

SWK-S 555 Practicum I (3 cr.)

Course Information

Semester Year: XXXX
Section Number: XXXX
Location: XXXX
Dates: XXXX
Time: XXXX

Instructor: XXXXX XXXXXXXXXX
Office: XXXX
Email: XXXX
Phone: xxxxx
Office Hours: xxxxx

Course Description

Prerequisites:

- 502 Research I
- 505 Social Policy Analysis and Practice
- 506 Introduction to the Social Work Profession
- 507 Diversity, Human Rights and Social Justice
- 508 Generalist Theory and Practice
- 509 Organizations, Communities and Society

Pre-requisites or Co-requisites:

- 517 Assessment in Mental Health & Addictions
- 518 Clinical Theory and Practice
- 519 Community and Global Theory and Practice
- 661 Executive Leadership Practice

The MSW Social Work Practicum I is an educationally-directed practice experience under the direct supervision of an approved agency field instructor. The practicum provides students with opportunities to integrate the foundation curriculum (theories, values, knowledge, and practice principles) in a practice setting. The practicum fosters the development of core competencies in generalist social work practice with emphasis on acquiring graduate-level, strengths-based interpersonal skills for work at all systems levels.

Learning opportunities in this first graduate practicum experience emphasize students demonstrating professional social work competencies. Fifteen hours of integrative seminars provide a supportive environment for students to discuss their Learning Plan, demonstrate beginning mastery of the social work core competencies operationalized at a graduate education level, and process practice issues that arise in the field placement setting.

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

Allan, K. (2012). What is an ethical dilemma? *The New Social Worker*, 19(2), 4-5.

Congress, E. (2000). What social workers should know about ethics: Understanding and resolving practice dilemmas. *Advances in Social Work*, 1(1), 1-22. Indianapolis, IN: IU School of Social Work. Retrieved from: [What Social Workers Should Know About Ethics Article](#)

National Association of Social Workers. (2017). Code of ethics of the National Association of Social Workers. Washington, DC. NASW Press.

Agency manuals and policies; review of social policies discussed in courses

Recommended Reading

Council on Social Work Education (2015). *Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards*. Alexandria, VA: Council on Social Work Education, pp. 6-9.

Indiana University School of Social Work. *MSW Practicum I-555 Field Manual*.

Lay, K., & McGuire, L. (2012). DEAL papers: Adapted from DEAL model of structured critical reflection [PowerPoint slides].

Course Content

The 555 Integrative Practicum Seminar is designed to provide students an opportunity to integrate knowledge from previous or current coursework with their experiences in the field practicum. The seminar is designed to enhance both collaborative and adult learning in that students are responsible to provide leadership in course activities. The seminar is also intended to support student participation in creation and identification of products for the Learning Plan. Within the practicum sites, students will have both interpersonal and leadership practice activities and complete a minimum of 320 hours.

Be mindful that academic and experiential content in social work courses may trigger an emotional response, especially in individuals who have prior trauma history. As social workers, it is our responsibility to be present for clients who have experienced trauma; therefore, it is necessary to cultivate compassionate self-awareness and address our personal histories in a timely manner for competent social work practice. If you are triggered in the classroom, your priority is self-care as well as continuing to gain knowledge for

practice. You may need to seek consultation from faculty as to your readiness for practice and/or how to better prepare for social work practice.

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. All practicum related work is found within Sonia.
- Canvas email will also be used as 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

Seminar 1:

Overview

- A. Practicum competencies and related behaviors
- B. Guidance to completing the Learning Plan with the Field Instructor
- C. Engaging agency staff and supervisors in the field experience

Recommended readings:

1. Council on Social Work Education (2015). Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards. Alexandria, VA: Council on Social Work Education, pp. 6-9.
2. Indiana University School of Social Work. *MSW Practicum I-555 Field Manual*.

Seminar 2:

Assignment #1

Organizational Structure and Policies Assignment due – [EP 2 and EP 5]

- Student brief presentations on overview of organizational structure, relevant internal policies and social policies that affect the agency and client systems (may be in groups if more than one student in an agency)
- Review student progress on Learning Plans

Required reading:

1. Agency manuals and policies; review of social policies discussed in courses.

Seminar 3:

Assignment #2

DEAL Structured Critical Reflection due – emphasizing Human Behavior in the Social Environment theories [EP 2, 6 and EP 8]

- Human Behavior in the Social Environment theories from Theory and Practice courses that relate to the client group, including attention to diversity and difference

Recommended reading:

1. Lay, K., & McGuire, L. (2012). DEAL papers: Adapted from DEAL model of structured critical reflection [PowerPoint slides].

Seminar 4:

Assignment #3

Ethical Decision Making Assignment due [EP 1]

- Ethical dilemmas encountered or potential ethical dilemmas in the setting; completed table turned in.

Required readings:

1. Allen, K. (2012). What is an ethical dilemma? *The New Social Worker*, 19(2), 4-5.
2. Congress, E. (2000). What social workers should know about ethics: Understanding and resolving practice dilemmas. *Advances in Social Work*, 1(1), 1-22. Indianapolis, IN: IU School of Social Work. Retrieved from:
<https://journals.iupui.edu/index.php/advancesinsocialwork/article/view/124/107>.
3. National Association of Social Workers. (1999). *Code of ethics of the National Association of Social Workers*. Washington, DC. NASW Press.

Seminar 5: (Field instructors invited):

Assignment #4

Client System Assessment [EP 7]

- Client System Assessments presentation to peers.

Assignments and Grading

In 555, it is recognized that student field performance is reflected from both in the demonstration of professional activities in the agency and in the classroom. The 555 course grade is comprised of points earned from *satisfactory* performance on the 555 Learning Plan (120 possible points) and the points earned from seminar assignments and attendance in seminars (80 possible points).

