University of Nevada, Las Vegas School of Social Work

Master of Social Work MSW
Field Practicum Manual

First Things First

Important information for students:

- **Students enrolled in Field Education are required to use their Rebelmail account for communication purposes. Please link your personal email to this account.**
- **All document submissions must be labeled/named with your Last Name first, First Name second, (i.e. Public, John Fall 2021 Learning Contract)**
- **All required documents are on the UNLV School of Social Work webpage https://www.unlv.edu/socialwork/field-agency-forms. DO NOT use other forms.**

The Field Education Department has alphabetically designated a point of contact for agencies and students:

Agency: First letter of name of the agency (please do not include THE)

- **A-J Delayna Tonogan, Assistant Director of Field (702) 895-3313**
  - delayna.tonogan@unlv.edu
- **K-Z Marde Closson, Director of Field (702) 895-5848**
  - marde.closson@unlv.edu

Student: Academic Standing

- **BSW: Delayna Tonogan, Assistant Director of Field (702) 895-3313**
  - delayna.tonogan@unlv.edu
- **MSW: Marde Closson, Director of Field (702) 895-5848**
  - marde.closson@unlv.edu

Please contact the appropriate staff member if you have any questions and/or concerns.

All Field Education Documents referenced in this manual can be found on the **Field Education Department Website**: http://www.unlv.edu/socialwork/field-education

Graduate Assistants are available during each semester (excluding Summer Term) for any document submission issues, and can be reached by email: socialworkfield@unlv.edu

Terms Used:

- **Directors of Field:** Includes Director and Assistant Director of Field Education
- **Agency Field Instructor:** Used interchangeably with AFI
- **Field Liaison:** Used interchangeably with Liaison
- **Electronically Submit:** Submitted via email or other designated ven

FIELD PRACTICUM SEQUENCE RATIONALE

The field practicum sequence is an extremely important component of the student's professional development and is governed by the objectives of the MSW program's mission statement, the foundation curriculum, and the three (3) advanced curriculum concentrations: Direct Practice, Management and Community Practice Trauma Informed Practice. The field practicum sequence provides students with a unique opportunity to realize the goals and objectives of the program through concrete, practicum, and community-based interactions with clients and practicing professionals. In field practicum, students are supervised, monitored, and directed by Agency Field Instructors and School of Social Work Faculty Field Liaisons.

The field practicum experience allows each student to apply to practice the academic knowledge and skills acquired from all areas of the curriculum where diversity, social justice, and attention to the needs of at-risk populations are emphasized. The field practicum sequence builds upon the generalist foundation, integrating systems theory, the problem-solving process, strengths perspective, and social work values and ethics. Field practicum provides opportunities for students to practice their skills evolving from generalist to more advanced techniques, and to apply their theoretical knowledge in settings where human conditions must be respected and enhanced. In essence, the field practicum sequence prepares students for social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, particularly those encountered within the complex and dynamic urban environment of southern Nevada.

ORGANIZING RATIONALE

The MSW practicum placements are organized into two broad categories generally referred to as "Foundation" and "Concentration." When students participate in each practicum depends on whether they are enrolled in the full-time or part-time (3 year or 4 year) programs. If a student is in the regular full-time program, the Foundation

Practicum occurs during the first year of enrollment and the Concentration Practicum occurs during the second year. A 3-year part-time student takes the Foundation and Concentration Practicum during their second and third years of enrollment respectively. A 4-year part-time student participates in this practicum during their second and fourth years of enrollment. Because all practicum are classes, the requirements remain the same regardless of full-time or part-time status and all practicum take place during the regular academic year, i.e. fall and spring semesters. Advanced Standing students complete one practicum generally referred to as the "Concentration" practicum.

Your Admission Program Status	When to take Field Practicum Course	Practicum Hours Per 15 Week Semester	Approximate Practicum Hours Per Week
Full Time (2 Years)	1st Year	225	15
	2nd Year	300	20 (minimum of 10 hours)
Part Time (4 Years)	2nd Year	225	15
	4th Year	300	20 (minimum of 10 hours)
Part Time (3 Years)	2nd Year	225	15
	3rd Year	300	20 (minimum of 10 hours)
Advanced Standing	1st Year	300	20 (minimum of 10 hours)
Advanced Standing Part Time	1st Year (no practicum)	0	0
	2nd Year	300	20 (minimum of 10 hours)

Foundation Practicum:

The two Foundation Practicum courses, which are taken sequentially in the Fall and Spring semesters, are grounded in the generalist perspective, emphasizing problem-solving, cultural competence, and the bio-psycho-social practice model within a systems framework. Field agencies are encouraged to provide students with opportunities to observe and experience a range of social work activities at multiple levels while building basic skills in communication, assessment, planning, intervention, and evaluation.

Concentration Practicum:

The advanced Concentration Practicum consists of Direct Practice (DP), Management and Community Practice (MCP) and Trauma Informed Practice placements based on the student's pre-selected area of focus. Within the Concentration Practicum, students build on generalist skills and knowledge, while participating in a more specific practicum experience with individuals, families, and groups, or with communities and organizations. It is important to note that while students are expected to participate in

activities specific to their concentration area of study, a thorough understanding of social work practice at all levels remains an educational goal. All practicum are taken in conjunction with the corresponding practice methods courses to enhance integration of advanced theory and practice. Activities and performance in each succeeding practicum must demonstrate a degree of increased skill, independence, and responsibilities.

RELATIONSHIP OF FIELD PRACTICUM TO THE TOTAL PROGRAM

The MSW student will have completed undergraduate courses in related disciplines including Human Biology, Principles of Economics, and Introduction to Sociology, General Psychology, and Cultural Anthropology. These courses are essential in providing students with a broad liberal arts foundation and a perspective on which to build social work knowledge, values, and skills. Upon entering the field practicum courses, students must follow their specified plan of study. All field practicum must be taken with the corresponding practice methods courses. Each course in a sequence builds upon the previous course, and provides students with theories and concepts that are to be integrated and applied to practice in the field.

The social work practicum depends on the student building upon and integrating theories from across the entire social work spectrum as experienced in all courses and sequences. Activities provided by the wide variety of field agencies and professional networks within and beyond Clark County allow students to apply increasingly complex concepts from courses in individual, family, group, and community practice; human growth and development; social welfare policy; research methods; cultural competence, and supervision. Moreover, as research and evaluative knowledge and skills develop, the student grows in his or her ability to critically assess the effectiveness of agency policies, procedures and practice methods in meeting the needs of the community and clients at multiple system levels.

Integration of theory and practice is facilitated through faculty review and feedback in the development of Learning Contracts and Journals, Course Assignments drawn from the practice experience, and field seminar classes that focus specifically on integrating field experience with curriculum content. Each student's course syllabus distributed to Agency Field Instructors (AFIs) to enhance integration of course work in the field. In each subsequent field practicum, students are assisted in developing activities that reflect growth and increased levels of complexity, skill, and autonomy.

Information about the field practicum and its relationship to the total program is disseminated in a variety of ways. This Field Practicum Manual is available for all field practicum students, Agency Field Instructors (AFIs), and School of Social Work faculty as it is posted on the School of Social Work Field Education website. Faculty Field Liaisons meet face-to-face at least twice each semester with students and Agency Field Instructors (AFIs) to provide support and to clarify requirements of the program. Orientations for Agency Field Instructors and Preceptors are offered once

per year to encourage ongoing dialogue between the School and Agency Field Instructors and to facilitate communication around educational goals, instructional methods, and techniques. The Orientation is mandatory for all new MSW Agency Field Instructors.

