Course Title and Number:  SW 680: Foundation Practicum I

Instructor:

Location:

Day and Time:

Contact Information:

Office Hours:

Credits:  4

Prerequisites:  Admission to social work program.

Corequisites:  SW 620, SW 624

Course Description:

Integration of professional content through a weekly one hour seminar and at least 15 hours of social worker supervised placement in an approved practicum site. This course is the first in the sequence of two, four-credit courses constituting the social work field education program required of all Foundation year MSW students. It consists of a practicum within a field setting that provides opportunities for students to demonstrate generalist social work competencies (see Appendix A). To earn their degree, MSW students must complete a total of 900 hours of field education. The School of Social Work breaks this down into two blocks of 450 hours each. Each block is associated with the Foundation and MSW Concentration curriculum. At the Foundation level students must complete 225 hours by the end of Fall semester (SW 680) and 225 hours by the end of Spring semester (SW 681). To meet this requirement, students must complete 15 hours of field education for 15 weeks each semester. Additionally, students participate in a weekly 50-minute seminar that structures learning activities that will help students integrate theory and practice skills gained from academic course work with authentic field experiences.

Linkages with Other Courses:

As the “signature pedagogy,” the field practicum is the cornerstone of social work education. Knowledge, skills, and values acquired through other social work courses are integrated and demonstrated as competencies within the field practicum. Given this function, the SW 680 practicum must be taken concurrently with the social work methods courses, SW 620: Interventions with Individuals and SW 624: Interventions with Families. This sequencing ensures that students are able to integrate the knowledge, values, and skills they acquire in their concentration courses into their work with clients.
Relevant Competencies and Associated Foundation Practice Behaviors:

Given the culminating and integrative nature of the generalist field practicum, students are expected to demonstrate the practice behaviors of all 10 competencies that comprise the Foundation year.

2.1.1 **Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.**
- F1 Advocate for client access to the services of social work.
- F2 Practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development.
- F3 Attend to professional roles and boundaries.
- F4 Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication.
- F5 Engage in career-long learning.
- F6 Use supervision and consultation.

2.1.2 **Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.**
- F7 Recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice.
- F8 Make ethical decisions by applying standards of NASW Code of Ethics and, as applicable, principles of the International Federation of Social Workers and the Association of Schools of Social Work Ethics in SW.
- F9 Tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethnic conflicts.
- F10 Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions.

2.1.3 **Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.**
- F11 Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom.
- F12 Analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention and evaluation.
- F13 Demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and colleagues.

2.1.4 **Engage diversity and difference in practice.**
- F14 Recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power.
- F15 Gain sufficient self-awareness to recognize the influence of personal biases and values in working with divers groups.
- F16 Recognize, value, and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences.
- F17 View themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as experts of their own circumstances.

2.1.5 **Advance human rights and social and economic justice.**
- F18 Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination.
- F19 Advocate for human rights and social and economic justice.
- F20 Engage in practices that advance social and economic justice.

2.1.6 **Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.**
- F21 Use practice experiences to inform scientific inquiry.
- F22 Use research evidence to inform practice.

2.1.7 **Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.**
- F23 Utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation.
- F24 Critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment.
2.1.8 Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.
   • F25 Analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance social well-being.
   • F26 Collaborate with colleagues and clients for effective policy action.

2.1.9 Respond to contexts that shape practice.
   • F27 Continuously discover, appraise, and attend to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services.
   • F28 Provide leadership in promoting sustainable changes in service delivery and practice to improve the quality of social services.

2.1.10 Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.
   • F29 Substantively and affectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.
   • F30 Use empathy and other interpersonal skills.
   • F31 Develop a mutually agreed-on focus of work and desired outcomes.
   • F32 Collect, organize and interpret client data.
   • F33 Assess client strengths and limitations.
   • F34 Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives.
   • F35 Select appropriate intervention strategies.
   • F36 Initiate actions to achieve organizational goals.
   • F37 Implement prevention interventions that enhance client capacities.
   • F38 Help clients resolve problems.
   • F39 Negotiate, mediate, and advocate for clients.
   • F40 Facilitate transitions and endings.
   • F41 Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions.

