

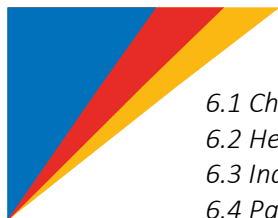
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK



FIELD EDUCATION MANUAL

UPDATED FEBRUARY 2026

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND BEGINNINGS

Michif Prayer

Li Bon Jeu, not Creatoer, li courage miyinaun, paray chee itayhtamawk, kwayesh kapimouhtayhk,
marsee chee itwayak ka kishcheetaimoyak.

God, our Creator, give us courage, let us be of one mind, make us righteous, thankful and proud.

Lee Michif Weechihik awnsawmbl chee atoushkaychik, sourtoo lee vyeu chee awpachihayakook li zhen
chee kishnamawachik pour li tawn ki vyaen.

Help the Métis to work together especially utilizing our Elders as teachers and preparing our youth for the
future.

Li Bon Jeu la diresyoon miyinawn, itayha chimiyoutayhtamak, li shmaen chee oushtawyawk pour la
Nawsyoon dee Michif ota dans not Piyee.

Lord provide us with direction and inspiration as we build a road for the Métis Nation in this Country.

Sa prend lee famee di Michif chee shoohkshichik kispin la Nation di Michif chee shoohkaw.

We must have strong Métis families in order to have a strong Métis Nation.

Marsee d'twnanan.

Thank you and amen

FIRST NATIONS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

The University of Victoria resides on the Traditional Territory of the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations.

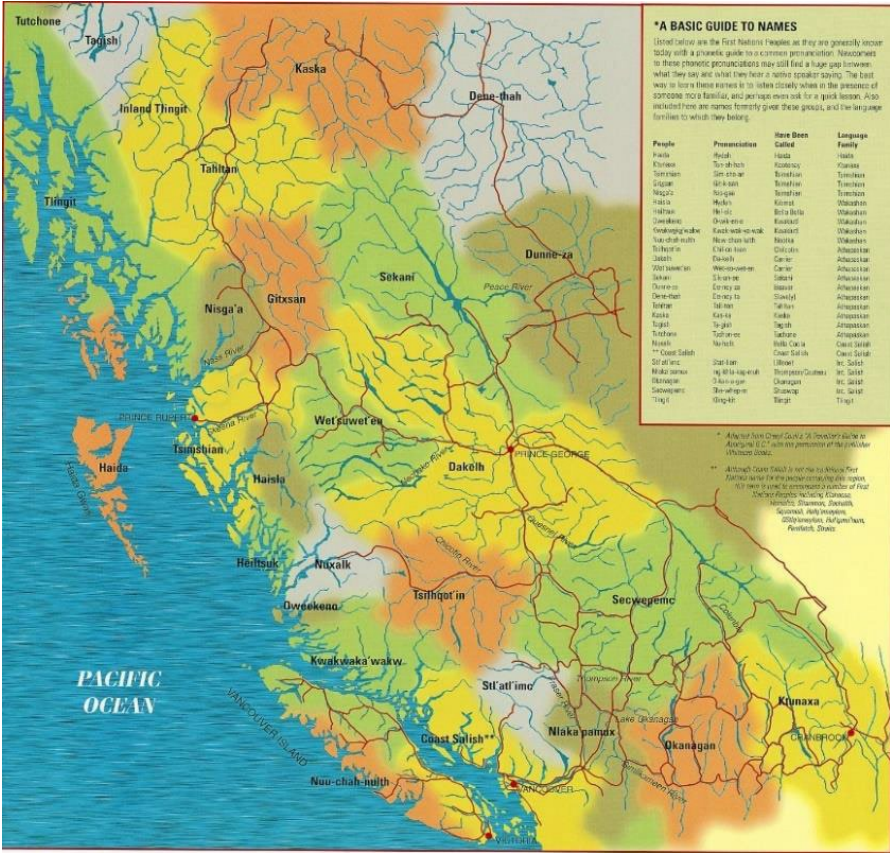
The Victoria Capital Region includes nine local First Nations:

* Songhees * Esquimalt * Tsartlip * Tsawout * Pauquachin
* Tseycum * T'Souke * Scia'new * Pacheedaht

Vancouver Island is the Traditional Territory of three language groups:

- The Coast Salish
- The Nuw -Chah -Nulth
- The Kwakwaka'wakw

FIRST NATIONS MAP OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



A BASIC GUIDE TO NAMES OF BC FIRST NATIONS

Listed below are the First Nations Peoples as they are generally known today with a phonetic guide to common pronunciation. Newcomers to these phonetic pronunciations may still find a huge gap between what they say and what they hear a native speaker saying. The best way to learn these names is to listen closely when in the presence of someone more familiar, and perhaps even ask for a quick lesson. Also included here are name formerly given these groups, and the language families to which they belong.

People

	Pronunciation	Have Been Called	Language Family
Haida	Hydah	Haida	Haida
Ktunaxa	Tun-ah-hah	Kootenay	Ktunaxa
Tsimshian	Sim-she-an	Tsimshian	Tsimshian
Gitxsan	Git-k-san	Tsimshian	Tsimshian
Nisga'a	Nis-gaa	Tsimshian	Tsimshian
Haisla	Hyzlah	Kitimat	Wakashan
Heiltsuk	Hel-sic	Bella Bella	Wakashan

Oweekeno	O-wik-en-o	Kwakiutl	Wakashan
Kwakwaka'wakw	Kwak-wak-ya-wak	Kwakiutl	Wakashan
Nuu-chah-nulth	New-chaa-nulth	Nootka	Wakashan
Tsilhqot'in	Chil-co-teen	Chilcotin	Athapaskan
Dakelh	Ka-kelh	Carrier	Athapaskan
Wet'suwet'en	Wet-so-wet-en	Carrier	Athapaskan
Sekani	Sik-an-ee	Sekani	Athapaskan
Dunne-za	De-ney-za	Beaver	Athapaskan
Dene-thah	De-ney-ta	Slave(y)	Athapaskan
Tahltan	Tall-ten	Tahltan	Athapaskan
Kaska	Kas-ka	Kaska	Athapaskan
Tagish	Ta-gish	Tagish	Athapaskan
Tutchone	Tuchon-ee	Tuchone	Athapaskan
Nuxalk	Nu-halk	Bella Coola	Coast Salish
Coast Salish**		Coast Salish	Coast Salish
Stl'atl'imc	Stat-liem	Lillooet	Interior Salish
Nlaka'pamux	Ing-khla-kap-muh	Thompson/Couteau	Interior Salish
Okanagan	O-kan-a-gan	Okanagan	Interior Salish
Secwepemc	She-whep-m	Shuswap	Interior Salish
Tlingit	Kling-kit	Tlingit	Tlingit

** Although Coast Salish is not the traditional First Nations name for the people occupying this region, this term is used to encompass a number of First Nations Peoples including Klahoose, Homalco, Sliammon, Sechelth, Squamish, Halq'emeylem, Ostlq'emeylem, Hul'qumi'num, Pentlatch, Straits.

