



PRACTICUM HANDBOOK

Bethel College
Social Work

2026-27



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Welcome to Social Work Practicum Instruction at Bethel College

We are excited to collaborate with you (students, practicum instructors, and practicum liaisons) to prepare new social workers for exciting areas of practice. Practicum instruction is a vital part of the social work curriculum. It provides an opportunity for students to practice skills and to integrate knowledge and values through authentic work experiences. Students are excited to see social work come alive. Practicum instructors play a key role in social work education by mentoring students, assisting the Social Work Program at Bethel College, and expanding enthusiasm for our profession.

This manual will give you an overview of the practicum process. It can be used as an orientation to practicum and as a written guide to supplement ongoing contacts with Bethel College faculty. We hope that the manual will facilitate the process of practicum instruction and therefore enhance the unique partnership between the school and the practice community. We are also here to assist you through our trainings, practicum liaison visits, and on-going communication throughout this endeavor.

This practicum manual is divided into two sections:

- Part one is an introduction to practicum and its general requirements. It includes important information on Bethel's social work curriculum, criteria for selection of practicum instructors and agencies, and roles and responsibilities of all parties involved.
- Part two is a guide to the practicum process from beginning to end, covering all stages of work with the student including checklists and tips for helping students integrate their learning from the classroom and the practicum experience.

All practicum forms can be emailed to you and will be accessible online (link will be provided by the Social Work department). Forms will need to be completed and submitted to the Social Work department.

The Social Work Code of Ethics can be accessed through the National Association of Social Workers website. <https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>

We are always excited to hear from you about your ideas for making Practicum Education at Bethel College better. Any questions or comments concerning Practicum Education or the Social Work Program at Bethel College should be addressed to:

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CONTEXT OF PRACTICUM EDUCATION: THE COLLEGE AND THE PROGRAM

Bethel College is a four-year church-related liberal arts college in North Newton, Kansas. The college, founded in 1887, is a private coeducational college affiliated with the Mennonite Church USA. Bethel College is known for its academic excellence, tradition of service, and concern for social justice and nonviolent management of conflicts.

As an outgrowth of its service tradition, Bethel College began the Social Work Program in 1972, with accreditation and the graduation of its first class in 1974. More than 300 students have earned their social work degree from Bethel College since the Program's inception. Graduates work in a wide variety of social work jobs, with a large percentage eventually completing a Masters in Social Work degree.

BETHEL COLLEGE SOCIAL WORK MISSION AND GOALS:

The Bethel College Social Work Program seeks to prepare graduates who have values, knowledge, and skills necessary to be agents of change in today's world.

The Bethel College Social Work program mission is to prepare social workers whose practice embodies the following core values:

1. An ethic of discipleship that calls the social worker to be a compassionate presence in solidarity with marginalized people;
2. An ethic of scholarship that calls the social worker to strive for continued excellence in social work practice through intellectual curiosity and scientific critical inquiry
3. An ethic of service that calls the social worker to elevate service to others above self-interest and to address social problems while assisting those in need;
4. An ethic of integrity that is the foundation for holistic personal and professional relationships.
5. An ethic of community that prizes social connectivity and inclusion;
6. An ethic of peace and social justice that calls social workers to work for human rights and global and societal peace through challenging social injustice and bringing empowerment in the face of oppression;
7. An ethic of diversity that is committed to anti-oppressive practice, and respects the inherent dignity and worth of every individual, keeping in mind the unique intersectionality of gender, sexuality, culture, ethnicity, religion, ability, race, and other individual or group differences.

With the above values as a foundation, the purpose of the Social Work Program is to prepare students for generalist practice within the context of the values and ethics of the social work profession.

Social Work Education at Bethel College:

The Bethel College Social Work Program believes all people, regardless of their status, are worthy of dignity, respect, and competent service. Through this, we are committed to anti-

oppressive and anti-racist practice and the elimination of poverty. We believe that students must understand how individuals and groups come to be marginalized in their social transactions with oppressive social systems and then must commit to social change and advocacy. Through social work education, students should develop the commitment, knowledge, and skills needed to identify people's strengths and help them achieve social, racial, economic, and environmental justice. Bethel College Social Work believes that competent practice includes peace-building, advocacy, and creative management of conflict in work with various sizes and types of human systems including individual, family, group, organization, community, and society.

Bethel College Social Work Program goals:

1. To prepare students for entry-level professional practice of social work in a variety of settings. Graduates of the program will be prepared to be "generalist" social work practitioners with sensitivity to diversity and competence to intervene with people and their environments for the purpose of enhancing the quality of life and building just systems for individuals, families, groups and organizations, and communities.
2. To prepare students for continued social work education on a graduate level through enhancing critical thinking skills, development of research expertise, and use of technology to promote sustainable practice for the future.
3. To be responsive to the needs of the south-central Kansas community through providing social work educational opportunities for prospective students and practicing professionals and by addressing the social welfare needs of residents.
4. To contribute to the realization of the mission of Bethel College through fostering a greater understanding of diverse people in relation to their environment, encouraging service in a globally interdependent world, and through developing the skills necessary for leadership in the quest for peace, social, racial, environmental, and economic justice.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES:

Students who satisfactorily complete the social work major will have demonstrated competence in nine areas, showing the ability to integrate and apply social work knowledge, values, and skills while utilizing professional cognitive and affective processes. The Program's Outcomes are consistent with the nine competencies articulated in the Council for Social Work Education (CSWE) Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS).

