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| **THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS**  **DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY & PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS**  **Brenda Sweeten, MSSW, LCSW**  [**Brenda.sweeten@unt.edu**](mailto:Brenda.sweeten@unt.edu)  **Social Work Field Practicum & Seminar (SOWK 4870 & 4875)**  **(12 credit hours)**  **Fall 2013**  **Classroom: Business Leadership Bldg. 140**  **Class: Mon 2:00 p.m. to 4:50 p.m.**  **Office: Chilton 238D**  **Telephone: 940-369-6991**  **Office Hours: M, T & W 9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. and by appointment** |
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*Please note that the Professor for this course has the option to revise or alter the course syllabus at any time.*

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The Field Practicum courses (SOWK 4870 and SOWK 4875) offer you the opportunity to begin to put into action the skills, practice principles, and ethics you have learned in the classroom. This is where you begin to work in the real world of social work practice. This is a big step for you. Congratulations! Along with this opportunity comes a great deal of responsibility. You will be working in a real agency with real people who have real problems. This is the final step to becoming a professional social worker with the Baccalaureate in Social Work degree and being eligible to sit for the licensing exam in the State of Texas. Your admission into the field practicum indicates that the UNT faculty has confidence that you are prepared to make the transition from student to beginning generalist social work professional.

**COMPETENCIES & PRACTICE BEHAVIORS**

The core competencies listed are in accordance with the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) - Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards 2008. Upon completion of the course, students will demonstrate the core competencies indicated below. The course objectives reflect the expected CSWE Practice Behaviors (PB) students will attain.

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| **CORE COMPETENCY** | **COURSE OBJECTIVES**  **STUDENTS WILL** | **ASSESSMENT** |
| Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly | 1. advocate for client access to the services of social work; 2. practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development; 3. attend to professional roles and boundaries; 4. demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication; 5. engage in career-long learning; and 6. use supervision & consultation. | Evaluations by Field Instructor  Self-Assessment  Integrative Paper |
| Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice | 1. recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice; 2. make ethical decisions by applying standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics2 and, as applicable, of the International Federation of Social Workers/International Association of Schools of Social Work Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Principles; 3. tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts; and 4. apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions. | Evaluations by Field Instructor  Self-Assessment  Integrative Paper |
| Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments | 1. distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom; 2. analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation; and 3. demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and colleagues | Evaluations by Field Instructor  Self-Assessment  Integrative Paper |
| Engage diversity and difference in practice | 1. recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power; 2. gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups; 3. recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences; and 4. view themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants. | Evaluations by Field Instructor  Self-Assessment  Integrative Paper |
| Advance human rights and social and economic justice | 1. understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination; 2. advocate for human rights and social and economic justice; and 3. engage in practices that advance social and economic justice. | Evaluations by Field Instructor  Self-Assessment  Integrative Paper |
| Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research | 1. use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry and 2. use research evidence to inform practice | Evaluations by Field Instructor  Self-Assessment  Integrative Paper |
| Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment | 1. utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation; and 2. critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment. | Evaluations by Field Instructor  Self-Assessment  Integrative Paper |
| Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services | 1. analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance social well-being; and 2. collaborate with colleagues and clients for effective policy action. | Evaluations by Field Instructor  Self-Assessment  Integrative Paper |
| Respond to contexts that shape practice | 1. continuously discover, appraise, and attend to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services; and 2. provide leadership in promoting sustainable changes in service delivery and practice to improve the quality of social services. | Evaluations by Field Instructor  Self-Assessment  Integrative Paper |
| Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities | 1. substantively and affectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities; 2. use empathy and other interpersonal skills; and develop a mutually agreed-on focus of work and desired outcomes. develop mutually agreed-on focus of work and desired outcomes. 3. develop mutually agreed-on focus of work and desired outcomes. 4. collect, organize, and interpret client data; 5. assess client strengths and limitations; 6. develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives; and 7. select appropriate intervention strategies. 8. initiate actions to achieve organizational goals; 9. implement prevention interventions that enhance client capacities; 10. help clients resolve problems; 11. negotiate, mediate, and advocate for clients; and 12. facilitate transitions and endings 13. Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions. | Evaluations by Field Instructor  Self-Assessment  Integrative Paper |

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the University's status as an institution of higher education. In the class setting, students shall follow their instructors’ directions and observe all academic standards and requirements published in course syllabi and other course materials. A student is responsible for responding to an academic dishonesty report issued by an instructor or other University authority. If a student fails to respond after proper attempt at notification, the University may take appropriate academic actions in the absence of the student.

