



 **MERCY UNIVERSITY**

# Social Work Practicum Manual

**Social Work Program**

**2023-2024**

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Dear Students and Practicum Supervisors:

Welcome to the senior year Practicum!

According to the Council on Social Work Education's (CSWE) Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards, field education also referred to as social work practicum is the "signature pedagogy of social work education." This designation underscores the role of the Practicum as the bridge for connecting the theories and concepts of generalist practice from the classroom to the practice skills used with your clients. As such, the Practicum is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated based on criteria by which students demonstrate mastery of the program's core competencies operationalized by the competence behaviors outlined by the School and CSWE. It also recognizes the importance of the community's involvement in the education of future social workers. We could not provide such rich learning opportunities for students without agencies' commitment to the core learning competencies.

The purpose of this manual is to serve as a guide and a resource for students, Practicum supervisors, agency educational coordinators and executives, Social Work faculty, and faculty Practicum liaisons. It highlights relevant information about the objectives, policies, and practices of our social work Practicum program and the University.

Again, we welcome you to your senior year Practicum and wish all of you a wonderful year!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Emily Murphy".

Emily Murphy, LMSW  
Internship Practicum Coordinator

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## **SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM**

### **Mercy University**

Mercy University is a private, independent, non-sectarian, four-year, coeducational institution. The College offers curricula in the Liberal Arts and Sciences and in pre-professional and professional areas of practice, granting undergraduate and graduate degrees. The Mercy University community takes pride in its dedication to teaching, emphasis on caring, both for students and each other, and in its commitment to serving individuals of different races, ethnic groups, nationalities, and socio-economic backgrounds. The Social Work Program is strongly in consonance with the spirit of the historic mission of Mercy University which encourages responsibility and community service.

### **MISSION OF THE SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM**

In concert with the school's mission, the Social Work Program at Mercy University builds on a strong liberal arts base that prepares its students to be competent entry-level generalist social work practitioners that serve diverse and at-risk populations. The Program educates students to engage in contemporary culturally competent practice with diverse populations, promotes critical analysis of environmental factors affecting individuals, families, and communities, and promotes advocacy for those who confront structural barriers, thus preparing students to contribute to their communities through service and leadership.

### **PROGRAM GOALS**

The goals for the Social Work Program are:

1. To educate students for entry level generalist social work practice including interventions with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
2. Students will acquire the knowledge and skills to serve diverse populations and needs with sensitivity, creativity, and professional courage.
3. Students will have respect for and an integration of professional ethics and values into their practice.
4. Students will have a commitment to seek avenues for lifelong learning and professional development.
5. Students who may wish to pursue graduate education will have a solid academic and practice foundation of knowledge skills.
6. Students will acquire a commitment to, Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice to improving unjust or oppressive social conditions and policies: promoting effective and humane agency/organization practices and programs.

## **THE ROLE OF THE PRACTICUM IN SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION**

The Council on Social Work Education has designated field work also referred to as social work practicum to be the “signature pedagogy” of social work education and is often regarded as the “heart” of learning how to become a social worker. As such, the Senior Year Practicum plays a pivotal role in student education and is regarded as the central form for socializing the student to the social work profession. It is during the Practicum experience those students, utilizing classroom theory and knowledge, test out skills toward developing professional competence and identity. The overall objective of the Practicum is to produce a professionally competent, ethical, self-evaluating, knowledgeable social worker with the capacity to learn and the initiative to keep on learning. As educators, we also need to model and to help our students to bring their humanity and authenticity to their practice, to act with courage, and to develop a vision about contributing toward the amelioration of the significant social problems that face our society today.

The social work Practicum is viewed as a unique partnership between the Social Work Program and its community agencies with the purpose of designing, implementing, and monitoring a sound educational program for students. Through ongoing communication and meetings, the agency and faculty work towards the development of a shared educational philosophy and standards regarding Practicum assignments, supervision, and student performance.

## **THE SENIOR YEAR PRACTICUM STRUCTURE**

During their senior year, students are required to complete a social work Practicum. This Practicum is worth 12 of the 24 requisite credits of the senior year curriculum. Practicum placements are assigned for 16 hours a week for a yearly minimum total of 450 hours. Some adaptations to this schedule may be developed in certain circumstances (such as during the Covid- 19 pandemic), including a reduction of hours if approved by CSWE. Students will be made aware of any adjustments to hours as they are determined and approved by the Program Director and Social Work Practicum Coordinator.

Students register for both SOWK 431 (worth 6 credits in the Fall), and SOWK 432 (worth 6 credits in the Spring). Students receive 1 ½ hours of supervision per week from their Practicum supervisor and submit one (1) process recording per week to their supervisor. They submit one (1) process recording per month with comments from their supervisor to their faculty Practicum liaison.

The social work Practicum starts in early September and typically ends in early May. Students must accrue 225 hours per semester, which typically breaks down to 16 hours per week or 2-3 days per week.

