411 and SOC WORK-420, Social Work Methods II and III. The responsibilities of the faculty field liaison are:

1. To assist the field instructor and the student with the development of the student's field practicum learning agreement/contract.
2. To plan and consult with the student and field instructor about relevant placement experiences and student performance.
3. To provide opportunities for the student to connect theories of practice with applications experienced in the field placement.
4. To keep informed about the student's field experiences through the student's participation in class discussions, review of student's submitted logs, individual meetings with the student, and through meetings with the field instructor.
5. To have contact with the field instructor a minimum of four times per semester to assure the student's progress toward the educational objectives of the field practicum. The first contact will be to establish the learning objectives of the field practicum; the second contact (usually by phone), will be at midterm; the third contact will be at the end of the semester for the final assessment. A fourth contact occurs at the *Welcome to the New Year* workshop held every Fall and the Spring Workshop held in March or April.
6. To review the progress of the student toward the contracted learning objectives in the field practicum and to determine the final grade for the field practicum based upon the evaluation by the field instructor, the student and the faculty.
7. To assess problematic or unsatisfactory performance in the practicum and take appropriate action.
8. To meet with the field instructor at the end of the academic year to provide mutual feedback.
9. To help identify when student is not getting adequate experiences in the field and work with the student and field instructor to rectify the inadequacy. If sufficient changes cannot be made to accommodate the student's learning objectives, then consult with other faculty to facilitate transfer to a new placement.

## **Procedures for Approval of Field Agencies in the Practicum**

Procedures for the Approval of Field Agencies:

1. An agency will make application to the program by submitting the following forms to the field coordinator:
  - Field Agency Application
  - Field Agency Description
  - Field Instructor Application(s)
2. An agency representative will call or meet with the Field Coordinator to review the application and discuss placement policies and procedures as well as identify a prospective field instructor.
3. The BSW field coordinator will meet with the prospective field instructor to review selection criteria.
4. The Program Advisory Committee will act in the capacity of consultants regarding the establishment of field placement sites keeping in mind the criteria for selection of field agencies and field instructors as well as utilizing the Committee's knowledge of experience in the practice community.
5. Upon review of the application by Social Work faculty, approval of the field agency will be based upon the selection criteria for agencies and field instructors as described below. All newly approved sites will be asked to sign the agreement *Program Memorandum for Senior Field Placements in the Undergraduate BSW field education Program* which will also be signed by university representatives.

### **Criteria for the Selection of Field Agencies:**

1. The presence of a written commitment by the administrator of the agency to provide professional, educational, learning opportunities.
2. The presence of a qualified field instructor or a team of field instructors who are willing to provide students with educationally guided experiences appropriate to baccalaureate levels of social work practice.
3. The provision of services and training compatible with the program's objectives.
4. The acceptance, enthusiasm and support for BSW level of practice by the agency.
5. The recognition of affirmative action guidelines in the selection of students for placement (please see appendix).

6. The promotion of: the four purposes of the Social Work Profession “(1) enhancing people’s capacities to resolve problems, cope, and function effectively, (2) linking clients with needed resources, (3) improving the social service delivery network, (4) “promoting social justice through the development of social policy” (DuBois and Miley, p.11); the six core values of social work “(1) service, (2) social justice, (3) dignity and worth of the person, (4) importance of human relationships, (5) integrity, (6) competence” (Loewenberg, Dolgoff and Harrington, pp. 20 & 21); and the NASW Code of Ethics.

