

**ST. CATHERINE UNIVERSITY AND UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK  
MSW PROGRAM**

**FOUNDATION FIELD SYLLABUS**

**I. COURSE TITLE:**           **GRSW 505: Field Practicum and Seminar I**  
   **GRSW 506: Field Practicum and Seminar II**  
  Fall, 2009 and Spring, 2010

**COURSE VALUE:**           GRSW 505 - 3 Semester Credits  
   GRSW 506 - 3 Semester Credits

**INSTRUCTOR:**           Lynn Ericson Starr, MSW, LICSW  
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   [www.stthomas.edu/socialwork/fieldprograms/  
gradfieldwork/default.html](http://www.stthomas.edu/socialwork/fieldprograms/gradfieldwork/default.html)

Field Instructors: Agency-based social work supervisor

**II. REQUIRED COURSE TEXTS:**

MSW Field Education Manual, 2009 - 2011

Two books or equivalent articles as assigned by agency field instructor and faculty field liaison. At least one book or equivalent articles must include reports of current research.

**III. COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

The field practicum is an educationally directed on-site experience under the supervision of an agency based social work field instructor and a campus based

faculty liaison. Students complete a total of 400 hours during the first practicum. On-campus seminars (I and II) taken concurrently with the practicum assist the student in the integration and application of practice theory to their placement learning activities. The first practicum is taken concurrently with GRSW 501 and GRSW 502: Theory and Practice of Social Work I and II.

#### **IV. COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

The purpose of the foundation MSW field practicum is to provide a practical field experience in a social work agency, institution and/or department. This experience is intended to complement the student's academic work by allowing the opportunity to apply generalist knowledge and theory to actual social work situations. The social work student will be expected to perform social work responsibilities under supervision of the field instructor. A central feature to the overall process is the sharing of experiences with other students in fieldwork seminars held on campus.

The fieldwork and seminar components will enable and support each student to:

- Understand structure and functions of agencies and communities and social work's role in them
- Understand social work ethics and values and develop professional identity
- Develop self-awareness and communication skills to guide professional practice
- Practice generalist social work skills
- Utilize supervision and evaluate practice

##### **A. Knowledge of the following:**

1. The structure and function of resource and delivery systems within the field agency and the community.
2. The field agency in terms of its history, philosophy, programs, client population, funding and organizational structure.
3. The field agency's organizational dynamics.
4. The role of social work in the agency and its function in interdisciplinary teams.
5. The social worker's role in terms of professional ethics, supervision, confidentiality and accountability to client systems.
6. Strategies of change that advance social and economic justice for at-risk populations.

7. The dynamics of risk factors as they affect individuals, families, and communities.
8. Issues of client systems that differ in social, cultural, racial, religious, spiritual and class backgrounds, gender, sexual orientation, ability and age.
9. One's own values and how they influence social work practice.
10. Individual issues that may affect practice and how to manage them through self awareness & supervision
11. One's personal styles and how they affect communication, learning and interpersonal relationships
12. The generalist method of social work practice from assessment through evaluation and termination as applied to systems of all sizes.
13. Interviewing techniques with individuals, small groups, families, organizations and communities.
14. Role and dynamics of supervision.

**B. Skills in the following:**

1. Applying agency policies and procedures for effective client service.
2. Clarifying and assessing one's own generalist practice in relation to the professional standards.
2. Applying social work ethics to generalist practice.
3. Assessing the effectiveness of helping systems and where there are gaps, promoting and creating effective, just and responsive service and resource systems.
4. Identifying and analyzing areas of unmet needs and policy issues.
5. Working with clients and colleagues towards social change efforts to advance social and economic justice.
6. Utilizing self through understanding one's values, how they may help or interfere in social work practice.
7. Monitoring impact of personal styles on others