A student who completes a Bethel College bachelor of social work degree will have demonstrated the following competencies necessary for beginning level professional practice:

1. The ability to demonstrate ethical and professional behavior.
2. The ability to advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.
3. The ability to engage anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion in practice.
4. The ability to engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice.
5. The ability to engage in policy practice.
6. The ability to engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

7. The ability to assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
8. The ability to intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
9. The ability to evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

The above outcomes, expressed as expected core competencies, contribute to fulfilling the mission of Bethel College and the mission and goals of the social work program. Each outcome consists of skills, values, knowledge and cognitive and affective processes needed to demonstrate value-based and professionally competent service--an underlying theme embraced by both the college and the social work program. The program outcomes are interrelated and together focus attention on the requirements for beginning generalist practice and continued professional development. Finally, the outcomes support a commitment to compassion and social justice for victims of oppression.

POLICY ON NONDISCRIMINATION:

Students are admitted to the social work program without discrimination in regard to class, race, ethnicity, color, culture, national origin, creed, religion/spirituality, age, gender, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, marital status, veteran or military status, immigration or citizenship status, political affiliation, tribal sovereignty status, ability/disability, or other individual or group difference.

SAFETY STANDARDS:

All Social Work students are required to follow the safety protocol and standards set by their host agency. Expectations and standards for safety are reviewed with students in class and in practicum visits.

All practicum placements should have clear guidelines regarding safety in the workplace. Students should receive orientation regarding these guidelines in the beginning of their placements. They should also have directions about where to go should they have any questions regarding their own safety or the safety of a service-user. This could include:

- Building safety and security including any access or exit issues
- Emergency procedures and evacuation routes in case of a natural disaster or other emergency.
- Staff responsibilities and procedures regarding violence in the workplace.
- Guidelines for home/community visits.
- Communication procedures regarding knowing where the student is and how they can be located quickly.
- Transportation guidelines (students are not to transport clients under any circumstances).
- Processes for debriefing critical incidents.
- Information regarding sexual harassment in the workplace.
- Guidelines regarding work time when there are others present in the workplace.

DEFINITION OF GENERALIST SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE:

The program uses the following model of practice in preparing students for social work. We view professional social work as a problem-solving activity whose chief purpose is the enhancement and restoration of people's capacity for social functioning. Guiding this purpose are the values and ethics of the profession as set forth by the National Association of Social Workers (2008). All people, regardless of their status, are worthy of dignity, respect, and competent service. Professional social work is especially attentive to individuals and groups who are marginalized because of their social transactions with oppressive social systems.

A central activity of social work is creative problem solving and nonviolent management of conflicts that people experience in transactions with their various social environments. The view that people are members of various social systems is necessary for a full understanding of the complex dynamics of person/environment change. With this perspective, we recognize that it is important to enhance the capacity of neighborhoods and communities to provide opportunities for belonging and participation and to address oppression through social change

The purposes of social work are realized through four key functions:

1. Enhancing people's problem-solving abilities.
2. Connecting people with resources.
3. Working to make resource systems more responsive and just.
4. Intervening to create new resources.

Execution of the above functions requires generalist social workers skilled in implementing a problem-solving process. This process requires the engagement of client systems in a purposeful and ethical relationship that builds on strengths and adaptive efforts. Mutuality is a key feature of this relationship, bringing together the client's perspective and the knowledge-based perspective of the social worker for a holistic assessment of relevant aspects of the client/environment social relationship. The process involves intervention that recognizes the client's right to dignity, self-determination, and the fullest participation possible. Finally, the process requires continuous evaluation to assure accountability for both the implementation and the outcomes.

Clients may be individuals, groups, families, organizations, or communities. Social work practice may focus on facilitating change in the client system itself, change in some other system on behalf of the client system, and/or may involve activities aimed at achieving social justice for classes of people who are victims of oppression and discrimination.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION POLICY FOR SOCIAL WORK

The social work department encourages students to be advocates and active participants in the ***explicit curriculum***. Students are always asked to provide critical feedback on courses as well as to provide their thoughts and ideas about the social work curriculum as a whole. Students provide this input informally through conversations and interactions with faculty and staff as well as formally through midterm and final assessments, matriculation conferences, advising meetings, senior focus group, pre-graduation evaluations, and practicum interviews. Faculty and staff consult with students prior to making any major curricular changes. They also consult with students and alumni on desired electives or topics to be incorporated into course content.

Students take a very active role in seeking out options for Practicum placements, especially if they have a particular area of practice interest.

The social work department encourages students to be advocates and active participants in the ***implicit curriculum***. Students can choose to do so by participating in clubs and organizations on campus related to the values and ethics of social work. Social work students are represented on our Advisory Council, Lectureship Selection Committee, Anniversary Committee, and other groups. They can also serve as leaders for special events on campus or in the community. We encourage students to take leadership in roles on campus that promote anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion, and we encourage and boost their participation in policy advocacy, service, or civic groups on campus and in the community.

OVERVIEW OF PRACTICUM EDUCATION

Practicum education grows out of and is related to the overall goals of the Social Work Program. The primary goal of BCSW is to prepare students for entry-level social work practice; the practicum, the site of social work's signature pedagogy, provides the context in which students learn to merge their social work knowledge, values, and skills in beginning professional practice.

In order to engage the student in applying classroom learning to practice experience, all Bethel social work students are required to complete two practicum placements:

- 80 hours (2 credit hours) in the Junior year and,
- 400 hours (9 credit hours) in the Senior year.

Students are strongly encouraged to select different agencies for the two placements to ensure a broad and varied experience in social work practicum. Bethel College's Social Work Program can draw upon a large number of agencies within the area, representing a broad spectrum of social work practice.

