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*Saint Louis University School of Social Work prepares students for professional social work and applied behavior analysis practice with a commitment to social justice and the empowerment of vulnerable and oppressed populations. The School strives for a dynamic community of learning with excellence in teaching, research, and service.*

The goals of the School of Social Work are:

- 1. To use knowledge, values, and skills in generalist social work practice.*
- 2. To use knowledge, values, and skills in advanced social work and applied behavior analysis practice.*
- 3. To contribute to the advancement of knowledge of the professions.*
- 4. To use skills, talents, and time in pursuit of social justice in the community.*

The following competencies are contained in the Learning Agreement for the BSSW Practicum. Students must meet all of the competencies over two semesters.

The student shall:

1. Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior
  2. Engage diversity and difference in practice
  3. Advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice
  4. Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice
  5. Engage in policy practice
  6. Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
  7. Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
  8. Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
  9. Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
- (adopted from CSWE EPAS, 2015)

### **III. ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND EXPECTATIONS IN FIELD EDUCATION**

#### **A. Role of the Student**

The School of Social Work uses a structured self-selection model for practicum selection. In consultation with the assigned Faculty Liaison, students are responsible for securing a practicum

approved practicum sites. Students initiate the practicum planning process by attending a practicum overview meeting. Invitations and notification for the practicum overview meeting will be sent to students who are identified as social work majors. Students will receive an

After the one-on-one meeting with the Faculty Liaison, students have the responsibility to follow up with desired agencies and organizations to pursue setting up formal interviews with the professionals who serve as contact persons for their agencies. **Starting a practicum without consulting your Faculty Liaison will lead to work hours in your practicum not being counted.**

The practicum search process is similar to a job search and employment interview. Students will need to have a professional resume and cover letter ready for the process. Contacts can be made through emailing or telephoning the listed contact for the specific practica.

Prior to contacting and interviewing, students need to be able to articulate their interests in the practicum site, their desired learning experiences, and career goals. Students should have researched the practicum site through reading their website or other on-line materials to have

their learning style and needs for supervision, and previous volunteer or employment background that can provide some experience for the practicum. Students should also be prepared to ask questions that will provide information on learning experiences, preferred times for practica, and , if they receive an offer. Students are free to have as many interviews or offers that they desire to locate a practicum. It is very important to be professional and respond to all offers. It may be that the student would like to have one practicum first and so they can negotiate with other offers to have a future practica.

resources or ideas in the process.

Once a student has selected an offer, the student should complete the practicum confirmation request form provided to them during their one-on-one meeting with the Faculty Liaison. The form will include both the name of the site and the name & contact information of the field instructor. The request will be presented to the field education office for approval. **The s practicum site & field instructor are not approved until the student receives a confirmation email to the SLU email address. Students may not begin practicum until their site and 7(i)7(r)( s)-6(i)vte**





#### **D. Role of Field Instructors**

Field Instructors that are approved for field instruction for students have agreed to the following:

- 1) Partner with the School of Social Work to serve as a field instructor;



**IV.**

## **F. Practicum Enrollment Options**

Two options exist for fulfilling the practicum requirement:

- A **concurrent practicum** consists of one practicum during a semester completed



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The physical restraint of clients is expressly prohibited in practicum. If students are in settings at which staff restrain clients, students must be paired with a staff member with the ability to restrain.

The distribution of medication of any kind is prohibited in practicum. If students are in a setting





## **Z. Lobbying Activities**

Students who engage in formal lobbying activities as a part of the practicum experience should discuss with the Field Instructor and her/his Faculty Liaison the issue of registering as a lobbyist with the appropriate governmental entity. If the student and Field Instructor determine that registration is appropriate, the student must register as a lobbyist with the practicum agency (not Saint Louis University). It is the responsibility of the student and the agency to comply with all laws and regulations relevant to lobbying.

## **AA. Sharing Sensitive Information**

The Office of Field Education and the Faculty Liaisons will not share any sensitive information without the student signing a release of information. The Faculty Liaison may share relevant or helpful information to a Field Instructor or practicum agency such as student name and that they will be contacting for an interview, level and/or concentration, and semester desired. Generally, Faculty Liaisons encourage and assist students in being able to share any sensitive information themselves directly to Field Instructors. Faculty at the school are bound by FERPA (Federal Educational confidentiality guidelines) so cannot respond to all questions posed by outside field

## **BB. Safety and Security of Student in Practicum**

Safety of students in field is a priority for the Office of Field Education. While the University does not wish students to be protected from the realities of professional practice, immersing students in the realities of practice can also expose them to safety and security risks. The University and practicum agencies must partner to reduce risks to students in practicum. Many practicum students have safety and security concerns as they enter the field practicum. If not addressed, concerns about personal safety can significantly impact learning opportunities in the practicum. Field Instructors and practicum sites, when applicable, should:

- 1) Discuss safety and security matters with students at the placement interview or at the outset of the practicum. Information about the prevalence of or potential for violence while conducting practicum activities should be relayed to the student.
- 2) Explain and enforce agency safety protocols with students, including building and office security, emergency procedures, management of violent clients and home visit safety procedures (NOTE: students are expected to follow agency rules regarding the necessity of home visits and home visit protocol).
- 3) Provide a tour of the surrounding neighborhood or areas in which the student may work and address concerns students may have regarding work in the community.
- 4) Allow students to observe staff engaged in the work for which the student is p.58 Tpdng work in the c

Any incident or injury involving the student should be reported immediately to the Faculty Liaison.

