

SWK-S 481 Practicum I (6 cr.)

Course Information

Semester Year:	XXXXX	Instructor:	XXXXX XXXXXXXXXX
Section Number:	XXXXX	Office:	XXXX
Location:	XXXXX	Email:	XXXX
Day:	XXXXX	Phone:	xxxxx
Time:	XXXXX	Office Hours:	xxxxxxxxxx

Course Description

Field education provides the opportunity for social work students to demonstrate competency in practice, integrating knowledge, values and skills gained in the professional education curriculum. The practicum experience in the Bachelor of Social Work program allows the student to develop and demonstrate beginning practice competency, culminating the S482 field experience. S481 Social Work Practicum I builds upon the theoretical and experiential learning of both *S331 Generalist Social Work Practice I: Theory and Skills* and *S332 Generalist Social Work Practice II: Theory and Skills* both taught during the Junior year. *S481 Social Work Practicum I* and *S482 Social Work Practicum II* afford the student an opportunity to make application of practice knowledge, values, and skills within seminar facilitation in conjunction with the organizational structure of a human service agency. The seminar is designed to facilitate the integration of material gained from practice and theory courses within the realities of practice as they occur in practicum. In the agency settings, students are expected to demonstrate beginning competency in working with clients, utilizing community resources, interacting with other professionals, and in functioning effectively within an organization. Furthermore, students are expected to identify and work to alleviate oppressive conditions in the lives of their clients.

As a component of *S481 Social Work Practicum I*, each student will participate in an integrative seminar, designed to assist the student to conceptualize his/her practice with the projected aim of professional integration. The seminar activities are designed to be compatible with and supportive of the development of behaviors outlined in the competencies defined by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). **If students fail S481 they are not allowed to enroll in S482, students must complete both courses consecutively.**

The practicum experience in the agency is developed according to the student's educational needs, practice preferences, and CSWE requirements. The student is at the practicum agency for a minimum of 15 hours a week for the 16-week semester. A formal learning plan (S481/S482 LEP) is developed by the student and agency field instructor, and approved by the faculty liaison, to provide opportunity for students to demonstrate the CSWE behaviors. Students complete a minimum of 240 hours of supervised practice in the agency.

Course Competencies

Council on Social Work Education (CWSE) 2015 EPAS Competencies addressed by this course included:

- 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
- 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

- 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice
- 4: Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
- 5: Engage in Policy Practice
- 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
- 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
- 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
- 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities

Course Objectives

Through the active participation in the learning experiences and completion of the readings, assignments, and learning projects offered throughout this course, students are expected to demonstrate the ability to show competency in all nine competencies as listed in the Student Learning Plan, Midpoint Evaluation, and Final Evaluation.

Required Texts

Council on Social Work Education. (2015). *Education policy and accreditation standards*. Silver Springs, MD: Author. Available at [Counsel on Social Work Education Website](#)

Indiana University School of Social Work. (2015). *Bachelor of social work field manual 2015-2017*. Indianapolis, Indiana: Author. Available at [IUSSW Website](#)

National Association of Social Workers. (2010). *Code of ethics*. Washington, DC: Author. Available at [NASW Code of Ethics](#)

Recommended Texts

Garthwait, C. (2014). *The social work practicum: A guide and workbook for students*. Pearson Publishing.

Course Content

This course is completed through guided learning experiences in both a seminar and practicum agency. In S481 the students are expected to have assignments that involve application of the helping process in working with at least two client systems (individuals, groups, organizations and communities). The student should integrate readings and written assignments from previous and current coursework that is applicable to and supportive of practice in the agency.

The following examples are suggested guidelines as to how a BSW senior student may spend his or her time in the practicum site.

Hours

Minimum of 1 hour/week

No more than 25% of semester

Activity

Supervision

Practicum Support

- Process recording (1 required for LEP).
- Agency requested research projects.
- Reading materials assigned by the field instructor.
- Visits to other agencies/communities.

Remaining of hours

- Collaborative activities as assigned by the field instructor.
- Generalist Practice**
- Micro
 - Mezzo
 - Macro

Resources

- Sonia will be used throughout this course to track your time, complete the learning plan, midpoint evaluation and final evaluation as well as document your supervision through the use of the Supervision Records. All practicum related work is found within Sonia.
- Canvas email will also be used a way to communicate between instructor and students. You are expected to check the course announcements on Canvas before each class.
- Additional readings will be assigned throughout the semester and be posted on Canvas (Resource tab).

Course Outline

Module 1:

Seminar Assignments:

Practicum Assignment:

Assignments and Grading

Students admitted to the Social Work Program are expected to provide evidence of CSWE mandated competencies and designated behaviors. Assignments will demonstrate evidence of a competency for a specific behavior(s).

Seminar Assignments:

- A. Process Recording. Students complete one process recording. The Process Recording format and procedures are located in the BSW Field Manual.
- B. Practicum Staffing.
- C. Professionalism.