### **Criteria for Selection and Retention of Field Instructors:**

1. The acceptance of the responsibilities for field instruction previously stated in the section titled: Participants and Responsibilities - Field Instructor.
2. Have an MSW or BSW earned from a CSWE accredited program or a related degree from another discipline with demonstrated understanding of and commitment to professional social work practice. In situations where the field instructor does not hold an MSW or a BSW degree, a qualified faculty member or a community practitioner will sign on as an additional field instructor to provide needed support. Exceptions to this general standard (CSWE BSW/MSW) for agency field educators is considered on a case by case basis and can include issues related to: a placement site that should be used because of strong student need; practitioners who are highly experienced and qualified and understand the philosophical underpinnings of social work and the role(s) it has among the helping professions; agencies in remote, rural regions or highly diverse practice settings. In all such cases, placements are supported or complemented by increased faculty supervision or community practitioner oversight on a regular basis.
3. Have an interest, enthusiasm, and belief in BSW professional practice.
4. Have supervisory and/or teaching skills and experience.
5. Have a practice orientation which is compatible with the mission and educational objectives of the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, Social Work Professional Programs .
6. Have knowledge of and demonstrated support of the profession’ s Code of Ethics.

## Placement of Senior Students in the Practicum

Placement Procedures for the Practicum:

Arrangements for field practicum will occur during the second semester of the junior year. The placement site must be carefully selected for each student, matching the educational needs of the student with the type of learning experience which an agency and field instructor can provide. Placement procedures for all students include the following steps:

1. The Field Coordinator will discuss with students field practicum procedures and opportunities.
2. Students will complete the Senior Field Practicum I and II - Student Application form and return to the Field Coordinator.
3. The Field Coordinator, after reviewing the students' completed applications, makes preliminary, suggested field placement assignments and then meets with the Methods I instructor and the Profession of Social Work instructor to review the applications and assign prospective senior field placements.
4. The Field Coordinator informs students of their prospective field placement and instructs them to contact the prospective field instructor to schedule a placement interview.
5. The Field Coordinator forwards a copy of the Senior Field Practicum I and II - Student Application form to the prospective field instructor of the selected site for review prior to the interview with the student. In addition, the Field Coordinator will acquaint the prospective field instructor with the educational needs of the student and the reason(s) for the selection of the field sites.
6. If at the end of the placement interview both field instructor and student are in agreement that this placement is a good mutual fit, the field instructor and student sign the *Student Placement /Agent Liability Coverage Confirmation* form brought by the student to the interview indicating their agreement to the placement. The signed form is then returned to the Field Coordinator by the student. If either the student or prospective field instructor has questions or concerns regarding the appropriateness of the placement, the field instructor and/or the student are to immediately contact the Field Coordinator.
7. The Field Coordinator will send a copy of the signed Student Placement/Agency Liability Coverage Confirmation form to the field instructor for his/her records as well as the Caregiver Background Check (for those agencies which require this).
8. One copy of the Student Placement/Agency Liability Coverage Confirmation form is given to the student and one housed with the Social Work Professional Program .

9. Students will begin their field placement the first week of class each Fall and Spring semester.

### **Learning Contract/Self Assessment for the Practicum:**

The Field Learning Contract is a learning agreement/understanding among the field instructor, the field liaison, and the student developed at the beginning of each semester which generally describes the practicum assignments and delineates the learning activities the student will complete during the placement. The learning activities for students are derived from assessment materials indicating the learning needs of the student and from the fourteen practice competencies which are a statement of the program's educational outcomes. In addition to guiding the field experiences, the practice competencies direct the entire curriculum.

Following is the process used by the student in the development of his/her Learning Contract:

1. The student, at the beginning of the fall semester, thoughtfully examines each of the practice competencies to determine a personal learning objective for each competency. In doing this, the student draws upon his/her past field and classroom experience, prior evaluations, and feedback from faculty to choose the most appropriate outcome objective to enhance his/her learning experience for the semester.
2. At the contracting meeting in beginning of the fall semester with the student, field instructor and field liaison in attendance, the Learning Contract is developed and reviewed to be certain that the activities by the student can be accomplished in the setting and in the time frame indicated. This, along with the *Evaluation of Student Mastery of the Competencies* form (describing the objectives by which the student's progress is measured in the field), then becomes both a guide and a measurement for the student's activities in the field placement.
3. The student then writes up the learning contract for each of the fourteen competencies that address his/her personal learning need.
4. At the end of each semester the student engages in a self-assessment based upon the Learning Contract and the Evaluation form.