8. Developing an identity as a generalist social work practitioner
9. Relating to client populations, colleagues and supervisors with effective communication and interpersonal skills.
10. Integrating and applying knowledge and theory acquired in academic courses to actual generalist social work situations through critical thinking.
11. Operationalizing the general method of social work practice from assessment through termination involving client groups at every stage.
12. Developing generalist practice competencies with client systems that differ in social, cultural, racial, religious, spiritual and class backgrounds, gender, sexual orientation, ability and age.
13. Recognizing and building on the strengths of client systems throughout the life span and in the context of intergenerational relationships.
14. Using social service networks to link resources with assessed human needs, making referrals, and recording results.
15. Intervening in multiple-sized systems.
16. Building an effective supervisory relationship.
17. Setting goals and strategies and monitoring progress toward those goals in a timely fashion.
18. Soliciting and utilizing feedback from multiple sources to improve practice.
19. Providing clear and concise written documentation.
20. Engaging in evaluation of her/his own practice outcomes.

**V. CONTENT OUTLINE:**

A. Knowledge of Social Work Agencies

1. History
2. Philosophy
3. Programs
4. Client populations
5. Funding
6. Organizational structure

7. Policies and Procedures
8. Role of social worker with clients and teams
9. Role in community

B. Social Work Ethics

1. Professional ethics and standards
2. Confidentiality
3. Accountability
4. Interaction with agency and staff
5. Accountability to client systems
6. Dynamics of populations-at-risk
7. Issues of diversity
8. Identifying unmet needs and policy issues
9. Advancing social and economic justice

C. Self Awareness

1. Understanding personal values, issues, history
2. Understanding learning, communication and personality styles
3. Learning effects of and managing personal values, issues, history, styles
4. Social work identity
5. Applying effective communication and interpersonal skills
  - a. Individuals
  - b. Groups
  - c. Families
  - d. Organizations, communities and institutions

D. Applying Generalist Practice Methods

1. Interviewing Techniques
2. Applying theories and knowledge
3. The General Method of social work practice at all levels
  - a. Engagement
  - b. Data collection
  - c. Assessment and planning
  - e. Intervention strategies
  - f. Evaluation and termination
4. Applying non-discriminatory and respectful skills with diverse populations
5. Building on strengths through the life span and generations
6. Social service networks and referrals
7. Multiple-sized systems

E. Supervision and Evaluating one's work

1. Field education contract: goals, strategies, monitoring
2. Supervisory relationships: role and dynamics
3. Feedback
4. Written documentation
5. Evaluating practice

## **VI. COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

A. To satisfy GRSW505 course requirements, each student must complete the following by the date indicated on the fieldwork seminar and/or field placement calendars.

1. Officially placed in a practicum site
2. Field Education contract and conference
3. Attendance and participation in Fieldwork Seminar and completion of seminar assignments
4. 150 hours completed and reported on the Statistical Report Form
5. First Semester Evaluation of Student and First Semester Student Evaluation of Practicum
6. Satisfactory performance of activities/responsibilities/assignments at agency
7. Readings as assigned

B. To satisfy course requirements for GRSW506, each student must complete the following by the date indicated in the fieldwork seminar and/or field placement calendars.

1. Minimum of 400 hours completed and reported on Statistical Report Form (150 of which is from first semester).
2. Attendance and participation in fieldwork seminar
3. Client presentation and process recording
4. Field instructor final evaluation form and conference
5. Student evaluation of self and placement
6. Satisfactory performance of activities/responsibilities/assignments at agency
7. Readings as assigned

## **VII. COURSE POLICIES**

A. Attendance:

Attendance and participation in field seminar is required. Students who are absent from seminar are required to complete an additional assignment. Lateness may be counted as partial absences. Students with more than one absence may be dropped from the course.

## B. Grading & Evaluation

Field Practicum and Seminar is graded on a Pass/No Credit basis. This grade is assigned by the field faculty liaison based on verbal and written feedback of performance in field from field instructor and student, and on performance in seminar groups and on seminar assignments. Students must turn in end of the semester paperwork (evaluations and statistical reports), **completed and with signatures**, to receive their final grades.

