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### SW 488.01: Field Work Practicum Seminar

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**FIELD PRACTICUM SEMINAR  
SOCIAL WORK 488**

**Cindy Garthwait, MSSW  
The University of Montana  
Department of Social Work  
Fall 2001**

**Tuesdays 3-5:00 PM  
Liberal Arts 102**

**PURPOSE**

The goal of the practicum seminar is to enhance the social work practicum experience by facilitating the integration of prior classroom learning and actual social work practice. Students will gain an understanding of the roles of the social worker in their agency settings and come to an understanding of professionalism, the planned change process, social policy, and ethics.

Heavy emphasis is placed on providing students with an opportunity to develop skills in oral communication and in explaining and describing social work practice and the structure and functioning of a social policy.

The specific topics to be discussed are ones directly related to the questions on the Competency Examination. Thus, this seminar is also intended to assist students in preparing for the Competency Examination.

**OBJECTIVES**

Students will demonstrate:

- The ability to integrate classroom theoretical knowledge  
and social work practice
- Knowledge of and ability to identify ethical issues and  
dilemmas and develop methods for dealing with those  
dilemmas
- The ability to write measurable learning objectives
- The ability to discuss professional social work topics in  
a seminar setting
- An understanding of and an ability to analyze their  
community
- An understanding of and an ability to analyze their agency
- An understanding of and an ability to analyze social problems  
and social policies
- The ability to identify legal issues in social work practice
- Competence in the phases of planned change
- An understanding of the importance of evaluation in social  
work practice
- The ability to merge their professional and personal selves

**GRADING** Pass / Fail

**ATTENDANCE**

Students are expected to attend all classes. HAVING MORE THAN TWO ABSENCES MAY RESULT IN A FAILING GRADE. Roll will be taken. Given good reason or special circumstances, a student may be excused from attending a session. If a student misses a class, s/he must make arrangements with the instructor to make up the work missed.

**ASSIGNED READINGS**

The Social Work Practicum: A Guide and Workbook for Students, Horejsi and Garthwait, Allyn and Bacon, 2002.

Department of Social Work Practicum Manual, Garthwait, 2000.

Both books are available at the University Center Bookstore.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Given the nature of the seminar and the fact that it will focus on concerns and issues faced by students working with real clients in real agencies, it is critically important that client confidentiality be protected. NEVER reveal the name of a client or provide descriptive information that might identify the client even when names are not mentioned. Consult with your instructor prior to the seminar meeting if you are unsure how you can discuss an important question or issue and still protect confidentiality.

**SEMINAR FORMAT**

Most of the sessions will be devoted to topics relevant to the practicum experience and to integrating social work concepts and theory with actual practice. STUDENTS ARE TO COME PREPARED TO DISCUSS THE WEEKLY TOPIC BY READING THE REQUIRED READINGS, COMPLETING THE WORKBOOK SECTIONS ASSIGNED, AND BE READY TO DISCUSS THE WEEKLY TOPIC. Students will be expected to bring examples from their agencies, to develop ideas and questions relevant to the topic of the week, and to respond professionally to the concerns and questions of other students.

**WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS**

Each week, 1-2 chapters from the assigned textbook will be assigned. Students are to read the chapters and complete the workbook sections of the chapters. Students are to come prepared to discuss what they have written in the workbook.

Students are also encouraged to spend time each week scanning and reviewing ALL chapters of the textbook, and wherever possible, answering those workbook questions for which they have relevant information and experiences.

If students are conscientious about securing answers to the questions listed in the workbook and entering the information into the space provided, they will be creating a record of immense value to the process of writing the social work Competency Examination.

Students are to write a 3-5 page draft of Competency Examination questions 1 (Organizational and Community Context of Practice), 2 (Social Problems / Social Policy), 3 (Assessment), and 7 (The Profession of Social Work).

Draft of question 1 due date:	October 23
Draft of question 2 due date:	November 6
Draft of question 3 due date:	November 20
Draft of question 7 due date:	December 4

#### **SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

September 4	Introduction / Orientation to practicum
September 11	Getting Started in Your PraCTICUM Chapter 1 What is a Practicum? Chapter 2 School, Agency, and Student Expectations Chapter 4 Getting Started
September 18	Learning Plans Chapter 3 Planning to Learn
September 25	Supervision and Communication Chapter 5 Using Supervision Chapter 7 Communication
October 2	Safety in the Practicum Chapter 6 Personal Safety
October 9	Understanding Your Agency Chapter 8 The Agency Context of Practice
October 16	Understanding Your Community Chapter 9 The Community Context of Practice
October 23	Social Problems and Social Policy Chapter 10 The Social Problem Context of Practice Chapter 11 The Social Policy Context of

Practice  
Question 1 due (Organization and Community)

October 30	Assessment and Planning Chapter 16 Social Work Practice as Planned Change Question 2 due (Social Problem / Social Policy)
November 6	Intervention and Evaluation Chapter 16 Social Work Practice as Planned Change
November 13	Professional Social Work and Ethics Chapter 13 Professional Social Work Chapter 14 Values and Ethics Question 3 due (Assessment)
November 20	Legal Issues Chapter 15 Legal Concerns
November 27	Evaluating Your Practice Chapter 17 Evaluating Student Performance
December 4	Merging Self and Profession Chapter 18 Merging Self and Profession Question 7 due (The Profession of Social Work)