## **Assessment of Student Performance in the Practicum**

### **Introduction:**

The awarding of BSW degrees from a CSWE accredited Social Work Program signifies to the student, clients, practice community and employing agencies that the graduate has achieved the profession's specified level of acquired knowledge and skill, and thus is "competent" to practice as an entry-level professional social worker who understands and subscribes to the profession's Code of Ethics.

The responsibility for the assertion of competence rests ultimately with the Social Work Professional Program and the University of Wisconsin – Green Bay. However, the issue is complex for the professional program as it is clearly understood that practice competence is not fully realized in the classroom but rather in the field placement.

The demonstration of competence must include the student's capacity to apply knowledge to specific practice situations toward the goal of realizing the profession's major purposes in relation to people. The application of knowledge becomes skill. Finally, assertion of competence must also include the assessment of the student's capability to practice within the ethics of the profession.

The assessment of student competence is carried out in partnership with the field instructor. Students also actively participate in the assessment activity. The understanding and agreement of the faculty, field instructors, and students as to assessment purposes, philosophy, criteria, structure and format are critical to the process and an outcome that, insofar as possible, does assure that graduates of the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, Social Work Professional Program are competent to practice as entry-level professional social workers. Thus, communication among faculty, field instructors and students is essential to identify issues raised in the field and classroom.

The following material serves as a guide for the assessment of student performance in the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, Social Work Professional Programs .

### **Assessment Purposes:**

Overall, the purposes of the assessment process are:

1. To evaluate student progress in the development of the competency level deemed essential for entry into professional practice at the baccalaureate level.
2. To help students develop skills in assessing their own ongoing professional growth and functioning.
3. To provide direction for continued professional development.

4. To provide an ongoing mechanism for the evaluation, modification, and change in curriculum, as may be indicated.

### **Principles/Philosophy of the Assessment Process:**

1. The assessment of the student's professional growth and development of competence begins at the time the student enters the program and continues until he/she leaves the program. The assessment culminates in the senior practicum experience when students are expected to demonstrate the skills, knowledge, and values reflected in the fourteen practice competencies.
2. Criteria, developed from the competencies to be achieved, are utilized in the assessment of the students' professional growth and performance. These criteria are clearly specified to and known by the students.
3. The criteria for the assessment of student performance are developed from the program's stated outcomes, the fourteen competencies. These criteria are utilized in structuring the student learning experiences in the practicum. The learning experiences provide opportunity for students to demonstrate evidence for the achievement of competence. There are a range and variety of experiences that can be used to achieve and demonstrate competence. Thus, while the outcomes (competencies) are fixed and non-negotiable, the learning experiences are varied and reflect the service activities of the agency, the student's special needs and interests, etc. However, there cannot be learning objectives or experiences that are in conflict with the baccalaureate practice competencies.
4. The competencies and subsequent assessment criteria derived from them are used by faculty, field instructors and students to assess the performance of each student. They assure that all students have achieved a comparable basic level of performance before leaving the program.
5. Faculty are responsible for delineating assessment criteria and for the development of the assessment tool. The advice and critique of the Advisory Committee and field instructors are reflected in this material. Faculty are responsible for seeing that the learning contract developed by the field instructor, student and faculty field liaison provides the learning experiences which are both appropriate for BSW practice and relevant to the achievement of the practice competence required.
6. The formal assessment conference is intended to be a constructive, non-intimidating experience for everyone - especially the student - just as the whole of the supervising experience should be. This does not mean that problems and/or problematic situations are to be avoided and not dealt with. It does mean, however, that such situations are called to the attention of the student long before the final conference.