SECTION 1: FIELD EDUCATION OVERVIEW

WELCOME

Kwe! Hello in Mi'kmaq

Numekwa! Welcome in Lekwungen

Gilakasla! Welcome in Kwakwaka

Yowtz! Hello in Haisla

Ni'it! Hello in Gitksan

Dalanghl askadung! Welcome to all in Haida

Tlax weak'e hat yiy.adi! We're so happy to see you in Kliget

Weytk! Hello in Secwepemc

Hadi H! Hello in Wet'suwet'en

Tansi! Hello in Cree

Ahnee! Or Boozhoo! Hello in Anishnabe

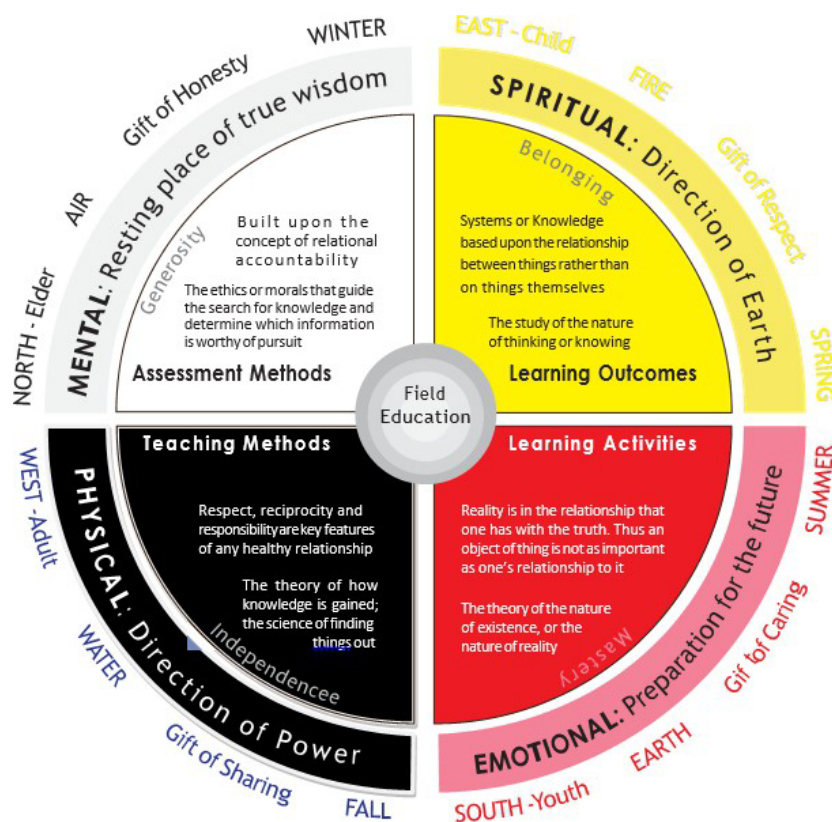
1.1 WHAT IS FIELD EDUCATION?

QUOTE FROM THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORK EDUCATORS

Field education is considered a central component of social work education because the integration of knowledge, values and skills in the context of field education is a critical and distinctive aspect of social work education. The purpose of field education is to connect the theoretical/conceptual contributions of the academic setting with the practice setting, enabling the student to acquire practice skills that reflect the learning objectives for students...

1.2 HOW DOES THE MEDICINE WHEEL INFORM OUR WORK?

The Field Education Team uses the Medicine Wheel to help us with grounding our work and guiding our intentions for field education work. We would like to acknowledge and give credit to the Nechi Institute in Edmonton Alberta who developed their medicine wheel to teach addictions counselors. This Field Education wheel was adapted from their work (Nechi. 1999).



This manual is a guidebook for the field education part of your degree.

To begin, you will locate your place in the field education process and learn about both the steps to take and how you will pull together with others along the way.

You will learn about how to navigate your relationship with a field education coordinator to secure a placement.

You will find general introductory information about how to begin your time on-site at a field placement as well as find out more about the relationship with your agency supervisor and faculty liaison.

Each journey around the wheel (each field course that you do) comes together in the end with an evaluation of the learning you have done in your placement.

1.3 WHAT ARE OTHER GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR FIELD EDUCATION?

The School and our partners, who are students, staff, sessional instructors, and faculty members, are committed to decolonizing, anti-racism, anti-oppressive, and social justice work in our leadership, research, and education. Our goals are to establish learning opportunities and/or objectives on-campus and in an online environment that promotes decolonial-equity, respect, responsibility, accountability, curiosity, collaboration, risk-taking, and creativity.

1.4 WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW IN GENERAL ABOUT PRACTICUM PLACEMENTS?

Placements are completed in a wide range of community and government agencies and can usually be done in your home community. In particular, placements are sought in agencies which offer a varied practice (e.g., working with individuals, groups, families, community involvement, and organizational change); exposure to inter-professional teamwork, non-traditional approaches to practice and innovative settings for social workers.

Although you can choose when during your degree to complete your placements you must apply by the deadline for your desired term (*a list of deadlines and links to apply for each course will be available to you after you finish the required introductory information*) and complete the required pre-requisite courses (*as per the UVIC Calendar*).

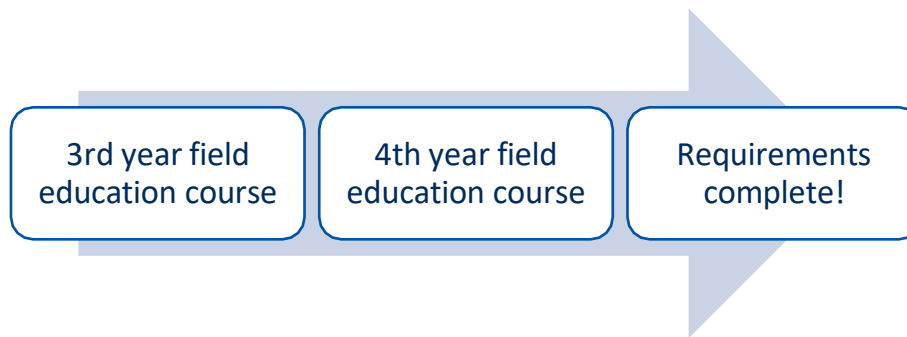
In the months leading up to your placement, a Field Education Coordinator will work with you to identify your learning interests, different placement options with community partners, and work out the details of a placement including acceptable supervision.

Availability of placements depends on factors such as your area, access to qualified supervisors, and time of year. Normally each field education placement is for a single term although there is a two term, part-time option from September to April only.

1.5 WHAT DO I NEED TO TAKE TO COMPLETE MY DEGREE?

1.5.1 Undergrad degree requirements

Successfully complete two 350-hour field education placements under the supervision of an experienced professional (field practice) and the guidance of a faculty liaison/ instructor (through the online Integrative Practice Seminar and learning plan, mid-point and final).