1. A contracting conference is scheduled at the agency just following agency orientation and includes the student, the field instructor(s), and the field faculty liaison. The contract form (faxed to the field faculty liaison in advance) is reviewed, discussed, and revised, enabling all parties to clearly articulate the learning objectives, the strategies for meeting them, and the means by which they will be assessed.
2. Ongoing evaluation should take place during regularly scheduled supervision sessions between the student and the field instructor.
3. A first semester evaluation is completed at the completion of 1<sup>st</sup> semester hours (Form is available online at UST). Additional three-way conferences (including the field faculty liaison) may be scheduled as needed.
4. Final evaluation forms are completed by the student and the field instructor jointly and are then submitted to the field faculty liaison prior to a final conference held at the agency. This meeting's purpose is to review the student's progress and growth opportunities, as well as to provide feedback to the agency and to the school to improve field supervision and education.

## C. Accommodations:

Classroom accommodations will be provided for qualified students with documented disabilities. Students are required to contact the Enhancement Program at the University of St. Thomas and Resources for Disabilities at St. Catherine University about accommodations for their courses within the first two weeks of the term. Appointments can be made at the Enhancement Program by calling 651-962-6315 or the Resources for Disabilities office at 651-690-6563. For further information you can locate the Enhancement Program on the web at <http://www.stthomas.edu/enhancementprog/> <<http://www.stthomas.edu/enhancementprog/>> Resources for Disabilities at <http://minerva.stkate.edu/offices/academic/oneill.nsf> <<http://minerva.stkate.edu/offices/academic/oneill.nsf>> .

D. Pandemic Policy:

The School of Social Work is committed to a healthy campus community. During the 2009-2010 academic year, there will be ongoing concerns regarding the prevalence among university faculty, staff and students of both the H1N1 virus and seasonal influenza. To help limit the spread of these illnesses, the Center for Disease Control has provided college campuses the following recommendation: students, faculty, or staff with influenza like illnesses (temperature of 100.0 or greater, plus a cough or sore throat) are directed to self-isolate (or stay home) for at least 24 hours after their fever is gone without the use of fever-reducing medicine. In the event that MSW students are unable to attend classes due to this self-isolation recommendation, they should consult the university's pandemic web site <http://www.stthomas.edu/pandemic/plan/default.html> and complete an on-line form informing professors of their absence. In accordance, faculty will provide opportunities for these students to participate in alternative educational delivery due to this illness.

E. Informed Consent Policy:

Students should familiarize themselves with the Informed Consent Policy, located in the MSW Field Education Manual.

## VIII. SEMINAR ASSIGNMENTS

**Seminar Format and Expectations:** Students will take an active role in shaping the seminar. Full participation in this class is also necessary for the benefit of yourself and your group members. Many social work agencies make use of a team model of interaction to support workers as a consultative and educational tool. Professional standards of respect and appropriate interaction are expected of all seminar members. Providing attentive support and feedback to others are also standards of professional behavior and desirable for an effective and enriching seminar.

Students should familiarize themselves with the *Responsibilities* outlined in the MSW Field Education Manual.

## **Fall Semester:**

### ***Initial self-assessment:***

In 2-3 pages, reflect on and respond to the following:

- Your strengths and challenges as you begin your placement, in terms of:
  - self-awareness, openness to feedback, and verbal and written communication skills,
- Comfort and confidence with social work direct practice.
- Your strengths and challenges as a group member that you bring to seminar group.
- What do you anticipate to be your greatest challenge and your greatest asset at your placement site?
- What are your goals for the year?

Be prepared to discuss what is comfortable in seminar.

### ***Education Contract:***

This document is completed with consultation from your field instructor. Specific instructions will be discussed in class and are outlined in the field manual.

### ***Agency presentation:***

Using the bullet points below, prepare to present your agency to the class. Bring agency brochures (if possible), and provide a 1 page summary of your agency to be distributed to the class.

- Name of agency
- Brief history of agency
- Services offered, how do clients access agency services
- Agency mission and program/department goals.
- Agency funding sources
- Agency structure (Place of social work in agency structure)
- Role of social worker
- Community served, include services to diverse and at-risk populations

### ***Supervisory Relationship Analysis:***

Read assigned reading then in a 2-3 page paper, analyze your relationship with your supervisor in terms of:

- Your similarities and differences in:
  - Styles of support and learning;
  - View of your level of independence/readiness;
- Also reflect on and discuss:
  - Your use of supervision
  - The balance of task and process in supervisory sessions.
  - The level of trust developing and its impact on supervision.

