

**UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL POLICY & PRACTICE  
M.S.W. PROGRAM**

**SWRK 604 - Foundations of Social Work Practice & Field Practice  
Fall 2021**

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**Course Purpose**

This course is the first of two in the foundation practice sequence, which is designed to provide first-year M.S.W. students with foundational knowledge, values, and skills in social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. In the first semester, the emphasis is on the development of foundational practice knowledge and competence for work with individuals, and, in the second semester, the emphasis is on the development of foundational practice knowledge and competence for work with families, groups, organizations, and communities. Attention to the needs of vulnerable populations and to the implications of race, ethnicity, culture, gender, socioeconomic resources, age, sexual orientation, religion, and physical ability in effective social work practice are integral parts of both semesters. The student's field experience is integrated with classroom content throughout both courses.

This course builds on critical thinking skills and knowledge of psychological, social, economic, cultural and biological considerations informed by a liberal arts perspective. It provides a base for practical application of theories of human behavior presented in SWRK 602 (Human Behavior in the Social Environment). The student is provided with an understanding of practice which incorporates awareness of the impacts of structural oppression, as presented in SWRK 603 (American Racism and Social Work Practice), and, as presented in SWRK 601 (History and Philosophy of Social Work and Social Welfare), ways social policies affect and are influenced by clients, agencies, and communities. In preparation for the second-year advanced practice courses (SWRK 704-714 and SWRK 708-718), students are introduced to concepts derived from core approaches and perspectives in social work practice, including the functional approach, the strengths perspective, empowerment practice, and the ecological systems perspective. Students will be oriented to evidence-based practice and will learn to draw upon the best available evidence, clients' preferences, practice competence, and critical thinking to guide their practice.

**Educational Objectives**

Initially, students are introduced to the "Penn Approach" and the values, concepts and principles that are integral to the practice of social work. Following this introduction, the social and agency context of social work practice is explored, along with an introduction to phases of the helping process and the skills needed for effective practice. Students gain understanding of and skills in engagement, assessment, contracting, planning, intervention, evaluation, and termination in social work practice with individuals in diverse service contexts. Throughout this course, emphasis is placed on the practice and application of skills through the use of role-plays and other interactive exercises.

Upon completion of this course, students will demonstrate at a foundational level:

1. An understanding of social work practice, its value base, professional ethics, major conceptual frameworks, use of evidence-based practice, and broad domains of intervention, particularly in relation to vulnerable populations;
2. Knowledge of the history of the social work profession and the role of social workers as agents of social change;
3. An understanding of the history, purpose and function of the field practice agency and the roles of agency context in service provision and client experiences in the setting;
4. An understanding of and respect for differences among individuals related to age, race, ethnicity, culture, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical ability, and socioeconomic resources, and an ability to incorporate this understanding and respect into effective social work practice;
5. Knowledge and skills to engage in ethical social work practice;
6. Knowledge and skills in interpersonal relationship building and interviewing necessary for beginning social work practice, with attention to professional use of self in the helping relationship;
7. Knowledge and skills in engagement, assessment, and problem-solving with individuals;
8. Knowledge and skills in the evaluation of one's practice and goal attainment with clients; and
9. Critical thinking skills that enhance understanding of people in their environments and strengthen the capacity to engage in effective practice.

### **The Council on Social Work Education 2015 EPAS Competencies**

The School of Social Policy & Practice's M.S.W. Program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). The curriculum implements the nine required social work competencies in the CSWE 2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (<https://cswe.org/Accreditation/Standards-and-Policies/2015-EPAS>, pages 7-9). This two-semester sequence (SWRK 604 and 614) prepares students to develop the following competencies:

- Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior;
- Engage diversity and difference in practice;
- Advance human rights and social, economic and environmental justice;
- Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice;
- Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities;
- Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities;
- Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities; and
- Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

### **Foundation Practice Sequence Statement on Social Justice**

Consistent with the mission of SP2 and the social work profession, we are committed to the pursuit of social justice, including addressing structural oppression and inequality based on race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic resources, age, physical ability, and intersecting social identities. We are committed to facilitating learning, conversation, and capacity to pursue social justice. We recognize that these processes

involve many different kinds of engagement, some of which may be challenging in individual and collective ways. We are committed to pursuing these process with you in moments where social change is realized in powerful ways and in moments where the process of social change is challenging. Please be in conversation with us as we pursue this commitment.