If a student disagrees with an instructor’s determination of academic dishonesty or with an academic penalty that is calculated into the course grade, the student may appeal to the chair of the instructor’s department within three (3) days of receiving the instructor’s written decision. The student’s written request for appeal must detail: (1) whether the student is requesting appeal of the finding of academic dishonesty or the instructor’s academic penalty, or both; (2) the specific basis for the appeal; and (3) any factual information in support of the student’s case, including any specific evidence. To see the full university policy, consult Student Standards of Academic Integrity #18.1.16.

**ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

The University of North Texas complies with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The University of North Texas provides academic adjustments and auxiliary aids to individuals with disabilities, as defined under the law. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation, please see the instructor and/or contact the Office of Disability Accommodation at 940-565-4323 during the first week of class.

**CLASS POLICIES**

**INCOMPLETE POLICY**

A grade of Incomplete or “I” will not be given unless the student contacts the instructor and makes special arrangements for making up the required work.  Only emergency situations that prohibit a student from completing the course warrant a grade of “I”.  Therefore, it will not be given automatically.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Students are expected to attend all classes because this class is only meeting approximately every other week on campus. Roll will be taken. Loss of one half letter grade will occur for each class missed. Be aware that tardiness will also affect your final grade.

As any professional social worker should do in the workplace, if you know you are going to miss a class or are going to be significantly tardy, you should contact your instructor via e-mail in advance to alert her of your situation. In advance means before the class period starts, not during or after the class is over.

**CLASS BEHAVIOR**

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.  The Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.unt.edu/csrr.

The Department of Community & Professional Programs puts an extremely high value on its rapport with students, in part because it is our main task to prepare them for careers in human service professions. **The goal of PACS’ academic programs is to prepare students for ethically and socially responsible leadership roles in public and community service careers within an increasingly diverse and complex world.** As a faculty member, it is my responsibility to maintain the order and fairness in class and sometimes, it is necessary to remind students of appropriate behavior in the classroom. This is necessary because problematic behaviors can set the stage for serious problems in obtaining and retaining professional employment after graduation and there is the potential to disrupt and interfere with other students’ learning.

Therefore, the following behaviors will not be tolerated in class: sleeping; cross-talk, or carrying on private conversations during lectures and discussions; wandering in and out of classes that are in progress; taking or making cell phone calls or texts during class; inappropriate use of laptops in class; expectations that classes will be canceled when professors cannot be present and/or on days adjacent to holiday (this is a policy violation taken seriously by our accreditation boards); and surliness and flippancy in communicating with faculty, staff and other students. Students may be asked to leave class at my discretion.

**Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE)**

The Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE) is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. This short survey will be made available to you at the end of the semester, providing you a chance to comment on how this class is taught.  I am very interested in the feedback I get from students, as I work to continually improve my teaching. I consider the SETE to be an important part of your participation in this class.

**SUCCEED AT UNT**

UNT endeavors to offer you a high-quality education and to provide a supportive environment to help you learn and grow. And, as a faculty member, I am committed to helping you be successful as a student.  Here’s how to succeed at UNT:  Show up.  Find support. Take control.  Be prepared.  Get involved. Be persistent. To learn more about campus resources and information on how you can achieve success, go to [succeed.unt.edu](https://success.unt.edu/succeed-at-unt?utm_source=StudentSuccessCamUNTHome&utm_medium=web&utm_campaign=StudentSuccess2013).

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOK**

There is no required book, all materials will be on the Blackboard site.

**ASSIGNMENTS AND MAKE-UP POLICY**

Promptness in completing assigned tasks and readings is required for this course. Assignments are due at the start of class on the day they are due. If students have circumstances that they feel warrant additional time for an assignment, contact with the instructor must occur well in advance. This does not mean the day before the assignment is due.

Make-up exams, as a rule, will not be permitted. Only in extraordinary circumstances will such ever be considered. If a make-up exam is warranted, it will be an essay exam.

**E-MAIL COMMUNICATION**

Students must have a university account while enrolled in this class. Students may obtain an e-mail address by logging onto https://ams.unt.edu/ this will put you into the computer account management system and you will be able to get Eagle mail. You can arrange for this e-mail to be forwarded to a preferred address if desired.