Course Objectives / Learning Outcomes:

During and upon completion of this two-course sequence, students are expected to:

680.1 Engage with peers from a variety of practicum settings to learn about the unique field settings, their strengths, their challenges, and from each other’s experiences (F2-F18, F21, F23-24, F26-F28).

680.2 Participate in learning activities that will help the student connect the knowledge, skills, and values learned in the classroom with field-based experiences. Such activities include, but are not limited to: discussions, student presentations, demonstrations, completion of Individual Practice Assessments, completion of Time Logs, completion of a Learning Agreement, Site Visit Form, and an Evaluation of Student Performance (F2-F18, F21, F23-F24, F26-F28).

680.3 Participate in a forum of engaged and authentic dialogue with peers and Faculty Liaison in processing field experiences while acknowledging the development of their professional identity (F2-F18, F21, F23-24, F26-F28).

680.4 Adhere to principles and policies set forth in the University of Nevada Reno Student Code of Conduct, the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, the International Federation of Social Workers, the Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act of 1996, Nevada Laws governing social workers (NRS 641B, NAC 641B), mandated reporting laws (i.e. NRS Chapter 432B), and other pertinent laws associated with the field setting in which student is placed (F1-F20).
680.5 Participate in a forum of engaged and authentic dialogue with peers and Faculty Liaison to collaboratively examining complex social and economic justice issues that arise in the field practicum (F1-F20, F27-F28).

680.6 Participate in a forum of engaged and authentic dialogue with peers and Faculty Liaison in addition to other learning activities to connect the knowledge, skills, and values learned in the “practice” classes to field-based experiences aimed at assessing, intervening, and evaluating issues facing individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities encountered during the field practicum (F29-F41).

680.7 Complete all required reading, forms, materials, and 225 hours of field education by specified deadlines (F2-F6).

680.8 Demonstrate competence in generalist practice by integrating the knowledge, values, and skills of the Foundation year practice behaviors in all 10 competencies and applying these behaviors to social issues within their field practicum setting (F1-F41).

Instructional Methods:

- The SW 680 seminar provides a forum for discussion, feedback, and problem solving in a collegial environment where peer and Faculty consultation is key. The role of the seminar leader is NOT to solve the students’ field-based problems for them, but to guide students as they work to apply the knowledge, values, and skills acquired throughout their program to generalist practice opportunities in the field. Students will be responsible for providing content and process by bringing issues to class for discussion and by contributing feedback and consultation with each other. Group process will be a primary learning tool and students will be challenged to demonstrate skills in listening, problem solving, and integration of knowledge with practice experiences.

Standard Course Policies:

- Disabilities: Students who have documented disabilities that may affect their learning or performance in this class should contact the UNR Disability Services Office (Thompson Student Services Building, Suite 100; (775) 784-6000; mzabel@unr.edu). The instructor will make those accommodations that are requested in writing by the aforementioned office.

- Academic Success Services: Your student fees cover usage of the Math Center (784-4433) or www.unr.edu/mathcenter/, Tutoring Center (784-6801 or www.unr.edu/tutoring/), and University Writing Center (784-6030 or www.unr.edu/writing_center). These centers support your classroom learning; it is your responsibility to take advantage of their services. Keep in mind that seeking help outside of class is the sign of a responsible and successful student.

- UNR Counseling Services: helps students make the most of their university experience, both personally and academically. It is the primary facility on campus for addressing personal, psychological, and mental health and substance abuse treatment needs of both undergraduate and graduate students. The goal in counseling is to help students
overcome difficulties they may encounter during their educational experience. For more information visit: [http://www.unr.edu/stsv/cs/](http://www.unr.edu/stsv/cs/) or call (775) 784-4648.

- **Academic Dishonesty:** "Cheating, plagiarism or otherwise obtaining grades under false pretenses" constitute academic dishonesty according to the code of this university. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and penalties can include canceling a student’s enrollment without a grade, giving an F for the course, or giving an F for the assignment. For more details, see the [UNR General Catalog](http://www.unr.edu/student-conduct/policies/student-code-of-conduct).