## **Course Requirements and Expectations**

### Expectations

Classroom learning is a fundamental component of your professional education. Students are expected to attend each class, arrive to class on time, and be in attendance of the full class. In the event that you are unable to attend class for any reason, you are asked to notify your instructor in advance. Excessive absenteeism (i.e., missing more than two classes) and lateness (i.e., being late more than 3 times) are considered serious problems that instructors will address by meeting with the student and determining whether the student's academic advisor should be notified and how the student's grade will be affected. Excessive absenteeism could result in course failure.

Students are expected to: (a) participate substantively in class discussions; (b) read on a weekly basis and come to class prepared to discuss the reading assignments; (c) demonstrate professional behavior; and (d) submit written assignments by the due date and in accordance with the specified format. Some instructors may include written or verbal reading reflection assignments as part of the class participation grade.

### Grading Policies

Grades will be based on:

- Class Attendance, Participation & Preparedness: 20%;
- Agency Context and Social Justice Paper: 25%;
- Process Recording: 20%; and
- Assessment, Goal Setting and Intervention Paper: 35%.

Instructors may make minor modifications in the weighting of the assignments (within 5%).

This course actively integrates your field placement experiences, and your professional social work behavior is considered in your grade for this course. Final grades in this course take into account activities and evaluations in both class and field placement. A passing grade in field placement is required to pass this course. The absence of a passing grade in field placement (based on the final field placement evaluation for the term, being asked to leave the agency, or leaving the agency without due process) will yield a reduction of 50 points in the final course grade and a final course grade of F, regardless of any other grades for assignments or class participation. A marginal passing grade in field placement is a serious concern that, in general, will result in a 1/3 reduction in the final grade in this course (e.g., a B+ would become a B); however, the reduction may be greater at the discretion of the instructor. It will also involve follow-up discussion with you, your field instructor, and your practice instructor/field liaison. A final grade of D+ or below is insufficient to pass this course and will yield a final course grade of F. Please refer to the M.S.W. Student Handbook for the School's grading policy. Students whose grade in this course is minimal or failing at midterm will be notified in writing.

**Grades:** Given the total possible points for the assignments and class participation, course grades will follow this scale:

97-100	A+
94-96	A
90-93	A-

87-89	B+
84-86	B
80-83	B-
77-79	C+
74-76	C
70-73	C-
60-69	F
59 and below	F

### Academic Integrity

Students are expected to adhere to the University's Code of Academic Integrity. Care should be taken to avoid academic integrity violations, including plagiarism, fabrication of information, and multiple submissions (see descriptions below).\*\* Students who engage in any of these actions will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct, which investigates and decides on sanctions in cases of academic dishonesty.

1. Plagiarism: using the ideas, data, or language of another without specific or proper acknowledgment. Example: copying, in part or in its entirety, another person's paper, article, or web-based material and submitting it for an assignment; using someone else's ideas without attribution; not using quotation marks where appropriate, etc.
2. Fabrication: submitting contrived or altered information in any academic exercise. Example: making up data or statistics, citing nonexistent articles, contriving sources, etc.
3. Multiple submissions: submitting, without prior permission, any work submitted to fulfill another academic requirement.

\*\*It is students' responsibility to consult the instructor if they are unsure about whether something constitutes a violation of the Code of Academic Integrity.

### Written Assignments

Students will be responsible for one ungraded and three graded written assignments during the semester. Specific information regarding each assignment is provided at the end of this syllabus. Instructors may modify due dates as needed.