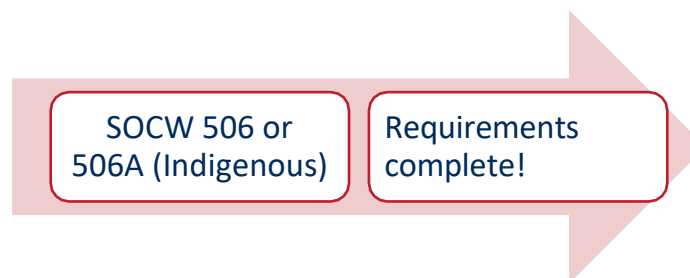


1.5.2 Graduate degree requirements

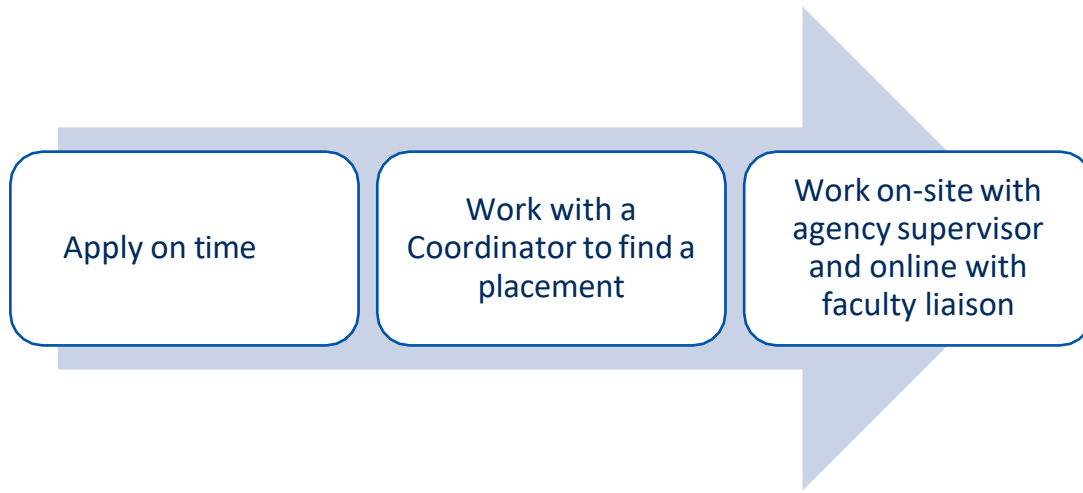
For 1st year Foundation program students, complete one 450-hour field education placement under the supervision of an experienced professional (field practice) and the guidance of a faculty liaison/ instructor (through the online Integrative Practice Seminar and learning plan, mid-point and final).



For Indigenous and Advanced program students who choose practicum over the thesis option, complete one 450-hour field education placement under the supervision of an experienced professional (field practice) and the guidance of a faculty liaison/ instructor (through the online Integrative Practice Seminar and learning plan, mid-point and final).



SECTION 2: THE JOURNEY FROM APPLICATION TO PLACEMENT



2.1 WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS?

Every student completing a placement in British Columbia is required to have a vulnerable sector criminal record check from the Ministry on file with the School. See the [Field Education site](#) for current information on how to get your criminal record check completed.

2.2 WHEN CAN I TAKE MY FIELD EDUCATION COURSE?

You can choose the term for your practicum course, but you are responsible for ensuring you apply by the deadline and successfully complete your pre-requisite courses prior to beginning each placement. Pre-requisites, for your year of entry to the program, are listed in the UVIC Academic Calendar.

For help with course planning, you can contact the Social Work Academic Advisor swadvise@uvic.ca

2.3 WHEN DO I APPLY FOR A FIELD EDUCATION COURSE?

Apply for SOCW 304, 304A, 402, 404A 6 months in advance of the start of term

Apply for SOCW 404, 540, 506, 506A 8 months in advance of the start of term

You apply by completing an application through Survey Monkey. Applications are found on the [Field Education site](#).

2.4 HOW DO I REGISTER FOR A FIELD EDUCATION COURSE?

You cannot register yourself for any Field Education course.

The School checks pre-requisites and does a bulk registration of all students for the term once registration opens.

If you have an issue with registration, please contact the Field Education Assistant at swfield@uvic.ca

2.5 WHAT DOES A FIELD EDUCATION COORDINATOR DO?

After you apply for your Field Education course, you will be matched with a Field Education Coordinator who will lead you through the steps to securing a suitable placement.

Once Coordinators have been assigned to students, you will receive an email with the contact information for your Coordinator.

2.6 WHAT DOES A FACULTY LIAISON DO?

A few days before the start of the term, you will receive an email with contact information about your Faculty Liaison (your instructor for the Integrative Practice Seminar portion of the Field Education course).

You will have access to the Integrative Practice Seminar on Brightspace on the first day of the term. This is the online portion of your field education course lead by a faculty instructor (Liaison). Not all Liaisons start instruction on the first day, so check the site for the actual start date.

2.7 WHAT DOES AN AGENCY SUPERVISOR DO?

An agency supervisor is the on-site experienced practitioner who guides you through your placement. They set the tasks that you will be involved in on-site. The supervisor connects with you and your faculty liaison for updates and evaluations.

SECTION 3: 3RD YEAR FIELD EDUCATION COURSES

3.1 WHICH COURSE DO I NEED TO TAKE: SOCW 304 OR SOCW 304A?

3.1.1 SOCW 304 General/Indigenous Specialization (350 hours; 4.5 units)

Most students take SOCW 304, which is the regular 2-part field education course (online and on-site components).

About this course

This first practicum is an opportunity to start the process of integrating what you have learned in coursework to practice in the community. No matter where you are placed, you will be able to do this integration work. For this reason, although field education coordinators will take suggestions from you on areas of interest or organizations where you would like to be, the most valuable part of this course is taking your knowledge to whichever setting is available to you.

Preparation

Complete the pre-requisite courses as outlined in the [UVic Academic Calendar](#)

Application

Ensure you have a valid British Columbia vulnerable sector criminal record check on file (if your placement is in BC)

Complete the online application survey by the **6-month** deadline

3.1.2 SOCW 304A Prior Learning Assessment (350 hours; 4.5 units)

The Prior Learning Assessment (SOCW 304A) is an alternate 3rd year practicum course for students with at least 2 years of experience in human services work within the past 5 years. If you have this experience you may qualify for this alternative, online field education course instead of completing an on-site placement.

About this course

The intention of this first practicum is to start the process of integrating what you have learned in coursework to practice in the community. As a student with prior experience in the field, it can be just as valuable to reflect on how your new understanding informs work you have already done as it is to bring this knowledge to a new experience in the community.

Preparation

Complete the pre-requisite courses as outlined in the [UVic Academic Calendar](#)

Prior experience requirement:

Much like the folks Registered Social Workers work with, students can arrive at the same place in life through a process that looks nothing like someone else's journey. For this reason, we give very basic information about how to demonstrate evidence of meeting the same competencies of a 3rd year practicum.