Additional trainings may be offered throughout the year for Agency Field Instructors (AFIs) and Preceptors interested in further developing their instructor skills. Orientation and trainings offered supply CEUs through the State of Nevada Board of Examiners for Social Workers.

MSW PROGRAM OBJECTIVES/COMPETENCIES:

Upon completion of the Master of Social Work degree, MSW students will be able to achieve the following competencies that are based upon the standards of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) - Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS).

The program course assignments, practicum experiences and seminars will allow students the opportunity to achieve the following competencies:

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

THE FIELD PRACTICUM IS DESIGNED TO:

1. Help students develop skills in theory application at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.
2. Provide students with real world experiences of how social service agencies work with client systems.
3. Help students investigate how concepts of social justice and multiculturalism are implemented in the field.
4. Assist students in identifying how generalist social work practice is based on the core mission of the profession.
5. Help students identify strengths and resources for client systems.
6. Support students in integrating concepts about human behavior in the social environment into proficiency in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

7. Guide students in initiating and building upon client-worker relationships.
8. Help students understand the tasks of collecting and assessing information related to client concerns.
9. Aid students in recognizing client issues, problems, needs, resources and assets.
10. Facilitate students' use of empirical knowledge and technological advances in working with client systems.
11. Help students become familiar with program outcome evaluations informing practice effectiveness.

ASSIGNMENT TO A PRACTICUM AGENCY SITE

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

Please follow these steps to secure a Practicum:

Step 1 – The Resume and Cover Letter:

Students entering a practicum search must first create a current Resume and Cover Letter describing their education, experience and objectives for field placement. Please contact UNLV Career Services at 702-895-3495.

Step 2– Sign-up for Handshake:

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

Please note: Only agencies that have an educational affiliation agreement (EAA) can be approved as a practicum site. If you encounter any problems with setting up an account or logging onto Handshake, please contact Career Services at 702-895-3495.

Step 3- Searching for Placements:

In the search field, type in Social Work Practicum. This will bring up all of the practicum placement opportunities that are available. Once you locate an agency you are interested in, just click the "Apply" button. Once you click "Apply" your resume will be sent directly to the Agency Field Instructor (AFI). You can check to see which

positions you have applied to by clicking on the "Job Postings and On-Campus Recruiting OCR Interviews" tab. From this tab you can click on the "Applications tab" which will bring up a window with all positions you have applied to.

Step 4 – The Agency Interview:

The Field Education Program adheres to a "matching" philosophy; that is, practicum works best when agencies and students "choose" each other. At the agency interview, either party - the student or the agency - may choose to accept or reject the other. Students are advised to interview at multiple agency sites to facilitate an informed choice. Agencies are not obligated to accept any given student solely on the fact that she or he has been referred by the University. Similarly, after interviewing, students may not accept agencies to which they have been referred. If there are no matches (based on practicum position availability, incompatibility of goals or some other reasonable criteria), the student is advised to immediately contact their Field Education Department designated contact person.

Step 5 – Practicum Site Selection:

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

Special Note: Part of professional behavior is in showing courtesy to the agencies to which a student applies and colleagues. It is the student's responsibility to notify all agencies with whom the student interviewed that a practicum selection has been made, opening the opportunity for the agency to select another student. Once you have selected your practicum site, please discontinue applying to additional sites.

Step 6 – Agency requirements:

Please note that some agencies have an onboarding process and may require background checks, drug testing, physicals and other medical screenings. Students are responsible for these expenses. The agencies may require UNLV School of Social Work to maintain these records for the student and make them available to the agency at their request. Students will be required to provide this information to UNLV School of Social Work Field Education Office to be kept as part of the student record.

Agencies may require students to attend orientation prior to the start of the practicum. These hours are outside of the practicum and are unable to be counted

as practicum hours.

FIELD PRACTICUM SETTINGS AND SELECTION CRITERIA

In order for the field practicum to be effective, it is imperative that the School of Social Work and participating agencies work together in planning and carrying out the educationally directed experience. At the same time, the School also recognizes the social responsibility of the agency toward its clients and the community, and is aware of the necessity of the educational objectives to be complimentary to those of the agency. The relationship between the University, the School, and the agency is outlined in the Education Affiliation Agreement (EAA) and is formalized by the signing of this document. While the School retains primary responsibility for the quality of the educational experience, it can only carry out that responsibility through cooperation and ongoing communication between the agency field instructors and the School. Field Education Program policy mandates that agencies provide the School with, among other documentation, a description of their program and practicum activities to assist in appropriately matching students with the agency.

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

- Child Welfare
- Abuse Investigation
- Foster Care/Adoption
- Community Action
- Domestic Violence
- Educational/School Social Work
- Elder Care/Geriatric
- Health/Medical/Hospice
- Homelessness
- Legal/Forensic
- Mental Health
- Inpatient and/or Outpatient
- Substance Abuse
- Social Service/Community Resources

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

- An established social welfare program with a clear-cut sanction from the community.
- Commitment to the goals of professional social work education.
- Willingness to support the School's educational objectives.
- Commitment to and the ability to provide the resources (space, time, and other support) needed by agency staff and students involved in the activities of

instructional field practice.
- Availability of qualified staff to supervise MSW students.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF AGENCY FIELD INSTRUCTORS

Agency Field Instructors:

Agency Field Instructors (AFIs) are vital members of the field training team and, with the support of the Directors of Field Education, are charged with the responsibility to assure that the planning, teaching, and evaluation components of students' field practicum experiences have a social work focus and are professionally sound.

The criteria for selection of Agency Field Instructors are as follows:

- Master of Social Work degree.
- Two (2) years postmaster's experience in the field.
- Six (6) months experience with the current agency.
- Licensed to practice professionally in the state of Nevada (preferred).
- Reputation for professional competence.
- Attitude of respect for students' competencies and needs.
- Ability and desire to teach social work theory and its application to professional practice.
- Demonstrated identification with the social work profession.
- Thorough knowledge of the purposes, policies, and procedures of the agency.
- Willingness to advance professional development as demonstrated by successful completion of the MANDATORY Agency Field Instructor (AFI) Orientation as well as participation in other continuing education opportunities.

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

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK AND AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

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

Director of Field

The Director of Field will be responsible for:

- Providing the agency with the necessary consultation and support to carry out the educational program goals.
- Providing specific learning objectives to be used in planning the educational program for students.
- Providing guidelines for evaluation of student progress.
- Obtaining regular feedback from the agency regarding the field program's strengths and limitations and recommending suitable modifications when appropriate.
- Maintaining regular communication with Agency Directors and Agency Field Instructors (AFIs).
- Providing consultation around field practicum concerns.
- Providing continuing educational services including the field instruction training seminars.

Assistant Director of Field

The Assistant Director of Field will assist the Director of Field in all responsibilities listed above.

In addition, the Assistant Director of Field is responsible for:

- Assisting in the development of Practicum sites within the community.
- Teaching Social Work Practicum seminars.
- Providing supervision to students in the field.
- Serving as one of the Field Liaisons.