<b>Week 4:</b>	Learning Contract Due (ungraded, but must be submitted to receive field practicum credit)
<b>Week 5:</b>	Agency Context and Social Justice Paper Due
<b>Week 9:</b>	Process Recording Due
<b>Week 13:</b>	Assessment, Goal Setting and Intervention Paper Due

### Format for Written Assignments

- All papers must be typewritten in 12-point font, double-spaced, and page-numbered with 1" margins on all sides. The first page should include the title of the paper, the student's name, course number, instructor's name, and the date. Papers need to be submitted electronically. Client-focused papers should be submitted using **Penn+Box**. A folder will be created on Penn+Box for you and all papers should be submitted by uploading to that folder. Client-related papers should not be sent by email or Canvas.

- Any information that is related to clients should be presented in ways that preserve confidentiality (e.g., names and identifying information should not be included); this expectation also applies to information shared in class. Please consult your practice instructor, field instructor, and/or field liaison if you have questions regarding confidentiality expectations.
- All ideas of others must be properly cited with the specific source, including authors' last names and year of publication. Please use in-text citations following APA style guidelines. Direct quotes must have the specific source and page number(s). Quotations longer than four typewritten lines must be single-spaced and indented. A list of cited references should be included at the end of each paper, using APA format.
- Please proofread all papers carefully for spelling, punctuation, and other similar errors.
- Papers written for other classes may not be submitted for written assignments in this course. Direct substitution of papers between courses may result in a failing grade for that assignment.
- Please keep a copy of each paper submitted.
- The instructor will gladly answer any questions regarding format.

### Readings

It is expected that students will read and think analytically about the required readings for the class, as well as other materials of their own choosing. The readings for this course are reviewed each year and updated to reflect emerging practice issues and research.

### Field Visit

During the first semester, each student's practice instructor or field liaison will make a visit to the field placement. The course instructor or field liaison will take responsibility for scheduling the meeting with the student and the field instructor. The purpose of the visit is to review the student's learning objectives in light of opportunities at the field placement and to address ways to support the student in having an optimal learning experience. The learning contract will provide the basis for this review.

### **Required Reading**

Hepworth, D. H., Rooney, R. H., Rooney, G. D., & Strom-Gottfried, K. (2017). *Direct social work practice: Theory and skills* (10<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.

This book can be purchased at the Penn Bookstore or purchased/rented online. It can also be borrowed from the Reserve Desk at the Van Pelt-Dietrich Library.

Additional required readings for each week can be obtained online via Canvas.

### Recommended Text

American Psychological Association (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

**SWRK 604: Fall 2021  
Class Schedule and Readings**

**Individual instructors may include supplemental readings and may extend required readings across weeks to accommodate discussion.**

**Week 1 (August 31<sup>st</sup>): Course and Year Introduction; Defining Social Work**

The Penn Approach. (n.d.). Available from <https://www.sp2.upenn.edu/degree-programs/master-of-social-work/overview/the-penn-approach/>.

Hepworth, D. H., Rooney, R. H., Rooney, G. D., & Strom-Gottfried, K. (2017). *Direct social work practice: Theory and skills* (10<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.  
Chapter 1, “The Challenges and Opportunities of Social Work,” pp. 2-22.

University of Pennsylvania School of Social Policy & Practice Field Education Manual. Available from: <https://www.sp2.upenn.edu/degree-programs/master-of-social-work/field-education/field-education-manual/>.

Websites to review:

Council on Social Work Education. (2015). Purpose: Social work practice, education, and educational policy and accreditation standards. Pages 5-9. Available from <https://www.cswe.org/getattachment/Accreditation/Standards-and-Policies/2015-EPAS/2015EPASandGlossary.pdf.aspx>.

Global Definition of Social Work. (n.d.). Available from <https://www.ifsw.org/what-is-social-work/global-definition-of-social-work/>.

National Association of Black Social Workers. (n.d.). Available from <https://www.nabsw.org/>.

Social Welfare Action Alliance. (2016). Available from <https://www.socialwelfareactionalliance.org/about/>.

**Week 2 (September 7<sup>th</sup>): The Professional Context of Practice—Social Work Values and Ethics**

Berlin, S. (2005). The value of acceptance in social work direct practice: A historical and contemporary view. *Social Service Review*, 29, 482-510.