A minimum of 4000 hours of human services work experience within the past five years, of which a maximum of 1500 hours may include unpaid, volunteer, or a practicum undertaken in a previous education program.

An analysis, prepared by the student, which identifies how the student's specific work experiences have enabled them to acquire and achieve the learning objectives of SOCW 304 (third year practicum), which include demonstrations of critical analysis, commitment to decolonial practices, and use of anti-oppressive principles.

3rd year practicum competencies include:

- Having hands on knowledge about the primary services and practice approach of a social work focused community service.
- Demonstrating an understanding of how an agency's services relate to Indigenous people and lands, BIPOC community members, as well as the greater social, economic and political landscape.
- Recognizing current and future advocacy opportunities.
- Demonstrating self-knowledge around presentation in the workplace: verbal and non-verbal language use; seeking constructive consultation and feedback; confidentiality; conflict resolution; and ability to sustain energy for the work.
- Beginning exploration of intersectionality.
- Beginning exploration of positionality.
- Demonstrating the ability to identify and respectfully disrupt/negotiate power relations.
- Maintaining relationality, a strengths-based approach, a not-knowing stance, and respecting the change process in others' lives.

Application

1. Complete an [application survey](#) before the deadline
2. Submit [2 references](#) to swfield@uvic.ca

A minimum of two completed references forms from direct supervisors that confirm the student has attained 4000 hours of relevant work experience and has demonstrated an understanding of professional practice.

Normally, applicants must also provide evidence that they have received direct social work supervision for at least a portion of their human services work experience (i.e. engagement with a person who has a BSW or MSW degree from an accredited School of Social Work). If you have questions about the suitability of your references, please email swfield@uvic.ca

3. Submit [work history form\(s\)](#) to swfield@uvic.ca

Complete a work history form which identifies how the learning objectives of SOCW 304 (third year practicum) have been met by prior experience, which includes demonstrations of critical analysis, commitment to decolonial practices, and use of anti-oppressive principles.

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Complete the online application survey by the **6-month** deadline

Submit 2 references

Submit work history form

SECTION 4: 4TH YEAR FIELD EDUCATION COURSES

4.1 WHICH COURSE DO I NEED TO TAKE: SOCW 402, 404, OR 404A?

4.1.1 SOCW 402 General/Indigenous Specialization (350 hours; 4.5 units)

Most students take SOCW 402, which is the regular 2-part field education course (online and on-site components).

Preparation

Complete the pre-requisite courses as outlined in the [UVic Academic Calendar](#)

Application

Ensure you have a valid British Columbia vulnerable sector criminal record check on file (if your placement is in BC)

Complete the online application survey by the **6-month** deadline

4.1.2 SOCW 404 Child Protection (350 hours; 4.5 units)

Students who have declared a Child Protection specialization must take SOCW 404, which is the regular 2-part field education course (online and on-site components) at the Ministry. This is for British Columbia students only.

Preparation

Complete the pre-requisite courses as outlined in the [UVic Academic Calendar](#)

Application

Ensure you have a valid British Columbia vulnerable sector criminal record check on file

Complete the online application survey by the **8-month** deadline

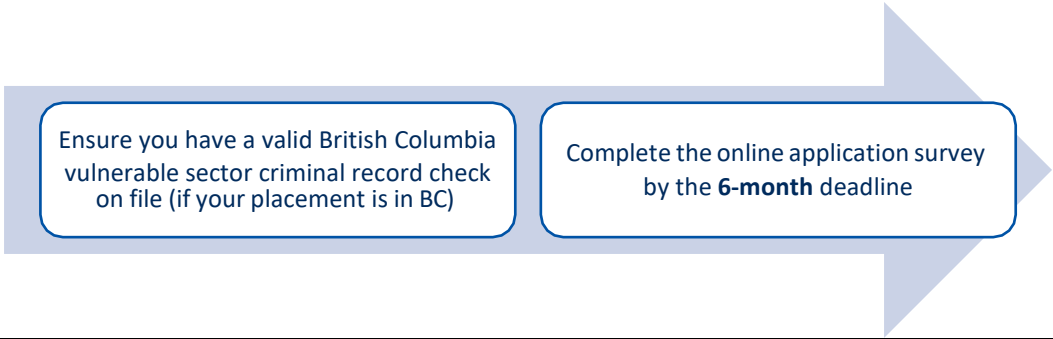
4.1.3 SOCW 404A Child Welfare/Indigenous Child Welfare (350 hours; 4.5 units)

Students who have declared a Child Welfare specialization must take SOCW 404A, which is the regular 2-part field education course (online and on-site components).

Preparation

Complete the pre-requisite courses as outlined in the [UVic Academic Calendar](#)

Application



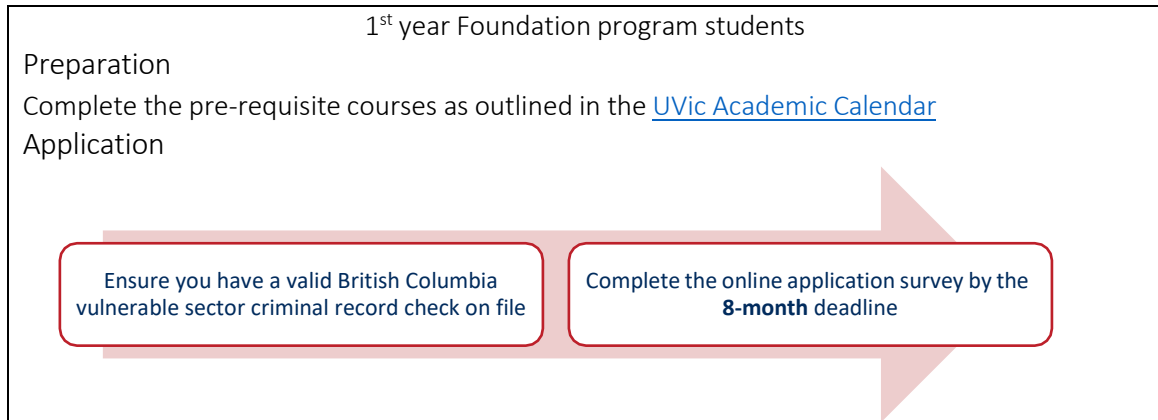
Ensure you have a valid British Columbia vulnerable sector criminal record check on file (if your placement is in BC)

