

**WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

MASTER SYLLABUS
Last Revised: March 2007

SWRK 6710: Field Education and Social Work Practice I

Instructor:
Email Address:
Office Room Number:
Office Phone Number:
Classroom Number:
Day/Time:

Course Description:

This is the first of two field education courses that entails two hundred (200) hours practicing in a human service agency under the guidance of an agency social worker and a faculty member. Weekly two-and-a-half-hour field labs are conducted during the first eight weeks of the semester and one field seminar is held later in the semester. Field placement forms an integral part of the preparation of students for professional responsibilities in social work and serves as the integration of coursework into actual practice. All placements begin with an in-depth orientation to the specific agency setting. Students develop a working knowledge of the agency's functions, structure, processes, and its service provider role within the community. Students apply knowledge and develop skills in conducting interviews, problem identification, data collection, problem assessment, and goal formulation with the client systems in the context of social work values and ethics. Students integrate self-awareness and appreciation of diversity into professional practice. The foundation MSW field experience emphasizes generalist social work practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. This course is graded credit/no credit.

Prerequisites:

Concurrent enrollment in SWRK 6610 is required.

Relationship to Other Courses:

Field courses are designed to teach students the application of material that is taught in other social work courses. Thus, this field course is directly related to the content of courses in practice, research, policy, and human behavior in the social environment as the link between knowledge and actual practice.

Course Objectives/Outcomes:

A student who successfully completes this course will make progress toward demonstrating the ability to:

1. Apply critical thinking skills within the context of professional social work practice
2. Practice within the values and ethics of the social work profession
3. Practice without discrimination and with respect, knowledge, and skills related to clients' diversity
4. Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and apply strategies of advocacy that advance social and economic justice
5. Understand the history of the social work profession and its current structure and issues
6. Apply the knowledge and skills of generalist social work perspective to practice with systems of all sizes
7. Understand and apply an ecological framework to understand individual development and behavior across the life span, and to understand the interactions among individuals, and between individuals and social systems (i.e., families, groups, organizations, and communities)
8. Analyze the impact of social policies on all levels of client systems, workers, and agencies
9. Understand and evaluate research studies, identify evidence-based practice methods relevant to the field setting, and understand how evaluation of practice is completed in the field placement agency
10. Use communications skills differentially across client populations, colleagues, and communities
11. Use supervision appropriate to generalist social work perspective to integrate classroom knowledge into practice skills in the field
12. Function within the structure of organizations and demonstrate an understanding of how agency mission, operational policy and procedures, resources, organizational structure and funding impact upon the delivery of social services

13. Establish, maintain, and manage effective helping relationships using appropriate problem-solving methods and demonstrating the professional use of self
14. Practice within the inter-professional environment of health and human services and demonstrate an awareness of community resources and an ability to appropriately utilize these resources on behalf of clients.
15. Demonstrate the ability to assess potential risk to oneself, client(s), and others and develop appropriate safety plans.