National Association of Social Workers. (2021). Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers. Available from <https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>.

Reamer, F. G. (2015). Clinical social work in a digital environment: Ethical and risk-management challenges. *Clinical Social Work Journal*, 43(2), 120-132.

Reamer, F. G. (2020). Tele-social work in a COVID-19 world: An ethics primer. Available at [https://www.socialworktoday.com/news/eoe\\_0420.shtml](https://www.socialworktoday.com/news/eoe_0420.shtml).

**Week 3 (September 14<sup>th</sup>): Beginnings in Practice and Agencies—Organizations, Self-Care, and Essential Assessment Skills**

Bloom, S. L. (2017). The Sanctuary Model: Through the lens of moral safety. In S. N. Gold (Ed.), *APA handbook of trauma psychology: Trauma practice* (pp. 499-513). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Butler, L. D., & McClain-Meeder, K. (2015). Self-Care Starter Kit. Available from: <http://www.socialwork.buffalo.edu/students/self-care/index.asp>.

NIMH toolkit. (n.d.). Brief suicide safety assessment. Available from [https://www.nimh.nih.gov/research/research-conducted-at-nimh/asq-toolkit-materials/outpatient/pdfs/bssa\\_155415.pdf](https://www.nimh.nih.gov/research/research-conducted-at-nimh/asq-toolkit-materials/outpatient/pdfs/bssa_155415.pdf).

SAMHSA. (2009). Suicide assessment five-step evaluation and triage. Available from <https://store.samhsa.gov/system/files/sma09-4432.pdf>.

Sprang, G., Lei, F., & Bush, H. (2021). Can organizational efforts lead to less secondary traumatic stress? A longitudinal investigation of change. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*. Advance online publication. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/ort0000546>.

**Week 4 (September 21<sup>st</sup>): Frameworks for Social Work Practice and Engagement**

Skills Lab: Engagement

**Learning Contract is due.**

Hepworth, D. H., Rooney, R. H., Rooney, G. D., & Strom-Gottfried, K. (2017). *Direct social work practice: Theory and skills* (10<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.  
Chapter 3, “Overview of the Helping Process,” pp. 35-56.

Dominelli, L. (2002). *Anti-oppressive social work theory and practice*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.  
Chapter 2, “Introducing Anti-Oppressive Theories for Practice,” pp. 7-36.

Kolivoski, K. M., Weaver, A., & Constance-Huggins, M. (2014). Critical race theory: Opportunities for application in social work practice and policy. *Families in Society*, 95(4), 269–276.

**Week 5 (September 28<sup>th</sup>): Cultural Awareness and Humility in Practice**

**Agency Context and Social Justice Paper is due.**

Ayón, C., & Philbin, S. P. (2017). “Tú No Eres de Aquí:” Latino children's experiences of institutional and interpersonal discrimination and microaggressions. *Social Work Research*, 41(1), 19–30.

Danso, R. (2018). Cultural competence and cultural humility: A critical reflection on key cultural diversity concepts. *Journal of Social Work*, 18(4), 410–430.

Meyer, D. (2012). An intersectional analysis of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people's evaluations of anti-queer violence. *Gender and Society*, 26(6), 849-873.

Sue, D. W., Capadilupo, C. M., Torino, G. C., Bucceri, J. M., Holder, A. M. B., Nadal, K. L., & Esquilin, M. (2007). Racial microaggressions in everyday life: Implications for clinical practice. *American Psychologist*, 62(4), 271-286.

**Week 6 (October 5<sup>th</sup>): The Professional Context of Practice—Critical Thinking, Evidence-Based Practice, and Listening and Communication Skills**

Skills Lab: Listening and Communication Skills

Corcoran, J. (2012). *Helping skills for social work direct practice*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. Chapter 3, "Exploring the Problem with Open-Ended Questions," pp. 49-59. Chapter 4, "Exploring the Problem with Reflecting Statements," pp. 61-78.