Practicum Experience (SWK372), is the first practicum course and provides practical experience in a social work agency setting during one term of the junior year, and experiential leadership and professional development outside of an agency setting during one other term of the junior year. The agency placement provides an opportunity for a mentoring relationship with a professional practitioner and serves as an evaluation of the student's motivation, values, and skills for pursuing the social work major. The leadership and professional development term provides an opportunity to gain practical knowledge, skills, and experience that will further enhance student's readiness for their senior practicum the following year. Practicum Experience asks students to build on the skills taught in the prerequisite course, Skills for Human Service Work (SWK310), and also provides a context for understanding subsequent course material in the social work curriculum. Students enrolled in this course will participate in a two-semester, weekly, on-campus seminar to share placement experiences and to apply course material to the practicum experience.

Practicum Instruction (SWK472) is a senior-level course designed to provide students with opportunities to further integrate and apply knowledge and theory to actual social work practice situations. Students will begin their practicum at the beginning of any college term (Fall, Spring, or Summer), and will be completed through the course of two terms; exceptions for a single-term practicum will be considered on a case-by-case student basis. During the senior year, students are required to enroll in Pre-Practice Seminar I and II, a weekly seminar with a component focusing on the practicum experience.

Credit for both Practicum Experience and Practicum Instruction is offered on a credit/no credit basis. Evaluation is provided by the agency and practicum instructor regarding work at the agency. The Practicum Director offers feedback concerning the completion of requirements for written work in concurrent seminars and assigns the final grade in the course.

OBJECTIVES OF PRACTICUM EDUCATION

The goal of supervised practicum work is to provide an arena for students to use and integrate the knowledge, skills, and values learned throughout the rest of the program's curriculum. In addition, practicum work makes unique contributions to student learning: the individualization of the student's learning needs and adaptation of teaching to these needs; an opportunity for the student to put knowledge to use in the service of others; and an opportunity for the student to experience her/himself in a professional role.

The specific objectives of the SWK372 Practicum Experience (Junior-level) course follow. Upon completion of Practicum Experience, a student should be able to:

1. Demonstrate ability to establish an appropriate helping relationship (Competency 6).
2. Demonstrate a beginning understanding of group work in the social services, including an ability to participate in or facilitate group interaction (Competency 8).
3. Understand the agency as a context for social work practice (Competency 5).
4. Demonstrate adherence to appropriate social work values and the Code of Ethics in the context of a social service agency (Competency 1).
5. Demonstrate interviewing and assessment skills appropriate to a beginning level in social work (Competency 7).
6. Have a beginning awareness of the roles social workers play in relation to other disciplines (Competency 1).
7. Display an ability to identify the problem-solving process in use in the social service agency and a beginning ability to use the problem-solving process with individuals or groups (Competency 7).
8. Demonstrate awareness of anti-racism practices related to intersectionality with regard to age, caste, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, generational status, immigration status, legal status, marital status, political ideology, race, nationality, religion and spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status or other individual or group difference as these issues affect the relationships and work of human service workers. (Competency 3)

The specific educational objectives of the SWK472 Practicum Instruction (Senior-level) course follow. Upon completion of Practicum Instruction, a student should be able to:

1. Display ability to assume a professional role in relation to clients and other professionals, including demonstration of self-awareness, commitment to social work values and ethical standards, and professional autonomy and responsibility (Competency 1).
2. Demonstrate through anti-racist practice, knowledge of the relationship of individuals and their environments and the diversity of needs and capabilities that the intersectionality of age, caste, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, generational status, immigration status, legal status, marital status, political ideology, race, nationality, religion and spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status and other differences bring as well as the mechanisms and forms of privilege, power, and oppression found in the environment (Competency 3).
3. Understand and engage in practices that advance human rights and social, racial economic, and environmental justice (Competency 2).

4. Utilize social work research to improve practice and understand appropriate intervention possibilities; engage in practice-informed research and in evaluation of own practice interventions (Competency 4).
5. Engage in policy practice, demonstrating understanding of the role of policy in service delivery and access to services, and demonstrating the ability to critique and advocate for just policies and structures (Competency 5).
6. In keeping with the importance of human relationship and collaboration, demonstrate ability to engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities (Competency 6).
7. Demonstrate appropriate use of social work theories through assessment with and on behalf of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities (Competency 7).
8. Demonstrate ability to intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities (Competency 8).
9. Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, applying findings to improve practice effectiveness (Competency 9).

National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) Competencies for a Career-Ready Workforce are integrated into practicum education. Students enrolled in SWK372 Practicum Experience and SWK472 Practicum Instruction will meet the following competencies through activities identified on their individual learning contracts in their practicum agencies, as well as through classroom assignments and discussions in the accompanying course seminars:

1. Proactively develop oneself and one's career through continual personal and professional learning, awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses, navigation of career opportunities, and networking to build relationships within and without one's organization (Career & Self-Development).
2. Clearly and effectively exchange information, ideas, facts, and perspectives with persons inside and outside of an organization (Communication).
3. Identify and respond to needs based upon an understanding of situational context and logical analysis of relevant information (Critical Thinking).
4. Demonstrate the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills required to equitably engage and include people from different cultures and backgrounds. Engage in anti-oppressive practices that actively challenge the systems, structures, and policies of racism and inequity (Equity & Inclusion).
5. Recognize and capitalize on personal and team strengths to achieve organizational goals (Leadership).
6. Knowing work environments differ greatly, understand and demonstrate effective work habits, and act in the interest of the larger community and workplace (Professionalism).
7. Build and maintain collaborative relationships to work effectively toward common goals, while appreciating diverse viewpoints and shared responsibilities (Teamwork).
8. Understand and leverage technologies ethically to enhance efficiencies, complete tasks, and accomplish goals (Technology).