To assure a continuous educational experience in congruence with the social work process, students cannot work additional hours in excess with the expectation of time off at a designated time in the semester. For example, a student may not frontload hours in the beginning of the semester because he or she would like to end their Practicum before the scheduled semester stop date.

Some adaptations to this schedule may be developed with agencies and students, such as a reduction in weekly hours or a schedule that extends beyond the traditional academic year. However, these arrangements must first be discussed with and approved by the Practicum Coordinator and clarified with the student's agency, supervisor, and faculty Practicum liaison.

**To ensure a quality Practicum, it must be conducted during normal working hours: Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-8 p.m. Some late afternoon and evening hours may be possible, but students must be available at least one full day during the week during regular working hours of the agency. Agencies that provide one weekend day are very rare, and students will need to discuss this with the Practicum Coordinator prior to being placed. The department does not guarantee any student a placement that will include weekend or evening hours.**

Students are first notified of the Practicum requirements during their admissions interview for the Social Work Program and are asked to sign an acknowledgement form of the Program's requirements (see Appendix). Throughout their junior year, students are reminded of the Practicum's required hours and time demands, so they can arrange their schedules accordingly. During the Practice I (SOWK 322) class in the spring semester, the Practicum Coordinator provides an Practicum presentation that reviews the time requirements and introduces the guidelines and the application process for the senior year Practicum.

**Specific details of the senior year Practicum are described more in depth in this Practicum manual. It is highly recommended that all students and participants in the Practicum and the Social Work Faculty carefully read this manual.**

## PRACTICUM OBJECTIVES

Mercy University's Social Work Program is fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). CSWE's 2022 Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) identified 9 core competencies. "Each competency describes the knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes that comprise the competency at the generalist level of practice, followed by a set of behaviors that integrate these components. These behaviors represent observable components of the competencies, while the preceding statements represent the underlying content and processes that inform these behaviors" (P.8). Generalist practice learning objectives for the Practicum are based on the application of these core competencies and behaviors. Because they are so integral to the curriculum, students are evaluated on their progress on mastering these competences through their end-of-the-semester evaluations (see Appendix). Copies of the competencies and behaviors are also widely disseminated to students, Practicum supervisors, and faculty Practicum liaisons throughout various points of the Practicum process, including orientations, agency meetings, and faculty and classroom discussions.

Students completing their senior-year Practicum and graduating with a Social Work degree from Mercy University are expected to demonstrate understanding and mastery at the BSW level of these 9 core competencies which are listed below.

## THE SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

**The Social Work Program at Mercy University is part of the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences. Students majoring in social work take a combination of courses and participate in an Practicum which constitutes the foundation of knowledge and skills necessary for a career in this profession. The social work baccalaureate major has been designed to meet requirements for accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education EDUCATIONAL POLICIES AND ACCREDITATION STANDARDS (EPAS)**

Mercy University’s Social Work Program is fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). CSWE’s 2022 Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) has identified 9 core competencies.

According to CSWE (2022), “Each competency describes the knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes that comprise the competency at the generalist level of practice, followed by a set of behaviors that integrate these components,”(P.8).

Students graduating with a Social Work degree from Mercy University are expected to demonstrate understanding and mastery at the BSW level these 9 core competencies and 31 behaviors which are listed.

<b>Competency 1:</b> Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior	<b>Competency 6:</b> Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
<b>Competency 2:</b> Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice	<b>Competency 7:</b> Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
<b>Competency 3:</b> Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in	<b>Competency 8:</b> Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
<b>Competency 4:</b> Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice	<b>Competency 9:</b> Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
<b>Competency 5:</b> Engage in Policy Practice	

### Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant policies, laws, and regulations that may affect practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand that ethics are informed by principles of human rights and apply them toward realizing social, racial, economic, and environmental justice in their practice. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision making and apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize and manage personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. Social workers understand how their evolving worldview, personal experiences, and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers take measures to care for themselves professionally and personally, understanding that self-care is paramount for competent and ethical social work practice. Social workers use rights-based, antiracist, and anti-oppressive lenses to understand and critique the profession's history, mission, roles, and responsibilities and recognize historical and current contexts of oppression in shaping institutions and social work. Social workers understand the role of other professionals when engaged in interprofessional practice. Social workers recognize the importance of lifelong learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure relevant and effective practice. Social workers understand digital technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice.

Social workers:

- a. make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics within the profession as appropriate to the context;
- b. demonstrate professional behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- c. use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
- d. use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

## **Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice**

Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights. Social workers are knowledgeable about the global intersecting and ongoing injustices throughout history that result in oppression and racism, including social work's role and response. Social workers critically evaluate the distribution of power and privilege in society to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice by reducing inequities and ensuring dignity and respect for all. Social workers advocate for and engage in strategies to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social resources, rights, and responsibilities are

distributed equitably, and that civil, political, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected.

