

# INTEGRATIVE PRACTICE SEMINAR

## Introduction

Welcome to the **Integrative Practice Seminar**. Over the course of nine weeks, you will have an opportunity to engage in a supportive learning environment, using the arena of the integrated practice seminar to deepen your understanding of the complexities and challenges of social work practice. You will engage with a group of peers and a faculty liaison and will co-construct a curriculum specific to your evolving practice queries and learning needs.

The Integrative Practice Seminar (IPS) accompanies SOCW 304, 402, 404 and 404A. Thus, most of you will engage in this seminar twice throughout your degree process. It is presumed that these two experiences will be substantively different because, each time, you are working with curriculum that is generated from the current questions posed and challenges faced by your particular group of students. No doubt the diversity of practicum contexts and geographical locations will lend richness to your experience.

It is assumed that you will encounter various practice issues and dilemmas while in your practicum. For example: you may be required to institute a policy or a practice that counters your idea of what anti oppressive practice should look like. Or you may find yourself wrestling with what appear to be contradictions in codes of ethics practice principles. Perhaps you have a different perspective on confidentiality parameters than do your workplace colleagues. The seminar provides a forum to discuss challenges specific to your role and responsibilities as a practicum student.

It is also a place to receive support and guidance from your peers. Integral to this seminar process is the establishment of a **collaborative learning community** wherein all will be "teachers" and "learners." It is presumed that you will develop leadership skills as you pose and wrestle with practice issues. Your competence as a practitioner will deepen as you engage in consultative processes that deepen the link between theory, knowledge and practice.

## Integrative Practice Seminar Learning Objectives

When you have completed this seminar, you will be able to:

- Identify the qualities of a collaborative online learning community, including the specific role you play in supporting your peers and providing leadership.
- Recognize and explain the influence and impact of the social, cultural, economic, and political context on various social work practice locations.

- Articulate the socio-political and practice distinctions between the First Nations, Canadian, and feminist therapy codes of ethics.
- Explore ethical tensions, contradictions, and possibilities within social work practice.
- Recognize and explain the fit and incompatibility between anti-oppressive theory and social work practice in your agency (e.g. power differences in practice).
- Utilize and critique various models of reflective social work practice and articulate which one (or ones) have the best personal fit.
- Acknowledge your evolving theory of practice and how the way in which you assume a position of leadership in your social work practice reflects this.

## **Seminar Structure and Timeline**

This seminar, comprising nine units, takes place **between Weeks 4 and 12** of the semester. Your faculty liaison will inform you of the exact start date. Your course website will be added to your Blackboard or Moodle list prior to the beginning of the seminar (eg. Week three of the term).

Depending upon your geographical location, some interaction in your seminar group may be a combination of face-to-face meetings, supported by online discussion. You will be notified of the schedule specific to your seminar by your faculty liaison.

Your participation is expected to be consistent for the entire nine weeks. You are required to complete a minimum of 80% of the coursework in order to successfully complete the seminar, which is a requirement for successful completion of the practicum. Students who do not meet the participation expectation may be required to repeat the seminar even if they have completed their practicum hours.

You will be expected to lead the group for one week as well as contribute to the discussions during the balance of the 9 week seminar or contribute to the work of the group through group activities provided by your faculty liaison.

## **Working Through the Course Materials**

Your faculty liaison may modify activities and/or readings. As such, you will need to refer to your course website (Blackboard or Moodle) for the current term's readings, as well as for seminar activities.