SELECTION GUIDELINES FOR PRACTICUM PLACEMENT AGENCIES AND PRACTICUM INSTRUCTORS

The following are criteria to be considered in the selection of a practicum placement for BCSW students. At times, a criterion may be waived at the discretion of the Practicum Director in order to provide a student with a placement meeting their particular needs.

1. The availability of a social worker on staff with a minimum of two-years post-social work degree practice experience and the time and motivation to be a practicum instructor. Although a master's level social worker is highly preferred, an experienced BSW may be designated as a practicum instructor. (If a qualified social worker staff member is not available, a qualified social work practicum instructor from outside the agency may also be utilized.) For Practicum Experience (Junior-level), a practicum instructor with social work credentials is preferred, but not required.
2. Administrative support for practicum instruction activities as demonstrated by:
 - a. Granting the practicum instructor or supervisor of daily activities the necessary time for teaching and supervising students.
 - b. Providing the student with physical facilities and materials necessary for the student to function as a professional. These include desk space, facilities for privacy in interviewing and tutorial instruction, reimbursement for agency-related travel, and provision of essential clerical services.
 - c. Providing agency sanction for the student to assume responsibility for the clientele with whom the student is working.
3. The opportunity for students to gain practice experience with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
4. The opportunity for students to gain practice experience with persons from diverse racial, ethnic, national origins, and cultural heritages and/or from age, religion, gender, disability, socio-economic status different from the student's own.
5. The agency's support of the educational focus of practicum instruction by granting time for supervisors to attend conferences, seminars, or workshops on practicum instruction sponsored by the Social Work Program.
6. The agency's proximity to Bethel College to allow for frequent visits by faculty practicum consultants.
7. The internal stability of the agency.
8. The agency's adherence to social work values and social work ethics.
9. The agency's adherence to a policy of non-discrimination regarding class, race, ethnicity, culture, gender identity and expression, age, religion, ability/disability, sexual orientation and expression, citizenship status, political affiliation, marital status, veteran or military status, tribal sovereignty status, or other individual or group difference.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN PRACTICUM EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning in practicum instruction depends upon the collaboration of the major participants: the student, the agency, and the faculty liaison or Practicum Director. The following is a delineation of the responsibilities each of these participants needs to assume to ensure an effective learning experience.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Meet with Practicum Director to discuss populations and agencies of interest within the first full month of the semester prior to the placement.
2. Complete a practicum instruction application form and return it to the Practicum Director by the appropriate due date.
3. Arrange a placement interview with the agency.
4. Coordinate start date directly with agency and report to the agency at the date and time specified for the beginning of placement.
5. Complete and submit Practicum Placement Contract by the first day of the placement.
6. Participate with the practicum instructor in formulating a Learning Contract that articulates learning objectives and learning assignments. Learning Contract must be submitted no later than the end of the first month of the placement.
7. Enter their hours in their student timesheet by the end of each week of the placement. Hours that are not submitted by the end of each worked week may not be accepted by the Bethel College Social Work Program in an effort to prevent fraudulent and/or inaccurate reporting of hours.
8. Complete weekly journal entries reflecting on tasks, successes and challenges, and growth of the student throughout the practicum. Failure to complete journals in a timely manner may result in loss of hours due to inability to account for the student's time and efforts in that week.
9. Develop professional work habits in completion of agency assignments.
10. Attend and actively participate in weekly conferences with the practicum instructor.
11. Observe the agency's schedule for working hours. In the case of illness or other extraordinary circumstances necessitating absence, the student is expected to notify the practicum instructor about the reasons for the absence and expected date of return. The student must arrange to make up for lost time to complete the hours required. Students are entitled to time away consistent with Bethel College's schedule.
12. Make advance preparations for case responsibilities when absent for vacations.
13. Seek assistance from the faculty practicum liaison when encountering problems in the placement.
14. Participate in the midterm and final evaluation conferences with the practicum instructor.
15. Complete an evaluation of the practicum experience at the end of the placement and return to Bethel's Practicum Director.
16. Adhere to the Social Work Code of Ethics in work with clients, colleagues, and the agency.
17. Complete all agency records as requested.
18. Make efforts to apply principles learned in the classroom to practice during practicum.

PRACTICUM DIRECTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The Practicum Director has primary responsibility for development and oversight of the practicum instruction program and for administering the policies governing the practicum instruction program.

Practicum Director responsibilities:

1. Select practicum placements and practicum instructors in accordance with the guidelines established by the Program.
2. Assign students to a practicum placement setting.
3. Provide practicum instructors and agencies with information about the Social Work Program including curriculum policies, goals, and expectations for student performance. Establish a plan for orientation and ongoing training for practicum instructors.
4. Assign faculty to serve as practicum liaisons to agencies in which students are enrolled in practicum placement.
5. Provide practicum instructors with a summary of the student's education, experience, and particular interests at the beginning of the placement.
6. Aid in final arbitration when problems and conflicts arise in the practicum placement which necessitate a change of practicum instructor or practicum placement.
7. Plan for orientation of students entering Practicum Experience or Practicum Instruction.
8. Assess the quality of practicum instruction provided to each student.
9. Teach or facilitate the Practicum Experience seminar and the practicum component of the Pre-Practice Seminars.
10. Assign student grades in consultation with the practicum instructor and practicum faculty liaison.

AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Identify an appropriate practicum instructor or supervisor of daily activities and grant this person the necessary time to fulfill their practicum teaching responsibilities.
2. Provide the student with opportunities to gain practice experience with individuals, families, groups, community organizations, and policy-making bodies.
3. Provide physical facilities and materials necessary for the student to function as a professional. These include desk space, facilities for privacy in interviewing, reimbursement for agency-related travel, and provision of essential clerical services.
4. Allow the student access to case files, recordings, board meeting minutes, and other agency documents that can substantially enhance the student's agency experience.
5. Provide agency sanction for the student to carry caseload responsibilities.
6. Grant the practicum instructor time for consultation meetings with social work faculty and to enhance her/his knowledge of practicum instruction by attending conferences or workshops on practicum instruction sponsored by the Social Work Program.
7. Ensure the safety of the student including educating student about courses of action to take in potentially dangerous situations both inside and outside the agency (ie. home visits or volatile clients) and informing student about agency sexual harassment policies.

PRACTICUM INSTRUCTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The practicum instructor is the practitioner who has agreed to teach and provide learning assignments for the social work student in the practicum setting.

Practicum instructors must be licensed social workers and generally have a master's degree in social work. At times, an experienced licensed social worker with a bachelor's degree may be designated as the practicum instructor. Occasionally, practitioners who have particularly valuable knowledge and experience but who are not licensed social workers may be appointed

as supervisors of daily work with oversight or additional supervision provided by a licensed social worker outside the agency. Though a social work license is required for all Practicum Instruction (Senior-level) placements and highly preferred in all Practicum Experience (Junior-level) placements, Practicum Experience students may be permitted to work with a practicum instructor with valuable knowledge, skills, and relevant experience without a social work license.

Practicum Instructor Responsibilities:

1. Participate in the selection of practicum instruction students through interviews and assessment of students referred by the Practicum Director.
2. Sign the Practicum Placement Contract as a written agreement to confirm the placement by the first day of the placement.
3. Write a Learning Contract with the student that identifies learning goals and assignments commensurate with the educational objectives of practicum instruction.
4. Orient the new student to the agency including agency policies, procedures, services, intake procedures, case assignments, planning and referral processes, sources of funding, administrative structure, and linkage to other agencies.
5. Provide the student with tutorial instruction through weekly conferences and additional informal consultation. Weekly supervision appointments should be scheduled at a regular time to promote the student's planning and should be scrupulously kept.
6. Provide the student with regular evaluative feedback about his/her progress toward achieving competency as a beginning-level practitioner.
7. Work collaboratively with the faculty practicum liaison to maintain the educational focus of practicum instruction and to improve their practicum teaching skills.
8. Review and sign student timesheets at the end of each month to ensure accuracy.
9. Provide the Social Work Program with both midterm and final written evaluation reports of the senior student's performance and one written evaluation at the conclusion of each junior student's placement.
10. Participate in practicum instruction conferences and workshops sponsored by the Social Work Program.

FACULTY PRACTICUM LIAISON RESPONSIBILITIES

A member of the Social Work faculty is assigned to consult with practicum instructors in every agency in which a student is placed. The faculty practicum liaison meets regularly with practicum instructors to establish specific learning objectives and assignments and to facilitate the educational goals of the practicum instruction program.

Faculty Practicum Liaison responsibilities:

1. Work collaboratively with practicum instructors to ensure the educational focus of practicum instruction.
2. Meet regularly with practicum instructors to review student's learning assignments and progress toward fulfilling the practicum instruction course requirements.

3. Meet with the practicum instructor and student during the beginning phase of the placement to facilitate formulation of a learning contract.
4. Facilitate resolution of problems or conflict between the student, practicum instructor, and/or agency.
5. Read and evaluate the student's practicum journal, agency paper, ADEI assessment paper, intervention paper (Juniors) or case paper (Seniors).
6. Strengthen and support the practicum instructor's practicum teaching skills.
7. Support the practicum instructor with midterm and final evaluations of the student.
8. Recommend continuing or discontinuing a student's practicum placement in the agency or continuing or discontinuing practicum instructor participation.
9. Receives assigned practicum paperwork from student (learning contract, resume, agency information, evaluations of practicum placement, midterm and final evaluations.)

EMPLOYMENT-BASED PRACTICUMS:

Students completing practicum instruction in an agency where they are employed should note the following guidelines:

1. All activities that count toward the minimum of 400 contact hours and for which the student receives credit for practicum instruction must be set forth and guided by the **Practicum Instruction Learning Contract**. This contract is established through collaboration among the student, the practicum instructor, and the practicum liaison. This requirement is the same as with all practicum instruction placements.
2. Availability of release time if needed for completion of course and practicum instruction requirements must be ensured by the agency.
3. Practicum instruction must be educationally focused rather than solely focused on agency services.
4. It is preferred that a separate practicum instruction supervisor from the student's employment supervisor should oversee the practicum instruction whenever possible, though in some cases agencies are unable to provide a separate instructor. In these instances, practicum instruction supervision must be focused on student learning directly relating to tasks and objectives on their Learning Contract which may differ from their employment responsibilities.
5. Practicum instruction in settings where the student is also employed must be administered in accordance with the pattern Bethel College uses for all students.
6. Agencies involved in this type of practicum instruction placement must meet the same criteria as other practicum instruction agencies used by the Bethel College Social Work Program.
7. Practicum instructors in this type of practicum instruction placement must meet the same criteria as other practicum instructors used by the Bethel College Social Work Program.

OVERVIEW OF THE PRACTICUM EDUCATION PROCESS

PLACEMENT SELECTION

The Practicum Director arranges all practicum placements with special consideration to student interests. During the semester before placement is to begin, the Practicum Director meets with the student to discuss interests, needs, and challenges the student faces as well as potentially available practicum agencies. The Practicum Director and the student select one or more agencies as most appropriate in meeting the learning needs of the student. The Practicum Director contacts each of these agencies to ask about the availability of a qualified practicum instructor and practicum assignments. The student is responsible for setting up appointments and interviewing with available practicum instructors and agencies. The student then selects the agency of their choice. The Practicum Placement Contract is then signed by the school, the agency, and the student.

