

ADVANCED PRACTICUM & SEMINAR I, II
SOWK 665/675
Minnesota State University, Mankato
Department of Social Work

PURPOSE OF THE COURSE

SOWK 665/675 provides students with the opportunity to apply advanced generalist social work methodology in a practice-learning environment as they continue their knowledge building and professional development while concurrently enrolled in courses. The practicum experience is designed to give students agency-based opportunities to integrate and apply advanced generalist social work practice knowledge, skills, theories, and values in direct and indirect social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations or communities. Field practicum, under the supervision of a qualified MSW level social work practitioner, engages students in ethical social work practice that ranges from direct practice with individuals, families and groups through indirect practice in organizational administration and change, policy development, and community practice. Field practicum will sensitize students to the practice issues germane to all client groups, to understand the issues of practice and leadership in small and rural communities, and to develop collegial relationships with a diverse group of practitioners.

Seminar is the integrative component of the practicum experience that promotes the open discussion of students' experiences with their student-colleagues from the perspective of various practice settings. The purpose of seminar is to help students clarify and integrate theoretical and practice curriculum content with experiences at micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Professional development, application of coursework, and issues related to populations at risk and clients distinguished by race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender or sexual orientation, religion, physical or mental disability, age and national origin, will be addressed through case presentation and discussion (face to face and/or on-line). Students will explore the ethical considerations of social justice, intervention options, and rural influences in a supportive and collaborative setting. Students will also prepare for the completion of their Capstone Project by participating in Research Dialogue Groups.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Apply evidence-based practice principles to direct and indirect practice at micro, mezzo, and macro levels, including with populations-at-risk, using general systems theories (MSW 1.10C).
2. Apply knowledge and research about diversity, including diversity of age, class, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, and sexual orientation, and to use practice methodology that celebrates differences and affirm social and economic justice (MSW 1.8C).
3. Demonstrate the understanding of needs of clients and client systems, knowledge of community resources and service delivery systems, and the ability to obtain services for clients and client systems within agency policy, with emphasis on the rural context (MSW 1.10C).

4. Practice according to the NASW Code of Ethics (MSW 2.4C).
5. Differentially apply skills related to interviewing, building relationship, assessing, intervening, and evaluating micro, mezzo, and macro systems, with emphasis on applications in the rural context as appropriate (MSW 1.9C, 2.4C, 2.5C).
6. Assess service delivery systems from a social and economic justice and ethical perspective in order to begin to influence the equitable distribution of services, resources, and supports for all micro, mezzo, and macro systems (MSW 1.8C, 3.3C, 3.4C).
7. Evaluate through supervision and self-reflection one's practice in relation to personal values, attitudes, beliefs, behaviors and the need for continued professional development (MSW 1.10C, 2.4C, 4.3).
8. Use knowledge from policy, research, and human behavior and the social environment to engage in advanced generalist evidence-based practice (MSW 3.3C, 3.4C).
9. Demonstrate the use of inter-professional collaborative approaches to obtain and provide services that are integrated, coordinated, and identified as helpful by micro, mezzo, and macro systems (MSW 1.10C).
10. Develop direct practice and indirect practice responses to unique opportunities and barriers that are present in rural and small community social work practice settings (MSW 3.3C, 3.4C).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Practicum and seminar assignments are designed to meet aforementioned course objectives.

1) Annotated Field Hour Log

A regular schedule negotiated with the field instructor should be maintained. The 500 field hours are spread over the weeks allotted for field and seminar, with the student typically in field approximately 20 hours per week during the spring semester *and* summer semesters. Students will log the number of hours in field (weekly) and maintain a running total. Students will write a thematic summary of and reflection on, weekly activities based on the objectives on their learning plan. The log will be submitted by email bi-weekly on the D2L website. The log should be written in paragraph form. This is the only official documentation of hours required. Your agency may have additional time-keeping requirements to which you will need to adhere. Accuracy and integrity count.

2) Learning Contract (See Appendix MSW Field Education Manual)

Develop and implement a learning contract in collaboration with field instructor and field director/coordinator which integrates experiences in the practicum setting with the seminar, and draws on information, skills, and knowledge gleaned from the classroom. The learning plan must integrate the following categories and the course objectives (syllabus p.3). Seminar assignments can be used to partially meet learning contract goals.

The five Categories for the LC are:

Professional Learning: includes the development of professional identity, incorporation of the NASW Code of Ethics into practice, the ability to reflect on and critically analyze one's practice, taking active responsibility for one's learning, and performing in a professional manner.

Advanced Direct Social Work Practice: includes the development of knowledge and skills to work effectively with individuals, groups, and families, and to engage in culturally competent direct practice, utilizing theoretical knowledge to understand the client system, assessment of the strengths the client system brings to the situation as well as barriers clients face in obtaining their goals.

Advanced Community and Organizational Social Work Practice: includes developing the knowledge and skills to understand the organization and the community both as the context for culturally competent practice with individuals, families, and small groups, as well as to understand the community and organization as client systems in and of themselves.

Advanced Research and Policy Applications: includes application of knowledge and skills needed to utilize the research literature for effective, evidence-based social work practice, and the development and completion of the Capstone Project in conjunction with SOWK 669, Advanced Social Work Evaluation.

Participation in Seminar: includes the active engagement in discussion of direct and indirect practice, participation in all assignments, and evaluation of one's practice.