Complete the online application survey by the **6-month** deadline

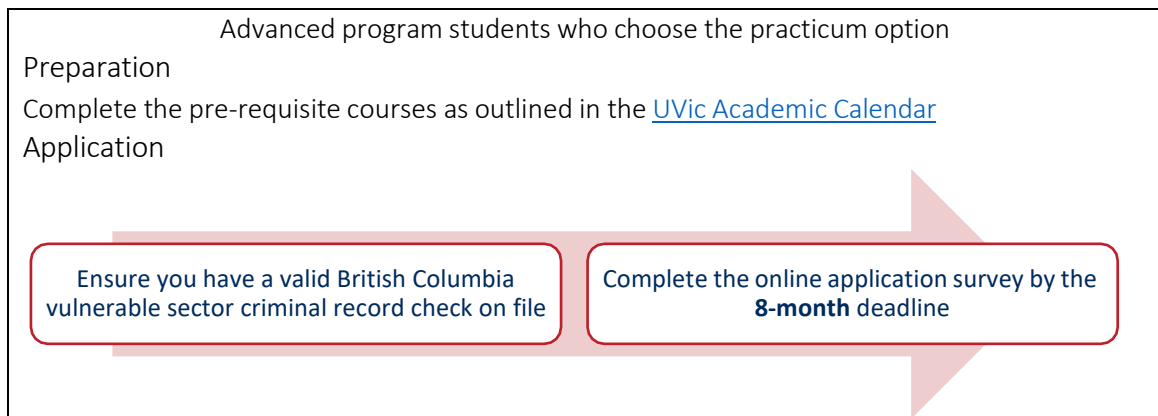
SECTION 5: GRADUATE FIELD EDUCATION COURSES

5.1 WHICH COURSE DO I NEED TO TAKE: SOCW 540, 506 OR 506A?

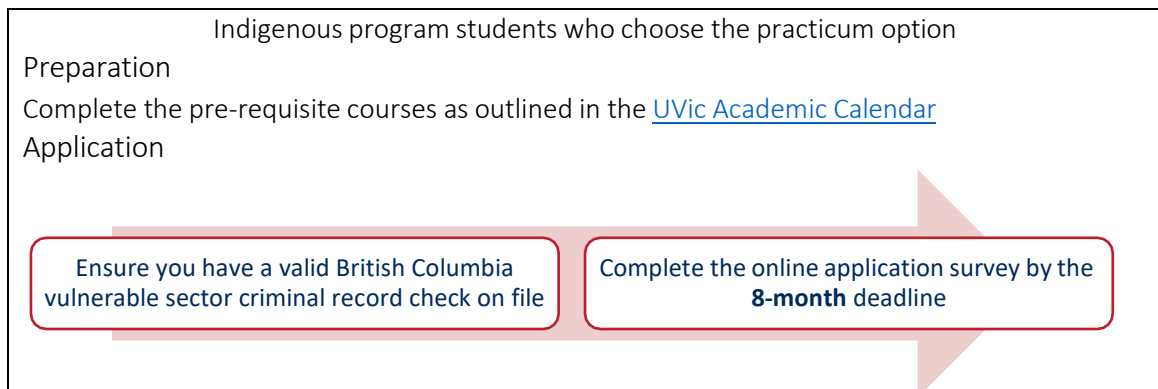
5.1.1 SOCW 540 Foundation (450 hours; 4.5 units)



5.1.2 SOCW 506 Advanced (450 hours; 4.5 units)



5.1.3 SOCW 506A Indigenous (450 hours; 4.5 units)



SECTION 6: POLICIES

You are required to abide by all the policies of the School of Social Work. Read this section and follow the relevant links.

[UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA - SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK - POLICIES - UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA \(UVIC.CA\)](#)

Electronic communications policy (including social media)

[University of Victoria - School of Social Work - Policies - Electronic communications policy - University of Victoria \(uvic.ca\)](#)

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK FIELD EDUCATION POLICIES

The faculty reserves the right to approve any agency or institution that provides placements for student placement, and to change any placement assigned to a student. The student, however, has the right to be informed in writing of the reasons for any change in placement.

The faculty accepts responsibility to provide sufficient placement placements within a student's program. Availability of placements requires a signed Placement Agreement.

Access to placements is competitive and may be limited based on availability, geographic location, and specialization.

A student may be required to withdraw from a placement course if none of the available placement agencies will accept the student.

It is the responsibility of the course instructor to inform students of the criteria by which unprofessional conduct will be judged in the placement setting.

6.1 Changing Agencies

After placement commences, changes are only made when the placement is clearly not meeting the student's learning needs. This could occur when there is:

- a previously unidentified learning need which cannot be met in the agency inadequate supervision
- inadequate or inappropriate workload
- personal difficulty of either the student or supervisor which precludes a satisfactory learning experience
- any form of workplace harassment or discrimination

If a change in placement is required, the first placement must be properly and respectfully terminated before any negotiations begin for a second placement. Any change in placement may also require that the student complete extra hours in order to allow sufficient time to demonstrate competence in the new setting and be evaluated on the current learning.

6.2 Health, Safety and Human Rights

Students have a right to a safe working environment, free of discrimination and harassment. The University policy regarding discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment of its students and employees, applies to students in the placement setting. The School of Social Work supports this policy and encourages any student who feels that they have been the subject of discrimination or harassment, to discuss the situation with the [Equity and Human Rights office](#). Any concerns may also be discussed with your faculty liaison.

Students and supervisors should also be aware that The University [policy on Religious observances](#) applies to students in placement.

6.3 Inability to Secure a Placement

When seeking a placement position, students may apply to a maximum of four agencies in any one semester. If the student is unable to secure a placement they will be allowed to withdraw without penalty from the course and advised on how to pursue a placement in the next semester.

6.4 Paid Placement

In general, a social work placement is an unpaid educational experience. The issue of paid placement has been raised numerous times and discussed within the school. This issue has also been under study by the CASWE (Canadian Association of Social Work Educators). This issue needs to be looked at closely, as it raises several complex questions and considerations. These include:

Learning needs of students. A placement is an educational opportunity in which the student is offered tasks to meet specific learning objectives. The student participates in establishing these learning goals and may request assignments which will enhance learning. The student should be able to indicate that they do not want to do certain tasks that they already have a level of skill and experience in, or that do not fit with their learning goals. On the other hand, an employee is hired to perform tasks based on the needs of the employer. In an employment relationship (including most co-op placements), the employee's learning needs are second to the agency's needs.

Evaluation. When someone is hired to do a job, they are expected to bring a level of competence. In placement, the purpose is to gain experience and competence. Expectations of students and of employees are different, and a student must be evaluated as a learner.

Race, class, and gender issues. The school recognizes that for many students, there are serious financial barriers to spending an extended period of time in an unpaid placement. The possibility of receiving payment for time spent in placement might make social work education more accessible for students marginalized with respect to class, race, socioeconomic background and lack of access to financial resources. We are also aware that it is primarily fields of study that are dominated by women that require unpaid placement work (social work, nursing, child and youth care etc.) while other fields (law, public administration, computers) offer paid placement work or co-op placements).

The School will consider students' proposals for paid placement on an individual basis. A proposal for paid placement must address the following points:

- The placement experience must be different than the student's regular workplace and previous volunteer or work experience. Fourth-year placement must be different than the third-year placement.
- If the placement is in the student's current field or current place of employment, the placement position needs to clearly be focused on new learning. The student must be able to leave the "worker" role and step into a new role as a learner. This difference in roles should be reflected in:
 - a change in supervisor.
 - a change of responsibilities.
 - an increased complexity of tasks.
 - a change in agency or, in a large agency, a change in program or physical setting.

