

**SOCIAL WORK 8160, 8160 Seminar  
Generalist Social Work Practicum I  
(3 Credit Hours)**

**SYLLABUS**

**1.0 Course Description Information**

- 1.1 Catalog Description:** This course is designed to provide supervised, individual and experiential learning offered within the setting of a selected social service agency. The student will be introduced to a variety of social work practice roles, develop professional relationships with client systems and learn to apply a number of interventive modalities to effect change across the life span. This course will also introduce graduate students to beginning direct and indirect social work practice. In order to facilitate integration of classroom theory with practice, **students will attend a seven-week practicum seminar** (2 hours per week).
- 1.2 Prerequisites of the course:** SOWK 8070, SOWK 8090, and SOWK 8130 prior to or concurrently, permission of the Practicum Office, and permission of the school.
- 1.3 Overview of content and purpose of the course:** The practicum experience consists of a series of courses which are characterized by individualized and experiential teaching and learning, offered within the setting of a social service agency and supervised by approved community practitioners. The courses, taken sequentially, are expected to facilitate learning experiences which are appropriate to the student's educational level and needs, and supportive of classroom learning.
- 1.4 For whom the course is intended:** Foundation level graduate students in social work.
- 1.5 Unusual circumstances of the course:** Each student is supervised by qualified agency practitioners in selected social service agencies with liaison and consultation from School of Social Work faculty. Requires 256 contact hours, which include 14 hours of attendance at a practicum seminar. The grade for SOWK 8160 will be lowered if the student does not attend or complete assignments in the practicum seminar.

**2.0 Course Justification Information**

- 2.1 Anticipated audience/demand:** This course is required for every student admitted to the MSW Foundation program.
- 2.2 Indicate how often this course will be offered and the anticipated enrollment:** The course is offered Fall, Spring, and Summer. Enrollment varies depending on the number of students who have completed the pre-requisites.
- 2.3 If it is a significant change to an existing course, please explain why it is needed:** This course syllabus includes gerontological content, an updated bibliography, and links MSW Foundation objectives to course objectives and assignments.

**3.0 Objective Information**

- 3.1 List of performance objectives stated in learning outcomes:** This course meets the following MSW Foundation Objectives:

1. Apply critical thinking skills in identifying and explaining theoretical frameworks.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of NASW Code of Ethics and the values and ethics of the profession.

3. Demonstrate understanding and respect for people of diverse backgrounds and populations-at-risk.
4. Recognize the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and apply strategies of advocacy and social change.
5. Recognize the history of social welfare and the social work profession.
6. Apply the generalist social work perspective to systems of all sizes.
7. Identify and explain empirically based theoretical frameworks to understand human behavior in the social context.
8. Analyze social problems and social policies, emphasizing social justice and civic engagement.
9. Evaluate research studies applied to social work practice and evaluate one's own practice.
10. Communicate effectively orally and in writing with systems of all sizes.
11. Utilize and benefit from supervision and consultation to improve social work practice.
12. Function effectively within agencies and social service delivery systems.

MSW Foundation objectives are partially achieved by providing opportunities for students to do the following tasks/activities:

### **MSW FOUNDATION TASKS**

#### **AGENCY/SYSTEMS FRAMEWORK FOR GENERALIST PRACTICE**

1. Understand and follow agency orientation materials and relevant sections of the agency's policy and procedure manual.
2. Attend and participate in agency staff meetings.
3. Identify, engage in, and document indirect services on behalf of clients (brokering, advocacy, systems change, planning, etc).
4. Analyze policies, procedures, and social justice issues that affect populations served by the agency.
5. Network with/contact other agencies and professionals.

#### **COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

6. Practice communication with clients.
7. Practice oral communication with co-workers, supervisor, and other professionals.
8. Practice written communication with co-workers, supervisors, and other professionals.
9. Maintain client records/files in accordance with agency standards.
10. Use empathy and nonjudgmental interviewing skills to assess social functioning and social support.

#### **ASSESSMENT SKILLS**

11. Conduct initial intake/screening/assessment interviews with clients.
12. Utilize the results of a multidimensional assessment to match client's needs to agency services.
13. Adapt interviewing methods to assess client's pertinent areas of diversity (cultural, ethnic, racial, class, religion, age, gender, disability, lifestyle).
14. Be aware of standardized assessment and diagnostic tools that are appropriate for the client population.
15. Develop clear, timely, and appropriate service or care plans with measurable objectives.