Field Liaison

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

Field Agency

A Field Agency that agrees to participate in the education of social work students is responsible for:

- Providing an environment which is conducive to educational goals and objectives.
- Accepting the student as contributing services related to the function of the agency.
- Affording the student significant responsibility in assignments with clients, sufficient to enable meaningful practice behavior opportunities appropriate to the field objectives and Learning Contract/Evaluation.
- Making adjustments as necessary to enable the Agency Field Instructor (AFI) sufficient time for planning of the student's activities, regular weekly and emergency conferences with the student, meetings with the Directors of Field and/or Faculty Field Liaison, writing of evaluations, and other duties connected with this responsibility.
- Providing the Agency Field Instructor (AFI) and student suitable physical facilities and work items including adequate desk space, telephone, supplies, clerical support, and privacy for client interviewing, group meetings, and supervision conferences.
- Assuring that a student is not, under any circumstances, left alone or solely responsible in an office, agency, or institutional setting. At least one (1) agency staff member must be available at all times. This includes during home visits. Students can not make a home visit by themselves.
- Agency Orientation: Students are required to have an agency orientation that includes dress code, parking, hours of work, overtime expectations, flexibility of hours, times and dates of staff meetings, policies regarding client care, reimbursement procedures for expenses, student safety plan, emergency contact information, policies and procedures related to social work activities.

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

Agency Field Instructor (AFI)

An Agency Field Instructor (AFI) is an employee of the agency selected to be the primary provider of instruction and supervision for social work students. The Agency Field Instructor (AFI) should meet the criteria for selection as indicated in Section VII. Therefore, by definition the Agency Field Instructor (AFI) holds at least a Master's in Social Work and has two (2) years post-masters' clinical and/or administrative experience. Additionally, the Agency Field Instructor (AFI is required to submit a current Resume to the Field Education Department.

Recognizing that the Agency Field Instructor (AFI) has other responsibilities besides

student supervision, she/he should, however, allot a sufficient portion of her/his time for each student on designated field practicum days. This will include time for student instruction, program development, and occasional meetings with the Directors of Field and/or Faculty Field Liaison, program and student evaluation, and other related activities. ***The Agency Field Instructor AFI) must schedule at least one (1) hour of formal face-to-face supervision with students (individual or group) on a weekly basis and complete documentation of the supervision.***

The Agency Field Instructor (AFI) should monitor practicum related documentation particularly Field Practicum Time Sheets, Student Evaluations and documents specific to the student's role in the agency. She or he is responsible for making sure that the student has access to guidance and consultation by other agency professionals in the Agency Field Instructor's (AFI's) absence (e.g., during vacation or illness). The Agency Field Instructor (AFI) is also expected to immediately notify the school if there is a significant change in the Agency Field Instructor's (AFI's) availability due to a change of employment status, staffing, etc.

To provide a meaningful field experience, the Agency Field Instructor (AFI) should:

- Understand how the overall objectives and specific curriculum of the School relate to the objectives of field instruction.
- Integrate these objectives with those of the agency and its policies and procedures.
- Assist the student to formulate a comprehensive educational plan through the Learning Contract/Evaluation.
- Integrate the student into her/his practice unit and set up an orientation program that will present a total picture of the agency.
- Select appropriate cases, objectives, learning tasks, and assignments for the student.
- Plan conferences and unit meetings.
- Assign written work (process and summary recordings, psychosocial summaries, case notes, etc.) and review them with the student.
- Encourage the student to participate fully in the life of the agency.
- Provide feedback to the student on a regular weekly basis as to performance.
- Communicate with the student, Directors of Field, and/or Field Liaison any unusual opportunities, conditions, or problems as soon as they are evident.
- Participate with the student in the preparation of the Field Practicum Evaluations during the semester.
- Participate in training seminars for all agency-based field instruction.

Preceptor

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

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

Agency Field Instructor (AFI) / Preceptor Orientation

The School of Social Work provides an Orientation that is mandatory for all new Agency Field Instructors (AFIs). Training is also provided for Preceptors and open to all professionals desiring to work with social work students

The orientation provides an opportunity to:

- Promote general consistency in the training of students with regard to basic social work skills across agencies.
- Foster a network of communication between Agency Field Instructors and the School of Social Work.
- Disseminate the most current information reflecting generally accepted principles of field supervision (including legal issues, examination of the supervisory relationship, promoting the optimal field learning experience, identifying and addressing student-agency problems, etc.).

STUDENTS IN THE FIELD PRACTICUM

Assignment to Agency

Assignment to an agency is the responsibility of the student through the completion of the tasks located in Section V of this manual. The Directors of Field Education are always available to assist the student in this responsibility.

Field Practicum Challenges

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

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

2. If the student and Agency Field Instructor (AFI) are unsuccessful at arriving at a resolution to the problem, either party should immediately contact the assigned Faculty Field Liaison for consultation, mediation or other action. Additional face-to-face meetings or other interventions may be mandated at the discretion of the Liaison toward problem resolution.

3. If the problem cannot be resolved with the assistance of the Faculty Field Liaison, the Directors of Field must be contacted immediately. The decisions of the Directors of Field are final. Intervention at this level could take several courses, but may include as a last resort, reassignment of the student to another practicum site.

4. If a practicum site terminates a student's placement at their agency, the student will be referred to the UNLV Field Education Committee for review prior to continuing in the program.

Special Note: Circumstances involving a student and any emergency situation require that a **Field Practicum Incident Report** be completed and routed to the appropriate parties listed on the form available on the Field Education Department website.

Personal and Professional Development

Career Objectives

Students admitted to the MSW program have selected a specialization in micro, mezzo or macro practice based on their own career goals. Upon mastering the generalist skills and knowledge of the foundation curriculum, placements and practicum experiences in the concentration year will be designed to enable the student to achieve the more specialized skills of Direct Practice and Management

and Community Practice.

Students must aim to achieve a level of maturity and ethical behavior that are in accord with their professional responsibilities. Self-understanding, self-acceptance, and acceptance of others are required in the helping professions. These qualities can be demonstrated by the student's awareness of how they are perceived by others; the ability to cooperate with clients and staff; and through the productive use of supervision. Students must also demonstrate respect for the individual's right to self-determination and the ability to work with people, not for people; the ability to see each person as an individual; willingness to recognize their own personal limitations; and openness to new ideas.

Professionalism requires taking the responsibility for one's own learning as demonstrated by the ability to carry out one's own workload effectively. Students must work collaboratively with others, and participate appropriately in conferences and staff meetings. Preparation of written reports and appropriate case recordings, along with dependability and punctuality, are also expected professional responsibilities.

Students develop an understanding of the helping relationship through experience, as well as skills and self-discipline in its use. In the practicum, students develop the skills to initiate contact with client systems; to maintain rapport without sacrificing focus or limits; to handle relationships with persons from a variety of age, gender, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds; to assist client systems in making plans and to modify those plans when necessary; to implement effective interventions at multiple client system levels; and to terminate the relationship based on an evaluation of one's actions and those of the client system.

Special Note: A "social work student" in a field practicum should **NOT** be referred to or sign any documentation using the title "intern". Currently, the term "intern" is reserved for post-master's professionals working on hours toward LCSW licensure in the state of Nevada and would constitute misrepresentation if used in reference to a MSW student.