- The student needs to demonstrate a plan, developed in collaboration with the agency supervisor, that addresses:
- how the student and supervisor will ensure that the student's learning needs will remain a priority throughout the course of the placement
- how any difficulties-- such as performance problems-- will be addressed
- how the student will be evaluated—e.g. Are the expectations of the student different than they would be of an employee? Are there any contradictions or dilemmas that arise and how will these be handled?

The agency must indicate their written agreement and assurance that the student's educational needs will be met. To this end, there needs to be a separate supervisor for the educational contract, separate from the usual work supervisor. This separation protects the student, allows them to take risks, and to respectfully be critical of the workplace without putting their employment or their placement in jeopardy.

Proposals need to be submitted, in advance, to the Field Education Coordinator. These will be brought to the Placement Team for consideration. You must receive approval from the School before accepting a paid placement position.

6.5 Requests for Exceptions to Placement Policy

Any requests for special exceptions to placement policy should be brought by the student to the Field Education Coordinator. The Field Education Coordinator will seek advice and guidance from the Placement Team and senior administration. Exceptions may be granted in circumstances of specific educational need or extreme personal circumstances.

6.6 Sick Time

Students are responsible for completing the required number of hours in their placement. Two sick days per placement are allowed without a make-up requirement. If more than two days are missed due to illness, this time needs to be made up. This should be negotiated between the student and the agency supervisor. The student should also notify the faculty instructor of the arrangements made.

6.7 Strikes, Job Action and Population Health Directives

When the placement setting experiences labour disruption in the form of job action and strikes, students are expected to honour and respect any picket lines in their setting. Where this brings undue hardship, students should discuss a plan of action with their faculty liaison. Should a student be in a placement that is closed due to health concerns, they should immediately inform their faculty instructor (liaison). Students are not considered part of essential workplace services during a health crisis.

Credit will not be given for any time lost while agencies are out on strike or closed.

6.8 University Contracts and Liability Insurance

The University of Victoria requires a Placement Agreement with agencies which provide placement opportunities for students. The major reason for such an agreement is to clarify that the University will maintain comprehensive liability insurance, saving harmless the agency against all liability which may result from any negligent acts of the instructors, students and staff of the University.

The contract between the University and agency is not student specific but outlines the legal responsibilities of the university and the agency. This contract is negotiated by the General Counsel's Office at UVic, not by the School of Social Work. Each new affiliation agreement is designed specifically for the host agency and will be sent directly to the agency for review prior to signing.

6.9 Denial of Placement, Withdrawal and Directed Placements

According to the policies of the Faculty of Human and Social Development, a student's application for a placement may be denied if the field coordinator in consultation with the faculty and director of the school deem that a student's preparatory work is insufficient and/or incomplete to reasonably assure they will be successful in their placement. Students will be given the opportunity to work with the school to produce a plan to address gaps in learning which should lead to a greater likelihood of success in their upcoming placement. The student may appeal the denial of placement.

Students may be required to withdraw from the placement with a failing grade if their performance in the placement or their placement preparation is considered unsatisfactory by their supervisor and faculty instructor (liaison).

If recommendations regarding specific learning needs are encountered in any prerequisite courses the school reserves the right to place the student in a placement where these concerns would be addressed and monitored. When there is a clear indication of a particular learning need, the student will be guided by the faculty instructor (liaison) and field education coordinator in the choice of a placement where this learning need could best be met. This is referred to as a directed placement.

Directed placements are also used in the case of missed opportunity. Students and faculty in consultation may wish to ensure that a particular skill or area is available to the student in the placement and therefore, seek a directed placement.

If a student receives a failing grade for the placement or if a placement change is required as described in the above, the following policy will apply in seeking a repeat or directed placement. A directed placement is one where the student's choice of placement must be made in consultation with the faculty. A directed placement may be recommended because of a learning need which could not be met in a previous placement or course.

The present course instructor or placement faculty liaison defines with the student (and the present agency where applicable) a statement of the student's:

- strengths, knowledge, and skills
- identified learning needs or areas of concern requiring particular attention during the placement
- learning goals
- specific requirements

This statement, signed by both student and faculty instructor, is placed on the student's file and shared with prospective agencies. Where the student has a different perspective of his/her learning goals, needs or concerns, the student will be encouraged to write a statement to this effect which will also be shared with prospective agencies.

The choice of possible agencies and supervisor for a repeat or directed placement will be based on the student's learning needs. The choice and rationale is discussed with the student by the faculty instructor. The student makes a choice from the identified agencies. A potential agency receives the written statement of learning needs along with any regular documentation for the placement. The agency then decides whether to accept the student for an interview and, if appropriate, subsequent placement.

Up to a maximum of six agencies will be asked to review the application and consider the identified student for placement. If all six agencies do not accept the student, the faculty will be asked to assess the situation and make a decision regarding withdrawal.

Following placement, a special contract focused on student learning needs and with special monitoring of progress is arranged between agency, faculty instructor and student.

During the time period of the placement, the student should be free of any encumbrances and duties from their regular workplace. The student should not continue to be responsible for cases or expected to be "called out" while at their field placement.

In general, placement placements are open to all eligible students. That is, a placement will not be developed for a particular student to the exclusion of other students. However, a spirit of equity will prevail. There are occasions when a student or group of students may be perceived as at a disadvantage and special arrangements may be necessary. The faculty has the sole authority to make final decisions regarding the suitability of placement proposals.

SECTION 7: WORKING WITH YOUR FIELD EDUCATION COORDINATOR

7.1 LOOKING FOR A PLACEMENT

7.1.1 Collaboration with your Coordinator

You and your field education coordinator are work together to find you a placement. Much like fishing, you start early, but can spend what feels like an enormously long time waiting for a bite. Once you have a bite, you have to act fast to reel in the placement. As the Coordinators place over 100 students per term, they have many lures out and are rushing around trying to land individual fish for multiple students at once.

As a student, you need to consider how you will fit a placement into your life (transportation; daycare; other commitments). A full-time placement is unpaid and takes place during a single term (September to December; January to April; May to August). Placements are 350 hours, which works out be approximately 30 hours of work a week over 12 weeks. There is one option for a part time placement from September to April, which means less of a time commitment each week.

You begin working with your Coordinator by having a discussion about your learning interests for your placement and possible agencies. Then the Coordinator talks with an agency to determine if there is a supervisor available to mentor a student for the term and learn about any requirements the agency has regarding what type of student would fit best into the placement.

At a minimum, you will need to submit a resume and cover letter to apply for a placement. Some placements require other paperwork and/or an interview.

Field Education Placements require a legal contract between you, the agency and the University. Coordinators have the knowledge, experience, and authority to make these arrangements. These legal agreements also ensure that you are covered by liability insurance while you are in your placement.