Practicum Assignment: Planned and implemented use of the Learning Evaluation Process (LEP). The planning process begins in the field agency, where the student and field instructor assess the learning opportunities that are likely to be available over the course of the practicum and match them with the required behaviors identified on the LEP. The proposed LEP is then approved by the faculty liaison/field seminar instructor.

More specific instructions for each assignment will be posted on Canvas. Instructor also will discuss details or answer any questions related to assignment during the class and office hours.

The final grade for *S481 Social Work Practicum I* is a letter grade comprised of graded assignment(s) in seminar and satisfactory/fail on the mid-point evaluation of the LEP.

Students should be ready to actively participate in seminar activities. Failure to observe these requirements will be considered in assigning the final grade.

The practicum evaluation process begins when the student and field instructor mutually discuss expectations during the pre-placement interview and during the first weeks of placement. **Therefore, the student and the field instructor share responsibility throughout the practicum for assuring that discussion of student progress and performance as well as the student's experiences with the agency and the field instructor are open and ongoing.** By the end of the fourth to fifth week in the placement, the student and the field instructor should have completed the *S481 Learning & Evaluation Process* (LEP) for review and approval by the faculty liaison. The (LEP) provides a framework for practicum experiences and the student is evaluated upon his/her ability to demonstrate the CSWE behaviors.

The School requires that written evaluative documents be completed at the end of S481 (mid-point). In order to receive a satisfactory (S) in the practicum, the student must have:

- Completed the Learning and Evaluation Tool components (plan and midpoint evaluation) by deadlines established in the field calendar
- Demonstrated consistency in effort, performance, and development as a social worker.
- Met all required assignments and practicum hours in the field placement.
- Achieved at least a score of "4" on each of the behaviors outlined on the S481-S482 Learning Evaluation Plan. (When a field instructor is not able to observe student learning outcomes for a behavior, the field instructor and student shall insert "not observed" in the score for a given behavior, and this behavior score should be excluded in the determination of the "S" or "F" S481 grade assignment.

For students receiving a score of 3 or below for any behavior, the student in conjunction with the field instructor will develop a rationale for the score and a supportive plan to demonstrate how the student will progress to the required "5" for each behavior during the S482 course. The student will submit to the field liaison rationale for the score and a supportive plan to be approved by the Faculty Liaison in order for the student to enroll and continue into S482. By the final evaluation, occurring in S482, a score of "5" or above for each behavior is required for an "S" S482 grade assignment (look at the manual for exact wording- propose that the 3 changes to 4 for passing).

Should the field instructor and field liaison assess the student to require remediation that exceeds a supportive plan, the field liaison may determine that the student shall be assessed a Fail (F) grade for the practicum.

S481 LEP Mid-Point Evaluation

At the end of the fall semester, the field instructor and student complete the midpoint evaluation. The student completes a self-assessment of their progress toward demonstrating the requisite behaviors and outlines the opportunities for demonstrating those not yet demonstrated. The field instructor also completes an assessment of student progress toward demonstrating the requisite behaviors and the opportunities for demonstrating those not yet demonstrated. Both student and field instructor discuss, document, and sign the midpoint evaluation which is forwarded to the faculty liaison.

Although ongoing contact with the liaison is expected, it is critical that if there are difficulties in student performance or disagreement between the student and the instructor regarding student performance, the faculty liaison is informed and some discussion between the liaison, the field instructor, and the student take place to examine the problem and plan for its resolution.

The “S” or “F” grade for the practicum portion of the course is assigned by the faculty liaison in consultation with field instructor. The liaison’s role in the evaluation process is to assist field instructors in assessing student performance as well as to assure comparability among expectations for students in various settings. A clear agreement between field instructor and faculty liaison regarding the evaluation and grading process aims to prevent confusion and problems at the semester’s end.

The evaluation process should be characterized by openness, mutuality and specificity regarding student strengths, learning needs, and progress identified as well as the process of the student’s experience with the agency and field instructor. The evaluation process is an integral part of the learning experience and can contribute in a major way to the student’s professional and personal growth.

In addition, students and field instructors evaluate the instruction and course content of *S481 Social Work Practicum I*. It is the responsibility of the BSW program to conduct this evaluation to enhance field education and provide field instructors and faculty liaisons feedback from these course evaluations.

Grading Standards

Papers are graded on the quality of the final product not on the effort you extended completing them. The grade of A is reserved for truly outstanding work that goes beyond basic requirements.

In the Indiana University School of Social Work BBSW program, grades of B are the expected norm. Reflecting competency and proficiency, grades of B reflect good or high quality work typical of graduate students in professional schools. Indeed, professors typically evaluate students’ work in such a way that B is the average grade. Grades in both the A and the C range are relatively uncommon and reflect work that is significantly superior to or significantly inferior, respectively, to the average, high quality, professional work conducted by most IU BSW students. Because of this approach to grading, students who routinely earned A grades in their undergraduate studies may conclude that a B grade reflects a decrease in their academic performance. Such is not the case. Grades of B in the IU BSW program reflect the average, highly competent, proficient quality of our students. In a sense, a B grade in graduate school is analogous to an A grade in undergraduate studies. BBSW students must work extremely hard to achieve a B grade. If you are fortunate enough receive a B, prize it as evidence of the professional quality of your work.