#### **INTERVENTION SKILLS**

16. Implement case management services with clients.
17. Provide direct services to individuals, or families, and groups; maintain caseload.
18. Provide direct services to groups with a treatment, educational or developmental purpose.
19. Work with diverse clients (cultural, ethnic, racial, class, religion, age, gender, disability, lifestyle).
20. Advocate on behalf of clients with agencies and other professionals to help clients obtain quality services.

#### **EVALUATION SKILLS**

21. Participate in agency research/program evaluation project(s).
22. Evaluate the effectiveness of practice and programs in achieving intended outcomes for the clients.
23. Identify and read professional literature pertinent to client and services, and apply to practicum experience.
24. Read and understand agency statistics and reports on clients served, services provided, and/or outcomes.
25. Identify, examine, and/or evaluate measurement tools utilized by the agency.

**PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT, VALUES, ETHICS**

- 26. Examine and apply the NASW Code of Ethics to the practicum setting.
- 27. Handle stress effectively by using supportive appropriate self-care and developing supportive relationships with colleagues, peers, and others.
- 28. Discuss with supervisor personal issues/obstacles that impact the student’s agency performance.
- 29. Exhibit knowledge of how one’s values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions and past experiences affect thinking, behavior, and relationships.
- 30. Show willingness to receive and accept feedback and supervision in a positive manner, as well as use such feedback to enhance professional judgment.

**PERFORMANCE AS LEARNER**

- 31. Read and discuss with the supervisor relevant articles, journals, or books that apply to the practicum setting.
- 32. Discuss all cases with supervisor/participate in supervisory sessions.
- 33. Discuss theories of human behavior and integration of classroom course content to practicum experiences with supervisor.
- 34. Discuss theories of intervention with supervisor.
- 35. Exhibit sufficient knowledge of social work and clarity of thinking to process information and apply it to appropriate situations in the practicum setting.

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

**FOUNDATION MATRIX FOR COMBINED 8160-8170**

<b>MSW FOUNDATION PRACTICUM COURSE OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>MSW FOUNDATION OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>MSW FOUNDATION TASKS</b>
1. Define, compare and contrast Social Work theories, concepts, ethics and values in social work practice, and its changes in application over time.	1, 5, 7	26, 31, 35
2. Apply and practice the generalist social work perspective and skills when working with clients & families across the lifespan, and within the agency structure and the community.	6, 12	1, 2, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17
3. Provide social work case management skills to link clients and their families who may be vulnerable to oppression and social injustices, to resources and services.	3, 4, 12	11, 13, 16, 17, 19, 20
4. Identify and integrate methods of treatment which are culturally sensitive when working with diverse individuals or populations across the life cycle.	3	3, 4, 17, 18, 19
5. Examine, interpret and demonstrate skill in applying social work values and ethics as they relate to social work practice, adhering to the NASW Code of Ethics.	2	26, 28, 29, 30
6. Recognize and practice effective oral and written communication skills with clients, co-workers and other professionals relating to the agency setting.	10	6, 7, 8, 9, 10

7. Utilize supervision to advance knowledge of social work theories and skills, and as an opportunity for self-understanding in relationship to the client, agency and community.	7, 9, 11	27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35
8. Identify and develop strategies to address service gaps, fragmentation, discrimination, and barriers that impact clients.	4, 8	3, 4, 5, 20
9. Evaluate research findings and the effectiveness of practice and programs in achieving intended outcomes for various program populations.	9	21, 22, 23, 24, 25
10. Develop, implement and practice culturally competent administrative policies and procedures in the social work setting.	3	3, 4, 20

**4.0 Content and Organization Information**

**4.1 List of topics to be covered in chronological sequence:**

**4.1.1 Practicum Placement Process**

- A. Review Practicum Manual on Social Work Website
- B. Attend Practicum Fair
- C. Complete Practicum Readiness Form and Resume
- D. Consult with advisor and have advisor sign Practicum Readiness Form
- E. Meet with Practicum Coordinator for selection of agency
- F. Attend Practicum Student Orientation
- G. Interview with approved agencies
- H. Complete Practicum Agreement Form and start Practicum

