EVALUATION OF STUDENTS IN FIELD EDUCATION

General Explanation of Evaluation Process

Evaluation of all students’ performance in their field internships -- whether they are undergraduates, foundation year MSW students or advanced year MSW students -- is an ongoing learning/teaching process. This process takes place informally in daily contacts between student and field instructor as well as more formally in the weekly supervisory sessions. It is operationalized through the Learning Plan, the Early Assessment Form and the End of the Semester Field Evaluations.

Our several evaluation instruments organize practice behaviors within 4 Core Competency areas for junior BSW students and 10 Core Competency areas (developed by the Council on Social Work Education [CSWE]) for BSW seniors and MSW students.

For our BSW seniors and all MSW students, we have selected 5 of the 10 competencies as benchmark competencies because they are critical to student development, and experience is likely to be obtained and evaluated in the field internship. These 5 benchmark competencies make up the Early Assessment (mid-term evaluation).

The rating scale used to grade students’ competence in different practice behaviors in all of our evaluation instruments follows:

1  =  This practice behavior has not yet emerged as expected
2  =  This practice behavior is demonstrated at a low and inconsistent level of competence
3  =  This practice behavior is demonstrated at an emerging level of competence
4  =  This practice behavior is demonstrated at a good level of competence
5  =  This practice behavior is demonstrated at a very good level of competence
6  =  This practice behavior is demonstrated at a high level of competence
NA =  Not applicable to internship experience
IE  =  Too little experience up to this point to be able to assign any rating

In addition to being evaluated on practice behaviors within the Core Competencies, students are expected to behave professionally in their field placements. All students will be assessed on 4 Essential Professional Behaviors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Professional Behaviors</th>
<th>Yes (Fall)</th>
<th>No (Fall)</th>
<th>Yes (Spring)</th>
<th>No (Spring)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Student reports to field on time.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Student attends field regularly.</td>
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<td>3. Student is receptive and open to feedback from field instructor.</td>
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<td>4. Student handles absences and/or unavoidable lateness responsibly.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Performance Requirements and Grading Instructions:

BSW Juniors:

The Junior Field Placement is a spring semester 96 hour internship. Students are evaluated once at the end of the semester. Students will be evaluated on the 4 Essential Professional Behaviors listed above and must receive a rating of Yes in all areas. A No rating will result in a Field Meeting to determine the student’s readiness to progress to a Senior Field Placement.

The Junior Field Placement is completed in conjunction with SSS 352: Social Work Theory and Practice 1. The student must successfully complete 96 hours in the internship, and the letter grade for the field internship accounts for 20% of the overall course grade.
We have identified 4 core competencies for evaluation of BSW Juniors:

- **COMPETENCE I (EP^1 2.1.1)**—Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.
- **COMPETENCE II (EP 2.1.2)**—Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.
- **COMPETENCE III (EP 2.1.3)**—Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.
- **COMPETENCE X (EP 2.1.10)**—Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

**BSW Seniors and MSW Students:**

**Early Assessment:**

The mid-semester evaluation includes selected practice behaviors from the Final Field Evaluation in 5 of 10 CSWE-set competencies, which we have determined to be **Benchmark Competencies**. This mid-point assessment provides a formal means for discussion and evaluation of the student’s performance.

1. Our expectation is that students will receive ratings of **Yes** in all **Essential Professional Behaviors**. In the **fall** semester, if a student receives ratings of **No** in any of the 4 **Essential Professional Behaviors**, the field liaison will set up a visit to develop an intervention plan.
2. In the **fall** semester, if a student receives more than 3 scores of **1**, the field liaison will set up a visit to develop an intervention plan (sample form is included elsewhere in **Field Manual**).
3. An intervention plan should address each essential **professional behavior or practice behavior** that is of concern. The intervention plan becomes part of the student’s field file.
4. If a student receives an **Early Assessment** in the **spring** semester and receives scores of **No** in any **Essential Professional Behavior AND/OR** more than 3 scores of **1**, a Student Review will be convened by the program chairperson.

**Final Field Evaluation**

The **Final Field Evaluation**, due at the end of the first and second semesters, provides a thorough assessment of students’ mastery of skills. By completing the spring semester evaluation in the 2nd column on a copy of the first semester evaluation, both field instructor and student can readily view and discuss the student’s progress. In addition to designating a numerical evaluation on each of the instrument items, the field instructor writes a narrative summary of the student’s strengths and growth as well as a summary of educational gaps and difficulties. After discussion and signature by field instructor and student, 2 copies of the **Field Evaluation** are submitted to the Seminar instructor (one will be handed in to the Office of Field Education).

**Fall Semester Final Field Evaluation**

1. If a student receives ratings of **No** in any of the 4 **Essential Professional Behaviors AND/OR** five or more scores of **1** or **2** in benchmark areas (these are the competencies that appear in **bold**), a **Field Meeting** will be held. If, in addition, there are four or more scores of **1** or **2** in other **Areas of Competence**, a Student Review is likely to be held.
   a. A Field Meeting is attended by: student, field liaison, Office of Field Education director or associate director, program chairperson, and field instructor (in person or by phone).
   b. When there have been ongoing concerns, as reflected in the **Early Assessment**, a Student Review may be convened.
2. If the student continues in field subsequent to a Field Meeting or Student Review, completion of an **Early Assessment** will be required in the spring semester.