From time to time, I may need to communicate with the entire class or contact you individually. If/when those occasions arise, I will only email your UNT account. You are responsible for the information in that email. Failing to check it or have the address in the proper format will not be excused. Information may also be posted on Blackboard Announcements.

**METHODS OF INSTRUCTION**

This course will meet in a hybrid format, meaning we will rotate between meeting on-campus and on-line (*however, the class format may change and revert back to on-campus only at the discretion of the instructor*). The on-line classes will be structured with assignments that equate to time that you might spend in a typical class. Therefore, you will be required to complete such assignments as reflection of your practicum experiences, ethical dilemmas, readings, and case studies. The on-line portion of the class will also have discussion boards. You are required to post a response to every question and at least one response to a peer during the on-line weeks. Failure to adequately participate will mean participation points will not be earned. The on-line assignments are time-limited and you will be unable to make late postings.

**LOGS**

Students will be completing all weekly logs on Blackboard. There are two parts to the log that include documentation of all hours and questions that must be answered. The question or questions listed each week on the syllabus are to be answered as part of the log. Each log is worth 10 points and will be graded for completion and quality of the response.

**ON-CAMPUS STRUCTURE**

***The following is the tentative structure of the on-campus classes. Modifications will be made as warranted to accommodate special situations (guest, etc.)***

1. The first portion of our in-class sessions will be set aside to *“check-in.”* Group leaders will be determined to help facilitate the discussion in small groups *(review Group Leader Roles on-line)*. This provides the opportunity for individualized attention to students and to process practicum related issues. You must fully participate during this process and openly share both your experiences in the field, as well as the emotional and personal impact of being in the field. In addition, while in the small groups, you will discuss the weekly topics. (Approximately 45-60 minutes).
2. Starting with week 5, a portion of the class will be reserved for case presentations. Several students per week will formally present a case, as described in the assignment schedule. You should listen closely during these presentations and ask relevant questions of the presenters (Approximately 60-90 minutes).
3. Occasionally, as time allows, there may be some guest speakers invited to class or other topics presented.

Outside speakers, role plays, group exercises, and videos may be used to supplement class materials. Class attendance and participation is required.

**ON-LINE STRUCTURE**

**Lecture and Discussion Board**

A written document, “lecture”, or other reading materials will be available during the on-line weeks of class. You are expected to read all materials posted. There may also be a case or ethical dilemma that you are required to review and comment on. You will be graded.

Each week on-line there will be a Discussion Board with one or more questions posed about important field issues. This will encourage each of you to engage in peer support, learn how to critically assess what you are doing and why, and to think “deeply” about social work practice.

1. You are expected to post your initial response to the discussion board by **Wednesday at midnight** during the on-line weeks.
2. After you post your own discussion, you must respond to at least one other individual’s posting by **Sunday at midnight**. The postings must be at least 24 hours apart.

**FIELD INSTRUCTOR AND UNT FACULTY ROLES**

While you are enrolled in the two practicum classes, you will be supervised by at least two individuals: the agency field instructor and the UNT seminar instructor. Both will work together to evaluate you on social work competencies as well as professionalism. While the agency field instructor may recommend your final grade, the ultimate responsibility for the grade rests with UNT faculty. Your grades for these classes will take into account several sources of information regarding your performance at the practicum and in the seminar. The sources and the weight these components have on your final grade for SOWK 4870 & 4875 are noted on the syllabus.

**HOURS REQUIRED**

You must complete and document a *minimum* of 480 hours in the field (as verified by your field supervisor). You are expected to work in your agency a minimum of 32-37 hours per week for 15 weeks. *You may not finish your practicum early.*

**COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS**

Week 1: Introduction

8/28/13 Placement starts - first day

9/3/13 What Does Capstone Mean? (**campus**)

Week 2: Theoretical Frameworks **(ON-LINE)**

9/9/13 Theoretical Frameworks Used in Agency: Ethical Dilemmas Faced

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| Log: What is the agency's formal mission? Do an informal survey and ask employees to tell you in their own words what the agency's mission is. How will ethics be taught in the field? |

Week 3: Integrating It All Together **(campus)**

9/16/13 Career Planning and Job Search (Haley Briggs, Career Center - Guest Speaker)

Résumés, Cover Letters, Job descriptions

***DUE: Learning Contract, Agency Agreement***

Log: If you had to identify the theoretical frameworks or theories most used in your agency, which theories seem to apply the most? (For example a medical setting may rely on crisis intervention; child protective services may use attachment theory, agencies working with families may use systems theory etc.)

