

PLANNING FOR SUPERVISION

BEYOND THE STUDENT SELF ASSESSMENT

What do you need to know about the student?

At what level in the social work program is the student?

What has the student's past experience with supervision been (positive & negative)?

What does the student expect from supervision?

What does the student need from supervision?

What is the student's style of learning and communication?

Are there multi-dimensional factors, such as age, background, and life experience, that may affect communication?

What does the student need to know about your expectations for the supervisory relationship?

Your style of supervision

Roles and responsibilities for you and the student

Your vision of the working relationship

Your availability for scheduled and unscheduled supervision

Guidelines regarding assignments and submission deadlines

A tentative overview of how you envision the placement progressing

How will supervision work?

When will you meet for supervision and where?

What is discussed in supervision?

How to discuss goals, fears, issues, assignments?

How will you & others assist the student with developing the *Field Practicum Contract*?

How should the student prepare for supervision conferences (prepared agenda, case summaries, samples of documentation, project summaries, journal, tapes, etc?)

Materials used in supervision meetings (case outlines, reports, recordings, etc.)

How will practicum activities be assigned?

Which assignments will be observed?

Who should the student contact when you are unavailable or away from the site?

How will coordination and communication with any additional field instructor or preceptors work?

How will performance evaluation work?

How will the student be formally evaluated throughout the course of the practicum (e.g. successful completion of formal trainings, evaluations from presentations given, other staff feedback, client feedback, quizzes, etc?)

How will you have direct access to student's work (observation, recordings, reports, etc?)

Will anyone else (e.g., task supervisor, program manager, trainer, etc.) provide the student with input regarding assignments and performance?

If yes, how will the student receive feedback from all involved persons?

And, how will the field instructor incorporate this feedback into the student's final evaluation?

FIELD INSTRUCTION & the SUPERVISORY STRUCTURE

Field Instructors

Students may not begin a practicum placement unless the Field Education Program has secured the identification and commitment of a designated *field instructor*. The field instructor is the most critical component of any field placement. The field instructor is the social worker who has responsibility for the development, implementation, and evaluation of the practicum student's educational experience at the practicum site. The field instructor works with the student to plan the day to day learning activities and assignments which comprise the practicum. The field instructor provides mentoring, instruction, professional guidance, practice and practicum supervision, and oversight of the student's practicum experience. The field instructor provides oversight of any non social work professional (preceptor) or task supervisor who is involved in the student's learning process.

Off-Site Field Instructors

The field instructor most typically is employed by the practicum site. If the site does not have an employee who qualifies, or who is available, to function in the field instructor role, the site may elect to use a field instructor from outside the site. There are practicum placements that depend upon the willingness of an offsite field instructor to oversee a student's practicum. The off-site instructor must be well-grounded in the work of the site and in social work education. The site must authorize the off-site field instructor to come onsite to perform the necessary on-site duties of a field instructor, e.g. shadowing the student, reviewing client records, communicating with the on-site preceptor, etc. When the field instructor is NOT working at the practicum site, there MUST be a designated onsite preceptor who will provide day-to-day supervision, and be responsible for day-to-day practicum activities and learning experiences of the student. In these placements, the field instructor must be available to both the student and the preceptor on a supervisory and consulting basis. When the preceptor is not a social worker, the school affiliated field instructor is responsible for maintaining the influence of the social work perspective in this supervisory arrangement.

The Use of Practicum Preceptors

Setting up a supervisory structure that includes the incorporation of on-site preceptors, and even off-site preceptors, to lead practicum activities that offer needed opportunities for students is a very important supervision planning responsibility for many field instructors. Preceptors may be professionally trained social workers, members of other professions, or paraprofessionals. Although preceptors may not be used in place of field instruction provided by someone who holds a social work degree, they may be used to broaden the range of learning opportunities available to students. Some preceptors may work with students providing day-to-day supervision, with the practicum instructor available on a supervisory and consulting basis. Other preceptors provide short term, specific learning opportunities, both on and off-site, that expand the student's experience.

When preceptors are incorporated into the teaching and learning process in a practicum, the extent of preceptor responsibility is determined by the field instructor and approved by the Field Education Coordinator at the time of placement approval. When preceptors are incorporated after

the practicum has begun, the extent and type of preceptor responsibility is determined by the field instructor and approved by the faculty liaison. This supervision structure, and any revisions in this structure, must be indicated in the Plan for Supervision in the Field Practicum Contract.

When a field instructor is incorporating other professionals into the instructional plan, or sharing instructional responsibilities with another MSW instructor or with preceptors, the School affiliated field instructor must provide supervision which focuses on integrative and reflective discussions which help the student integrate the preceptor's contribution to the overall learning experience.

