

Welcome to Stockton University

Online Seminar in Field Instruction
(SIFI)

UNIT 1: Overview & Introduction

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Objectives of Field Instruction

Helping students learn to:

- Integrate classroom knowledge and apply it to practice
- Develop self-awareness and a professional social work identity
- Learn techniques and skills necessary to achieve competencies and practice behaviors outlined by CSWE (Council on Social Work Education)
- Perform as a professional social worker—with skill and integrity

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Signature Pedagogy

- Field education has been identified as the *signature pedagogy* of social work education
 - The term was introduced by Lee S. Shulman, who wrote about the “fundamental ways in which future practitioners are educated for their professions.” (Shulman, 2005).
 - In social work, a signature pedagogy is the primary teaching method used to prepare future social workers for their roles as professionals. Field instructors play a central role in teaching their students how to think and perform as professional social workers and to act with integrity.

Shulman, L. S. (2005). Signature pedagogies in the professions. *Daedalus*, 134(3), 52-59.

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Signature Pedagogy

In the field, students learn to:

- Translate classroom knowledge into effective practice
- Learn the knowledge, skills and values of the social work profession
- Bring the intellectual content of the classroom into focus with everyday tasks and responsibilities

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Competencies

What should social workers be able to do once they have completed their education?

- The Council on Social Work Education debated this question and came up with 10 core competencies, each with associated practice behaviors, that describe a well-prepared social worker.
- The goal is for the student to integrate classroom knowledge with professional skills and support all interventions with the values of the social work profession.

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10 Core Competencies

- Identify with the social work profession and conduct self accordingly.
- Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.
- Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.
- Engage diversity and difference in practice.
- Promote human rights and social and economic justice.

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10 Core Competencies

- Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.
- Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.
- Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.
- Respond to contexts that shape practice
- Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, and communities.

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Field Terminology & Responsibilities

- Coordinator of Field Education
- Assistant Coordinator of Field Education
- Field Liaison
- Field Instructor
- Task Supervisor
- Program Director
- Student intern

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The Coordinator of Field Education

- Places and manages student internships.
- Serves as the intermediary between students, field instructors and the social work program.
- Assists field instructors in structuring learning experiences for students and monitoring student performance.
- Assists with problem solving and learning strategies to assure program standards are being met.
- Teaches field seminar courses in order to integrate theoretical curriculum content with applied experienced in internships.

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The Assistant Coordinator of Field Education

- A full- or part-time staff person who is responsible for field visits and assists the field coordinator with placements and issues or concerns with the field education experience.
- Teaches field seminar courses.
- Assists with updating affiliation agreements

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The Field Liaison

The Field liaison is the either the coordinator or assistant coordinator of field.

- Acts as the connection between the agency, the student and the school.
- Provides support for the field instructor and the student.
- Visits student placements to ensure that students are meeting the requirements for field education.
- Ensures the competencies and practice behaviors are being met.

Task Supervisor

- *An experienced professional who provides day to day task supervision to the student.
- *Works with the student and field instructor on a regular basis.
- *Participates in field conferences and provides input in to the student's evaluation.
- *May not have an MSW but is supervised by an MSW.

Program Director

The MSW Program Director oversees our graduate social work program. She has many important roles, one of which is making sure our program maintains its accreditation by adhering to Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) standards.

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Student Responsibilities

- Keeping track of field hours and completing required number of hours
- Actively participating in supervision and field visit conferences
- Handing in process recordings and journal entries
- Performing all tasks and activities in learning contract by time identified.
- Taking an active role in assuring the timely completion of the field evaluation
- Reporting any issues or problems to field liaison immediately
- Conducting themselves in a professional manner meeting the standards of the agency and the *NASW Code of Ethics*

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Students' Essential Abilities and Attributes

- **Attendance-** Students must attend field education during the agreed-upon schedule. (In the very beginning, come to a clear agreement with the student about the student's schedule.) Discuss with the student the agency's "call out" procedures and how field hours will be made up.
- **Communication-** Students must communicate sensitively and effectively with other students, faculty, staff, clients and professionals. They should be able to express their ideas and feelings clearly and demonstrate a willingness and ability to listen to others.
- **Participation-** Students must be willing and able to learn to do the activities required by social workers in that setting. For example: home visits or court appearances. They should be able to acquire, integrate and effectively communicate data to other students, faculty, supervisors, and clients.

Students' Essential Abilities and Attributes

Self Awareness- Students must know and be willing to further explore their values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions and past experiences that affect their behavior when working with clients or interacting with other professionals.

Students must be willing and able to function in and work with others in both subordinate positions and positions of authority.

Acceptance of Diversity-Students must appreciate the value of human diversity. They must serve in an appropriate manner all persons in need of assistance, regardless of the person's age, class, race, ethnicity, religious affiliation (or lack of), gender, ability, sexual preference and value system.