Cournoyer, B. R. (2014). *The social work skills workbook* (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole. "Listening," pages 208-211; exercise will be done in class.

Gambrill, E. (2013). *Social work practice: A critical thinker's guide* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press. Chapter 5, "Critical Thinking: Integral to Evidence-Based Practice," pp. 94-114.

**Week 7 (October 12<sup>th</sup>): Assessment**

Grady, M., & Drisko, J. (2014). Thorough clinical assessment: The hidden foundation of evidence-based practice. *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Social Services*, 95, 5-14.

El-Lahib, Y. (2017). Theoretical dimensions for interrogating the intersection of disability, immigration and social work. *International Social Work*, 60(3), 640–653.

Hepworth, D. H., Rooney, R. H., Rooney, G. D., & Strom-Gottfried, K. (2017). *Direct social work practice: Theory and skills* (10<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning. Chapter 8, "Assessment: Exploring and Understanding Problems and Strengths," pp. 187-215.

Perone, A. K. (2014). The social construction of mental illness for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons in the United States. *Qualitative Social Work*, 13(6), 766-771.

**Week 8 (October 19<sup>th</sup>): Assessment**

Skills Lab: Assessment

Corcoran, J. (2012). *Helping skills for social work direct practice*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. Chapter 6, "Exploring the Solution," pp. 90-117.

Hepworth, D. H., Rooney, R. H., Rooney, G. D., & Strom-Gottfried, K. (2017). *Direct social work practice: Theory and skills* (10<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning. Chapter 9, "Assessment: Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, and Environmental Factors," pp. 216-250.



Kant, J. (2015). Towards a socially just social work practice: The liberation health model, *Critical and Radical Social Work*, 3(2), 309-319.

### **Week 9 (October 26<sup>th</sup>):      Motivational Interviewing**

#### **Process Recording is due.**

Miller, W. R., & Rollnick, S. (2013). *Motivational interviewing: Helping people change* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Chapter 1, "Conversations about Change," pp. 3-13.

Chapter 2, "The Spirit of Motivational Interviewing," pp. 14-24.

Chapter 3, "The Method of Motivational Interviewing," pp. 25-36.

Moyers, T. B., & Miller, W. R. (2013). Is low therapist empathy toxic? *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors*, 27(3), 878-884.

### **Week 10 (November 2<sup>nd</sup>):      Goal Setting, Contracting and Evaluating Progress toward Goals**

Skills Lab:      Goal Setting and Contracting

Cairns, A. J., Kavanagh, D. J., Dark, F., & McPhail, S. M. (2019). Goal setting improves retention in youth mental health: A cross-sectional analysis. *Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Mental Health*, 13, 31.

Hepworth, D. H., Rooney, R. H., Rooney, G. D., & Strom-Gottfried, K. (2017). *Direct social work practice: Theory and skills* (10<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.

Chapter 12, "Developing Goals and Formulating a Contract," pp. 312-362.

### **Week 11 (November 9<sup>th</sup>):      Intervention**

Skills Lab:      Intervention

Castro, F. G., & Yasui, M. (2017). Advances in EBI development for diverse populations: Towards a science of intervention adaptation. *Prevention Science*, 18(6), 623–629.

Han, S. A., & Scanlon, E. (2016). The integration of micro and macro practice: A qualitative study of clinical social workers' practice with domestic violence survivors. *Affilia: Journal of Women and Social Work*, 31(3), 331-343.

Hepworth, D. H., Rooney, R. H., Rooney, G. D., & Strom-Gottfried, K. (2017). *Direct social work practice: Theory and skills* (10<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.

Chapter 13, "Planning and Implementing Change-Oriented Strategies," pp. 364-422.

### **Week 12 (November 16<sup>th</sup>):      Intervention**

Gibbons, J., & Plath, D. (2012). Single session social work in hospitals. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy*, 33, 39-53.

Hepworth, D. H., Rooney, R. H., Rooney, G. D., & Strom-Gottfried, K. (2017). *Direct social work practice: Theory and skills* (10<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.  
Chapter 14, “Developing Resources, Advocacy, and Organizing as Intervention Strategies,” pp. 423-454.