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).

Assignments

- The 555 Learning Plan final evaluation is determined to be either *satisfactory* or *unsatisfactory* based on scoring of demonstrated competence in behaviors. Students achieving satisfactory performance on the Learning Plan receive 120 points. Students failing to achieve satisfactory performance on the Learning Plan receive 0 points. In order to earn satisfactory performance (120 points) on the 555 Learning Plan, the student must earn an average of “5” [determined by totaling the points (i.e. 1-7) for each behavior, then dividing by 16 (total number of behaviors)]. Students earning less than a “5” average would receive 0 points of the 120 possible points towards the overall course grade, thus failing 555.

- **Organizational Structure and Policies (20 pts):** This is a written paper and oral presentation [EP 2, and EP 5].
- **DEAL Structured Critical Reflection Paper Emphasizing Human Behavior in the Social Environment Theory (15 pts):** This is a written paper [EP 2, EP 6, and EP 8].
- **Ethical Decision Making (15 pts):** This is a completed table [EP 1].
- **Client System Assessment (20 pts):** This is a written paper and oral presentation [EP 2 and EP 6].
- **Professional Participation (10 pts):** *Professionalism* demonstrated in seminar. Overall evaluation of class participation will take into account the manner and extend to which a student: a) attends all seminars and comes prepared for discussion and engagement; b) submits practicum related assignments and documents in a timely fashion; c) raises relevant questions and awareness of multiple perspectives; and e) gives and uses feedback constructively. Seminar attendance is vital to the student’s success in 555. Failure to attend seminar may result in a failing grade. Professional class and participation is essential. A brief narrative evaluating all criteria and completion of the professional participation rubric must be turned in with the completed rubric on the last day of class [EP 1].

Evaluation and Grading

Seminar Assignments (40%):

Assignment #1.....	20
Assignment #2.....	15
Assignment #3.....	15
Assignment #4.....	20
Assignment #5 (Professional Participation).....	10

Field Instructor Evaluation/555 Learning Evaluation Plan (60%)120

TOTAL: 200

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 MSW 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 MSW 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 MSW 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. MSW 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 MSW 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 MSW 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 MSW 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 MSW-level professional. We anticipate that a small percentage of MSW students will earn unsatisfactory grades of C-, D, and F.

Grading scale

Grade minimums are as follows [Note: grades below C, are Unsatisfactory in the MSW 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 MSW students)
B-	80%	Satisfactory Quality
C+	77%	Marginal, Modestly Acceptable Quality
C	73%	Marginal, Minimally Acceptable Quality
C-	70%	Unsatisfactory Quality

Course Policies, Attendance, & 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. Attendance in seminar is important to student success in 555. Failure to attend seminars may result in a failing grade for 555.

- Missing one seminar class will result in a half a letter grade drop in the final course grade.
- Missing two seminars will result in a full letter grade drop in the final course grade.
- Missing three seminars will result in a failing course grade.

Bibliography

- Allen, K. (2012). What is an ethical dilemma? *The New Social Worker*, 19(2), 4-5.
- Ash, S.L., & Clayton, P.H. (2004). The articulated learning: An approach to guided reflection and assessment. *Innovative Higher Education* 29(2), 137-154.
- Berkenmaier, J., & Berg-Wegen, M. (2011). *The practicum companion: Integrating class and field work*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Congress, E. P. (2000). What social workers should know about ethics: Understanding and resolving practice dilemmas. *Advances in Social Work* 1 (1).
- Council on Social Work Education (2008). *Educational policy and accreditation standards*. Alexandria, VA: Council on Social Work Education, pp. 3-7.
- Dolgoff, R., Loewenberg, F. & Harington, D. (2012). *Ethical decisions for social work practice* (9th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Edmond, T., Megevern, D., Williams, C., Richman, E., & Howard, M. (2006). Integrating evidence-based practice and social work field education. *Journal of Social Work Education* 42(2), 377-396.
- Indiana University School of Social Work. *MSW Practicum I-555 Field Manual*. Indiana University: Indiana University School of Social Work.
- Lay, K., & McGuire, L. (2012). DEAL papers: Adapted from DEAL model of structured critical reflection [PowerPoint slides].
- National Association of Social Workers. (2017). *Code of ethics of the National Association of Social Workers*. Washington, DC. NASW Press.
- Paul, R., & Elder, L. (2012). *Critical thinking: Tools for taking charge of your learning and your life*. Boston: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Paul, R. & Elder, L. (2006). *The miniature guide to critical thinking*. Santa Rosa, CA: The Foundation for Critical Thinking.
- Pollo, D.E., & Macgowan, M.J. (2011) *Evidence-based group work in community settings*. New York: Routledge.
- Roberts, A.R., & Yeager, K.R. (2006). *Foundations of evidence-based social work practice*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Assessment Resources

- Centerpoint for Leaders. (2007). *Organizational performance assessment*. Found at [Center Point for Leaders Website](#). Washington, D.C.: Centerpoint for Leaders, Inc.
- Hardcastle, D.A., Powers, P.R., & Wenocur, S. (2011). *Community practice: Theories and skills for social workers*. New York: Oxford University Press. See Chapter 5, Assessment: Discovering and documenting the life of a community, pp. 133-154, and Chapter 6, Using assessment in community practice, pp. 155-181.
- Sowers, K., Rowe, W., & Rapp-Paglicci, L.A. (Eds.). (2008). *Comprehensive handbook of social work and social welfare. Volume 3, Social work practice*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley. See various chapters. by various authors, in this volume related to assessment with children, adolescents, adults, elderly, families, groups, communities, organizations, and institutions.