Social workers:

- a. advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community system levels; and
- b. engage in practices that advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

### **Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice**

Social workers understand how racism and oppression shape human experiences and how these two constructs influence practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community levels and in policy and research. Social workers understand the pervasive impact of White supremacy and privilege and use their knowledge, awareness, and skills to engage in anti-racist practice. Social workers understand how diversity and intersectionality shape human experiences and identity development and affect equity and inclusion. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of factors including but not limited to age, caste, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, generational status, immigration status, legal status, marital status, political ideology, race, nationality, religion and spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that this intersectionality means that a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege and power. Social workers understand the societal and historical roots of social and racial injustices and the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination. Social workers understand cultural humility and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, racial, technological, and cultural exclusions, may create privilege and power resulting in systemic oppression.

Social workers:

- a. demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels; and
- b. demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness, and self-regulation to manage the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working with clients and constituencies, acknowledging them as experts of their own lived experiences.

### **Competency 4: Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice**

Social workers use ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive approaches in conducting research and building knowledge. Social workers use research to inform their practice decision making and articulate how their practice experience informs research and evaluation decisions. Social workers critically evaluate and critique current, empirically sound research to inform decisions pertaining to practice, policy, and programs. Social workers understand the

inherent bias in research and evaluate design, analysis, and interpretation using an anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspective. Social workers know how to access, critique, and synthesize the current literature to develop appropriate research questions and hypotheses. Social workers demonstrate knowledge and skills regarding qualitative and quantitative research methods and analysis, and they interpret data derived from these methods. Social workers demonstrate knowledge about methods to assess reliability and validity in social work research. Social workers can articulate and share research findings in ways that are usable to a variety of clients and constituencies. Social workers understand the value of evidence derived from interprofessional and diverse research methods, approaches, and sources.

Social workers:

- a. apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and programs; and
- b. identify ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research methods to advance the purposes of social work.

### **Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice**

Social workers identify social policies at the local, state, federal, and global level that affects wellbeing, human rights and justice, service delivery, and access to social services. Social workers recognize the historical, social, racial, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. Social workers understand and critique the history and current structures of social policies and services and the role of policy in service delivery through rights based, anti-oppressive, and anti-racist lenses. Social workers influence policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation within their practice settings with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers actively engage in and advocate for anti-racist and anti-oppressive policy practice to effect change in those settings.

Social workers: a. use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services; and

b. apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

### **Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with and on behalf of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are self-reflective and understand how bias, power, and privilege as well as their personal values and personal experiences may affect their ability to engage effectively with diverse clients and

constituencies. Social workers use the principles of interprofessional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate.

Social workers:

- a. apply knowledge of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, to engage with clients and constituencies; and
- b. use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to engage in culturally responsive practice with clients and constituencies.

### **Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in the assessment of diverse clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of assessment with diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and value the importance of inter-professional collaboration in this process. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may affect their assessment and decision-making.

Social workers:

- a. apply theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as other culturally responsive and interprofessional conceptual frameworks, when assessing clients and constituencies; and
- b. demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing a mutually agreed-upon plan.

### **Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are knowledgeable about evidence-informed interventions to achieve the goals of clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to effectively intervene with clients and constituencies. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing and implementing evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers value the importance of inter-professional teamwork and communication in interventions, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may require interdisciplinary, inter-professional, and inter-organizational collaboration.

Social workers:

- a. engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals; and
- b. incorporate culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies

**Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers recognize the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness.

Social workers:

- a. select and use culturally responsive methods for evaluation of outcomes; and
- b. critically analyze outcomes and apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

## THE SOCIAL WORK MAJOR & PRACTICUM

Students generally begin the Social Work major as they enter their junior year. All students pursue a broad-based liberal arts curriculum and take courses that are supportive of the social work curriculum. A significant number of Mercy University students also transfer from other two- or four-year Colleges.

Students interested in the Social Work major must have accrued at least 42 credits and have a GPA of 2.66 on a 4.0 scale. They must also apply to the major by contacting the Program and scheduling an interview. During this meeting, students are informed of the importance and requirements of the senior year Practicum. The student is asked to consider any time or scheduling concerns that might interfere in successfully completing their Practicum. At the end of the interview, students are asked to sign an acknowledgement form of the Program's requirements (see Appendix).

As a full-time faculty member, the Practicum Coordinator interviews students for admission to the Program but also assumes the role of a consultant for other faculty interviewing students who have questions or concerns about the Practicum. An additional meeting with the Practicum Coordinator may be warranted for such students.

### Curriculum & Practicum Eligibility Requirements

The Social Work Major at Mercy University is based upon a progressive sequence of courses offered largely over a 4-semester period in the junior and senior years. The core requirements are based on the curriculum guidelines established by CSWE, the national accrediting body for Baccalaureate Social Work Programs. The undergraduate curriculum is, in most respects, equivalent to the first-year graduate foundation curriculum. The student does not receive course credit for life or prior work experience.