Mendenhall, A. N., & Grube, W. (2017). Developing a new approach to case management in youth mental health: Strengths model for youth case management. *Child & Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 34(4), 369-379.

### **Week 13 (November 30<sup>th</sup>): Termination and Field Placement Interviewing**

Skills Lab: Field Placement Interviewing

#### **Assessment, Goal Setting and Intervention Paper is due.**

Hepworth, D. H., Rooney, R. H., Rooney, G. D., & Strom-Gottfried, K. (2017). *Direct social work practice: Theory and skills* (10<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.  
Chapter 19, “The Final Phase: Evaluation and Termination,” pp. 568-584.

Rosenthal Gelman, C., Fernandez, P., Hausman, N., Miller, S., & Weiner, M. (2007). Challenging endings: First year MSW interns’ experiences with forced termination and discussion points for supervisory guidance. *Journal of Clinical Social Work*, 35(2), 79-90.

### **Week 14 (December 7<sup>th</sup>): Wrap-Up and Integration**

#### **Preparing for 614, Spring 2022**

Next semester, we will be focusing on social work practice with families, groups, communities, and organizations.

We will begin our focus on social work practice with families during the first week of 614. Please read the chapters below to prepare for the first day of class after the Winter Break.

Hepworth, D. H., Rooney, R. H., Rooney, G. D., & Strom-Gottfried, K. (2017). *Direct social work practice: Theory and skills* (10<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.  
Chapter 10, “Assessing Family Functioning in Diverse Family and Cultural Contexts,” pp. 251-278.

Walsh, F. (2014). Family therapy: Systemic approaches to practice. In J. Brandell (Ed.), *Essentials of clinical social work* (pp. 160-185). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

The community-focused portion of the course will involve conducting a community assessment—either individually or in a small group—that addresses a social problem affecting a community served by your agency; it will include assessing the community’s strengths and challenges in relation to the specified social problem. To prepare for this component of the course, please consider a community and social problem that is of particular interest to you. Additionally, instructors may recommend reading the following materials prior to the start of classes next term:

Schriver, J. (2011). *Human behavior and the social environment: Shifting paradigms in essential knowledge for social work practice* (5th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.  
Chapter 9, “Perspectives on Communit(y)ies,” pp. 498-544.

Hardcastle, D. A., Powers, P. R., & Wenocur, S. (2011). *Community practice: Theories and skills for social workers* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.  
Chapter 4, “The Concept of Community in Social Work Practice,” pp. 94-129.  
Chapter 6, “Using Assessment in Community Practice,” pp. 155-181.

### Written Assignments

#### The Learning Contract

**Due Week 4—Ungraded—signed, completed contract is required to receive field placement credit**

Using the educational goals listed in this syllabus as a starting point, please create a learning contract that includes the following information:

1. Brief description of three learning goals you have established in collaboration with your field instructor for your professional development this semester. Please specify the knowledge and skills that will be gained in pursuing these goals.
2. For each goal, a concrete plan for measuring progress toward the goal. This plan should clearly specify how you will know that you have reached each goal.
3. Specific steps you will take to ensure that each goal is met.
4. Commitments of both the student and field instructor. For this section, the student and field instructor are asked to consider the following questions: What commitments will you make to this field placement/student? What will they look like? What can the student/field instructor/agency/clients count on from you? These commitments may include hours of attendance and supervision, actions to facilitate learning and professional development, and other considerations relevant to the student, field instructor and agency.

Suggested steps for writing a learning contract:

1. Student writes a rough draft of the learning contract.
2. Student shares rough draft with field instructor for feedback/input; student revises contract based on field instructor feedback.
3. Both the student and the field instructor sign the final copy of the learning contract.

Keep a copy for yourself and email a copy to your field instructor; for the practice instructor and the field liaison upload to Penn+Box.