***Exploring diversity:*** Students will be asked to examine their own diversity, that of their clients and the impact of culture and belief systems on professional practice. Detailed assignment will be handed out in seminar.

### **Spring Semester:**

***Agency Analysis:*** In order to assess your understanding of your agency's policies and their impact on clients, please discuss the following questions with your field instructor and come to class prepared to discuss in class.

- How are policies and programs evaluated? How have they changed over time?
- How effective is this agency in responding to pertinent issues of social & economic injustice and meeting needs of at-risk populations?
- How effective is this agency in meeting the needs of diverse populations?
- How well do you see generalist practice principles in place?

***Client Presentation and Paper:*** (3-4 pages) Choose a client (or family, group or project) and in your paper and your presentation include: 1). relevant introductory information (do not use actual names or other identifying information) 2). assessment of client's strengths, risk factors, and goals; 3) impact on client of agency procedures, policies, services; 4) analysis of developing professional relationship between client and student, including issues of diversity in terms of class, race, gender, age, etc; 5) identify and discuss the use of theories and methods in the work with this client 6) Present the class a question for consultation.

***Social Work for Social for Justice Assignment:*** To be decided

***Final Self Assessment:*** In 2-3 pages, discuss what you have learned about yourself during this placement: How do you evaluate your strengths and challenges differently than at the beginning? How would you describe your current understanding of yourself as a social worker (your role, purpose, style)? What do you need to do to take the next step in your professional development?

## IX. COURSE CALENDARS

### FALL SEMESTER

FIELDWORK SEMINAR (Date)	TOPIC/ACTIVITY	READING / ASSIGNMENT
Class 1: September 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course overview</li> <li>• Review Syllabus, assignments and Field Education Manual</li> <li>• Agency Orientation, Agency Safety</li> <li>• Discuss Field Education Contract and visit</li> <li>• Scheduling Conferences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Field Manual</li> <li>• Review Syllabus</li> <li>• Completed and signed <u>Learning Agreement</u> if already started in agency</li> <li>• <u>Read article: Making the most of Field Seminar, The New Social Worker, Fall 2007.</u> (link for article provided in email sent with syllabus, also in course Bb)</li> <li>• <u>Initial self assessment</u></li> </ul>
Class 2: October 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check-ins</li> <li>• Agency presentations</li> <li>• Education contracts and conferences</li> <li>• Learning styles</li> <li>• Discussion of article</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Agency Presentation and one page summary</u></li> <li>• Draft Copy of Education Contract with Self Addressed stamped envelope</li> <li>• Read: <i>Shaping Your Professional Self in the Practicum</i>, The New Social Worker , Summer 2004. <u>Be prepared to discuss in class</u></li> </ul>

<p>Class 3: November 6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check-ins</li> <li>• Agency Presentations</li> <li>• Dynamics of supervision and feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Agency Presentations</u></li> <li>• <u>Supervisory analysis paper</u></li> <li>• <u>Read:</u> Building Skills in Supervision and Feedback. In C. a. Hanley, <i>Learning Through Field</i> (p. Chapter 5).</li> </ul>
<p>Class 4: December 4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check-ins</li> <li>• Discuss and sign up for Case Presentations</li> <li>• Diversity and self awareness</li> <li>• Discuss evaluation forms and process</li> <li>• Evaluating practice and professional accountability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Read assigned reading</u> (to be distributed in class)</li> <li>• <u>Diversity Assignment</u></li> <li>• <u>Final signed copy of Education Contract</u></li> </ul>

\*Spring course calendar will be handed out in November.

## X. BIBLIOGRAPHY

The bibliography is located in the MSW Field Education Manual and online at the School of Social Work website:

<http://www.stthomas.edu/socialwork/graduate/curriculum/default.html>