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Problems in Field – students should:

1st Speak to the Field Instructor at the agency. If not resolved,



2nd Speak to the Field Liaison. If not resolved,



3rd Speak to the Field Coordinator. If not resolved,



4th Speak to the Program Director

Problems

When students encounter a problem in the field, they are encouraged to first speak with their field instructor at the agency. The objective is to reinforce good communication and to resolve conflicts through discussion and dialogue. If you and the student are not successful in resolving the issue, then contact the Field Liaison. He/she will work with you and the student to resolve the problem. If this does not work, then please speak to the Field Coordinator. Should the problem continue, the last recourse is to speak to the Program Director. However, please follow this chain of command because failure to follow it may result being sent back to the individual you skipped.

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Field Hours

- First year MSW students are to complete 200 field hours each semester with a total of 400 for the academic year.
- Second year and advanced standing students are to complete 250 hours each semester with a total of 500 for the academic year.
- The student is responsible to document and keep track of their hours. The best practice is to have the field instructor sign the documentation on a regular basis, so there is no misunderstanding.

Knowing the curriculum

- Students need to take responsibility for their own learning and professional development.
- Students may have assignments from various classes that require specific tasks to be completed related to field. The student should share this with you early on so that the field assignments can be molded to complement and integrate the class assignments.
- Students should share the syllabi from their courses with you.
- Some academic assignments may involve the field placement; yet field placement time should not be spent completing homework assignments.

Stockton's MSW Program Mission Concentration

The MSW Mission Statement is too long to reproduce here, but it begins and ends with the following:

- “The mission of Stockton’s MSW Program is to educate social workers who are prepared for advanced-level practice with diverse individuals, families, and communities.”
- “... the MSW Program aims to produce graduates who have a lifetime commitment to upholding human rights, respecting human diversity, and working towards social justice in their professional and personal lives.”

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Explanation of Mission

- American Social workers practice in a society that is very diverse and becoming more so. Skills involved in working with individuals, couples, families, groups, and communities across difference are critically important in a diverse society. Our program aims to produce graduates who not only respect diversity but have the skills needed to work effectively with diverse client systems.
- Our graduates move into a variety of positions—in behavioral health, schools, hospitals, managed care organizations, advocacy organizations, family service agencies, and so on, well prepared for the challenges of working in today’s diverse society.

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The MSW Curriculum

Foundation Year Fall

- Human Behavior and the Social Environment 1
- Social Organizations and Environments
- Social Welfare Policy
- Foundation Social Work Practice 1
- Field 1

Foundation Year Spring

- Human Behavior and the Social Environment 2
- Social Work Research
- Race, Ethnicity, and Diversity: Implications for Social Work Practice
- Foundation Social Work Practice 2
- Field 2

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The MSW Curriculum

Advanced Year Fall

- Advanced Cultural Competence
- Advanced Social Work Research
- Advanced Social Work Practice with Diverse Individuals, Families, and Communities
- Field 3
- Elective

Advanced Year Spring

- Advanced Social Welfare Policy
- Integrative Seminar
- Field 4
- Elective
- Elective

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Forms

- Process Recordings
 - Macro
 - Group
 - Individual
- The Learning Contract
- The Student Performance Evaluation

All forms can be found on Stockton's MSW Field website.

Stockton.edu/MSW and click on "Field Program" or you may follow the link below

<http://intraweb.stockton.edu/eyos/page.cfm?siteID=163&pageID=62>

In addition, the students have access to forms for all assignments in their Blackboard portal.

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Forms

- Process Recordings- a detailed narrative of a student encounter with a client or client system (macro, group, or individual). The completed process recording becomes a tool that the student, field instructor, and field liaison can use to reflect upon and examine dynamics and interactions.

Process Recordings

- This tool has a long history in Social Work training.
- The student is to conduct a minimum of two process recordings. The instructions are on the syllabus, and the template is available on our website as well as in the students' Blackboard portal.

Process Recordings

- A process recording can reflect a whole interview or a part of an interview or interaction. The interaction must be face to face.
- The interaction can be with the field instructor, task supervisor, a staff member, client or client system.
- Enable the Field Instructor quickly to assess the student's responses to both emotion and content.
- Reflect the extent to which students are able to integrate knowledge and theory gained from previous experiences, classroom courses and outside readings.
- Provide "data" for end-of-the semester student evaluation.

Process Recordings

- Play an important part in providing direction and a structural framework for the supervisory conference
- Serve as the basic instrument in guiding learning and help the student conceptualize and organize ongoing activities with client systems
- Help clarify the purpose of an interview or activity and the student's role in it
- Provide a basic tool for stimulating communication and self-awareness
- Provide a base for both student and field instructor for identifying student's strengths and areas for growth

Forms

The Learning Contract- A tool used to facilitate the learning experience. This document is a learning path to achieve the competencies and practice behaviors detailed in the MSW Program curriculum. The learning contract is to be completed together with the student, outlining the learning experiences, tasks or duties the student will have during his/her internship.