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## **Practice in an Agency Context**

### **Due Weeks 5, 9, and 13—Graded Papers**

Central aims of this course include:

- understanding your field agency context and its implications for direct practice;
- engaging in ethical social work practice;
- developing foundational capacity to engage in assessment, goal setting, intervention, and practice evaluation with clients; and
- enhancing critical thinking and professional use of self.

The assignments described below contribute to these goals.

#### **Paper One: Agency Context and Social Justice**

#### **Due Week 5 Approximate Length: 7 pages Total Possible Points: 25**

This assignment focuses on understanding your agency setting, reflecting on your initial responses to the agency, examining your role in the agency, reflecting on social justice in the agency, and considering implications of the agency setting for direct practice. Please address the following topics in relation to your field placement:

- 1) the agency, setting, and services, including agency mission, history, function, funding sources, leadership, people served, attention to serving diverse populations, community setting and relationship with it, relationships within the network of agencies serving your agency's population (i.e., leadership roles, collaborative relationships, interagency referral patterns), types of services provided by the agency, ways in which services are evaluated, and other information you deem pertinent to understanding the agency context;
- 2) the value of social justice as described in the NASW Code of Ethics (2021) in the agency setting, including responses to COVID-19, structural racism, and oppression; and discussion of factors which appear to facilitate and/or hinder the application of this principle in practice;
- 3) your initial responses to the agency and its setting;
- 4) ways in which the information provided in parts 1-3 of the assignment might influence clients' experiences with the agency, service provision, and your direct practice with clients.

**The analysis required for part 4 of the assignment may be interwoven throughout the paper or discussed as a separate section. It is a central element of the assignment that should be given considerable attention in the paper.**

- For this assignment, it will be important to consult your field instructor and other agency staff, as well as agency documents and publications. Additionally, you are asked to integrate findings from a minimum of **3-5 empirical studies from academic journals** to inform your discussion of the agency setting and services provided. These studies might identify key issues to consider in this agency context and/or address information regarding the effectiveness of the types of interventions provided. *These are journal articles of empirical studies that you find on your own and are not readings from the class syllabus (A.K.A "outside scholarly sources").*
- Additionally, be sure to cite the sources that inform and support your discussion, including agency documents, course readings, and other relevant literature.

<b>Paper Two:</b>	<b>Process Recording</b>
<b>Due Week 9</b>	<b>Approximate Length: 4-5 pages</b> <b>Total Possible Points: 20</b>

Students will provide a process recording focused on the beginning process of direct practice with a client in the agency setting. The process recording can be based on a brief interaction. Some instructors may request that students provide two process recordings, in which case, students will select one process recording to be graded for the assignment.

If you have not interacted with clients by around week 5 or 6 of the semester, please be in contact with your field liaison and practice instructor. Given the current uncertainties in many social service agencies, this assignment may need to be modified for practice in your setting.

### **Guide for Preparation of Process Recording**

- ◇ It is necessary to obtain your supervisor's permission to use agency case material for class presentation. The process recording should be reviewed and initialed by the supervisor before submission to the instructor. Ample time will be needed to allow for this process.
- ◇ Names and other identifying information for clients and other people must be disguised. Do not use initials or humorous pseudonyms.
- ◇ Text may be single-spaced for this assignment.

### **Instructions for Introduction**

1. Provide a brief description of the agency to which you have been assigned. Include in this description the services the agency provides, population served, needs addressed, and physical setting, including the neighborhood in which the agency is located.
2. Provide the context of the session within ongoing services, focus of the session, and context of the presented segment within the session.
3. Specify the people involved in the presentation.

### **Instructions for Case Material**

Presentation should be in both narrative and column format. A brief narrative, preceding the content of the interview should include the following:

**“Tuning in”**: As you prepare to meet with the client, anticipate the person’s thoughts, feelings, and possible interests as the person enters the interview. Consider your own thoughts, feelings, and interests as you anticipate this interview.

**Focus for work/connection to overall purpose**: What did you want to pay special attention to in the interview?

**Content**: Presentation of interview content includes a selective presentation of the significant verbal and nonverbal content necessary to understand the interaction. In other words, you will not present the entire interview; rather, you will present an excerpt of the longer interview, ensuring that you provide an adequate introduction as described above to inform the reader. Events should be recorded in chronological order to reflect the progression of the interview. In this section, you can include your thoughts – ones that occurred during the interview itself and/or ones that developed at a later time (e.g., while writing the process recording).