7. The ultimate objective of the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, Social Work Professional Program is to prepare a competent professional practitioner at the BSW entry level. Students are expected to develop the skills necessary to assume responsibility for their own professional behaviors and decisions. This means that students are active participants in the assessment process, including assuming responsibility for preparing and presenting an assessment of their own professional achievements.

### **Assessment Process and Format:**

1. Field Instructor Supervision - Ongoing Assessment:

Field instructors will meet with students regularly to review student progress, discuss future plans, attend to any areas needing special attention, etc. The student will be encouraged by both faculty and field instructor to raise any issues or concerns he/she may have in the practicum experience directly with the field instructor. Field instructors are encouraged to provide regular, ongoing feedback to students regarding their performance in the practicum so that there are no surprises at the semester's end. Faculty should be contacted immediately if issues arise which cannot be resolved by the field instructor and the student.

2. Mid-Semester Progress Assessment:

This typically occurs via phone contact initiated by the faculty field liaison with follow-up contact, when necessary.

3. End-of-Semester Formal Assessment:

At the conclusion of the semester, there will be a formal assessment of the student's progress/ achievements during the semester. The assessment tool (*Evaluation of Student Progress in the Competencies*) will be used in carrying out the final assessment, and a pass/fail grade will be assigned by the faculty. To graduate, the student is required to achieve a minimum score of "2" for each indicator in the assessment tool during the Spring evaluation. The formal assessment format follows:

- a The assessment conference will be arranged by the faculty field liaison at a time convenient for the liaison, field instructor and student. Typically the conference will be held at the practicum site.
- b Prior to the conference, the student, field instructor, and the faculty field liaison prepare for the conference. The student prepares a self-assessment relating to his or her evaluation of the learning contract and completes the *Evaluation of Student Progress in the Competencies* material. In the self- assessment materials, the student lists his/her

outcome objectives, experiences he/she has had which relate to those objectives, and how that student measured and evaluated achievement of each objective. For the *Evaluation of Student Progress in the Competencies*, the student utilizes the rating scale provided. The student provides copies of these materials to the field instructor and faculty field liaison at least three working days prior to the conference. The field instructor prepares for the conference by completing and sharing with the student his or her ratings in relationship to the document pertaining to *Evaluation of Student Progress in the Competencies*. The field instructor also may make notes on these materials to share during the conference.

- c At the evaluation conference, the student presents his/her completed self-assessment and evaluation material. It is expected that both field instructor and the faculty field liaison will contribute to the student's assessment as well. The purpose of this session is to engage in an honest, open discussion with the student about his/her progress, strengths and areas needing additional development. The roles of the faculty and field instructor, functioning as a collegial team, are to facilitate and assist the student with the integration of content and its application to practice. Finally, in assuming major responsibility for the assessment, students have the opportunity to further develop skills through carefully and objectively assessing their own development and performance.
- d Learning activities for the second semester should emerge during the formal assessment conference held at the conclusion of the first semester. At the conclusion of the second semester, and prior to leaving the program, students should have a very clear sense of their professional strengths and skills, as well as limitations and areas which will need further attention as they enter professional practice.
- e The material utilized for this conference becomes part of the permanent record of the student's performance in the practicum.

## **Termination of Field Placement**

### **Student Request for Termination:**

When, during the course of the semester, a student decides to terminate his/her enrollment in the field practicum, notification should immediately be made to the Field Instructor, the Faculty Field Liaison, and the BSW Field Coordinator so that a careful termination can be accomplished. Reasons for such decisions might be related to issues of health, impairment, finances, or other life events. Prior to re-enrolling in the field practicum, the student must demonstrate, to the satisfaction of faculty, that the reasons for discontinuance have been adequately addressed and that the student is ready to carry out professional responsibilities at the Bachelor's level.

