

Indiana University
School of Social Work

S683
10 credit hours

Practicum III: Interpersonal

Course Description

Practicum III: Interpersonal provides an in-depth practice experience for MSW II students who have selected the interpersonal practice method as their primary specialization. This block practicum requires students to complete 512 clock hours of on site agency-based, supervised interpersonal practice during a 16 week semester. As the final MSW practicum this course builds upon practicum experiences gained in the foundation year particularly with regard to social work values and ethics, the alienation of oppression against ethnic minorities of color and women, the selective utilization of the scientific problem-solving process in achieving planned change and the development of interactive communication skills.

Practicum III: Interpersonal is also one component of students' secondary service delivery specialization in health, mental health or child and family services. Consistent with this dual focus agencies are selected for Practicum III: Interpersonal based upon their ability and willingness to provide in-depth learning experiences in direct social work practice within a health, mental health, or child and family setting. Health agencies include hospital, outpatient medical and health programs. Mental health settings are typically comprehensive mental health centers, private and public psychiatric hospitals, and other counseling agencies. Child and family agencies are broadly defined to include family services agencies, public and private child welfare agencies, and other settings that provide family support and reunification services. Addictions, correctional and gerontology agencies cross service delivery classification. In Practicum III: Interpersonal, students receive weekly supervision and provide direct clinical services 50-75 percent of on-site time. Students are provided with learning experiences consistent with individual, family, or small group study. Students are expected to take an active stance as an adult learner in preparation for post-graduation practice.

Course Objectives

Upon satisfactory completion of this course students should be able:

1. To achieve a conviction about professional values and ethics and creative engagement with the values and ethical dilemmas of the profession.
2. To demonstrate an understanding of social constraints that inhibit the realization of potential for oppressed populations and commitment to eradication when possible of institutionalized forms of oppression.
3. To demonstrate awareness of own values, feelings, and behavior and of the potential impact of these on clients, colleagues, own agency, and other systems, and a willingness to undertake work on conflicting personal and professional values and ethical demands.

4. To demonstrate active engagement in the teaching/learning process with practicum instructor and assumption of mutual responsibility for identification of learning needs and goals for and progress towards autonomous practice.
5. To demonstrate the ability to utilize appropriate sources of knowledge and skills in the practicum learning process.
6. To demonstrate the ability to analyze practicum agency's practice, policies and procedures in relation to focus of service and population being served.
7. To demonstrate competence in social work practice in one system size and growth in the skills required for competent social work practice with other size systems.
8. To demonstrate the ability to apply and integrate the knowledge and skills of interpersonal practice in the selected service delivery system specialization.
9. To demonstrate initiative and appropriate autonomy in applying the dynamic social work processes of assessment, goal formulation, planning, plan implementation termination and evaluation in meeting human needs.
10. To demonstrate an ability to be professionally reflective and accountable and to systematically evaluate the appropriateness and effectiveness of social work interventions made by oneself and others.
11. To demonstrate the ability to conceptualize and communicate clearly, including speaking and writing in a grammatically correct form which reflects the progressive ability to integrate, analyze, and synthesize learning with professional practice.

Course Evaluation

The evaluation process begins as goals and expectations are mutually discussed by student and field instructor and established during the pre-placement visit and the first weeks of the placement. The student and instructor share responsibility throughout the semester for assuring that discussion of student progress and performance, as well as of the student's experience with the agency and instructor, is open and ongoing. At two points, mid-semester and semester's end, the School requires that written evaluative documents be completed.

Mid-Semester Progress Report

At mid-semester, the progress report includes a description of student learning assignments, review of learning objective achievement, strengths and learning needs identified, and goals and plans for the balance of the semester. It is recommended that the student and field instructor complete the report independently and then in conference share and discuss their perceptions and observations. A report which reflects the ideas of both is then forwarded to the field liaison. Although ongoing contact with the

field liaison is expected, it is critical that if there are difficulties in student performance or disagreement between student and instructor regarding student progress at any point before or by the mid-semester point, field instructor, student and field liaison meet together to examine the problem and plan for its resolution.

Final Evaluation Report

The final evaluation report includes:

1. A description of the student's practicum assignments throughout the semester.
2. An evaluative section utilizing rating scales to assess overall performance as well as student achievement of specific course objectives. This report also includes section comments and summary narrative statements.
3. A statement that the evaluation has been read by the student and has been discussed by student and field instructor together and that both understand that the report is intended for and to be used for educational purposes only.
4. Signatures of both student and field instructor and date signed.

The recommended process for the final evaluation parallels that of the mid-semester progress report (i.e., student and field instructor independently prepare observations regarding student performance, share and discuss their observations in conference, and forward a report which reflects both the field instructor's and student's perceptions of the student's level of performance and progress to the field liaison).

The grade for the ten credit hour practicum course is assigned by the faculty field liaison in consultation with the field instructor. The liaison's role in the evaluation process is to assist field instructors in assessing student performance as well as to assure comparability among expectations for students in various settings. A clear agreement between field instructor and faculty liaison regarding the evaluation and grading process prevents confusion and problems at the semester's end.

The evaluation process should be characterized by openness, mutuality, and specificity regarding student strengths, learning needs, and progress identified as well as regarding the student's experience with the agency and field instructor. The evaluation process is an integral part of the learning experience and can contribute in a major way to the student's professional and personal growth.

Student Evaluation of the Course

In addition, the instruction and course content of Practicum II is evaluated by students, and by field instructors. It is the responsibility of the Field Department to conduct this evaluation and provide field instructors feedback from these course evaluations.