- **Audio or Video Recordings:** Surreptitious or covert video-taping of class or unauthorized audio recording of class is prohibited by law and by Board of Regents' policy. This class may be videotaped or audio recorded only with the written permission of the instructor. In order to accommodate students with disabilities, some students may have been given permission to record class lectures and discussions. Therefore, students should understand that their comments during class may be recorded. NOTE: THIS POLICY ALSO APPLIES TO THE FIELD PRACTICUM SETTING. THERE IS TO BE NO COVERT VIDEO, AUDIO, OR PHOTOGRAPHING OF WORK WITH CLIENTS OR ANY OTHER ACTIVITY ASSOCIATED WITH THE FIELD SETTING.

**Additional Course Policies:**

- Please refer to the Field Practicum Manual for specific course related policies, expectations, roles and responsibilities. Students will be held accountable to the information presented in this manual. Students must also refer to the “Field Calendar” located online for important dates relating to their field experience.

- **Attendance:** Active engagement and contribution to each weekly seminar is critical to the attainment of the objectives listed above. Therefore, students are expected to attend each class. Students who miss more than 2 classes are at risk of failing the course. Absences due to field-related activities are not considered “excused.”

**Course Texts:**

- **Required Text**
  
  - School of Social Work Field Education Manual (located online at [http://www.unr.edu/social-work/field.html](http://www.unr.edu/social-work/field.html), click on “Current MSW Concentration Year Field Students.”)
  
  
  
- International Federation of Social Workers Statement of Ethical Principles:  
  http://ifsw.org/policies/statement-of-ethical-principles/


- Field Setting/Agency Policies and Procedures

- Other reading assigned by field setting and/or Faculty Liaison

  o Recommended Text


Assignments:

  o Please note that all required forms are located online (referenced above). Due dates are subject to change according to unique field-related circumstances. Students not able to meet deadlines, must consult with the Faculty Liaison and obtain permission for extended due dates.

1. *Pre-field assignment*: Due first day of field class, or as agreed upon with Faculty Liaison.

2. *Required readings*: Prior to the start of their field practicum, students must complete all readings listed above. Readings must be continually referenced throughout the practicum as evidenced by student’s demonstrated behaviors in field and seminar contributions.

3. *Acknowledgement form*: Due first day of field class, or as agreed upon with Faculty Liaison.

4. *Learning Agreement*: See the proposed schedule of classes for due dates.

5. *Site Visit Form*: Must be submitted prior to scheduled agency visit, per Liaison instructions.

6. *Field Performance Assessment*: See the proposed schedule of classes for due dates.

7. *Time Log*: Utilize template provided and submit to Liaison weekly.

8. *Individual Practice Assessment*: Students are required to complete a bi-weekly log aimed at assessing their own field performance and how they would modify/enhance their practice based on “lessons learned.” Students must respond to a minimum of two questions. The first question is listed in the proposed schedule of classes below and corresponds with the assigned reading, the second question may be selected from the list below:

   a. Assess your overall development as a professional social worker. Reflect on this assessment.

   b. Provide an example of how you utilized supervision during the past two weeks? How was that successful or unsuccessful?
c. Describe a situation that was particularly challenging for you. How did you utilize ethical principles to guide your decision-making?

d. Describe a situation in which you had to modify your course of action in order to respond to the culture and diversity of the people/organizations involved in the situation.

e. Describe a situation in which the power/oppression dynamic was evidenced. Reflect on this experience.

f. What skills/traits would you like to develop or improve?

g. What is the most important thing that you learned during the past two weeks about yourself and the work that you are doing?

h. How do you know that you have done your work effectively? What evidence would you draw upon to determine effectiveness?

i. What event or events had the biggest impact on you this week?

j. Do you feel that you have clear direction regarding expectations of your performance?

k. Frame a research question based on your experiences over the past two weeks. What practice observations are you basing this question on?

l. Identify a theoretical perspective(s) that is used in your setting. To what extent does it help explain a situation, an intervention, or the context that a client might find themselves in?

m. Identify policies that impact a situation that you have encountered in the past two weeks. Assess the intended and unintended outcomes of those policies.
Grading:

- Students will be assessed on progress toward and achievement of integration of classroom content with the demonstrated practice behaviors described above and professional expectations outlined in the field manual and the required readings. The Faculty Liaison, in consultation with the Field Instructor, is responsible for assigning the final grade for the four-credit field practicum course. Grade options are:
  - Satisfactory (S). Student has met the performance requirements of the course at an acceptable level.
  - Unsatisfactory (U). Student has not met the performance requirements of the course at acceptable levels.