**4.1.2 Content of Field Experience**

- A. Introduction and orientation to the agency
- B. Identification and observation of agency structure
- C. Initial knowledge of referral sources and procedures
- D. Experience in delivery of services to individuals across the lifespan
- E. Experience in delivery of services to families
- F. Experience in delivery of services to client systems with racial, ethnic, life-span, and socio-economic backgrounds, and gender different from that of student
- G. Experience in utilizing case management techniques
- H. Experience in delivery of services to formed groups with a treatment, educational or developmental purpose
- I. Facilitate or co-facilitate a task-oriented group, agency project or administrative task
- J. Contacts with other agencies
- K. Integration of classroom course content with practicum experiences, with special attention to gender, racial, ethnic, life span, and social status variables
- L. Participation in supervision
- M. Attendance at team/staff meetings
- N. Use and preparation of records (process, summary) and reports (e.g., social history, statistical, court reports). Preparation and delivery of oral reports

**4.1.3 Content of Practicum Seminar**

- A. Demonstration of knowledge of the agency in which student is placed. This includes mission, structure, services provided, clientele, funding sources, problems being faced currently and any other important information.

- B. Identification and presentation of at least one value dilemma or practice issue which student must address in carrying out practicum assignment.
- C. Exhibit through journaling an increased self-awareness and sensitivity about the relationships formed and experiences gained in practicum.
- D. Examination of social work ethics and discussion of ethical dilemmas and boundary issues as they apply in the student's assignments

## 5.0 Teaching Methodology Information

### 5.1 Methods to be used:

- A. Field Experience: Experiential learning with instruction and supervision by university-selected and appointed agency practitioners. Liaison and consultation to the practicum supervisor and student by School of Social Work Faculty.
- B. Practicum Seminars: School of Social Work faculty serve as leaders in the seminar. Group discussion, student presentations and limited didactic presentation by leader.

**5.2 Student role in the course:** Student participation in practice assignments in agency of placement. Student preparation for shared responsibility in supervision and reporting of assignments. Regular attendance and informed participation in practicum seminars.

**5.3 Contact Hours:** A total of 512 hours are required for the MSW Foundation Practicum, 256 hours for SOWK 8160 and 256 hours for SOWK 8170. Students may complete a concurrent practicum where they spend 16-20 hours per week (but no more than 24 hours) at the practicum site; or a block practicum where they spend 32-40 hours per week at the practicum site.

## 6.0 Evaluation Information

### 6.1 Types of student projects that will be the basis for evaluating student performance:

#### *Field Experience:*

The student develops a learning contract with the practicum instructor based on practicum assignment guidelines explicated in the School of Social Work Practicum Manual. This contract details the projects, case assignments and relevant tasks for which the student is responsible. A copy of the task list for MSW Foundation students is listed above and in the Practicum Manual.

#### *Seminar:*

Each student develops an agency profile and an analysis of one of her/his practicum assignments.

**6.2 Basis for determining the final grade:** Final grade is based on the student's performance in field experience assignments (4/5 of grade) and of seminar participation (1/5 of grade).

For the Field Experience: Final grade is based on the student's performance in field experience assignments as evaluated by the practicum instructor and Practicum Coordinator. An evaluation tool with a grading scale based on levels of expectation is included in the School of Social Work Practicum Manual. Grading responsibilities and procedures are also described in the Practicum Manual. In addition, a copy of the evaluation tool used by the student to evaluate the practicum placement and practicum instruction is included in the Practicum Manual.

For the Seminar: Evaluation is based on attendance, quality of participation and on an oral presentations. Students who miss more than ones seminar class are at risk of having their grade lowered.

Students must receive a "B" or above in order to pass practicum.

**6.3 Grading Type:**

A+ =	98% or Above	C+=	78 to 80.9%
A =	94 to 97.9%	C =	74 to 77.9%
A- =	91 to 93.9%	C- =	71 to 73.9%
B+ =	88 to 90.9%	D+ =	68 to 70.9%
B =	84 to 87.9%	D =	64 to 67.9%
B- =	81 to 83.9%	D- =	61 to 63.9%
	F	=	60.9% and below

**7.0 Resource Material**

**7.1 Textbooks or other required readings used in course:** The Practicum Survival Packet is required and available at the UNO bookstore. The Practicum Manual is used as reference material and available through the Social Work Website.