The *junior* year course content is geared to developing the student's awareness of the diversity of professional practice in relation to persons, problems, settings, roles, and activities of the social worker. These courses provide students with additional foundation knowledge for practice, help the students acquire the analytic skills and the knowledge essential to making informed practice choices, and facilitate the socialization of students into the profession.

Throughout their junior year, students take the required course in Social Welfare Policy & Services (SOWK 342), a full-year course sequence in Human Behavior & the Social Environment (SOWK 311 & 312), a course entitled Issues of Diversity in Social Work Practice (SOWK 314), and Social Work Research (SOWK 332). In the Spring semester of their junior year, students begin the first of three Social Work Practice courses. Please refer to the Student Handbook for a more detailed description of each course.

During their junior-year spring semester, the Practicum Coordinator visits each Practice I (SOWK 322) class to provide an Practicum orientation. Students who are continuing into the senior year must have a minimum 2.8 GPA and have successfully passed all prerequisite courses. To be eligible for the Practicum, every student must complete a Practicum application (see Appendix) and submit a resume to the Practicum Coordinator by due date. The Practicum Coordinator will also speak with faculty members regarding students' professional behavior within the classroom and readiness for the senior year Practicum.

### **Integration of Classroom Concepts & Practicum**

The emphasis in the *senior* year is on conceptualization and application of generalist practice in work with individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations. In congruence with the Practicum, students take two additional sequential co-requisite social work practice courses (SOWK 423 & 424), a co-requisite social work practice elective (either Social Work with Children and Adolescents [SOWK 435] or Social Work in Health and Mental Health [SOWK 436] including services to older people and to people with addictions), and a course entitled, Influencing Communities, Organizations and Social Policies (SOWK 426).

To further connect the classroom and practice, students are assigned term papers and projects in Practice I & II (SOWK 322 & 423) courses that illustrate concepts needed to learn a practitioner's role. The Practicum Coordinator also teaches both a Practice I and II section each year and plays an integral role in planning the curriculum for courses.

In the Practicum, students are encouraged to actively refer to their practice textbooks when planning supervision sessions or considering the social work processes within their agency. On the process recording form, they are asked specifically to consider how what they've learned in the classroom might assist them in working with a client (see Appendix). Students are also required to attend integrative meetings with their designated faculty Practicum liaison several times throughout the semester. Faculty Practicum liaisons also are required to meet with Practicum supervisors at the agency once per semester and to meet with the Practicum Coordinator at least twice per semester.

In general, all faculty are encouraged to cultivate community contacts and participate in professional organizations to keep abreast of current practice issues. The Mercy University Advisory Board is also comprised of practitioners and leaders within social work who provide experience and perspective from practice. The Board meets as a group once a semester and are available for consultation throughout the year. During the Practicum Graduation, a designated practitioner is asked to speak on various educational topics.

## **STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION OF THE PRACTICUM PROGRAM**

The Practicum Coordinator carries responsibility for overseeing the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the Social Work Practicum Program. The coordinator carries primary responsibility for assessing all potentially new and continuing agencies and Practicum supervisors and mutually planning with them. The coordinator, along with faculty, consults with agencies about learning opportunities in their respective programs, including orientation, assignments, resources, and other issues which affect student learning.

The Practicum Coordinator, in consultation with the Program Director and faculty, is responsible for assigning students to their respective Practicum agencies. In this role, the coordinator provides orientations to all eligible juniors to assess the learning needs, capacities, and preferences of students to make an educationally sound match with an Practicum placement and agency supervisor. There is no guarantee that students are placed at an agency or Practicum of practice of their choice. Nor can the Practicum department promise a student a placement as per his or her geographical or scheduling preferences. Every effort will be made to accommodate all students and to place each student in an educationally viable and rich placement.

The Program plans and sponsors mandatory orientation meetings for students entering Practicum and disseminates information about all students to their respective Practicum training settings. In cooperation with the student's faculty Practicum liaison, the coordinator, along with Program faculty, serves as a resource to students with questions or concerns about their learning in the Practicum and in planning their Practicum.

Faculty are assigned by the Practicum Coordinator to serve in an advising role to students in their Practicum and as liaison to agencies. Faculty Practicum liaisons keep the Practicum Coordinator informed of developments in agencies, about concerns that may emerge regarding student performance in the Practicum and prepare year-end summaries on both students and agencies. At the end of the academic year, students are provided with the opportunity to assess their total Practicum experience to the Social Work Program.