7.1.2 Where can I do a placement?

Placements are completed in a wide range of community and government agencies and can usually be done in your home community.

Where possible, you may complete both your 3rd year placement and 4th year placement in the geographic area of your choice, although international placement is reserved for 4th year students only.

7.1.3 How do I find a placement?

After the application deadline for your chosen term, a Field Education Coordinator will work with you to identify a suitable field placement and approach the agency on your behalf.

The Coordinator will help you refine your learning goals and work out the details of placement and supervision. Availability of placements depends on factors such as your area, access to qualified supervisors, and time of year.

7.1.4 I have daytime commitments. Can I complete a placement on evenings and weekends?

Most agencies are only able to offer placement supervision during weekday daytime hours. You should not expect to be able to complete your placement on evening and weekends.

7.1.5 Can I do a part-time placement?

We offer a part-time placement from September – April only.

However, some placements are only available as full-time (in one term). Your Field Education Coordinator will help you identify suitable part-time options.

7.1.6 Can I be placed in a Health Authority/work in another country/do research etc. for my placement?

It depends. You will discuss this with your Field Education Coordinator who is assigned to you after the application deadline.

Field Education prioritizes both new learning and solid supervision. A workplace proposal must be approved by the Associate Directors and endorsed by your workplace. Your Coordinator will assist you with this paperwork.

7.1.7 Can I be placed at more than one agency during a term?

Each placement is normally completed in one agency only. This is based on the principle that you need time to observe and practice to gain competence and a sense of confidence.

7.1.8 What if I can't find a placement?

Our experienced Field Education Coordinators help most students find a placement. Coordinators will seek potential placement opportunities until 2 weeks before the start of classes. If a placement can't be found, you will have to defer your course to a future term.

SECTION 8: AGENCY PLACEMENT AND INTEGRATIVE PRACTICE SEMINAR

8.1 FIELD EDUCATION COURSES: WHERE CONCEPTS MEET PRACTICE

Every Field Education Course has **2 parts**: working **onsite at the agency** and completing an **online Integrative Practice Seminar**. Your instructor for the Integrative Practice Seminar is called a Liaison.

During your placement, you will work with a Liaison and an Agency Supervisor to create and carry out a learning plan. Your learning plan will help you reflect on and apply concepts explored in your other social work courses to the practice of social work.

8.1.1 Working with your liaison

Your Liaison will guide you through readings; facilitate interactions with other student completing placements; arrange an introductory, mid-point and final meeting with you and your agency supervisor; evaluate your learning; and submit a complete or incomplete grade for the course (there are no letter grades for field education courses).

A few days before you begin your placement, you will receive an introductory email from your Liaison with contact information, a copy of a blank learning plan and other details which you will share with your agency supervisor.

8.1.2 Working with your agency supervisor

The agency supervisor is the individual in the setting where you are placed who provides supervision during your placement. This is also the person who establishes your tasks and responsibilities while you are on site at the agency and helps craft your learning plan in collaboration with you and your Liaison.

8.1.3 Faculty of Human and Social Development Policies

As the School of Social Work is part of the Faculty of Human and Social Development, there are a number of policies that are relevant to your Field Education Experience. Please review these policies as outlined in Section 6.

8.1.4 BC and Canadian Code of Ethics for Social Workers

[BC Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics](#)

[Canadian Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics](#) & [Guidelines for Ethical Practice](#)

8.1.5 Traditional First Nations Code of Ethics

1. Give thanks to the Creator each morning upon rising and each evening before sleeping. Seek the courage and strength to be a better person.
2. Showing respect is a basic law of life.

3. Respect the wisdom of people in council. Once you give an idea it no longer belongs to you, it belongs to everyone.
4. Be truthful at all times.
5. Always treat your guests with honor and consideration. Give your best food and comfort to your guest.
6. The hurt of one is the hurt of all. The honor of one is the honor of all.
7. Receive strangers and outsiders kindly.
8. All races are children of the Creator and must be respected.
9. To serve others—to be of use to family, community, or Nation is one of the main purposes for which people are created.
10. Observe moderation and balance in all things.
11. Know and practice those things that lead to your well-being and avoid those that lead to your destruction.
12. Listen to and follow the guidance given to your heart. Expect guidance to come in many forms—in prayer, in dreams, in solitude and in the words and actions of Elders and real friends.

SECTION 9: YOUR PLACEMENT

9.1 HOW DO I GET STARTED?

Engaging with your learning plan is the main focus of your time in your placement. Your liaison will help guide you through creating a learning plan that makes sense in the context of the tasks and responsibilities of your placement. You will receive a copy of the learning plan document a few days before your placement begins. Take a look at it before you arrive for your first day of your placement.

9.2 WHAT SHOULD I DO IN MY FIRST FEW DAYS?

There will be days between starting in your placement and having your first meeting with your Liaison and Agency Supervisor. Here are some other ideas about how to get settled into your placement:

- Be prepared to go over your previous experience and share your learning interests with your supervisor.
- Find out what the plans are for your orientation/introduction and beginning work with agency.
- Ask about the most pressing service problems and service priorities for the supervisor, staff, and agency.
- Confirm your schedule.
- Schedule supervision times.
- Ask questions such as, how to conduct yourself in the office, work attire, coffee and lunch breaks, and cell phone use at work, storage for personal items.
- Learn where the policy manuals are located and be oriented to agency policies regarding health and safety, emergency procedures, discrimination and harassment and privacy and confidentiality.

9.3 MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR PLACEMENT

Get into a variety of areas of practice and stretch your boundaries now, to help you to discover the types of work that you enjoy. Through your placement you may learn what you don't want to do as well as what you would like to do more of. Some students who initially want to "do counseling" exclusively, later find themselves in the role of an administrator, supervisor, or consultant.

Let yourself fit into the agency, instead of trying to make it fit you. Learn as much as you can about the politics of the agency by talking with people who work there, by attending staff meetings, and by asking questions. All of your learning will not result merely from interacting with clients. You can learn a good deal about an agency by being attentive and by talking with coworkers.

Be aware of the toll that your placement might have on you, both emotionally and physically. Certain aspects of your life that you have not been willing to look at may be opened up. Know that your increased awareness could lead to more anxiety in your life so be prepared to make use of your support networks.

Recognize the limits of your training, practice only within these boundaries, and put yourself in situations where you will be able to obtain supervised experience. Regardless of your educational level, there is

always more to learn. It is essential to learn the delicate balance between being overly confident and doubting yourself.

Strive to be flexible in applying techniques to different work situations but do so under supervision. Avoid falling into the trap of fitting your clients to one particular theory. Use theory as a means of helping you understand. Realize that diverse backgrounds necessitate diverse communication approaches. Although it is essential to learn therapeutic skills and techniques, they should be applied in appropriate ways.