Placement timeline: Placements should be confirmed in the semester before the placement begins.

Practicum Placement Contracts should be signed as a part of that confirmation and must be submitted by the first day of the placement. Students should not begin their placement until the placement contract has been signed by all parties.

PLACEMENT OBJECTIVES

Because Bethel College's Social Work Program prepares students for entry-level social work, the school requires that practicum placements reflect a generalist approach to social work practice. The objectives for Practicum Instruction and Practicum Experience should be used as guides in designing a placement.

Within this framework, the practicum instructor, student, and liaison should plan for the following types of assignments when developing a plan for a **Practicum Experience (SWK372 Junior Placement)**:

1. Chance to establish a helping relationship and practice interviewing and communication skills with one or more individuals.
2. Opportunity to observe, participate in, and assist in facilitating a task or treatment group.
3. Opportunity to learn about the agency through staff meetings and contacts with a variety of agency employees.
4. Chance to observe and identify the problem-solving process in use in the agency and show a beginning ability to use the problem-solving process.
5. Opportunity to work with persons of different age, race, color, gender, ethnicity, class, or gender orientation from the student.

In the senior-level course, **Practicum Instruction (SWK472 Senior Placement)**, the practicum instructor, student, and liaison should adhere to the following standards when designing the placement and assignments:

1. Each student must gain practice experience with all sizes of systems: individuals and families, groups (task and/or treatment), the organization itself, and the community.
2. Each student must gain practice experience with persons from diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural heritages, and/or from age, sex, sexual orientation, socio-economic status different than their own.
3. Each student must have the opportunity to become knowledgeable about, observe, and critique agency and social policies affecting the provision of services to consumers of the agency's services.
4. Each student must gain practice experience in all phases of the problem-solving process: engagement, assessment and goal-setting, intervention, evaluation, and termination.

DURING THE PRACTICUM PLACEMENT

After the initial orientation and assessment, it is time for choosing appropriate ongoing assignments for students and thus for the serious work of the placement to begin. The needs of four systems should be kept in mind in this process: the student, the agency, the recipients of services, and the Bethel College Social Work Program. The initial phase of the placement clarifies the needs of the student. The practicum instructor has the responsibility to protect and look out for the interests of both the agency and the recipients of services. In any assignment, the ultimate responsibility for clients must rest with the practicum instructor or agency. Although it is essential that students do meaningful and real work, agencies should not plan to fill regular staffing needs with students. Students' learning should be protected with smaller caseloads/fewer assignments and more time for instruction, preparation, and reflection.

PRACTICUM PLACEMENT CONTRACT

The Practicum Director ensures a Practicum Placement Contract between the student, Bethel College, and the agency is signed before the placement begins.

LEARNING CONTRACT

An individualized Learning Contract is an important guide for the practicum experience and is a joint effort between practicum instructor and student. The contract is the agreement about what is to be learned and the specific assignments that will lead to that learning. The contract can be thought of as a road map for the practicum instruction experience. Both practicum instructor and student need to have some idea of where they are going (objectives), how to get there (learning experiences), and how they will know when they arrive (evaluation). The contract provides the overall structure and plan for the placement experience, although it can be adjusted when circumstances dictate. Because the contract will include information about expectations, it can diminish anxiety of the student about the unknown and can also aid in the process of ongoing feedback and evaluation.

The contract should be negotiated and written within the first month of the experience. The student should initiate the writing of the learning contract with the practicum instructor and is responsible for giving a copy of the contract to the practicum liaison. The following steps suggest a process that can facilitate the development of a contract:

1. Student and practicum instructor meet to discuss what the student is hoping to learn and gain from the placement and what the practicum instructor is expecting from the student. Review of potential assignments available in the agency should also be included.
2. The student writes a draft of their Learning Contract.
3. At a second conference, the student and practicum instructor modify the draft contract with additions or revisions. Discussion should include how accomplishments of the objectives will be evaluated. It may be helpful to specify the degree of skill or knowledge necessary to be rated as satisfactory, unsatisfactory, or outstanding. Use of examples to describe the various skill levels frequently clarifies the learning task for the student.
4. The student completes a final draft of the contract, arranges for appropriate signatures on the typed copy, and gives a copy to the Practicum Director and/or Practicum Liaison.

The Learning Contract becomes part of the framework for training at the agency. The learning objectives and tasks become the basis for future evaluation of the student.

PRACTICUM ASSIGNMENTS

Following orientation and identification of educational experiences in the Learning Contract, the practicum instructor begins assigning specific cases and tasks. The practicum instructor, not the student, should take responsibility for finding cases from their own pool of cases or in consultation with other staff. A student's first cases should be task-oriented. When the presenting problem is concrete and can be resolved quickly through contacts with community resources or by playing an advocacy or linking role, the student can experience success. This gradually eases the student into the social work role, builds confidence, and prepares him/her for more difficult challenges.

INTEGRATION OF THEORY AND PRACTICE

Practicum experience is a primary arena in the social work curriculum for the integration of learning from classroom and practice. In practicum, the student must act on the abstract ideas learned in the classroom. There are two primary ways in which the practicum curriculum is designed for integration: 1) ongoing educationally-directed supervision of the student by the practicum instructor, and 2) integrating practicum seminars.