### **Faculty or Field Agency Request for Termination:**

Performance concerns or personal problems that interfere with performance expectations may be grounds for dismissal from the Program. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Non-achievement or less than satisfactory achievement of BSW Student Contract goals.
- Behaviors that violate the NASW Code of Ethics in the field agency (see examples below).
- Personality characteristics that conflict with the professional values and professional role sets of the Social Work profession and the State of Wisconsin MPSW 20 Code of Conduct (see examples below).
- Disruptive behaviors constituting a threat to the safety of the student or others.
- A pattern of unwillingness to participate in the learning activities of the Program.
- Inability to communicate effectively, orally or in written form, such that performance is seriously handicapped.

The following list of behaviors serve as examples for those which could violate the NASW Code of Ethics or be deemed as conflicting with professional values and role sets. This list is offered as examples and should not be considered to be all-inclusive.

1. Challenges in addressing unresolved life issues which persistently interfere with judgment and performance.
2. The decision to not seek professional help or take other steps necessary to protect clients and others when these challenges interfere with professional judgment and performance.
3. Preoccupation with self and self-centered behavior to the extent that it is inappropriate for a professional role.

4. Challenges in one's ability to develop professional relationships so that effective communication to engage others using effective relational and communication skills cannot be accomplished.
5. Challenges in placing appropriate boundaries between personal and professional relationships with clients, agency co-workers, or others who are part of the professional practice environment.
6. Practicing beyond the scope of one's competence.
7. Repeatedly misrepresenting competence or credentials to clients, agencies, others, etc.
8. Repeatedly and or seriously violating obligations concerning use of privileged information and violation of confidentiality.

When concerns about impaired performance arise in the field agency, classroom, or otherwise, the concerns must be documented with regular updates regarding progress, or lack thereof. Documentation will include: statements addressing the student's skill assets and deficits; a description of the concerning behaviors or attitudes; the instructional or supervisory interventions provided; the student's responses to those interventions; and, the student's current level of functioning, and progress made in addressing the concern. This documentation and related recommendations should be submitted to the student's faculty advisor and the BSW Program Field Coordinator. When indicated, the Field Coordinator will schedule and conduct a meeting with the student, Faculty Field Liaison, and the Field Instructor to allow all parties to present information and perspectives related to the challenge or concern and to present recommendations for possible solutions.

The BSW Field Coordinator, in connection with the Program Chair, will make a ruling regarding termination or continuance in the field practicum. A ruling for continuance may require extending the length of placement, repeating the placement, or transferring to another agency. The final decision regarding termination of a field placement is the responsibility of the Social Work Program. A decision for termination of placement will require the student to withdraw from other classes in the Program. Documentation of the meeting and the outcome decision will be completed by the Field Coordinator and placed in the student's file.

The Field Coordinator will be responsible for informing the student about the procedures for appeal. The grievance and appeal policy pertaining to academic appeal, which applies to BSW students, may be found in the University's Student Handbook in the section pertaining to University Policies and Procedures.

## Change of Field Practicum Site

Under ordinary circumstances, social work senior students' placement is made for two consecutive semesters in the same agency and juniors are in a single placement throughout the Spring semester. This allows for depth and breadth of learning. Changes in placements are considered problematic since leaving one agency for another disrupts the continuity of the learning experience. Placement changes should be conducted in a thoughtful and carefully-planned manner.

When either the student or the Field Instructor/Supervisor requests a change of placement, the following steps will be followed:

1. The student and the Field Instructor/Supervisor will meet together to fully discuss the situation. If a satisfactory resolution is not accomplished, contact should be made with the Faculty Field Liaison.
2. The Faculty Field Liaison will meet with the student and the Field Instructor/Supervisor to clearly define the challenges and consider possible solutions. The BSW Field Coordinator should be notified and included in the problem-solving process. When the student initiates the change request, s/he must provide a compelling rationale for the change, including a statement of learning goals, why the goals cannot be accomplished at the current placement agency, and a plan outlining how the practicum experience can be successfully completed through a placement change.
3. When an agreement is made that a change of placement is in the best learning interest of the student and/or the agency, the Field Coordinator will seek an alternative placement for the student.
4. The student will be responsible for following the required application-for-field-placement procedures in a time frame established by the Field Coordinator.
5. The student will be responsible for following the NASW Code of Ethics and agency policies governing termination of employment and termination of client services.