FIELD PRACTICUM SEMINAR

Field seminar classes are a component of the three (3) credit field practicum courses. These classes are very important and your attendance is mandatory. The seminar class is 25% of your practicum grade. Failure to meet the attendance and participation requirements results in a maximum grade of C in the class. These classes are designed to clarify student responsibilities and requirements for field, to share practicum experiences and discuss concerns, and to relate course concepts with field experiences. Written assignments, readings, case studies, classroom discussion and interactive

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

Students are expected to:

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

While the content of the field practicum seminars may address a range of personal and professional issues, these class sessions are not in any way to be construed as "therapy". Sharing information to promote professional growth is appropriate, however, students are expected to demonstrate an understanding of appropriate boundaries within an educational context. Additionally, by enrolling in field practicum courses including the seminar component, students are consenting to abide by the NASW Code of Ethics. In seminar, this is interpreted in part to mean that all students will protect the confidentiality of others. For example, if required to present case presentations, adequate attention must be given to securing the identity of clients. Also, relevant personal issues presented by other fellow students are not to be discussed or debated outside of the seminar class.
The discovery of dishonesty in seminar (or inappropriate behavior in field practicum) will result in initiating the "counseling out" procedure, and the instructor has the right to assign a failing grade for the entire practicum course.

FIELD PRACTICUM REQUIREMENTS

Class Attendance and Participation

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

Learning Contract/Evaluation

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

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

Special Note: There **MUST** be comments in each practice behavior for the Learning Contract, Midterm, and Final Evaluation explaining how the student will or has completed each practice behavior. The learning contract, midterm and final comments are to be completed by the Agency Field Instructor. This is their evaluation of the student.

The Learning Contract, completed by the student and Agency Field Instructor is prepared early in the practicum, identifying the specific practice behaviors that will be accomplished throughout the field practicum experience. The document is designed to assist the student in accomplishing the course objectives. In developing the Learning Contract, students are to follow the simple drop-down format provided for each Core Competency. Students can earn up to 4 hours for developing the learning contract and 2 hours for the midterm and 2 hours for the final evaluation. Revisions may be suggested by the Faculty Field Liaison and should be resubmitted in a timely manner. Once reviewed with the Agency Field Instructor, the document will be **electronically submitted by the Agency Field Instructor to the assigned Field Liaison.**

Special Note: Students who do not submit the learning contract by the due date are unable to continue in their practicum until the learning contract is accepted by the Field Office. A student, Agency Field Instructor, or Faculty Field Liaison may initiate an Addendum to the original Learning Contract. Addendums may be submitted at midterm of current semester and can include changes or additions to the original Learning Contract made after the due date. If students receive a pass score on more than 9 of the practice behaviors an addendum will need to be completed to identify learning activities for the rest of the semester and submitted with the final evaluation. Addendums must also be signed by the student, Agency Field Instructor and Faculty Field Liaison before submission to the Director of Field. The form can be found on the Field Education department Website.

Special Note: Students are able to identify practicum activities outside of their agency at a maximum of 10% of their total practicum hours each semester. These activities must be approved by the agency field instructor. These activities can include non-agency sponsored events (i.e, conferences, community trainings, and workshops that your agency isn't participating directly in.

Field Practicum Time Sheet

MSW Foundation Students must complete a total of **225 hours per semester** (approximately 15 hours per week), whereas **Concentration Year** MSW Students must complete **300 hours per semester** (approximately 20 hours per week). **Advanced Standing** MSW Students must complete 300 hours per semester (approximately 20 hours per week). All Students are expected to be at their practicum site a minimum of 15 weeks each semester. All students are required to maintain an accurate record of field practicum hours and learning contract practice behaviors. Hours and activities such as supervision, reading, agency meetings, client interviews, training, and all other learning activities conducted during placement are to be recorded daily on the Field Practicum Time Sheet.

Students are to email their Field Practicum Time Sheets to their Agency Field Instructor (AFI) each week. Once the Agency Field Instructor (AFI) has reviewed the activity sheet they will sign the timesheet and return it to the student electronically submit the document in their journal to the appropriate Liaison by 5 pm on Monday. Recorded activities should relate to Learning Contract practice behaviors. Regular review of the Field Practicum Time Sheet record will assist student, Agency Field Instructor and Faculty Field Liaison in monitoring the student's progress toward accomplishing these specific tasks. Only **one and one-half (1.5) hours per week** will be allotted for student's agency-related outside reading (students must cite the reading on the timesheet) and journaling.

Field Practicum Weekly Supervision

MSW students are responsible for being prepared for educational supervision with the Agency Field Instructor. MSW students must prepare an agenda prior to meeting with the AFI for supervision and include it in their weekly journal for the Field Liaison to review. Regular supervision will assist the student and Agency Field Instructor (AFI) in monitoring the student's progress toward accomplishing specific tasks and integrating classroom knowledge to the field experience. Students will review their progress with regard to the core competencies with the AFI. The AFI will track the student's progress weekly and indicate on the midterm evaluation whether the student has had the opportunity to practice(or not) specific lerning activities to develop the needed core competencies and for the final evaluation will give the student the appropriate score of 0 or 4, the Agency Field Instructor will provide rationale for the score. If a student is struggling with a specific behavior or core competency skill, the AFI will complete action plan with the student to explain the steps that will be taken to assist the student in developing the required core competency skill. All undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in field practicum must participate in formal, face-to-face supervision for a minimum of one (1) hour on a weekly basis with the assigned

Agency Field Instructor (AFI).

Experiential Journal

Each student is required to prepare a weekly experiential journal starting the first week of the semester in order to communicate their progress towards goals of placement, and to demonstrate in writing, practice skills, values, critical thinking, and an ability to analyze and evaluate personal feelings that impact practice. Students **may** share their journals with Agency Field Instructors (AFIs) but are not required to do so. Many students find journaling helpful in their preparation for weekly supervision**.** Journal entries are to be entered **directly into** the assignment section of the journal assignment box located in the **WebCampus CANVAS** classroom **by 5 pm every Monday starting the first week of the semester.**

The journal sections are:

1) Analysis of social work skills and self-awareness. Describe how your practicum experiences and feelings and observations have led to changes in the way you integrate and apply practice skills. Review how supervision, reading, and/or concepts from course work enriched your practicum experience. How have experiences in the field enhanced your commitment to particular values of the profession or shaped your career goals and interests? Evaluate the need for developing new skills and knowledge. Please list the title of your reading in this section.
2) NASW Code of Ethics: Answer each week's question related to the NASW Code of Ethics.
3)Supervision Agenda. Attach your supervision agenda. (Please note the agenda is for the week you are journaling about).
4)Timesheet. (Please upload timesheet after approved by AFI and if you have one your Preceptor). It must meet the following criteria:
1. Has activities listed
2. Has supervision listed
3. Has hours listed for each activity
4. Has readings/journaling listed(with the title of the reading

EVALUATION

Review of Evaluation Process

The evaluation of student learning in field practicum is an ongoing process and is the responsibility of the Agency Field Instructor, Field Liaison, and the Directors of Field. Evaluation is based on student's timely completion of field practicum responsibilities, which include class attendance and assignments, successful completion of the practice behaviors outlined in the Learning Contract, hours and activities indicated on the Field Practicum Time Sheet, Experiential Journal, and the Field Practicum Evaluations. It is the student's responsibility to initiate each

document in collaboration with their Agency Field Instructor (AFI) (except journals). Students and AFI should prepare a rough draft of comments prior to supervision and completion of the midterm and final evaluations. It is the AFI's responsibility to add the comments to the evaluations and determine if the student has developed the CORE Competency Skills identified in the learning contract.