1. ONGOING SUPERVISION AND FEEDBACK

The student and the practicum instructor should have a regularly scheduled weekly conference. The content of these meetings will vary depending upon the stage of the placement and needs of the student, but should be educationally focused. In the beginning, meeting time will be consumed with orientation, assessing the student, and in developing a trusting relationship. Integration of theory and practice can be encouraged by discussing together the student's courses, key concepts from classes and how they will fit with practicum. After orientation, the contract can be developed. As case and task assignments are made, conference time can be spent in preparing the student for work with cases through role play, "tuning in", and review of the records. The student and practicum instructor together should continually explore connections between practicum and classroom content. The student should be challenged to apply theories to cases or agency situations and to assess the environmental and societal issues raised by practice situations. It is also expected that the practicum instructor and student will discuss values, ethics, policy, and personal experiences and style as they influence the student's work. Near the end of the placement, the student will need conference time to discuss and plan for termination with the agency and clients.

Both student and practicum instructor should prepare for supervisory sessions by developing an agenda. A supervisory notebook can be a helpful tool for practicum instructors. The practicum instructor may keep track of topics of discussion, examples of accomplishments or problems encountered, and assignments made with due dates. The notebook can be used in this way to keep records for evaluative purposes.

Learning requires specific feedback; practicum instructors should offer feedback regularly and students should routinely ask for it. The Learning Contract should be used as the standard for discussing student progress. It may be helpful to review the final evaluation form from time to time to compare the student's work with evaluation criteria. As in all of social work, the practicum instructor and student can profit from using a strengths perspective.

Some additional recommendations for practicum instructors supervising students are:

- Communicate the attitude that students are learners and not workers. Invite them to take advantage of all educational opportunities possible. It is important to decrease the pressure to perform and emphasize learning.
- Be direct and honest in evaluating the student's work. Viewing criticism as constructive is helpful to learning.
- Be open with sharing your own experiences in work and in practicum placements. It is helpful for students to know that practicum instructors are fallible and to see them as models of lifelong learners.
- Ask the student for course syllabi or textbooks in order to become acquainted with class content and theories. In this way, theory-practice integration is encouraged.
- Schedule ample time to be available to students, yet urge them to also develop independence as they gain confidence in the role of social worker.

2. STUDENT COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

In addition to the supervisory conferences, the Practicum Experience seminar and the practicum component of the Pre-Practice Seminar are designed for integration of classroom and practicum learning. Each seminar is concurrent with the student's practice in the agency. Please see the next section for information on student assignments.

STUDENT ASSIGNMENTS

Requirements for the **Practicum Experience** (SWK372 Junior Placement) course ask students to meet in a seminar weekly. Students must complete the following assignments which address integration:

- Journal of experiences from the practicum agency and reflections upon how theory and concepts of social work apply to the practical experiences.
- Oral and written presentation describing the agency using systems concepts.
- Oral and written presentation of an intervention with a recipient of services who is different from the student in one of the following ways: race, ethnicity, culture, age, class, gender, sexual orientation, class, disability/ability, religion/spirituality.
- Oral and written presentation evaluating and describing the agency's practices, policies, and procedures relating to Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.
- Readings related to social work values and Code of Ethics as well as other topics.

In the alternative term of SWK372 enrollment when the student is not placed in an agency setting, students will continue to be expected to attend a weekly seminar in which additional assignments in areas of leadership and professional development will be given.

Concurrent with **Practicum Instruction** (SWK472 Senior Placement), students attend the Pre-Practice Seminar with social work faculty. The seminar gives opportunity for students to learn about other types of practicum settings, share experiences, and further integrate theory with practice.

Assignments to be completed by students include the following:

- Journal of experiences and reflections upon how theory and social work concepts apply to practical experiences.
- Oral and written presentation about the agency.
- Oral and written presentation of a case study from practicum, including theories used to understand and make decisions about case.
- Oral and written presentation evaluating and describing the agency's practices, policies, and procedures relating to Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.
- Completion of evaluation research of student's own practice.

ENDING THE PRACTICUM PLACEMENT

Evaluation is an important ingredient for continuous professional development. It provides essential information about strengths and acquired skills and identifies areas where additional growth is needed. Students particularly need evaluative feedback to help them feel confident about their performance and to offer assurance that they are meeting the expectations.

Evaluation also provides the school and the student with a written record of the student's performance for purposes of granting credit and writing recommendations for graduate school or employment. Although evaluation should be an integral part of the regularly scheduled conferences between practicum instructor and student, there is a more formalized process for evaluation: at midterm (for just Practicum Instruction students), and at the final (for both Practicum Instruction and Practicum Experience students).

1. Midterm Assessment for Practicum Instruction: Midway through each practicum placement, the practicum instructor and student schedule a conference to assess the student's progress, to adjust assignments, and to reaffirm or modify the Learning Contract. The practicum instructor in a senior placement, along with the student, completes the "Midterm Evaluation Form" and submits it to the faculty liaison. Practicum instructors in junior placements can review the evaluation form with students to offer a midway forecast of the final evaluation; there is no submission of an evaluation.
2. Final Evaluation: The final evaluation asks the practicum instructor to rate the student's demonstrated competencies and readiness for beginning-level social work practice. Online links to complete the Practicum Instruction (SWK472 Seniors) and Practicum Experience (SWK372 Juniors) final evaluation will be supplied by the department. *Completed surveys can only be printed by the Social Work department. Instructors and students may request a copy of the completed evaluation by contacting the Practicum Supervisor or the Administrative Assistant.* If using a printed (instead of online) version of this evaluation is preferred, that can be provided.