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^1 EP = CSWE Educational Policy
Spring Semester Final Field Evaluation

1. A Student Review will be convened if a student receives ratings of No in any Essential Professional Behavior, AND/OR five or more scores of 1 or 2 in benchmark areas. If there are four or more scores of 1 or 2 in other Areas of Competence in addition to any scores of 1 or 2 in benchmark areas, a Student Review is likely to be held.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DUE IN FIELD SEMINAR AS FOLLOWS:</th>
<th>FALL, WEEK OF October 15</th>
<th>FALL, WEEK OF October 22</th>
<th>FALL, WEEK OF Dec. 3</th>
<th>SPRING, WEEK OF January 21</th>
<th>SPRING, WEEK OF February 25</th>
<th>SPRING, WEEK OF April 29</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WHAT'S DUE:</td>
<td>Learning Plan</td>
<td>Early Assessment Form</td>
<td>End of Semester Evaluation Form</td>
<td>Revised Learning Plan</td>
<td>Early Assessment Form (usually optional)</td>
<td>End of Semester Evaluation Form</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Academic Requirements Related To Grading

The National Catholic School of Social Service (NCSSS) affirms its right to require its students to meet accepted academic requirements that consist of scholastic and behavioral components. Consistent with Catholic social teaching and social work values, NCSSS respects the worth and value of all persons regardless of age, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic or national origin, handicapping conditions, or diversity of opinion.

Students’ behavior should reflect the core values of the social work profession - service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity and competence. Standards for professional performance require that students adhere to ethical standards as outlined in the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, and the requirements that follow.

Scholastic Requirements: See MSW Handbook.

Behavioral Requirements: Social work students are expected to maintain accepted standards of professional conduct and personal integrity in the classroom, in the field placement, and in the university setting. Students should:

1. Attend classes and field regularly and contribute positively to the classroom/field agency culture.
2. Recognize and avoid behavior that jeopardizes the learning/teaching environment of other students or the instructor.
3. Demonstrate competence in planning academic and field-related activities and in following through on those plans.
4. Reasonably respond to and respect others’ reactions to one’s comments or actions in classroom and in field setting.
5. Use an appropriate level of class time and instructor’s time and attention in and out of class.
6. Use an appropriate level of supervisory time and field instructor’s time and attention.
7. Behave in a manner that is consistent with the ethical principles of the social work profession.
8. Students are expected to show an appropriate level of professional judgment, being careful not to jeopardize the best interests of people for whom they have a professional responsibility.

Social workers should not allow their own personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties to interfere with their professional judgment and
performance or to jeopardize the best interests of people for whom they have a professional responsibility. (*NASW Code of Ethics, 4.05*) Students whose professional judgment and performance are hampered in any way are expected to immediately seek consultation and take appropriate remedial action by seeking professional help, making adjustments in workload, terminating field internship, or taking any other steps necessary to protect clients and others. Students who are unable to meet any of the academic requirements may be subject to the review committee process. (*Approved 10/23/98 by NCSSS faculty*)

**Grading of Field Education/Integrative Seminar**

Field Education grades are assigned based on performance in field as reflected in the *Final Field Evaluation* submitted by the field instructor, and by the student’s performance in the field seminar. The final grade is assigned by the Seminar instructor.

The following are minimum requirements in order to pass field/field seminar:

**BSW Juniors:**

The student must successfully complete 96 hours in the internship, and the letter grade for the field internship accounts for 20% of the overall course grade. The student must also meet classroom requirements, as outlined in the course syllabus.

**BSW Seniors and MSW Students:**

**Seminar Requirements:**

- Attendance required at a **minimum** of 12 seminar classes each semester. If a student cannot attend a seminar, s/he must call or email the instructor in advance of the class.
- A grade of Pass is required in all written assignments.
- All assignments, whether graded or ungraded, must be completed satisfactorily.

**Field Requirements:**

- Acceptable evaluation per requirements related to *Essential Professional Behaviors and Practice Behaviors* (see instructions above).
- Student must meet required number of field hours (480 hours/year – Foundation Year; 600 hours/year – Advanced Year) at the internship.
- A recommended grade of Pass by the field instructor.

**Final Grade for BSW Seniors:**

The *undergraduate senior*’s final grade is based on field education work (60%) and seminar work (40%). Students must receive a grade of C or better in both Seminar and in Field in order to progress to the next semester of Field Education/Field Seminar. Grade assignment is in accordance with the University grading system found in the *CUA Announcements*. Undergraduates receive a letter grade for the course.

**Final Grade for MSW Students:**

The *MSW student*’s final grade of Pass/Fail is based on field education work (60%) and seminar work (40%). Students must receive a grade of Pass in both Seminar and in Field in order to progress to the next semester of Field Education/Integrative Seminar.