This information helps you and the reader understand both the interactive process and the internal process that led you to respond in a particular way.

**Column presentation of interview content:** Use three columns. The left-hand column should contain the dialogue between you and client(s). This section presents, in detail, what transpired in the session or session segment(s) selected for presentation. Narrative providing continuity between separate segments within a session may be included in this column. The middle column reflects your unspoken feelings, thoughts, and reactions to what is happening (as presented in the first column). The third column (far-right) provides your analysis of the interaction, the client's feelings, your feelings, your verbal and nonverbal responses to the client, other possible responses, skills used, values reflected, conceptually and empirically informed considerations, etc. Please note that you will be graded on the quality of the analysis, not the quality of the practice, although the instructor will also provide feedback on the practice. The analysis is covered in the third column and in the conclusion.

**Conclusion & “next steps”:** The concluding paragraph should be an assessment of what you learned from this interview, as well as how you felt you used yourself during the course of the interview. Please consider the following additional questions: what concept(s) were relevant in your professional use of self, including your social identity, and the interactions between you and the client? What might be next steps in your next interaction with the client? Are there things that you need to learn and/or consider prior to the next interview?

Throughout the assignment, be sure to **cite relevant literature from this class and beyond** to inform your discussion and analysis. *“Beyond” means: cite 3-5 journal articles that you find on your own and are not readings from class syllabus, (A.K.A “outside scholarly sources”).*

<b>Paper Three:</b>	<b>Assessment, Goal Setting, and Intervention</b>	
<b>Due Week 13</b>	<b>Approximate Length: 6-8 pages</b>	<b>Total Possible Points: 35</b>

In this paper, you are asked to draw upon your work with a client in your field placement, course readings, a minimum of **3-5 additional empirical studies\*** from academic journals (beyond those cited in the Agency Context and Social Justice paper), and other relevant literature to discuss assessment, goal setting, evaluation, and beginning intervention with the client. You are also asked to consider the implications of the agency context in your work with this client as you review the effectiveness of your practice with the client in the final section of the paper. *\*These are journal articles of empirical studies that you find on your own and are not readings from the class syllabus (A.K.A “outside scholarly sources”).*

Please be in contact with your field liaison and your course instructor by week 9 regarding your ability to complete this assignment based on your field placement experiences. Given the current uncertainties in many social service agencies, this assignment may need to be modified for practice in your setting.

The assessment should include attention to the client’s sociodemographic background, presenting concerns, ecological context, strengths, resources, challenges, and needs. One or more practice frameworks or perspectives that we have addressed in this course should be used to guide and organize the assessment. **In your assessment, be sure to go beyond listing or summarizing information regarding the client and to consider the meaning and implications of the information for understanding the client and the client’s environmental context, the presenting concern(s), salient goal(s), and beginning interventions that are likely to facilitate progress toward the identified goal(s).**

The assessment should inform the identification of 1-2 beginning goals of intervention. Clearly specify these goals and identify a plan for monitoring progress toward them. The monitoring plan might include individualized or standardized measures. If you use an individualized measure, be sure to provide a complete example of it (e.g., an example of a self-anchored rating scale).

The interventions you have conducted or propose to conduct (depending on the current phase of work with the client) should aim to facilitate progress toward the specified goal(s). Clearly describe actual or proposed interventions, their effectiveness in facilitating progress toward the specified goal(s), and the current state of the intervention process with the client.

In the final component of the assignment, you are asked to analytically reflect on your work with the client and to consider factors that facilitated and/or hindered the effectiveness of assessment, goal setting, evaluation, and intervention(s) with the client. In this process, be sure to address the following considerations: agency and system factors; evidence-based practice; cultural awareness and humility in practice; ethical practice; critical thinking; professional use of self; and what you might do similarly or differently in the future.