The coordinator also plans and teaches the Seminar in Field Instruction (SIFI) for agency supervisors new to student supervision and/or working with the Social Work Program at Mercy University. The Practicum Coordinator works with agencies to enhance communication and problem-solving, to mitigate difficulties, to advocate for and monitor sound standards for the social work Practicum and social work practice, and to serve as a source for ideas and for information on Program policy and procedures and ideas. Other responsibilities of the Practicum Coordinator include but are not limited to:

- Interviewing students for the Social Work major and acting as a consultant for interested students who have concerns or questions about the senior-year Practicum.
- Planning and evaluating curriculum and teach Practice I & II courses to assure optimal integration of generalist practice concepts and skills.
- Cultivating and screening agencies and maintaining agency contacts to assure educationally rich placements.
- Planning all Practicum events including the end-of-the-year Practicum graduation
- Overseeing the federal work/study community service program
- Conducting meetings with all agency personnel at least twice per semester (copies of the Minutes from these meetings are kept in the Practicum Coordinator's office).
- Consulting, when needed, with the Program Director regarding Practicum concerns

## PRACTICUM PERSONNEL

### Definitions of Practicum Personnel

**Agency supervisor:** A staff member at the agency site who is designated by the Agency and approved by the University's Social Work Program to carry primary responsibility for supervision of the student in the Practicum. If there is not a qualified supervisor at the agency, the University will hire and assign a licensed social worker for this role.

**Educational Coordinator:** A staff member at the Practicum site who is designated by the Agency to serve as the official representative in planning with the Social Work program. Often acts as Agency coordinator with the respective agency supervisors.

**Faculty Practicum Liaison\*:** A faculty member is assigned by the Practicum Coordinator as the student's advisor for the Practicum. Their role and responsibilities are described below.

**Practicum Coordinator:** Full-time faculty member responsible for the social work Practicum program. The coordinator is Emily Murphy, LMSW. You can contact her at (914) 674-7556 or [EMurphy4@Mercy.edu](mailto:EMurphy4@Mercy.edu)

## The Faculty Practicum Liaison

Each student is assigned a faculty Practicum liaison. The faculty Practicum liaisons' responsibilities include actively maintaining contact with assigned students, Practicum supervisor, and agency educational coordinators. The faculty Practicum liaison carries responsibility for the student's Practicum experience and for assigning the final grade each semester.

It is through the faculty Practicum liaison that the student integrates the total educational experience. The faculty Practicum liaison carries primary responsibility for helping the student, the agency supervisor, and the agency to meet the educational objectives established for the student's Practicum training experience. The faculty Practicum liaison helps the agency supervisor and the student identify the educational resources and the teaching content in practice and facilitates the integration of practice and class learning.

**Students should regard the faculty Practicum liaison as they would any other professor teaching in a classroom setting.** Practicum liaisons will request assignments from the students, including a completed educational plan, process recordings, and evaluations. Practicum liaisons might also ask for additional assignments such as supervisory agendas or statistical monthly form if an Practicum situation warrants them (see Appendix for these assignments).

Faculty Practicum liaisons are expected to meet with students at least 3 times per semester. This should include at least one individual meeting. They are required to visit the agency and agency supervisor at least once per semester and maintain phone or email contact with agency personnel between visits. In some situations, faculty Practicum liaisons will visit more frequently than the minimum and agency supervisors are encouraged to request contact whenever the need arises. Additionally, Practicum liaisons must attend one mandatory meeting with the Practicum Coordinator per semester. Minutes from these meetings are kept in the Practicum Coordinator's office.

Other specific Practicum liaison tasks include:

- Carefully review and comment on process recordings. Students are required to submit process recordings to *both* Practicum liaisons and Practicum supervisors
- Review each student's educational plan to compare/contrast it as per the student's learning needs and CSWE core competencies and practice behaviors. The Practicum liaison should adjust the educational plan as needed throughout the academic year.
- Actively evaluate each student's performance in the Practicum. This is not just limited to the student's paper evaluations, but also the Practicum liaisons interactions with the student, agency supervisor, and agency personnel.
- Evaluate the educational experience provided by agencies and Practicum supervisors

All faculty Practicum liaisons and Practicum supervisors are given a copy of CSWE's 2022 core competencies and practice behaviors at the beginning of the academic year. Faculty Practicum liaisons are strongly encouraged to create their own "course expectations sheet," which includes deadlines for process recordings and policies relating to student meetings and specified advising hours. Faculty Practicum liaisons are required to attend *both* the Practicum supervisors' orientation as well as the student Practicum at the beginning of the academic year. At both orientations, they

are introduced and paired with their assigned students and Practicum supervisors.

### **Role with Agencies**

The faculty Practicum liaison works with the agency supervisor and with the agency educational coordinator or executive administrator to plan for student work assignments, the student's integration into the agency, and monitors the ongoing educational experience. The necessary two-way communication between the agency and the Program is facilitated by the faculty Practicum liaison who can share information with both parties. The faculty Practicum liaison is expected to inform the agency of changes in curriculum or issues that would have a bearing on the student's experience in the agency. It is also important for the Program to hear through the faculty Practicum liaisons about issues in the agencies that may impact its planning and curriculum.

### **Responsibilities for Student Assignments**

Faculty Practicum liaisons monitor the assignments given to the student from early in the semester to ensure there is the volume, the diversity, and the depth necessary for a solid educational experience. If there are difficulties with providing such assignments, it is of importance that the faculty Practicum liaison is notified quickly. The faculty Practicum liaison will work with the agency supervisor to develop ways in which problems can be addressed or alternatives developed. The monitoring of the assignments is a year-long activity as students' learning needs and capabilities change over the year and different assignments become appropriate.