Week 4: Assessing Personal Strengths **(ON-LINE)**

9/23/13

Log: The Problem Solving Process must be taught in all accredited social work programs and is the foundation of social work practice. The process defines the helping process as working through seven distinct phases: engagement, assessment, planning, intervention, evaluation and termination and follow-up. Describe how these phases apply in your agency. Explain which phases are seen as more important than others. Which phases are rarely utilized for clients in your agency? Are social workers in your agency trained in these processes and if so, how?

Week 5: Supervision **(campus)**

9/30/13 Learning style, educational and supervisory philosophy; Integrative Project

Log: Talk with your field instructor about the benefits to supervision. Is it all about making sure that you do your job or is there more to the supervision process? Is there a time when you don’t need supervision anymore? How does a social work supervisor ensure that he/she is providing supervision and not social work services or does that really matter?

Week 6: Diversity Issues **(ON-LINE)**

10/7/2013 ***Due: Reinvestment project plans***

Log: Discuss the ways your agency deals with diversity issues (race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability etc.?) How do aging issues impact your agency? If your agency does not work directly with older people, how do aging issues affect it indirectly?

Week 7: Professional Network **(campus)**

10/14/2013 Networking and Graduate School

Log: Discuss how to build a professional network. What meetings can you attend? What contacts should you make to begin to meet other professionals who can help you get a job? Discuss with your field instructor the pros and cons of graduate school? Is an MSW absolutely necessary for social workers?

Week 8: Advocacy and Policy Practice **(campus)**

10/21/2013 ***Due: Discussion Board***

10/25/2013 (Friday) ***Due:*** ***Mid-term evaluation***

Log: What activities are your agency involved in pertaining to policy practice? Is your supervisor involved in policy advocacy activities or is that the job of someone else in the organization?

Week 9: Licensure, Importance of Professional Organizations **(ON-LINE)**

10/28/2013 ***Due: Social Work Reinvestment Videos***

Log: What jobs in your agency require licensure (from any discipline)? How important is licensure to your agency? Why do social workers have licensure? How does it maintain and improve a profession? How do social workers in Texas become licensed?

Week 10: Check In and Case Presentations **(Campus)**

11/4/2013 ***Due: Professional cover letter, résumé, and meeting memo regarding Career Center***

Log: Talk about the job search process with your supervisor. Review the types of questions that might be asked in your placement agency and what skills and qualifications they might be looking at for a specific job you might be interested in applying for. What would rule someone out?

Week 11 Use of Self **(ON-LINE)**

11/11/2013 Understanding use of self and self-awareness in practice

Log: Compile two lists: one of your personal strengths and one of your professional strengths. Each list must have at least 25 items. Discuss your strengths with your supervisor. Which of your strengths will take you the furthest? What kind of social work position do you feel best matches your unique set of strengths?

Week 12: Check In and Case Presentations (**Campus**)

Week 13: Management, Agency Organizational Structure, Termination **(Campus)**

11/25/2013 ***Due:*** ***Integrative Paper (bring hard copy)***

Log: What is the management philosophy in your agency? Does information flow up or down the ranks? How is information disseminated? Is this effective? How could communications improve? Who actually makes the big decisions? What sort of ethical issues do administrators or managers deal with in this agency? How do these differ from micro-practice issues? What are potential liabilities? How does ethical social work practice reduce liability risk?

Week 14: Taking Care of Self, Burn-out, & Time Management **(ON-LINE)**

12/2/2013 ***Due:*** ***Final and Self-Evaluation Packet***

Log: Why do you think burnout is a problem in social work? Give some examples of social workers that you have observed who have serious signs of burnout? Ask your field instructor for recommendations for how social workers may take care of themselves and to avoid burn-out? How can social workers maintain a good balance between their professional lives and personal life? Why is this so important? How important is time-management to social workers? Ask your field instructor for advice on helping a beginning social worker think about organizing and managing multiple tasks throughout a typical day.

Week 15: Next Steps **(campus)**

12/9/2013

Log: Please answer the following questions. What are you most proud of? What was your best experience? What skill have you improved the most? What one thing would you change, if you could? What is your best advice to the next student who comes into this agency?