Detailed instructions are outlined on the learning contract form.

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The Learning Contract

- The learning contract templates are available on Stockton's MSW website. (Note that there are separate ones for students in the Foundation and Advanced Years.) Contracts should be completed within the first 2-3 weeks of placement and submitted by the student to the instructor of the field class. Copies should be held by the field instructor, liaison and the student and will be discussed during field liaison visits.
- Learning experiences must be S.M.A.R.T.:
 - Specific
 - Measurable
 - Achievable
 - Realistic
 - Timely

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Purposes of the Learning Contract

- Joint planning of student's learning experiences by the student and the Field Instructor.
- Outlining the learning objectives for the field placement.
- Identifying what the student wants to accomplish.
- Monitoring the student's progress. This plan will be used by the student, field instructor, field liaison and the school to track the student's accomplishments.
- Periodically examining goals. The contract can be modified as needed and agreed by the student and the field instructor. At the start of the second semester a comprehensive review and update of the contract should be done.
- Assisting with assuring coverage of competencies and practice behaviors

Learning Contract Ideas

Competency 1: Identify as a social worker and conduct self accordingly

Foundation Practice Behavior 2: Practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development.

Student Task/Activity: Attend supervision with Field Instructor at least one time per week for one hour to discuss any issues, concerns, or areas for possible professional growth to further develop social work skills.

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Learning Contract Content

- Students, in preparing effective Learning Contracts, need field instructors' assistance to figure out what experiences available in the field agency will help the student achieve the competencies and practice behaviors, Foundation or Advanced, that they need to demonstrate by the end of their internships.

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Journals

Students are required to complete a minimum of three professional field journal entries. These assignments are to be handed into the instructor teaching the field course. The journal instructions are located on the syllabus. The field supervisor is not required to review the student's journal but may ask to do so during supervision time. Journals are not considered a "form"; therefore, they are not available on our web page.

Forms

Performance Evaluation- Measures the student's knowledge, skills, and acquisition of competencies in field. The learning contract completed in the beginning of the semester should be the guide for assessing student performance. The evaluation should be a mutual process, with the student actively involved and signing this form once completed. The student will have the evaluation form in Blackboard. The evaluation form can also be found on the MSW Field web page. Note that there are two versions—one for the Foundation Year and one for the Advanced Year.

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Student Anxiety

Many students experience some anxiety when beginning their field placement. Below lists some of the issues and concerns most students encounter

“Will I be prepared for what is ahead”?

“Will the workers in the agency accept me as a professional”?

“Will I fit into the agency”?

“What will the clients think about me being an intern”?

“Will I be able to handle the field hours, my studies, my family, my job”?

The best way to deal with student anxiety is orientation, open communication, and reassurance.

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Orientation

- Orientation is the best way to curb fears and anxiety.
- Orientation sets the parameters from the start.
- Orientation gives the opportunity for student to ask questions and get clarification.
- Orientation acclimates the student to the agency and co-workers
- Orientation reinforces that it is “OK” to be new.

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Safety

- Discuss safety concerns with your student. Each agency and assignment will have specific safety issues, such as protocols regarding unstable clients.
- Review agency emergency preparedness with student.
- Discuss safety and liability (insurance, transporting clients, safety training).
- Review agency emergency procedures regarding evening hours, home visits, geographic locations, verbal and physical safety.
- Students need to be instructed and reminded not to enter or continue in a situation in which they feel unsafe.

Confidentiality

Make sure the student understands the importance of confidentiality.

For example:

- Do not release client information orally or in written form without written permission of the client and supervisor.
- Do not leave charts/records out in the open where they may be viewed by others.
- Be careful with computer screens – minimize confidential materials while away from your desk.
- Disguise names and identifiable information in process recordings or other classroom assignments.

Duty to Warn

Make sure the student understands the law about duty to warn and when confidentiality can be broken.

- Review agency protocol with student
- Child, adult & elder abuse and neglect
- Reporting to DCPD or APS
- Harm to self and others
- Be sure the student notifies you or a supervisor and that the student documents the date, time and person that he/she reported the incident to and that individual's response

In Closing

Field instructors invariably become role models for students. How the field instructor demonstrates and models (through words and actions) the helping relationship with students will greatly influence how students relate to clients and to the field instructor. This parallel process will assist the student in becoming a professional in the field of social work.

The goal is for this to be an enjoyable, rewarding experience for you and the student. Remember, you are not alone and have the support of our social work team here at Stockton University.

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