### **Student Meetings with Faculty Practicum Liaisons**

Faculty Practicum liaisons are required to meet with each student at least once on an agency per semester. Students are urged to initiate contact with their Practicum liaison and not to wait for the faculty Practicum liaison to set up an appointment. Practicum liaisons and students should also maintain telephone or e-mail contact with each other to assure that any emerging issues are readily identified, discussed, and addressed.

### **Integrative Practicum Seminar**

Students in their senior year Practicum are required to participate in an in-person Practicum seminar class with their faculty Practicum liaison. There are weekly seminars conducted throughout the course of the school year in person. These seminars are an essential part of the students learning experience while in their Practicum. The overall goal of the Practicum seminar is to bridge what the student is learning in the classroom with their practice experiences in their Practicum. Integrative seminars play a key role in helping the student develop a professional identity as a social worker, problem- solve challenging experiences in the classroom and in their Practicum and encourage self- awareness and professional development. Attendance is required and students are expected to actively participate and complete the required assignments.

## **Progression, Evaluation, and Grading of Student's Work**

The faculty Practicum liaison monitors the student's work throughout the year and is responsible for determining the student's grade at the end of each semester. By reading the student's process recordings and/or other written material and talking with the student and the agency supervisor, the faculty Practicum liaison assesses the progress of the learning. The faculty Practicum liaison ensures that the process between the student and the agency supervisor is one of mutuality and that the student and agency supervisor are taking responsibility for working on the expected learning tasks. The faculty Practicum liaison provides consultation to the student and the agency supervisor about any issues or problems in the learning/teaching process.

Students are formally evaluated three times a year. In the Fall semester, agency supervisors are asked to fill out a Mid-Semester Evaluation (around October) and a final End-of-the-Semester Evaluation (December). In the spring, students are evaluated only once at the end of the semester. **Agency supervisors will base their evaluation on how well the intern performed according to their educational plan and role description. The evaluation form consists of measurements that address the CSWE 2022 EPAS 9 core competencies and behaviors.** The Practicum liaison reads the student's evaluation and can discuss it with the student and offer his/her perspective to the agency supervisor. It is expected that students are actively informed and aware of any issues that the agency supervisor or faculty Practicum liaison might perceive in their learning process prior to the submission of any written evaluation. A student's signature on evaluations does not signify agreement with the evaluation but acknowledgement of its review. All students are encouraged to add a rebuttal or other information to their evaluations, which will be kept with the original evaluation in the student's file.

The faculty Practicum liaison's role as a mediator between the student and the agency supervisor helps both to move past any obstacles in the educational alliance. (In the event that an Practicum supervisor is assigned by the University, the same faculty will not act as the Practicum liaison.) The faculty Practicum liaison provides consultation on the use of effective Practicum teaching techniques and confers with the agency supervisor to ensure that there is understanding and appropriate application of the performance criteria for evaluation. Effective communication between the faculty Practicum liaison, the student and the agency supervisor are important factors in identifying gaps or potential difficulties so that all the parties can focus on areas that need improvement and change. Agency supervisors should immediately contact the faculty Practicum liaison if there is any potentially serious problem with the student's performance in the Practicum setting or in their capacity to meet expected criteria for the semester.

### **Students must receive at least a grade of C in the Fall semester of their Practicum to continue in the Social Work Program.**

Students' final semester grades are based upon the following: (See Rubric)

- 1.) Professional Development (e.g. Arrives on time to Practicum, dresses and acts appropriately, interacts with colleagues, agency supervisor, and Practicum liaison respectfully)
- 2.) Practice Skills (as summarized and interpreted by the Practicum supervisor and Practicum liaison via written evaluations and process recordings)

- 3.) Integration of Theory and Classroom (as summarized and interpreted by the agency supervisor and Practicum liaison via written evaluations and process recordings)
- 4.) Understanding and Demonstration of Diversity Issues & Ethical Practice (as summarized and interpreted by the agency supervisor and Practicum liaison via written evaluations and process recordings)
- 5.) Faculty Practicum Liaison Requirements: Turns in process recordings and Practicum documents on time, responds to the Practicum liaison outreach attempts, meets, and meaningfully interacts with the Practicum liaison.

### **Appealing Practicum Evaluations and Grades**

If a student does not agree with his or her evaluation, he or she is welcome and encouraged to submit an addendum to their Practicum evaluation. This will be kept with the evaluation and placed in the student's file. Students are informed that signing their evaluations does not signify agreement with the evaluation but acknowledgement of its review.