The AFI will then have the student review and sign the evaluation prior to signing each document. It is the responsibility of the Agency Field Instructor (AFI) to electronically submit each document to the Field Liaison. Evaluation begins at the onset of the semester when the student and the AFI review expected outcomes for the field practicum. At midterm and at the end of the semester, the Agency Field Instructor (AFI) awards a pass, in-progress, or fail for each competency listed on the Learning Contract/Evaluation form. The Agency Field Instructor (AFI) will then award a passing or failing grade which awards points to the student evaluation. If the student does not receive a passing score for an evaluation, the student is not awarded any points.

Midterm Evaluation: If student has at least 40% of total practice behaviors (7 out of 18) at "in-progress" student receives "PASS" Pass = 15 points at Midterm Evaluation.

Final Evaluation: If student has at least 90% of total practice behaviors (16 out of 18) at "pass" student receives "PASS" Pass = 20 points at Final Evaluation.

Special Note: The **Field Practicum Addendum** form is also used to justify a "pass" or "fail" grade for the agency practicum section when a student exceeds or neglects to demonstrate acceptable social work skills for a student at her/his level of matriculation independent of having completed the contracted practice behaviors. If students receive a pass score on more than 9 of the practice behaviors an addendum will need to be completed to identify learning activities for the rest of the semester and submitted with the final evaluation.

The Field Department has ultimate responsibility for the assignment of grades. **Students must receive a grade of C or higher in order to pass the course.** If the student disagrees with the evaluation, a narrative statement specifying the reasons should be submitted to the Agency Field Instructor (AFI), Field Liaison, and Directors of Field within one (1) week after the Field Practicum Evaluation is due. Students are advised to maintain a copy of the evaluation for their own records. The completed evaluation forms become a part of the student's file. If the student and Field Department are unable to resolve the disputed grade, the student can request a review by the Director of the School of Social Work. If not resolved to the student's satisfaction, the student then has until the end of the

second week of instruction in the semester (Fall/Spring) following that in which the grade was given to file a grade grievance with the Faculty Senate Office http://facultysenate.unlv.edu/students/dispute-grade.

In the case of serious difficulties, the School's counseling out policy has provisions for addressing concerns about student performance raised by the Agency Field Instructor (AFI) or the Field Liaison. The procedures for counseling out are described in the MSW Student Handbook.

Evaluation of the field program is also ongoing and occurs in a variety of ways utilizing the online student evaluation surveys of Practicum Seminar Instructors, Agency Field Instructors (AFIs), Faculty Field Liaisons, and Practicum sites.

CRITERIA FOR GRADING

Evaluation will be based on a variety of criteria designed to allow the student to demonstrate mastery of course objectives. These include accomplishment of Learning Contract tasks, the Field Practicum Evaluation, the Experiential Journal, Field Practicum Time Sheet, and other written assignments, as well as classroom participation in the field seminar.

Specific criteria for grading are as follows:

1. **Class Attendance and Participation (25 Points)**
    a. **Attendance (12.5)**
    b. **Participation (12.5)**
2. **Learning Contract (10 Points)**
3. **Experiential Journal (30 Points)**
    a. **Midterm (15)**
    b. **Final (15)**
4. **Field Practicum Evaluation (35 Points)**
    a. **Midterm (15)**
    b. **Final (20)**

- Submitted assignments will be evaluated and graded on: (1) content, (2) clarity, (3) specificity, (4) understanding of social work concepts, values, and ethics, (5) personal insight, (6) originality, (7) grammar,

(8) spelling, and (9) promptness.

- All hours of field practicum experience must be completed, as well as all Field Practicum Time Sheets, Journal Entries, and Evaluation Forms submitted, to fulfill course requirements for grade assignment. The practicum is a 15-week course. Practicum hours and weekly assignments are expected to be distributed throughout the semester time frame. Therefore, anything **less than 15 weeks** of practicum experience will result in a failing grade.

- The grade of "I" (Incomplete) can only be requested by a field instructor when a field student, who is doing otherwise acceptable work, is unable to complete a course because of illness or other conditions beyond the field student's control. Unfinished work must be completed with the same field instructor except under extenuating circumstances. The field student has one calendar year from the date the mark of "I" is recorded to complete the course. Students must clear their "I" before proceeding with other practicum courses.

- It is the student's responsibility to communicate any difficulties encountered in this process to the Field Liaison and/or Directors of Field.

SUPERVISION

All undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in field practicum must participate in formal, face-to-face supervision for a minimum of one (1) hour on a weekly basis with the assigned Agency Field Instructor (AFI) and be documented in the Journal. This supervision may be formatted in an individual or group setting.

This may be clinical and/or administrative supervision as appropriate for the student's learning needs and the structure of the practicum site. While occasional supervision sessions may be missed (e.g. due to illness, vacation), the student's Field Practicum Time Sheets must collectively reflect a pattern of regular contact and consultation with the Agency Field Instructor (AFI). The Agency Field Instructor will also document weekly supervision and complete the Field Practicum Supervision and Progress Report with the student and will electronically submit the reports to the Liaison when they submit the midterm and the final learning contracts.

Special Note: Agencies and individual Agency Field Instructor (AFI) may request or require supervision requirements above and beyond those of the Field Education Department or the field faculty may institute additional supervision requirements if the

student manifests a practice concern.

This requirement is for the protection of both students and Agency Field Instructors. AFIs who take on supervisory roles assume vicarious liability with students and other supervisees, and may therefore be held legally responsible in some part for the performance of supervisees. AFIs that are, or become, unable to meet the supervisory requirement must notify the assigned Faculty Field Liaison immediately. If as a student you believe your supervision falls below standards, first address the issue with the AFI and consult the Faculty Field Liaison for guidance.

COURSES IN THE FIELD SEQUENCE and STUDENT COMPETENCIES

Foundation Practicum

The Foundation Practicum experiences are designed to enable application of human behavior, social policy, research, and practice knowledge at the generalist level and to prepare the student for entry into the advanced level concentration of her/his choice. Based on the notion that problems of living are determined by multiple social, as well as economic and material factors, the generalist approach utilizes problem- solving skills and the strengths perspective within a systems framework for intervention at micro through macro levels. The Foundation Practicum student is enabled to develop and demonstrate self- awareness and the accountability use of the knowledge, values, and skills of the profession. Activities and performance in each succeeding practicum must demonstrate new learning and a degree of increased skill and autonomy.

The objectives of the Graduate Level Field Practicum flow from the mission, goals, and objectives of the program and reflect the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) - Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS), specifically the Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors. The program places an emphasis on critical thinking, professional mentoring, and respect for human diversity. Upon completion of the MSW Foundation Field Instruction (**practicum**, **seminar class**, and **course assignments)** students are expected to demonstrate through practice behaviors the Foundation competencies achieved through the following objectives:

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior.
   - Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context;
   - Use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations;
   - Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;

- Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
- Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

2. Engage diversity and difference in practice.
   - Apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels;
   - Present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituenciesas experts of their own experiences; and
   - Apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

3. Advance human rights and social, economic and environmental justice.
   - Apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to Advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels; and
   - Engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

4. Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
   - Use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research;
   - Apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings; and
   - Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery

5. Engage in policy practice.
   - Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services;
   - Assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services;
   - Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.