### **CC. Paid Practicum**

While agencies are not required to financially compensate students for practicum, the Office of Field Education encourages organizations and agencies to provide funds when possible. It is important for the Faculty Liaison to know of these arrangements as the educational experience is still primary before an employment status.

Possible funding sources for practicum include:

- 1) Agency general revenue or grant funds    Some agencies have included stipend funds for

The practicum arrangement must be approved by both the Faculty Liaison and the Director of Field Education.

### **EE. Liability Coverage**

The practicum agency may have established policies regarding liability coverage for student travel and practice. As these policies vary within the community, students are strongly encouraged to address and clarify these issues prior to the acceptance of a practicum. Saint Louis University provides up to \$1,000,000 in professional malpractice insurance coverage for each occurrence. Students may also elect to purchase individual malpractice coverage at their own expense through the National Association of Social Workers Insurance Trust (800/638-8799 ext. 387) or another insurance carrier. Students may contact any Faculty Liaison for more information about individual coverage options. The University can provide verification to the agency of such coverage.

The University does not provide automobile liability coverage. **Students who will be using**

**JJ**

**B. Field Education page on the School of Social Work site** Information available on the above site:

- 1) Office of Field Education Contact information
- 2) practicum requirements, policies and related information;
- 3) link to the Field Education Collaborative Searchable Practicum Website;

**C. Information Through E-mail**

Students will have a great deal of communication with their Faculty Liaison and practicum Field Instructors through their SLU Email accounts.

**VI. OFFICE OF FIELD EDUCATION RESOURCES AND FUNCTIONS**

**A. Field Education Curriculum Committee**

The Field Education Curriculum Committee is comprised of full-time and adjunct Field Education Liaisons. The committee oversees and approves policy related to Field Education, consults with the appropriate curriculum committees, notifies and, if appropriate, seeks approval from the School Assembly of policy changes relevant to the curriculum.

**B. Practicum Competencies and Practice Behaviors**

The responsibility for authoring and approval of modifications to field education learning objectives is shared between committees charged with overseeing curriculum and the Office of Field Education. Input for and approval of modifications must be gained from both prior to the implementation of the objectives. For the Office of Field Education, input and approval must be obtained

Step 8: Submit the confirmation request form you received during your one-on-one meeting with the faculty liaison.

Step 9: During the registration period, meet with your academic advisor to review your academic plan. Register in Banner for the appropriate Practicum and Integrative Seminar.

Step 10: Begin your practicum the following semester on a date arranged with the practicum site.

**NOTE: YOU MAY NOT COUNT PRACTICUM HOURS UNTIL HIPAA TRAINING IS COMPLETE AND PRACTIUM SITE & FIELD INSTRUCTOR HAVE BEEN APPROVED.**

### **VIII. TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PRACTICUM** (developed by Pamela J. Huggins)

*“For the things we have to learn before we can do them, we learn by doing them.” ~Aristotle*

#### **1. Approach your practicum as a job.**

This means that being on time, having regular attendance, following agency policies and the dress code, and performing your best will provide you with a strong reference for your next practicum or first social work position.

#### **2. Communication is vital.**

It is important to communicate your thoughts, wishes, and concerns openly and frequently with your field instructor and other staff. Establishing a strong communication plan that alff. E792 reW\*nBT/F6 12 TF



instructor is not personally available, another staff member can be designated to respond to questions that must be answered immediately.

4) **Clear supervision and work expectations**

Students, field instructors, and agencies benefit from clear supervision and work expectations. While some field instructors expect students to prepare for and bring an agenda to the supervision session, others prefer to structure the time for the student. The expectations for the quality of work vary widely among field instructors, as well. Students benefit from very clear expectations that are communicated at the beginning of their practicum and reiterated if and when expectations change.

5) **Immersion into work as early as possible in the placement**

The student should move from reading about the agency and observing others to actually practicing social work as quickly as possible. For example, starting with assigning a piece of a larger assignment to the student that can be completed along with another staff member is a helpful beginning experience.

6) **Exposure to relevant and varied learning experiences**

The competencies behavioral indicators located in the Learning Agreement, depend upon the degree sought, concentration, and level of practicum. However, all students benefit from both breadth and depth of learning experiences. The Faculty Liaison may also be a helpful resource as to possible practicum learning activities. Students should be engaged in w 612 792fm



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