Students who would like to appeal their Practicum grade should write a letter or email to the Practicum Coordinator explaining any circumstances surrounding the grade and the student's performance and a request for a grade change. The Practicum Coordinator will then consult the necessary parties (faculty Practicum liaison, Practicum supervisor, task supervisor, etc.) to ascertain the validity of the student's appeal. The Practicum Coordinator will then present these findings to the Program Director and a decision will be made regarding the appeal.

### **Evaluation of Agencies and supervisors by the Faculty Practicum Liaison**

At the end of the academic year the faculty Practicum liaison talks with the Agency Educational Coordinator or agency supervisor about how the educational experience proceeded and gives any suggestions for the next year. Faculty Practicum liaisons are required to complete an Agency Assessment form evaluating the agency and a supervisor evaluation form evaluating the quality of supervision and instruction the agency supervisor provided through the course of the school year. These evaluations are given to the Practicum coordinator so that planning for the next year can be done knowledgeably.

### **Evaluation of the Practicum by the Social Work Intern**

At the end of the Practicum, students assess their total Practicum experience. This provides feedback to the social work program and the agency regarding the Practicum experience and provides students with the opportunity to improve the quality of future Practicums at the agency. The student's experience and feedback are invaluable in preparing for future student's Practicum placement experiences.

## **Request for change of Practicum**

Requests for replacement may be made by a student, agency coordinator, agency supervisor, or faculty Practicum liaison. The request should be fully reviewed, and consultation should be sought from the Practicum Coordinator, who carries responsibility for determining replacements. Please refer to the Students Experiencing Difficulty in Practicum section of this manual for more information. Students should continue attending their Practicum until told differently.

## **Contact with the Practicum Coordinator**

The Practicum Coordinator (or Program Director) serves as a level of appeal if there are unresolved differences at the faculty Practicum liaison level or unanswered questions about Practicum policies and practices. Students, supervisors, and agency educational coordinators can contact the Practicum Coordinator with any pressing concerns or unmet needs, especially if the faculty Practicum liaison is not available.

## EDUCATIONAL ROLES IN PRACTICUM PLACEMENTS

### Primary Individual Practicum Supervisor

Every student is assigned to an agency designated staff member who has been approved by the University's Social Work Program to serve as a professional social work supervisor. This supervisor carries responsibility for the student's training in the agency. If an agency does not have a qualified person to assume the role of supervisor, the University will hire and assign a licensed social worker to provide supervision and work closely with the agency for the academic year. This same person will not act as the student's Practicum liaison. A different Practicum liaison will be assigned to the student.

The Practicum supervisor is expected to provide an hour and a half of supervision to each student per week. One hour must be individual and face-to-face supervision. The remaining half hour can include group supervision or informal meetings. Supervision should help select appropriate assignments for the student, to monitor and coordinate the student's work in the agency, to read the student's recorded material prior to conferences and use them in teaching, to assume responsibility for the students' evaluations, and to confer with the student's advisor.

### Secondary Practicum Supervisor

In some agencies a student may be assigned to another service or community program outside of his/her primary Practicum placement site. This kind of assignment is used to expand the student's training opportunities, e.g., a group on another service, a few cases on an out-patient service if the primary assignment is on an in-patient service, or a community-oriented assignment. This kind of assignment can be supervised by the primary Practicum supervisor, or it may be supervised on a regularly planned basis by a *secondary Practicum supervisor*, who should be a professionally trained social worker. The secondary Practicum supervisor should keep the primary Practicum supervisor regularly informed of the student's performance and should engage in an evaluation process with the student.

### Task Consultant/Supervisor

In some agencies a student may be assigned a task consultant in relation to some specific assignments on which s/he is working. A task consultant need not be a social worker, but may work in a related discipline, e.g., a psychiatric nurse, a community development specialist. A task consultant provides guidance to the student in carrying out administrative tasks, e.g., information on hospital patients, resources for a community needs assessment. The primary Practicum supervisor retains all educational teaching functions and would supervise the student on these assignments. The task consultant/supervisor **MUST** provide feedback to the primary Practicum supervisor on the student's progress or evaluation.

## **Practice Consultant**

Commonly students meet with representatives of other disciplines, e.g., psychologist, psychiatrist, for consultation on an assignment. Students cannot be supervised by a person in another discipline. However, it is recognized that related disciplines functioning as consultants have much to offer students from their own expertise and we encourage their use.

## **Group Supervision**

Some agencies provide regularly scheduled group supervision to students. This model of supervision can be very useful in expanding the student's learning of practice through interchange with others. We particularly encourage agencies who have several students in placement from our or other programs to provide opportunities for them to meet. Students can learn about practice in other services and addressing the range of clients' needs in their agency. The opportunities for teaching areas of practice such as assessment, differential interventions and modalities are greatly expanded when students can present their work to one another or in similar exchanges with staff.

If group supervision is offered it should be viewed as a supplement, not a substitute, to the student's full weekly individual supervision. Requests for any modifications of supervisory time arrangements should be addressed for approval to the Practicum Coordinator.