The items listed for each of the five categories already exist as learning objectives on the mid-terms and final. Students are expected to *add individualized objectives* that are specific to their practicum site and the learning opportunities available there. This assignment is due the third week of the spring semester. A second learning contract *if needed* for the summer semester will be due the second week of the summer semester.

3) Application of Evidence-based Practice Principles

This is a two part assignment. Each student will post an application of evidence-based practice, utilizing the *seven elements* from Thomlison and Corcoran (assigned reading), for one micro or mezzo case, *and* one macro case using the Desire 2 Learn course website. Due dates for each part of this assignment appear on the class schedule. It may be useful to think about this assignment as an 'on-line case consultation' where one requests feedback or other contributions.

First, the student will post information based on the seven elements of evidence-based practice (Thomlinson & Corcoran) for review and discussion with student-colleagues (Case #1, posting #1). Depending on where one is with the client/case, all of the elements may not be addressed. All students must respond to two of the cases posted in the D2L discussion forum based on the request for feedback or other contributions.

Second, the student will complete the information based on the elements that could not be provided in the first posting and state how feedback or other contributions from their student/colleagues was used or considered (Case #1, posting #2). All students will again respond to two cases posted in the D2L discussion forum with feedback, assistance, or other contributions.

Each student will do the same for a second case (Case #2, posting #1 and Case #2, posting #2). Students may 'lurk' beyond their required postings.

4) Research Dialogue Groups

The Capstone Project is required for successful completion of the MSW program. A protocol outlining the steps for students and faculty for completion of this project will be provided in Seminar. One part of that protocol is the use of Research Dialogue Groups (RDGs).

Seminar members will form research dialogue groups (RDGs) that are balanced between members who are conducting direct practice research and indirect practice research as part of the Capstone Project (CP). The goal of this assignment is to provide time for students to begin planning for the CP, in consultation with the faculty of record for SOWK 669, Advanced Social Work Evaluation, during the spring semester. These groups offer the opportunity for three brief tutorials focusing on the preliminary research steps: 1) discussion of research possibilities in practicum sites, 2) discussion of the range of genuine research questions, and 3) the development a Research Proposal for use in SOWK 669. Dates for the RDGs will appear on the course schedule.

In the summer semester RDGs will re-focus on student-colleagues sharing the different research issues and processes of the ongoing research for the CPs. Group members may offer each other different perspectives, feedback, or thoughts to consider as they 1) share literature review, 2) share their creation of documents, and 3) share their data analysis. In addition group members will be increasing their appreciation of the differences on direct and indirect research. These groups will meet three times in the summer semester and dates for the RDGs will appear on the course schedule.

5) Current Topics in Social Work

Each student will be asked to choose a current topic in the field of social work applicable to their field practicum setting and lead a brief discussion on the topic during face to face seminar. Students are asked to provide their classmates with a brief summary of the topic with references to at least 3 supporting articles, documents, books or news releases (written within the last two year). When applicable, the impact that rural social work has on the topic area should be addressed and practicum experiences should be used to help develop the brief presentation. The following are a list of suggested topic areas that students might consider choosing for this assignment.

Topic:

- Ethics, values, and legal issues for internships
- Evidence-based practices for supervision
- Evidence-based skills for interviewing
- Evidence-based skills for assessment
- Motivational interviewing skills
- Impact of the rural context on evidence-based practice
- Identifying evidence-based practice interventions
- Identifying evidence-based practices for mental health/other
- Evidence-based practices for at-risk youth/other
- Identifying evidence-based practice in corrections/other
- Evidence-based practices for risk assessment
- Gathering your own evidence
- Policy implications for rural practice
- Career development in rural settings

COURSE OUTLINE**Spring Semester - SOWK 665****Week 1**

Topic: Welcome; Syllabus & assignments review; Practicum discussion

Week 2

Topic: Evidence-based practice; Learning Contract discussion; Practicum discussion

Week 3

Topic: Research Dialogue Groups (RDGs)- discussion of research possibilities in practicum sites; Ethics, values, and legal issues for internships; Practicum discussion

Week 4

Delivery Method: Online

Week 5

Topic: Evidence-based skills for assessment; Practicum discussion

Week 6

Delivery Method: Online

Week 7

Topic: RDGs - discussion of the range of genuine research questions; Evidence-based skills for interviewing; Practicum discussion

Week 8

SPRING BREAK (negotiable for completing hours – no seminar)

Week 9

Topic: Policy implications for rural practice; Practicum discussion

Week 10**Week 11**

Topic: RDGs - the development a Research Proposal for use in SOWK 669; Motivational interviewing skills; Practicum discussion

Week 12**Week 13**

Topic: Evidence-based practices for risk assessment; Practicum discussion

Week 14**Week 15**

Topic: Impact of the rural context on evidence-based practice; Practicum discussion

Summer Semester – SOWK 675**Week 1**

Topic: Identifying evidence-based practices; Practicum discussion

Week 2**Week 3**

Topic: RDGs - share literature review; Identifying evidence-based practices; Practicum discussion

Week 4**Week 5**

Topic: RDGs - share their creation of documents; Identifying evidence-based practices;

Week 6**Week 7**

Topic: RDGs - share their data analysis; Identifying evidence-based practices; Practicum discussion

Week 8

Week 9

Week 10

Topic: Wrap-up