

# MEMO

TO: MSW Students  
Part Time Program

FROM: Bonnie B. Alston  
Director of Field

RE: FIELD PRACTICUM REQUIREMENTS

You are about to begin your field practicum experience which is a required component of the SUNO graduate social work program.

Students must register for both Seminar and Practicum the same semester, and each seminar and Practicum should be the same section.

## **SKILLS LAB**

A required field skills lab is part of the field practicum program. Full time students enrolled in Field Practicum I are provided with a four (4) week skills lab prior to their field practicum experience. Students participate in the field skills lab two (2) days per week. Time will be given for skills lab 64 hours credited toward the required field hours.

## **TIME REQUIREMENT**

Students are not expected to be at their agency during the final exam week

If a field agency has a holiday on a day the student is expected to be at the agency, the student is not required to report nor does he/she need to make up the time.

Student will be given field credit for attending any workshops or conferences that are related to the social work profession. Student must notify the field supervisor at least two weeks in advance of their planned absence from field.

Students are expected to continue participation at the field agency during the Spring break. No student shall be allowed to report to field sites between semesters or at any time students are not officially enrolled in field practicum with the University.

If a student is absent from the agency for sick or personal emergency, he/she must work out a plan with the agency supervisor to make up the missed time.

Students are expected to report to the field agency on time as scheduled. If a student is going to be late, a courtesy call to the field supervisor is expected, attendance is important. Excessive absence and tardiness as determined by the field supervisor may negatively impact the student's grade.

Students must maintain a time sheet reflecting the hours earned at the field agency. The time sheets must be signed by the field supervisor weekly.

Following the skills lab, students begin the field practicum experience. Students are required to have field practicum each semester for six (6) semesters. The field experience is concurrent with course work.

Field practicum experience is a required component of the Graduate Social Work Program. From June through July at the end of your first year, you will be required to partake on an agency experience for ten (10) hours weekly and attend Field Seminar each semester.

Field I – II are divided into Field IA, Field IB, Field IIA and Field IIB respectively. You will complete a minimum of 225 hours over a two (2) semester period for Field I and for Field II each respectively. You will be assigned to a field agency for the time period and will have an assigned field supervisor who will be responsible for providing weekly supervision. The supervision will be educationally focused as opposed to work. Students in Field IA and Field IB will be evaluated at the end of the summer and end of fall semesters. Students in Field II will be evaluated at the end of spring and summer semesters. This evaluation will assess your acquisition and use of practice skills, your orientation to the field agency, your use of field instruction, and your professionalism. This evaluation of your experience within the agency will be used by your assigned field seminar instructor in assigning a final grade for Field I and Field II.

Students are not expected to be at their field agency during the final exam week each semester. If a field agency has a holiday on a day in which the student is expected to be at the field agency, the student is not required to report nor does he/she need to make up the time. Please indicate this on your time sheet by writing **HOLIDAY** in the appropriate area.

Time missed for personal illness or personal emergency must be made up. Students are required to make a plan with their field supervisor to make up the missed time upon their return to the field agency following their absence.

Students **cannot** use hours accumulated during semester breaks.

Students will be required to submit time sheets to your field instructor. These time sheets must be signed by your agency field supervisor. The student field supervisor will inform you of the due date. Students are required to be present at the assigned field agency as scheduled.

### **SUPERVISION**

Students will be assigned to a field agency and will have an assigned field supervisor who will be responsible for providing one hour per week individual supervision. The standards written by the Council on Social Work Education require the supervisor to have a minimum of two years post graduate experience, therefore it is **not necessary** for the field supervisor to be a Board Certified Social Worker (BCSW or LCSW). The supervision will be educationally focused as opposed to work focused.

## **USING EMPLOYMENT AS A FIELD PLACEMENT**

Field Placement at your place of employment cannot occur unless approved by the Director of Field Education. For students already working full time in a social service program, arrangements can be made to complete one academic year of field requirement at the employing agency. These arrangements must be approved by the Director of Field Education on a case-by-case basis.

Approval is conditional based upon the following:

- a. practicum experiences must be qualitatively distinct from those in student's paid employment, and
- b. supervision and instruction must be provided by an individual who is not the student's assigned supervisor and who meets the other requirements for a field agency supervisor.

## **SELECTION OF FIELD AGENCIES AND FIELD SUPERVISORS**

Agencies selected as field settings provide the base practice experience necessary for our students. These agencies support the educational objectives of the field experience and are willing to provide the time and staff necessary to achieve our field experience objectives.

To ensure that agency field supervisors are introduced to our program in a planned and organized manner, a series of seminars for new field supervisors are offered. Individuals selected to serve as field supervisors receive information about the seminars and attendance expectations. This constitutes part of the agency working agreement with the School.

The seminars introduce the field supervisors to an overview of the School's mission, themes, and curriculum as well as the field practicum made. The seminars are led by the field faculty and span the academic year. Content is presented in four (4) two-hour sessions. In addition, the seminars focus on the principles of adult learning theory.

## **ADVANCED FIELD PRACTICUM**

In regard to advanced field practicum curriculum (Field III), students are required to choose a field of practice from two (2) areas: Health/Mental Health, and Children, Youth and Families. In addition, they choose a method of intervention Direct Services (DS) or Administration, Planning and Organizing (APO). The Field Seminars are available based on field of practice.

APO students are given assignments which afford opportunities to continue building on foundation core knowledge and expanding to include learning experiences which focus primarily on practice areas e.g. total quality management, community/organizational change, grant writing, research, policy analysis, program planning and implementation, program evaluation, and political, social and economic change.

Direct Service students will continue to build on skills learned in foundation courses. Their assignments will expand to include a broader range of alternatives of interventions used in working with individuals, families, and groups within a specialized field of practice.

## EVALUATION

The assigned field seminar instructor will be responsible for working with the students, field supervisor, and field agency. He/she will conduct weekly field seminars and will be responsible for assigning final grades for the field practicum experience. The field supervisor will indicate a recommended grade on the Field Evaluation. The field seminar instructor will utilize the field supervisors recommended grade along with the seminar grade to determine the final field grade.

Because the field courses test the student's ability to apply knowledge and skill to actual client situations and aims to enhance his/her professional development, the field course grade is of special significance. A grade of "C" in the last semester will not permit a student to graduate with a BSW or MSW degree. A grade of "C" in practicum or instruction must be repeated before going to the next field course. A grade of "F" will not allow a student to continue in the MSW or BSW degree program. A grade of "I" in Field Courses (instruction/practicum, seminar) must be completed by the end of six weeks of the next semester. If not, student must drop the field courses she/he is attending.

The assigned field seminar instructor will be responsible for working with the students, field supervisor, and field agency. He/she will conduct weekly field seminars and will be responsible for assigning final grades for the field practicum experience. The field supervisor will indicate a recommended grade on the Field Evaluation. The field seminar instructor will utilize the field supervisors recommended grade along with the seminar grade to determine the final field grade.

The field practicum seminar is a required component of the field practicum program. Attendance is mandatory and expected. Students must **attend** both Seminar and Practicum the same Semester.

Please review the Affiliation Agreement which delineates the School of Social Work, Agency, and Student responsibilities in the field practicum experience.

Revised: 12/20/10