TERMINATION

The dynamics of the ending of the practicum instructor-student relationship may be seen as parallel to dynamics of the termination of the student-client relationship. Because of the similarity, it is part of the learning process for the student to attend to the common themes in endings. Themes that may emerge include a denial of the feelings associated with endings, a reluctance to say good-bye, guilt or regret, and sadness and loss. It is important for student and practicum instructor to express feelings about the student's leaving and to plan for the student to deal with termination with clients in a parallel manner. An ending evaluation conference or "exit interview" which focuses on strengths and weaknesses of the practicum instructor-student relationship is considered essential. By identifying issues in the ending phase between the student and the practicum instructor, the student can develop the ability to deal with the termination phase of practice.

POLICIES FOR EARLY TERMINATION OF PLACEMENT

Success and effectiveness of the practicum placement require commitment to professionalism, ethical behaviors, and consistent communication between all parties. Though steps are taken to ensure goodness of fit and commitment to the placement during the selection and pairing process, placements may be terminated early under extenuating circumstances. The following procedures will be followed:

TERMINATION DUE TO STUDENT BEHAVIORAL MISCONDUCT

In the situation where a student's behaviors, attendance, or communication are unsatisfactory or of concern to the practicum instructor, the practicum instructor should communicate these concerns with the student and with the Practicum Director to collaboratively identify underlying causes and problem solve remediation measures for student improvement. If student behaviors or offenses continue after initial remediation measures and rise to a level that the practicum instructor no longer feels the student can continue their practicum placement in that agency, the placement will be terminated immediately. Students will not be placed in a new agency during that semester to complete their remaining hours. Students will be provided the opportunity to receive an incomplete for the course, and will work with the Practicum Director to identify an alternative, new placement for the following semester. Students will be expected to complete all practicum requirements, hours, and assignments in the new placement. Students may be required to sign and adhere to a Student Compliance and Care Contract during their new placement, which may include specific behavioral, attendance, and communication requirements, in addition to sustainable self-care practices they will utilize during the process. The student will not be provided more than one alternative placement during the student's course enrollment; if the student is unable to complete all requirements during the alternative placement, they will not receive credit and will be required to re-enroll in the course.

The Practicum Director has the right to collaborate with the Program Director on an additional student remediation and/or disciplinary measures beyond those outlined above, which may include termination from the Social Work program, depending on the severity of the concern.

TERMINATION DUE TO AGENCY CHANGES

In the situation where the practicum agency or practicum instructor are unable to complete the practicum requirements due to staffing or other internal agency factors, the practicum instructor should make efforts to communicate these concerns with the student and with the Practicum

Director as soon as they are aware of the changes. All parties will collaborate to terminate the placement respectfully and with a mutual understanding of the situation. The Practicum Director will work with the student to identify an alternative placement as soon as possible within the current semester. The student will not be expected to make up hours already completed during their initial placement. The student will be required to complete a new Practicum Placement Contract and Learning Contract in their new practicum placement.

TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT-BASED PRACTICUM

In the situation where a student becomes unemployed during an employment-based practicum for any reason, the student will be expected to immediately notify and meet with the Practicum Director to discuss options. Efforts will be made to determine if the student can continue in any capacity within the agency that may differ from the original position and responsibilities; if they cannot, arrangements will be made for an alternative placement. If the student is terminated due to student behavioral misconduct, the “Termination Due to Student Behavioral Misconduct” policy as listed above will be followed. If the student is terminated due to internal agency factors, the “Termination Due to Agency Change” policy listed above will be followed. *The Bethel College Social Work Department is unable to guarantee that the student will be placed in another employment-based practicum.*

PRACTICUM INSTRUCTOR MATERIALS WEBSITE

Practicum Instructors will be able to access documents (listed below) through a link that is emailed to Practicum Instructors at the beginning of placement. All documents can also be emailed upon request.

- BCSW Practicum Manual
- Practicum Instructor’s Evaluation of Student
- Practicum Instructor/Liaison Program Survey
- Practicum Junior or Senior Learning Contract
- Practicum Instructor Resume form: not required if a current resume is already on file (this is also available to complete online on the Practicum Instructors Materials page)
- Practicum Placement Contract form

PRACTICUM PLACEMENT STUDENT FORMS

Each practicum student has been provided a google timesheet & checklist which lists all their required forms & assignments. Here students will keep track of their practicum hours and check off forms as they have completed them. All forms below are available for students to download from Moodle.

PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE (SWK372 JUNIOR PLACEMENT)

All forms & assignments are available to students online.

- Practicum Instructor Resume (online option available)
- Practicum Placement Contract
- Junior Learning Contract
- SWK372 Junior Placement Practicum Experience Evaluation (practicum instructor's evaluation of student) Link for practicum instructor will be provided. (Survey Monkey will not allow you to print the completed survey -- contact the Program Manager for a copy.)
- Student's Evaluation of the Practicum Placement (through a Survey Monkey link)
- Practicum Application (for Senior Placement)
- Social Work Practicum Manual
- Google Timesheet & Checklist
- SWK372 Assignments: Agency Paper, Intervention Paper, ADEI Assessment

PRACTICUM INSTRUCTION (SWK472 SENIOR PLACEMENT)

All forms & assignments are available to students online.

- Practicum Instructor Resume (online form option available)
- Practicum Placement Contract
- Senior Learning Contract
- SWK472 Senior Placement Practicum Instructor's Evaluation of Student (Midterm or Final) Link for practicum instructor will be provided. (Survey Monkey will not allow you to print the completed survey -- contact the Program Manager for a copy.)
- Student's Evaluation of Practicum Placement (through a Survey Monkey link)
- Social Work Practicum Manual
- Google Timesheet & Checklist
- SWK472 Assignments: Agency Paper, Case Paper, ADEI Assessment



Practicum Manual

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