**NOTE:** The student may be required to repeat some or all of the field hours to establish that learning requirements have been accomplished.

## **Policy Issues**

### **Term of Placement:**

Field practicum requirements are to be met during the Fall and Spring semesters only. Students may contract extra hours for independent study credits during the summer semester, if they desire.

### **Paid Practicums:**

It is the policy of the Social Work Professional Programs and the Council on Social Work Education not to grant academic credit for reimbursed work experience as the practicum is designed with the focus on learning. While it is expected that the agency will benefit in a variety of ways from the presence of students, the practicum requires a commitment of supervisory and instruction time from the agency as well as the provision of opportunities for varied, planned learning experiences. Since the student's learning takes priority over the agencies' staffing needs, the practicum student should never be viewed as supplementing or filling paid positions within the agency. Furthermore, it is the policy of the Program to attempt to place students in settings that will provide new learning opportunities. Thus, it is unusual to place a student in an agency where he/she has or would work as a volunteer or staff member. In a very few, limited situations, students may work and have an internship in the same agency. A number of procedures must be implemented in this situation which include having a paid supervisor and a field instructor/supervisor who are **not** the same person. The field and paid employment are to be kept separate and accounted for individually. Paid employment cannot be counted as internship hours. Additionally, the student's educational experiences will be different than the paid job duties. Faculty also must support such an arrangement and decisions are made based upon the learning needs of the student and the student's assessed strengths as well as areas identified as warranting further growth.

### **Workshop and Orientation for Field Instructors/Supervisors:**

All field instructors are expected to attend workshop(s) each academic year. The *Welcome to the New Year* workshop for senior-level field instructors is held at the beginning of the Fall semester. Junior-level field supervisors attend a workshop held at the beginning of the Spring semester. Typically in the Spring of each year, a workshop is offered which focuses on the enhancement of the BSW field education component of the curriculum and all senior and junior-level field instructors are invited to attend this Spring workshop. In addition, new field instructors will be provided with an orientation to the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, Social Work Professional Programs in the field practicum. Attendance at these meetings is critical in maintaining the continuity of an educationally directed field program. Lack of attendance at orientations and workshops may affect continuance as a field training site.

### **Student Participation in Activities Which May Interfere with Class or Field Work:**

From time to time, conferences, workshops, or other professional development activities will occur which will be beneficial for students to attend. These activities may at times interfere with class meetings or with assigned field time. Field instructors will be notified in advance when the activity is approved by the faculty. Likewise, the field instructor is expected to notify the faculty field liaison when an agency activity will interfere with a student's class attendance. Excused activities which are unrelated to the student's learning agreement cannot be counted toward the hours required for field placement. Arrangements to make up field time will be negotiated between the field instructor and the student.

### **University Non-Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Policy:**

All BSW field education agencies, field instructors and supervisors need to be knowledgeable of, and act in accordance with, the University's policies concerning discrimination. These policies, which are included in the appendix of this handbook titled: Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Policy, are applicable to students in both on-campus and at Social Work Professional Programs approved BSW field education sites. The policy asserts:

There shall be no discrimination against any student and/or employee, or applicant for admission or employment, because of race, color, ethnic identity, national origin, ancestry, creed, political or religious affiliation, age, sex, marital status, refusal of sexual attentions, sexual orientation, arrest or conviction record\*; identify as: an individual with a disability, a disabled veteran, a Vietnam era veteran; membership in the national guard, state defense force or any other reserve component of the military forces of the United States or this state, or other protected class. This requirement of non-discrimination pertains to all persons—whether or not they are members of a conventionally defined minority group. (University of Wisconsin-Green Bay Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Policy)

(\* In the case of persons convicted of felonies, the program does have the legal right to information about the nature of the felony prior to admission to the major. Such information will be shared with the agency if the nature of the offense is relevant to the field assignment.)