When utilizing preceptors, it is the School affiliated field instructor's responsibility to develop clear lines of responsibility, authority and feedback about the student's performance in these activities. It is the field instructor's responsibility to check frequently with the student and colleague to monitor the effectiveness of the supervisory structure. Preceptors participate in the overall evaluation of the student's progress consistent with the amount and type of responsibility they have had for the student's learning. They provide feedback about the student's field performance to the field instructor, who has final responsibility for the student's evaluation and for recommending the student's final grade. See: Responsibilities of Preceptors and Responsibilities of the Field Instructor in Relationship to Practicum Preceptors

Field Instructor Roles and Responsibilities with Preceptors

- Designate and monitor preceptors involved with the student's educational experience
- Orient preceptor(s) to practicum course requirements, the social work perspective, the Field Practicum Contract and the attending learning processes and procedures
- Collaborate with preceptors in the development of the learning experience; determine the extent of preceptor responsibility; designate practicum activities and assignments which will be preceptor supervised
- Assure that practicum activities and assignments follow the requirements of the Field Practicum Contract; are in keeping with the perspective and practices of the social work profession; and are based on the student's skill level, knowledge and experience
- Help students integrate the preceptor's contribution with the social work perspective and with the overall learning experience
- Check frequently with the student and preceptor to monitor the effectiveness of the preceptor plan
- Develop ways the preceptor can share ongoing feedback with the student
- Obtain feedback from the preceptor regarding the student's performance in task supervised activities.
- Insure that the student is open about any conflict arising from different perspectives, or supervision or management styles; help the student focus on positive aspects of learning from other professions
- Obtain ongoing feedback from the preceptor regarding the student's performance in task supervised activities
- Consult with the preceptor regarding the student's final evaluation
- Assume final responsibility for the student evaluation

Field Instruction & Supervision: Student Requirements & Responsibilities

The first competency to appear in the Field Practicum Contract is the SUPERVISION competency. Students are responsible for letting their field instructors know about their needs of supervision 1) when interviewing for placement, and 2) in their first meeting with their field instructor. In this first meeting, the student and instructor discuss the Student Self Assessment which the student prepared as part of the practicum planning process. This discussion is the culmination of a reflection process which is initiated by the student at the outset of practicum planning. In the first supervisory conference, the instructor and student develop a plan for field supervision. This plan is recorded in the SUPERVISION competency of the Field Practicum Contract under “Plan for Supervision.”

Students are required to meet with their field instructors one hour each week in a regularly scheduled, individual, integrative, supervisory conference. In a block placement, it is preferred that students receive an additional hour of supervision each week. This additional time, beyond the first formal conference hour, can take place in group supervision, or with a preceptor, or shadowing and debriefing the field instructor’s work. Ideally, group supervision, when available, is an accompaniment to individual supervision. However, when appropriate, instructors who are working with multiple social work students can supervise their students in a group. In these instances, the instructor must be available to process more personal and sensitive issues with students on an individual basis.

All students must work with their field instructors to set regular, weekly supervisory conference times.

- Students are responsible for finding out from their instructor what is expected in these conferences and how to prepare.
- Students are responsible for obtaining field instructor signatures on all Activity Logs and Supervisory Conference Reports.
- Missed supervisory conferences must be made up; missed supervision can be documented on the Supervisory Conference Report for the missed week, with a notation that indicates when the time has been made up.

Students are responsible for understanding the importance of the supervisory structure and roles involved in their practicum placements.

- Students are expected to immediately report to the School any problems or obstacles that interfere with practicum supervision.
- When field instructors have incorporated preceptors into the student’s supervisory structure, students are responsible for understanding the roles and relationships involved in this arrangement.

Student Remuneration of Field Instructor

No student will be permitted to make separate monetary payments for supervision in relation to his or her field placement. In situations where a site does not have a staff member available who qualifies as a field instructor, the site may, at its discretion and at its expense, contract with a qualified MSW outside the site to provide the necessary field instruction.

Some Instruction & Supervision Methods

- Individual conferences
- Group supervision
- Team meetings
- Incorporation of preceptors
- Sharing office space with the student, arranging office proximity
- Unscheduled, informal discussions & availability
- Ongoing field practicum contract review
- Ongoing performance evaluation & feedback
- Consultation as needed
- Shadowing the instructor & debriefing
- Role playing
- Reverse shadowing (instructor/preceptor following, observing/sitting in)
- Coaching
- Collaboration/Co-facilitation
- Live supervision (one-way mirror)
- Video or audio recording of instructor's work; review & critique
- Video or audio recording of student's work; review & critique
- Case presentations
- Case consultation/conferences
- Reviews of student's client documentation
- Review of student's written professional communication
- Verbal reports
- Focused topic discussions
- Discussions of theory
- Reflective/Integrative discussions
- Mentoring
- Instructor stories/anecdotes
- Instructor thinking out loud
- Socratic questioning
- Student log or practicum journal
- Process recordings
- Online training
- Assigned readings & discussion
- In-service training/staff development
- Case screening & assignment selection
- Off-site assignments with preceptor feedback

Student Utilization of Supervision

The Field Practicum Contract lists only five (5) practice tasks that must be evaluated in the SUPERVISION competency. The following list is a more comprehensive look at the various ways the education contract calls upon the student to make use of supervision, or demonstrate the Supervision competency.

- Utilize supervision for ongoing development of the field education contract.
- Prepare for supervision with questions, cases, concerns and issues to discuss.
- Utilize supervision to assess personal and professional strengths and challenges.
- Use supervision to develop an awareness of personal values and sort out personal biases.
- Use supervision to clarify conflicting values and ethical dilemmas.
- Use supervision to explore differential use of self in professional relationships.
- Actively seek out and utilize supervisory feedback to evaluate and improve practice.
- Demonstrate the ability to know when to seek out supervision and feedback.
- Use supervision to integrate classroom learning with professional practice in the practicum setting.
- Use supervision to develop, monitor and revise learning goals and plans.
- Use supervision to enhance professional development.
- Use supervision to appropriately discern and use power and authority in professional relationships.
- Use supervision to ascertain/confirm statutes and regulatory standards that apply to practice at the practicum site.