6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
   - Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies; and
   - Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.

7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.
   - Collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies;
   - Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis

of assessment data from clients and constituencies;
- Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies; and
- Select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.

8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.
   - Critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies;
   - Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies;
   - Use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes;
   - Negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies; and
   - Facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.

9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
   - Select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes;
   - Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes;
   - Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes; and
   - Apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

Foundation Practicum I and II

Foundation Practicum I (SW 719) and Foundation Practicum II (SW 729) each consist of 225 hours of experience in a social service agency and attendance in field seminar classes. The Foundation Practicums (SW 719 and SW 729) are taken in succession and concurrently with the corresponding practice courses (SW 720 and SW 730).

The Foundation Practicum are geared to familiarize the student with the basic roles and responsibilities of both the social worker and agency, and to provide a broad range of generalist experiences. Students should be provided a comprehensive orientation to the agency. Experiences should include opportunities to work with clients and staff from diverse backgrounds, to **observe and eventually participate** in the direct delivery of

client services, and to attend staff development and other administrative and collaborative meetings. Students should also review program evaluation procedures, become familiar with social policies that impact on the agency and its client systems, and participate in planning and interventions targeted at multiple system levels.

Advanced Standing Practicum

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

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

Direct Practice – Field Practicum I and II

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

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

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

- The Direct Practice Practicum class student will develop a broad range of practice skills based on the generalist perspective and effective at multiple levels of client systems with particular emphasis on micro and mezzo level intervention.
- Will be able to more thoroughly integrate bio-psychosocial, strengths and systems oriented frameworks to direct practice; will be able to effectively apply principles of generalist practice, particularly in clinical, therapeutic, advocacy and case management work with diverse populations.

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

Management and Community Practice - Field Practicum I and II

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

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

- Management and Community Practice Practicum class students will be able to apply bio-psycho social, strengths and systems oriented frameworks to practice with multiple levels of client systems with a particular focus on groups,

organizations and communities; will be able to effectively apply principles of generalist practice in working with diverse populations.

- Will be able to effectively execute a variety of social work roles (e.g. managerial, supervisory, administrative) using the generalist perspective.
- Management and Community Practice Practicum class students will model the values and ethics of the social work profession by demonstrating competence, self-awareness, objectivity, accountability, professional presentation/behavior, and respect for the right to self-determination; will actively participate in the learning process by making use of the constructive feedback available through supervision and other field support mechanisms; will develop leadership qualities in line with the client-centered, respect-oriented values of the social work profession.
- Management and Community Practice Practicum class students will be able to identify how factors such as economics, social policies, and oppression impact the functioning and well-being of a range of small and large client systems; will be able to apply primarily macro practice skills and methods to a spectrum of cultural factors (e.g. gender, age, sexual orientation, and racial-ethnic, spiritual) that affect client systems.

Trauma Informed Practice Field Practicum I and II

Field Practicum I consists of 300 hours of experience in a social service agency and attendance in field seminar classes, as well as specific required assignments requested by the Field Coordinator. Students should be provided a comprehensive orientation to the agency. Students are also expected to engage in a range of advanced direct practice experiences that involve opportunities to observe and participate in the delivery of client services, including assessment, planning, intervention, and case management with individuals, families, and groups. Activities should be designed to enhance therapeutic approaches and intervention strategies with client systems solidly founded in trauma informed care evidence-based approach. In addition, students should attend staff development and treatment team meetings, review practice evaluation procedures, and become familiar with the broad range of roles and responsibilities of both the social worker and agency. Field practicum activities, written assignments, readings, case studies, and classroom discussions will provide students with opportunities to demonstrate the development of analytical and practice skills.

Field Practicum I (TIC Practice SW 779) and Field Practicum II (TIC Practice Sw 789) builds upon the experiences and content of the professional generalist foundation and expands upon the advanced concentration curricula. The course is designed to enhance evidence-based practice skills while preparing students for advanced, critically analyzed, and ultimately autonomous work with individuals, families, and groups from vulnerable, oppressed, and at-risk populations that have experienced trauma. The learning experiences and assignments provided by Field Practicum enable students to demonstrate integration of the social work curriculum, as well as the ability to effectively access and implement services in accordance with the needs of the client system and the function of the agency. The practicum course will maintain a particular emphasis on central themes of social and economic justice, human diversity, the problem-solving process, systems theory, and social work values and ethics.

The objectives of the Trauma Informed Practice Field Practicum are derived from the

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

- Identify, attend, and facilitate ethical considerations including maintaining physical, interpersonal, spiritual, emotional, and psychological boundaries for clients and client systems, face-to-face and virtual, and demonstrate the ability to assess and address barriers to safety for clients across the lifespan.
- Make ethical decisions incorporating understanding of trauma, trauma reflective treatment, research, and policies along with trauma-informed organizational practice, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics, models of ethical decision making, and relevant laws, policies, and regulations.
- Understand their own trauma-related history and their positionality as well as clients' experience of trauma as it relates to age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion and spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status.
- Engage in self-reflection, self-regulation strategies, and self-care practice including reflective trauma-responsive supervision to prevent and address secondary traumatic stress, compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma, and burnout in self and organization to enhance effective practice, policies, and research that considers ethical decision making related to trauma.

POST-DEGREE FIELD PRACTICUM

School Social Work

The Field Education Program makes available practicum experiences for individuals who hold MSWs or a related degree and are seeking extended professional development through fieldwork. The post-degree field practicum can include training in **School Social Work** and meets the Clark County School District requirements for employment with the District. Such post-degree professionals are advised to first meet with the Directors of Field. If the practicum is deemed appropriate in meeting professional goals, the post-degree student must enroll in social work 799 (Independent Study) at the registrar's office and complete the Independent Study form available at the School of Social Work office. The post-master's student must then adhere to all of the documentation, assignments, and time requirements of the foundation practicum with the exception of attendance in the weekly seminar class. Upon successful completion of the school social work practicum, a letter of certification is submitted to the UNLV Department of Education for counter-signature and forwarded to the Clark County School District. Letters of completion may be obtained for other areas of focus.

FIELD PRACTICUM POLICIES

General Agency Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the agency's educational coordinator or field instructor to inform the University immediately of any changes in field placement arrangements and if any of the following changes occur:

- Changes in agency address or phone number.
- Changes in agency director and/or educational coordinator.
- Proposed changes in field instructors.
- Major adjustment proposed in student schedules.
- Pending strikes and labor/management disputes.
- Any extraordinary tension in the agency that may affect student learning.
- Absence of the field instructor from the agency for more than one week.
- Student absences for more than three days per term.

Hours Required

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

Accountability for hours is established though the accurate completion of the Field Practicum Time Sheet submitted by the student to the Agency Field Instructor (AFI), who then in turn signs it and returns it to the student to be submitted in the journal to the Field Liaison. Inaccuracies, inconsistencies, receipt by someone other than Agency Field Instructor (AFI) or other designated agency representative (i.e. Preceptor) not in an approved supervisory position, or other modifications to this document will be cause for not crediting hours toward the course requirement. This could result in a "Fail" grade in the course.