Grades of A reflect Excellence. Excellent scholarly products and academic or professional performances are substantially superior to the “good,” “the high quality,” “the competent,” or the “satisfactory.” They are unusual, exceptional, and extraordinary. Criteria for assignments are not only met, they are exceeded by a significant margin. Excellence is a rare phenomenon. As a result, relatively few BSW students earn A grades.

Grades of B signify good or high quality scholarly products and academic or professional performance. Grades in the B range reflect work expected of a conscientious graduate student in a professional program. Criteria for assignments are met in a competent, thoughtful, and professional manner. However, the criteria are not exceeded and the quality is not substantially superior to other good quality products or performances. There is a clear distinction between the good and the excellent. We expect that most BSW students will earn grades in the B range—reflecting the good or high quality work expected of competent future helping professionals.

Grades of C and C+ signify work that is marginal in nature. The scholarly products or professional performances meet many but not all of the expected criteria. The work approaches but does not quite

meet the standards of quality expected of a graduate student in a professional school. Satisfactory in many respects, its quality is not consistently so and cannot be considered of good or high quality. We anticipate that a minority of BSW students will earn C and C+ grades.

Grades of C- and lower reflect work that is unsatisfactory. The products or performances do not meet several, many, or most of the criteria. The work fails to approach the standards of quality expected of a graduate student and a future BSW-level professional. We anticipate that a small percentage of BSW students will earn unsatisfactory grades of C-, D, and F.

The practicum grade for *S481 Social Work Practicum I* is Satisfactory (S) or Fail (F). Students must earn at least a score of “4” on each of the behaviors in the LEP in order to achieve 100% of the associated points.

Scoring

- A score of **1** demonstrates a complete ***inability*** to demonstrate skills.
- A score of **2** demonstrates skill at a ***basic rudimentary*** level of someone having no formal undergraduate coursework.
- A score of **3** demonstrates skill at the level of ***beginning level BSW coursework*** with no more than one semester/quarter of courses.
- A score of **4** demonstrates skill at the ***midpoint BSW level*** of education.
- A score of **5** demonstrates skill at the level of ***new BSW graduate*** (expected performance level by end of practicum).
- A score of **6** demonstrates skill at the level expected of a ***relatively new BSW graduate*** (less than two years of social work experience).
- A score of **7** demonstrates skill at the level of a ***seasoned, highly experienced post-BSW practitioner*** (rarely expected score).

The weighing for seminar assignments and LEP is as follows:

Midpoint LEP	60%
Assignments	40%
Process Recording.	
Practicum Staffing.	
Professionalism.	
Total	100%

Total points may vary should assignments be added or deleted at the instructor’s discretion. Any changes in the assignments and/or points will be announced in class.

Grading scale

Grade minimums are as follows [Note: grades below C are Unsatisfactory in the BSW Program]:

A	93%	Excellent, Exceptional Quality
A-	90%	Superior Quality
B+	87%	Very Good, Slightly Higher Quality

B	83%	Good, High Quality (expected of most BSW students)
B-	80%	Satisfactory Quality
C+	77%	Marginal, Modestly Acceptable Quality
C	73%	Marginal, Minimally Acceptable Quality
C-	70%	Unsatisfactory Quality

Course Policies

Assignment

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time. If you need to extend a deadline you MUST speak to the instructor in advance of the due date to get an approval and an agreement will be reached. Late submission (except by prior agreement) will be marked down 5% per day late. IU has a subscription with the Turnitin plagiarism detection service, and faculty members have the right to submit student papers to the service to check for originality. Turnitin.com service will be used for all student papers in this course.

Additional Course Policies

1. If students must miss time at the agency due to illness, emergencies, delays or closings, he/she needs to be in communication with the field instructor. Students must make up any missed time.
2. Students are expected to observe the agency schedule for holidays. When agencies are closed during your scheduled hours, this time does NOT need to be made up.
3. Students are expected to abide by to the standards and practices established by the agency and by the BSW program for this practicum course including adherence to the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics.
4. A formal evaluation of the course and its instructor will be completed at the end of the semester, consistent with the School's academic policy.

Attendance and participation

Students are expected to attend and participate in all class sessions. Students should complete readings and homework as assigned and come to class prepared for discussion and questions. Because of the nature of this course and group assignments, regular attendance is required and extremely important. Class attendance and active participation in class activities are considered essential for the satisfactory completion of the course objectives. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to get notes from other students regarding materials covered during your absence. If you are absent on the day when an assignment is due, you need to submit your assignment before the beginning of the class. Missing more than 2 of the scheduled classes will result in a letter-grade deduction for the course. Late arrivals and early departures will also lead to course point deductions. It's up to instructor's discretion to decide the deduction points. If you miss five or more classes you will fail the course.