If you have a placement that you do not particularly like, don't write it off as a waste of time. At least you are learning that working in a drug-rehabilitation center, for example, is not what you want for a career. Beyond that, it is useful to determine what you don't find productive about the placement and why. You can also think of ways to make your assignment more meaningful, rather than just telling yourself that you'll put in your time and get your credit. There are no doubts at least a few avenues for creating learning opportunities.

Make connections in the community. Learn how to use community resources and how to draw on support systems beyond your office. You can do this by talking to other professionals in the field, by asking fellow students about their connections in the community, and by developing a network of contacts.

Be open to trying new things. If you have not worked with a family request to observe a family session or, if possible, work with a supervisor who is counseling a family. Give yourself room to learn by doing, at the same time gaining supervised experience.

Be prepared to adjust your expectations. Don't expect an agency to give you responsibility for providing service before it has a chance to know you. You'll probably start your fieldwork by being in an observing role. Later you may sit in on a counseling group, for example, and function as a co-leader.

Find ways to work cooperatively with other students and to combine your talents with theirs. Look for means of tapping into your own creativity. If you are talented musically, for example, look for a way that you might incorporate music into your field placement activities. If a fellow student has talents in the areas of dance and movement, perhaps you can combine forces in an innovative therapeutic intervention.

Treat your field placement like a job. Approach fieldwork in much the same way as you would if you were employed by the agency. Demonstrate responsibility, be on time for your appointments and meetings, show up for all appointments, and strive to do your best. Although you may be in an unpaid placement, this does not mean you can be irresponsible on the job. Often an unpaid internship can turn into a paid position.

Think and act in a self-directed way. Don't expect the staff to do everything for you and to take all the initiative. Be active and seek ways that you can involve yourself in a variety of activities. If you merely wait for a supervisor or other staff members to give you meaningful assignments, you may be less than satisfied with your placement or the assignment.

SECTION 10: FOR THE SUPERVISOR

10.1 GETTING STARTED WITH A STUDENT

The first week of a practicum (or approximately 35 hours) is the orientation phase. During this time the student should be exposed to all facets of the organization.

Supervisors have the responsibility to help acquaint the student with agency policies regarding health and safety, emergency procedures, discrimination and harassment, privacy and confidentiality, and general protocols.

Some of the activities agency supervisors have found to be helpful are the following:

First Day

This is a good time to have an uninterrupted discussion with your student. We would hope that you could spend two hours with the student in this first meeting.

Probable agenda items for that first day:

- The specifics of the office:
- a tour and introduction of staff—who is on the team, do they know who the student is?
- the coffee room and how it operates
- location of the washrooms
- safety issues and concerns, evacuation route, first aid
- office rituals, (e.g. monthly potluck, etc.)
- General overview of the functions in the office: roles; identifying key people in the organization; setting up times for the student to spend with key personnel during the orientation phase.
- Decision making process in the office—how to get what you need.
- Supervision process: what is expected from the student; what the student can expect from the agency supervisor; who will be available for back-up supervision.
- Evaluation form and required competencies: student and supervisor need to take a look at the evaluation form to being to collaborate on what work will be given in order to achieve these.
- Student's learning interests/needs/style:
- find out how the student feels he/she learns most effectively, i.e. active participation, observing, etc.

- how does the student's learning style fit with your supervision style and/or agency requirements? For example, at what point will the student have direct contact with clients? Is there room for negotiation around these issues?
- A general discussion of attitudes, values, and philosophy: yours and the student's.

First Week

After the introductory session, arrange for the students:

- To spend time in each work area—initially as observer but picking up small tasks that can be done by the end of the week.
- To have appropriate reading material: files, policy manuals, agency forms, books and/or articles pertaining to consumers utilizing service, e.g. readings on addictions.
- To observe sessions with professional staff.
- To attend some work meetings to get a sense of the agency.
- To have work assigned to them.
- To take appropriate oaths and complete a criminal record check if necessary.

Supervisors have also found it helpful to arrange a “buddy” system for the initial phase. In large organizations, a memo to staff outlining the student's schedule for the first week along with a copy of the student's resume has served as a good introductory tool.

9.2 The Learning Plan & Evaluation Form

One of the first tasks of the practicum is to complete the learning plan and evaluation form. Many of the objectives are fixed, but there is also some room for students to identify their own specific learning objectives.

Our social work students come from a wide variety of backgrounds, and they come with diverse employment and life experiences. We encourage the students to assume practicum tasks that challenge them to learn new skills so it is important to clarify your expectations and the agency policies that the student will need to adhere to.

The evaluation part of the learning plan is completed on two occasions during the practicum: at the midpoint and at the end of the practicum. There are areas for both supervisors and students to enter comments on the form.

At the midpoint, feedback is seen as a guide to how the student is doing and whether or not the student and agency are on target. The faculty instructor arranges to talk to the student and supervisor together to discuss the student's progress and discuss any adjustments to the learning plan.

The practicum is evaluated on a pass/fail basis and the faculty instructor will assign the final grade.

The Agency Supervisor can offer explicit feedback by:

- Emphasizing the details of the student's practice and learning
- Identifying themes
- Identifying areas of mastery/problem/areas for further growth.
- Providing constructive feedback and encouragement

The student can offer explicit feedback by:

- Discussing areas where learning occurred and sharing learning goals for the future.
- Identifying areas of practice that are challenging.

If anyone (student, agency supervisor or faculty instructor) identifies any significant concerns or problem areas, then further and immediate three-way consultation will take place to assess the issues involved and to identify a work plan with a clearly defined time frame.

As the final evaluation approaches, both the agency supervisor and the student are encouraged to review the learning plan to ensure that the students learning objectives have been met. During the final evaluation the student and agency supervisor are encouraged to be clear, specific, and concrete about the student's performance. It is by this kind of feedback that a student learner can fully understand the range and depth of what she/he has learned and what new learning needs and goals have emerged.

10.2 SUPPORTING STUDENTS

Students may work in several programs at the agency, and they may work with several of the professional staff. However, it is recommended that they meet with their primary supervisor at least once per week to debrief and receive encouragement and support. Agencies supervisors play an exceptionally important role in the practicum students learning.

Research confirms that students who believed they had a good relationship with their supervisor also reported a higher level of satisfaction with their practicum experience (Garner, 2006).

Knight (2000) notes that there is a "multi-dimensional" aspect to field education. Students have different learning needs at the beginning, middle and end of the practicum. Students generally report that they have the most successful practicum experience when supervisors adjust their supervision approach to support students learning needs at each of these points. Students typically become more self-motivated as they adjust to the practicum environment and develop positive relationships with agency staff. Nevertheless, students report that they have the best experiences when supervision remained consistent throughout the practicum (Knight, 2000; Garner, 2006).

Agency supervisors who encourage students to be self-reflective, invite students to engage in learning activities and provide constructive feedback are highly regarded by practicum students. Generally, supervisors who demonstrate a high level of practice knowledge and sensitivity towards the clients and others in the work environment are positively regarded by practicum students (Knight, 2000).

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