The grade of "I" (Incomplete) can only be requested by a field instructor when a field student, who is doing otherwise acceptable work, is unable to complete a course because of illness or other conditions beyond the field student's control. Unfinished work must be completed with the same field instructor except under extenuating circumstances. The field student has one calendar year from the date the mark of "I" is recorded to complete the course. Students must clear their "I" before proceeding with other practicum courses.

Special Note: In general, students may begin counting their Practicum hours at the start of the semester in concurrence with their selected Practicum site and Agency Field Instructor (AFI). Students **MAY NOT** do practicum hours during Summer Sessions, over Winter Break, or prior to the start of the semester. Students **MUST** be at their practicum site for 15 weeks each semester. If a student has not submitted a Practicum Selection Form to the Field Office and received confirmation that it was received, they are unable to count any practicum hours.

Compensatory Time

The student's schedule should be in accordance with the agency's policy regarding normal working hours. Occasionally, agency programs require some appointments outside of regular hours. This is a professional obligation that should be met by arrangements planned in advance between the student and Agency Field Instructor (AFI) consistent within agency policy and field practicum perimeters. Occasionally, opportunities may arise such as special trainings, conferences or service events. If these are congruent with the services provide by the agency and social work practice, these may be considered for inclusion in practicum hours with the prior approval of the Agency Field Instructor (AFI). Only contact hours (hours actually spent in the training, etc.) may be counted as possible practicum hours, **NOT** travel, meals or other secondary activities. It is advisable to present any unusual practicum activities or commitments to the Field Liaison for feedback and direction. Students are able to identify practicum activities outside of their agency at a maximum of 10% of their total practicum hours each semester.

Field Practicum Days

Field practicum days should not interfere with class schedules. It is the student's responsibility to arrange or negotiate field days/hours that are compatible with her/his school and work schedule. Moreover, if the best learning for a student is facilitated by a flexible scheduling of hours, this may be arranged between the AFI and the student. Students are able to begin their practicum the first week of instruction each semester.

Special Note: Students **MAY NOT** do practicum hours during Summer Sessions, over Winter Break or prior to the start of the semester.

Agency Orientation

Students are required to have an agency orientation that includes dress code, parking, hours of work, overtime expectations, flexibility of hours, times and dates of staff meetings, policies regarding transportation of clients, reimbursement

procedures for expenses, student safety plan, contact information, policies and procedures related to social work activities.

Special Note: Agencies must have a safety plan in place for students in case of emergencies such as fire, police or possible unruly/violent client behavior.

Student Dress Code

Students in placement are expected to dress and conduct themselves appropriately as professionals and within agency guidelines. Jeans, tank tops, tee shirts with slogans, sneakers, and sportswear such as bike pants, shorts and sweatshirts are not generally acceptable attire in a professional setting. Revealing or provocative garments are not acceptable under any circumstances and students should avoid dressing in a way that would be offensive. Students in health care and other settings may be asked to keep their hair above shoulder length, clip their nails short, limit jewelry, or wear protective garments supplied by the agency.

Home Visits

Home visits are a regular part of most placements. Even if they are not, a home visit may be clinically indicated in certain situations. Agencies will be expected to take appropriate measures to ensure the safety of students. At a minimum, the same safeguards provided to staff must be provided to students. However, in students may need additional support and security provisions. The Director of Field Education should be consulted if safety is a concern. Under **NO** circumstances should students transport agency clients in their own personal vehicles or conduct home visits on their own.

Background Checks and Fingerprinting

Some agencies (e.g. hospitals, federal agencies, Clark County, State of Nevada agencies, and etc.) may require students to obtain special background checks that could also include fingerprinting, and/or a medical clearance. It is very important to inquire about these checks and conditions at the time of the interview at the agency. The student is responsible to obtain, provide, and in some cases pay for the information required by the agency. Please initiate the background check as soon as possible, some of the checks can take 4-6 weeks to complete. If a student is held up because of incomplete requirements it may hurt the student's ability to accumulate the required number of practicum hours.

Special Note: Students are responsible for these expenses.

Transportation

It is the student's responsibility to secure transportation to and from the field setting. The University has no funds with which to reimburse students for the use of their private automobiles and for other expenses incurred in the conduct of agency business. Under **NO** circumstances should students transport agency clients in their own personal vehicles.

Liability

The University carries malpractice liability insurance that provides coverage for students during the practicum enrollment period. However, under **NO** circumstances should a field practicum student be left alone and responsible in an office or agency setting. At least one (1) agency staff member must be present and available. Supervising agency field instructors may be subject to vicarious liability for the performance of the student like any other supervisee.

If the student travels for agency purposes in his/her own or agency vehicle pursuant to field course activities, he/she should be quite clear about the coverage by agency insurance and his/her personal liability in case of accident.

Special Note: Under **NO** circumstances should students transport agency clients in their own personal vehicles.

Holidays

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

Absences

The student should be allowed absence from field courses and practicum in cases of personal illness or when illness or death occurs in the immediate family. The student is required to notify the Agency Field Instructor and the Faculty Field Liaison immediately. All practicum hours missed must be made up before a final semester grade will be given. Barring such emergencies, the student is expected to follow the practicum time guidelines as set up between the student and agency field instructor and the tardiness/absentee policies of the agency. Students are

to give early attention to accounting for personal vacations or other planned activities that may interfere with competing practicum course requirements and to make the appropriate accommodations.

NASW Code of Ethics

The Code of Ethics is relevant to all social workers and social work students, regardless of their professional functions, the settings in which they work, or the populations they serve. Students should familiarize themselves with these principles. **In particular, confidentiality should be adhered to in all written assignments and class discussions.** Violation of the Code of Ethics could be grounds for dismissal from the field course. The website is located at http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code.

Administrative Responsibility

Students are expected to understand agency values, policies, and procedures. No activity undertaken by the student should be to the detriment of clients, nor to the agency when it is pursuing its proper functions in the community.

Disability Accommodations

If you have a documented disability that may require assistance, you will need to contact the Disability Resource (DRC) for coordination of your academic accommodations. The DRC is located in the Reynolds Student Services Complex (SSC-A Room 143) and the phone number is 702-895-0866 (TDD 702-895-0652).

Mental Health Supports

At times the ability to balance the demands of a rigorous academic program, other life responsibilities, and internal stressors may become difficult thereby requiring professional intervention. The Student Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) (702-895-3627) is available on campus to help students with concerns before these become more serious problems and to address crises. As a part of being self-aware, it is incumbent upon each social work student to understand his or her personal issues and limitations and to seek assistance through CAPS or other community resources when these have the potential to interfere with appropriate social work practice. Field faculty or their designees who identify or suspect significant mental health issues are encouraged to direct students to appropriate resources.

Petition Requirements

Petition forms are required for the following circumstances:

- Student may petition to change their practicum placement during a semester break (i.e. SW 719 into SW 729). Approval depends on the reasoning for changing practicum sites with a heavy emphasis placed upon student's educational goals. Petitions related to the practicum for the following semester must be submitted by October 1st for Spring Semester and June 1st for Fall Semester.

Agency Orientation

Students are required to have an agency orientation that includes dress code, parking, hours of work, overtime expectations, flexibility of hours, times and dates of staff meetings, policies regarding transportation of clients, reimbursement procedures for expenses, student safety plan, contact information, policies and procedures related to social work activities.