**ASSIGNMENTS**

| **IMPORTANT DUE DATES & ASSIGNMENTS-SOWK 4870** | **Weight &**  **Points** | **Due Dates** |
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| **Case Staffings / Presentations:**  You will present one case presentation which is 10 minutes (with 5 minutes reserved for questions) based on a client or client system (family) from your practicum agency. You will facilitate group discussion of your case/problem *(It may be the same client that you will be using for the integrative project).* You will develop a 1-2 page, de-identified overview of the client and include: the purpose of the interaction and important issues and concerns illustrated by the case. Give a brief description of your agency, who it typically serves and the services generally offered. Provide identifying data that helps us “see” your client such as age, gender, race/ethnicity, marital status, and other relevant demographic/personal data. Help the class understand the client’s presenting problems and why they sought services from your agency. Were they voluntary clients or mandated? Are they a first time or returning client? Also include in your presentation the bio-psycho-social history of your client. See the Oral presentation outline instructions included on Blackboard for more detail. Don’t forget to talk about treatment relationships you have with the client, what interventions you used and social work values relevant to the case. Address how research may further inform your understanding of the client’s circumstances. Provide as a handout, a case summary to distribute to the class. Include references and cite sources for your presentation (APA). A grading guide will be posted on-line. **You must adhere to the 10 minute guideline.** | 15%  150 Points | Students will sign-up |
| **Social Work Reinvestment Project Plans and Video**  Each student is expected to participate in the Social Work Reinvestment Initiative (the themes for Social Work Reinvestment are Recruitment, Retention, Research and Reimbursement/Compensation). Students will conduct research on the Social Work Reinvestment Initiative to gain a better understanding of its history and purpose. In groups of three (3), devise a plan to create a YouTube video for the purpose of educating the public about the purpose, mission and value of the social work profession. The video should be no longer than 5 minutes long. You will be graded on content, creativity and effort used to produce a meaningful and informative video. The group’s plan should be turned in via hard copy to Mrs. Sweeten by October 7, 2013 at 2:00 p.m. The video should be uploaded to Blackboard no later than October 28, 2013 at 2:00 p.m. | 20%  200 Points | 10/7/2013 |
| **Weekly Logs, Class Participation, & Professionalism**  You are expected to be an active participant in class. In addition, the completion of a weekly log of student activities, questions, and supervision is required as part of the weekly supervision process. The logs will all be done electronically on the class Blackboard site. In addition, for the weeks that class is on-line, you are expected to participate in the discussion board(s) for that week and that grade will also be reflected here. Each log and discussion board will be worth 10 points. | 20%  200  Points | Weekly |
| **Professional Meeting**  You are expected to meet with the Career Center to review your résumé and cover letter, to understand what they do, and to see what resources are available to you as a graduating senior. You will provide a one page memo about your meeting and how it will benefit you or not in the future. Your professional cover letter, résumé and meeting memo should be submitted via Blackboard by 11/4/2013 at 2:00 p.m. | 10%  100  Points | 12/2/2013 |
| **Integrative Project**  You will prepare a scholarly report to demonstrate your knowledge of the social work problem solving process. *(See handouts and grading rubric for additional information)* | 35%  350  Points | 11/25/2013 |
| **TOTAL** | **100%**  **1000** | |

***Failure to complete all of the above assignments may result in a failing grade***

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| **IMPORTANT DUE DATES & ASSIGNMENTS- SOWK 4875** | **Weight &**  **Points** | **Due**  **Dates** |
| **Learning Contract**  You are required, with the assistance of your field instructor, to identify activities and objectives related to the competencies and practice behaviors listed in the syllabus to be accomplished during your practicum. The activities should be doable and measurable activities such as: completing an intake interview independently, writing a summary of a board meeting, etc. The contract should also address the structure and parameters of the practicum. | N/A | 9/16/2013 |
| **Midterm Evaluation Due**  Your Field Instructor will receive the midterm from the Career & Internship Center for completion. Schedule a time to complete the Mid-Term with your Field Instructor. | 40% | 10/25/2013 |
| **Final Evaluation Due**  Your Field Instructor will receive the Final from the Career & Internship Center for completion. Schedule a time to discuss it with your Field Instructor. You will also receive an email with the self-evaluation packet. This includes an evaluation of the agency and the Social Work program. | 60% | 12/2/2013 |
| **Total** | 100% |  |

***Failure to provide the above documents, verification of required practicum hours, or receive positive ratings in field may result in failing the practicum.***