**7.2 Other suggested reading material:** Handouts are provided for seminar participants. The practicum instructor may assign readings in the field of practice in which the student is interested.

**7.3 Current bibliography and other resources:**

Alle-Corliss, Lupe A. and Randall M. Alle-Corliss. (2006). Human Service Agencies: An Orientation to Fieldwork, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Baird, Brian. (2005). Internship, Practicum, and Field Placement Handbook, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Old Tappan, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Birkenmaier, Julie & Marla Berg-Weger. (2007). The Practicum Companion for Social Work: Integrating Class and Field Work, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Boston: Pearson Education, Inc.

Danowski, William A. (2005). In The Field: A Real-Life Survival Guide for the Social Work Internship, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition, (DSM IV-TR). (2000). Washington D.C.: American Psychiatric Association.

Garthwait, Cynthia L. (2005). The Social Work Practicum: A Guide and Workbook for Students, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. Boston, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Grobman, Linda May. (2002). Field Placement Survival Guide: What You Need to Know to Get the Most From Your Social Work Practicum. Harrisburg, PA: White Hat Communications.

Kirst-Ashman, Karen K. & Grafton H. Hull. (2006). Understanding Generalist Practice, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Pacific Grove, CA: Thomson Brooks/Cole .

National Association of Social Workers (NASW). *Code of Ethics*, available at [www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp](http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp). 1996; revised 1999.

Rothman, Juliet Cassuto. (2000). Stepping Out Into the Field: A Field Work Manual for Social Work Students, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Royse, David D., Surjit Singh Dhooper, & Elizabeth Lewis Rompf. (2007). Field Instruction: A Guide for Social Work Students, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition. Boston: Pearson Education, Inc.

- Russell-Chapin, Lori & Allen E. Ivey. (2004). Your Supervised Practicum and Internship: Field Resources for Turning Theory into Action. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing.
- Scales, T. Laine & Terry A. Wolfer. (2006). Decision Cases for Generalist Social Work Practice-Thinking Like A Social Worker, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition. Belmont, CA: Thomson Brooks/Cole.
- Sue, D.W. (2003). Counseling the Culturally Different: Theory and Practice. New York: Wiley and Sons.
- Ward, Kelly & Robin S. Mama. (2006). Breaking Out of the Box: Adventure Based Field Instruction. Chicago, IL: Lyceum Books.

## **8.0 Other Information**

### **8.1 Plagiarism**

The Executive Body of the School of Social Work has passed a policy alerting students to, and emphasizing the importance of, the issue of plagiarism. The UNO policy on plagiarism is as follows:

"The prevention of plagiarism and the imposition of sanctions upon those who resort to plagiarism is necessary in any university that espouses the ideals embodied in the concept of academic freedom. Plagiarism is the appropriation of the work (be it ideas or words) of another without crediting the source. Such a practice is particularly reprehensible in a community dedicated to the pursuit and advancement of knowledge."

The UNO policy on Academic Integrity reads as follows:

"The maintenance of academic honesty and integrity is a vital concern of the University community. Any student found guilty of academic dishonesty shall be subject to both academic and disciplinary sanctions."

Academic dishonesty definitions, procedures and sanctions are available on the current University of Nebraska at Omaha web-site

### **8.2 Procedure Regarding Student Grades/Papers**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 requires that student grades not be published in a personally identifiable fashion. Therefore, unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor, students must provide a self-addressed adequately stamped envelope for papers, projects, or exams that were not returned to them in class. Any remaining papers, projects or exams will be kept by the instructor for 3 months after the semester ends, at which time they will be shredded.

### **8.3 Statement Regarding Students with Disabilities**

Accommodations are provided for students with certified disabilities. For more information contact Services for Students with Disabilities, EAB 117 or 554.2872, TTY 554.3799.

### **8.4 Additional Assistance**

Students who have concerns about their competence in writing papers or who have extreme anxiety in taking tests or giving class presentations should address these concerns by seeking professional counseling through the University Division Counseling Services.