In each instance, the student will have to complete a **Field Practicum Petition Form** and submit to the Directors of Field Education.

The student may be required to submit a petition per the Directors of Field if an unusual or extraordinary situation is requested. In such circumstances, the student must provide written documentation clearly illustrating how the placement request complies with field objectives, policies and guidelines. Such documentation (like the employment site petition) must be submitted with the original signatures of the student, prospective Agency Field Instructor (AFI) and other individuals that may be closely linked to the situation. **All petitions must be approved by the Directors of Field prior to the beginning of the field practicum. Failure to obtain this approval may interfere with the student's ability to successfully complete field requirements.**

Special Note: Field Practicum Petition Forms can be found on the Field Education website. Please note that petitions **are not** always granted, so students should be actively searching for other practicum placements while waiting for decisions to be made about the petition. **Special Note:** The integrity of a student's education if most important. Students are unable to petition to repeat practicums at a previous practicum site and petition to complete their practicum at their place of employment simultaneously.

Previous Experience

The Field Education Program will not, under any circumstances, credit a student for work or volunteer experience acquired prior to enrollment in practicum courses. The rationale for this policy is based on the philosophy that learning is a continuous process. Thus, even an individual with extensive experience in a

particular area can still benefit from the learning opportunities available via monitored, supervised fieldwork.

Counseling Out Policy

In some cases, the student may be advised that participation in field practicum is contradictory to his or her welfare or that of the clients or population they serve. Circumstances or situations that initiate the counseling out process are available through the School of Social Work. As far as the Field Education Program is concerned, any field, other School faculty, or designee (e.g. preceptor, agency field instructor) may recommend the initiation of this policy based on reasonable information that indicates that the student is not able or willing to function in accordance with School or professional standards. The discovery of dishonesty in the educational context (i.e. falsifying case information, copying peer papers, etc.) can result in the initiation of this policy. Outcomes can range from consultation to delay in field practicum, to participation in field practicum under specified conditions, assignment of a failing grade to dismissal from the social work program. Students are advised of each stage in the process according to School policy.

Sexual Harassment

It is the policy of University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) –School of Social Work, that in order to maintain an environment in which the dignity and worth of all students are respected, that harassment of students in their field placements is intolerable and unacceptable. It is seen as a form of behavior that seriously undermines the atmosphere of trust essential to the learning environment. Also, willful false accusations of harassment will not be condoned.

The School of Social Work recognizes that, the harassment policies and procedures adopted by UNLV may not apply to the harassment of a student in the field practicum agency where he/she is not an employee of the agency or where harassment is coming from someone who is not a University instructor. The following guidelines are provided in case there are situations or complaints regarding harassment of students (due to the unavoidable subordinate position students experience in field placement at times). Harassment of students may include harassment from a field instructor, agency employee, community representative, etc.

Harassment may be defined as unwanted sexual advances, or visual, verbal or physical conduct of an inappropriate nature. May involve the behavior of the field instructor or any person employed by the field practicum agency of either gender when such behavior falls within the definition outlined below (the following is a partial list):

- Harassment of a student from UNLV is defined as unwelcome sexual

advances, requests for sexual favors, verbal or other expressive behaviors, or physical conduct commonly understood to be of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's continued placement;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for decisions or assessments affecting the individual's welfare as a student placed in the agency:

- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with an individual's welfare, academic, or professional performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, offensive, and demeaning internship/educational environment.
- Consensual relationships are deemed unwise and seen as professionally inappropriate when they occur between members of the teaching staff or other agency staff (specifically, in field for this policy) and students. A professional power differential exists in these situations in terms of the influence and authority which the one can exercise over the other. Also this type of relationship begins to professionally and ethically concern the NASW Code of Ethics.

- Harassment of any practicum student from the School shall not be tolerated from a field instructor, employee, or representative of the field practicum agency. To best ensure that students are placed in an agency environment free from sexual harassment, the following needs to occur:
  - Any field practicum setting approved for use as a field placement shall provide the student with a copy of its own "harassment policy" utilized within the agency setting. Agency policies and procedures shall bereviewed in complete detail with the student. Students should be clear on who to inform and who are the designated persons to share the matter with. UNLV, and the Field Education Faculty, may also request a copy of this policy at any given time. If the agency has **no** such policy, the School of Social Work **strongly urges** that one be developed.
  - Each field practicum agency is responsible for orienting students to the harassment policies and procedures in that particular setting. This orientation should include, but not be limited to:
    - Discussion of harassment within the agency setting, including professional and non-professional staff, field instructors, etc.;
      - discussion of harassment issues with clients; and
      - harassment from fellow colleagues.
    - If a student believes that he/she has been the subject of harassment in the field practicum setting, the student will notify the following personnel concerning the field: the field instructor; the field faculty; and/or the Director of Field Education or Assistant Director of Field Education.
      - Any student who believes that she/he has encountered harassment is encouraged to discuss the concern with any one of the following persons at the University with whom

she/he feels comfortable: Field Education Faculty mentioned above, the Advisor, Department Director, Dean of the College, Equal Opportunity Counselors, University Personnel Services, etc.

- If the field practicum setting has a specifically designated individual or office to deal with these matters, that person or office should also be notified by the student. The student is strongly encouraged to notify agency personnel.
- The School faculty member receiving the report shall immediately notify the School Director, Director of Field Education, field faculty, designated Personnel Services officer, etc. and follow procedures in accordance with the University policies. See UNLV Sexual Harassment Policy at http://hr.unlv.edu/policies/harassment
- Based on the exploration or investigation of this matter, the School shall ensure the student is safe and free from harassment.

The following procedures shall be followed in the event that charges of sexual harassment are raised while a student is in field.

- Complaint:
  - Made directly to Coordinator of Field Education, or
  - Made to School of Social Work Director, or
  - Made to any administrator designated to receive complaints i.e. the Affirmative Action Program Officer, the Human Resources Officer or any other officer designated by the President.

- Investigation Process:
  - Interview with the complainant
  - The procedure will be explained
  - Complainant provides alleged charges in writing
  - An interview will be conducted with the alleged perpetrator
  - Interview all involved parties; e.g., field liaison, field instructor, other practicum students, and client

- Types of Action which may be taken:
  - No foundation to the complaint found; no record of alleged charges maintained
  - Some foundation of sexual harassment found but unable to substantiate
  - Warning letter sent to the alleged perpetrator

- Copy of letter placed in student or agency file
- Solid foundation for the charge
- If charge is against agency personnel:
- Reassignment of student to different field instructor or different agency with no penalty to student.
- Discontinuation of use of agency unless corrective action is taken by immediate supervisor of accused.
    - If charge is against student:
- Complaint is referred to the Office of Student Conduct for investigation and possible action

Students following these procedures are in no way inhibited from pursuing other options. No student will be subject to restraint, interference, or reprisal for seeking information about harassment or filing a harassment complaint, etc.

Paid Practicums

Practicum activities and student roles are separate and distinct from "employment." Very few agencies offer a "stipend," which consists of limited funds given to students as compensation for time spent in their practicum. However, stipends are offered solely at the agency's discretion. Students who receive stipends are situated the same as students who do not receive stipends, and are not to be treated as employees by the agency.