- The following materials and observations will be utilized in assigning the final grade in this course:
  1. Field performance assessment (completed by student's field instructor)
  2. Seminar attendance
  3. Seminar participation (i.e. engagement and contribution)
  4. Timely submission of forms and other required materials
  5. Adherence to all policies and codes referenced in the syllabus and as mandated by the field setting in which the student is placed
  6. Student's general readiness to advance (as measured by the level of integration of knowledge, values, and skills to demonstrate the requisite practice behaviors)
Sample Proposed Schedule of Classes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week #</th>
<th>Date of Class</th>
<th>Assigned Reading/Notes</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
<th>Hour Tracker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>August 30</td>
<td>Chapter 1&lt;br&gt;Chapter 2&lt;br&gt;Ground rules</td>
<td>Time Log&lt;br&gt;Pre-field Assignment&lt;br&gt;Acknowledgement Form</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>September 6</td>
<td>Chapter 3&lt;br&gt;Time Log</td>
<td>Individual Practice Assessment: What is your commitment as an “engaged learner”?</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>September 13</td>
<td>Chapter 6&lt;br&gt;Time Log</td>
<td></td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>September 20</td>
<td>Chapter 4&lt;br&gt;Time Log</td>
<td>Individual Practice Assessment: Assess aspects of your identity (i.e. cultural, values) and their implications for your development as a professional.</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>September 27</td>
<td>Chapter 7&lt;br&gt;Time Log</td>
<td>Time Log</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>October 4</td>
<td>Chapter 5&lt;br&gt;Time Log</td>
<td>Individual Practice Assessment: What are your assumptions, concerns, goals?</td>
<td>90</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>October 11</td>
<td>Chapter 8&lt;br&gt;Review Learning Agreement&lt;br&gt;Time Log&lt;br&gt;Site Visit Form</td>
<td>Time Log&lt;br&gt;Site Visit Form</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>October 18</td>
<td>Chapter 10&lt;br&gt;Time Log</td>
<td>Individual Practice Assessment: What is the “context” of your placement?</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>October 25</td>
<td>Chapter 11&lt;br&gt;NO CLASS&lt;br&gt;Nevada Day</td>
<td>Time Log</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>November 1</td>
<td>Chapter 8&lt;br&gt;Time Log</td>
<td>Individual Practice Assessment: How are you handling your initial field experiences? What are you doing to</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Assignment</td>
<td>Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 Nov</td>
<td>No reading</td>
<td>Time Log</td>
<td>165</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12 Nov</td>
<td>Chapter 9</td>
<td>Time Log</td>
<td>180</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Individual Practice Assessment: Apply the “Eight Steps to Creating Change&quot; model to a situation (p. 263-277).</td>
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<tr>
<td>13 Nov</td>
<td>Chapter 14</td>
<td>Time Log</td>
<td>195</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Pgs.398-402</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 Nov</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td>Time Log</td>
<td>210</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thanksgiving Day</td>
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<td>Individual Practice Assessment: What are your “termination plans” for the end of the semester?</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 Dec</td>
<td>Review Learning Agreement</td>
<td>Final Time Log</td>
<td>225</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Field hours must be complete</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 Dec</td>
<td>Final Exam TBD</td>
<td>Final Individual Practice Assessment: Take stock of what you have learned and practiced this semester. What do you need to accomplish next semester?</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluation of Field Performance Due</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
References


Nevada Administrative Code for Social Workers

NAC §641B which can be retrieved from [http://leg.state.nv.us/NAC/NAC-641B.html](http://leg.state.nv.us/NAC/NAC-641B.html) as of 2/21/13 especially:

- NAC §641B.200 Professional responsibility (NRS 641B.160)
- NAC §641B.205 Responsibility to client (NRS 641B.160)
- NAC §641B.210 Confidentiality of records (NRS 641B.160)

NRS §641B which can be retrieved from [http://leg.state.nv.us/NRS/NRS-641B.html](http://leg.state.nv.us/NRS/NRS-641B.html) as of 2/21/13

all Nevada Revised Statutes which can be retrieved from [http://www.leg.state.nv.us/NRSIndex/S.html](http://www.leg.state.nv.us/NRSIndex/S.html) on 2/21/13