### **Grievance Procedures in the Field:**

Elsewhere in this handbook, it is clearly indicated that normal problems which may arise in the field placement shall first be drawn to the attention of the field instructor by the student and/or faculty field liaison. However, should the student believe him or herself to be the victim of unfair treatment on the part of the agency staff or field instructor, including violations of University non-discrimination/sexual harassment policy, the student shall be free to confer directly with the faculty field liaison. The faculty field liaison shall then inform the student of his/her rights and complaint-filing procedures and require the student to submit the grievance in writing to the faculty field liaison within five days. Following receipt of the written complaint,

the faculty member will bring the matter to the Program Chair, who shall in turn report it to the appropriate agency administrator or supervisor.

Depending upon the circumstances and the seriousness of the allegations, the Chair may take a number of actions as may be deemed appropriate. Such actions may include: discussing the issues directly with the agency administrator; the field instructor or field instructor's supervisor; removing the student from the placement; consulting with the Program Advisory Committee; and other actions that appear necessary and appropriate.

### **Assessment of Field Placement Sites and Field Instructors:**

The assessment of field placements has a two-fold purpose:

1. To enhance student learning opportunities, the professional growth of field instructors, and the BSW field education program.
2. To ensure a good match between the student, the field instructor, and field site.

This assessment process involves the input of students, field instructors and faculty. However, the ultimate responsibility to assess field placements and to provide and solicit feedback lies with the faculty.

Feedback to field instructors is expected to be provided by faculty and students on an ongoing basis. In addition, students are provided with an opportunity to communicate to their field instructors the strengths and concerns related to the learning environment during student assessment conferences. At the conclusion of the field experience and the practicum, students fill out an *Evaluation of the Junior Field Experience* or *Evaluation of the Senior Field Practicum* form. Any areas of concern arising from a student evaluation are typically communicated to field personnel by the Field Coordinator for attention and possible action.

Annually, an evaluation questionnaire, referred to as the *Field Placement Assessment* form, is completed by the field instructor and reviewed by faculty. This form elicits the field instructor's comments, opinions, and suggestions regarding the field experience. This form will be placed in the Social Work Professional Program's file on the Agency. Any areas of concern are discussed by both parties resulting in appropriate follow up measures.

### **Discontinuance of a Field Learning Site and/or Field Personnel:**

Any field placement site may be discontinued if contractual agreements have not been met. Discontinuance of a field instructor may occur if the field instructor no longer meets the criteria for selection and retention of field instructors. This must not be confused with the interrupted use of a learning site and/or field instructor.

In the event of the need for discontinuance, the field instructor will be notified by faculty prior to the assignment of students for the coming year. Depending on the reasons for the

discontinuance, the Social Work Professional Program Chair may also take a number of actions as may be deemed appropriate. Such actions may include: discussing the issues directly with the agency administrator or the field instructor's supervisor; removing the student from the field placement during the academic year; or other actions that appear necessary and appropriate.

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## Appendix

### **Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Statement**

The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay is committed to equal opportunity to all individuals regardless of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender and/or gender identity expression, marital or parental status, national origin, ethnicity, citizenship status, veteran or military status, age, disability and any other legally protected basis. Harassment or discrimination based upon protected status is illegal and will not be tolerated. This policy is applicable to employment practices and all programs within the University. This commitment to all employment and educational practices includes, but is not limited to recruitment and hiring, training, compensation, benefits, promotions, transfers, terminations, layoffs, access to facilities as well as social and recreational programs.

The University's compliance with this statement is the responsibility of all administrators and others whose duties are related to decisions regarding employees. Further, the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay is committed to fully participate in the implementation of all applicable federal and state laws, executive orders, rules, regulations and policies.

[The Affirmative Action Program is housed within the Human Resources Department at ES 107; 920-465-2390]