## **PRACTICUM EDUCATIONAL PLAN**

As previously outlined, there are several key people involved in a student's Practicum education. An educational plan serves to clarify the roles of all the agency personnel assisting the student in his or her learning experience. Moreover, it outlines the student, agency, and school's expectations for the Practicum experience. Its purpose is to formulate the student's specific learning goals within the agency's mission, services, and functions.

All intern supervisors and faculty Practicum liaisons are provided with a copy of CSWE's 9 core competencies and behaviors. When constructing an educational plan, faculty Practicum liaisons and Practicum supervisors are asked to keep these core competencies and behaviors in mind when developing tasks and assignments for the student. Educational plans should be reviewed frequently and changed as needed. Faculty Practicum liaisons are ultimately responsible for assuring that students have an educationally strong experience that is congruent with the student's specific learning needs.

## **SEMINARS FOR PRACTICUM SUPERVISORS and MEETINGS for FACULTY, FIELD INSTRUCTORS & EDUCATIONAL COORDINATORS**

### **Seminar in Field Instruction (SIFI)**

All Practicum supervisors supervising for the first time are asked to attend a 12-session session, 1 ½-hour Seminar in Field Instruction taught by the Practicum Coordinator. Practicum supervisors who have completed a comparable seminar at another School of Social Work may be exempt from this requirement by our Practicum Coordinator but are asked to attend the practicum supervisor's orientation at the beginning of the academic year.

The purpose of the Seminar is to train new Practicum supervisors with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively meet the range of educational responsibilities in their role as supervisors of social work students. The general content areas covered in this Seminar include beginning processes in supervision (orientation to the agency and supervision, selection of student assignments), preparing a student to move into each assignment, range and use of student recordings, teaching concepts and methodology, and evaluation processes.

To receive credit for completion of this Seminar, Practicum supervisors will be expected to attend all Seminar sessions (2 excused absences allowed) and to meet the written requirements of the Seminar (e.g. Homework is periodically assigned). There is also a final paper due at the end of the academic year. Certificates are issued to each participant upon completion of the Seminar's requirements. Other Schools of Social Work within the Tri-state area honor a Practicum supervisors' completion of the SIFI. Practicum Supervisors who are geographically closer to other Schools of Social Work may take the SIFI at other participating Social Work programs. However, they must first contact the Practicum Coordinator to request this.

### **Orientation to Practicum Supervision for Experienced Supervisors**

Practicum supervisors new to Mercy University who are experienced in social work student supervision through affiliation with another School of Social Work may be exempt from attendance at our SIFI program by the Practicum Coordinator. However, they are strongly encouraged to attend the Practicum supervisor's orientation held at the beginning of the school year to acquaint themselves with Mercy's curriculum and Practicum policies and practices.

## SELECTION OF AGENCIES AND PRACTICUM SUPERVISORS

The selection of agencies and Practicum supervisors is an essential part of the Social Work program's educational planning. The Practicum Coordinator and the Social Work program carries the responsibility for determining an agencies and Practicum supervisors' suitability for student training and works closely with interested agencies and potential Practicum supervisors in this process.

Potential new Practicum placements may be identified in several ways. Agencies may request to serve as training sites or they may be suggested by a student, faculty member, alumnus, or community representative. Agencies interested in hosting a student must complete an Agency Request Form (see Appendix) and provide necessary documentation of any credentials for prospective practicum supervisors (e.g. License, SIFI certificate, etc.). After clarifying the availability of a qualified Practicum supervisor and appropriate assignments, the Practicum Coordinator or faculty member may visit the agency to make a formal assessment of the agency and prospective Practicum supervisor(s). The assessment covers such areas as: the function and services of the agency, possible student assignments, and availability of resources for the student, level of practice competence of the supervisor, and special requirements for student placement. The Practicum Coordinator also interprets our curriculum, Practicum requirements and the Social Work Program's expectations regarding assignments, supervision, and time commitments. The Practicum Coordinator then communicates the decision to the agency. Information is also sent to those Practicum supervisors who must attend the Seminar in Field Instruction. (See "Seminar in Field Instruction").

During this process, the Practicum Coordinator informs each agency of CSWE's core competencies and behaviors and how they are operationalized and evaluated within Mercy's Social Work Practicum. It is expected that each agency selected believes in and complies with the National Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics (see Appendix) and has appropriate policies in place regarding sexual harassment, affirmative action, non-discrimination, and American with Disabilities Act.

Because social justice and issues relating to diversity are integral to the Mercy University Social Work program, both students and Practicum liaisons are asked to evaluate the agency on its commitment to social justice and diversity at the end of the academic year. It is important that each agency models affirmation and respect for diversity and difference (age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.)

In this evaluation, the agency is also assessed for its commitment to student learning. This includes consideration of the Practicum supervisor and agency's ability to provide quality practice assignments, identify student's strengths and learning challenges, and be accessible to faculty. The Social Work program carries final decision-making responsibility for the use of continuing agencies and Practicum supervisors based on reports and recommendations of faculty Practicum liaisons, students, and their own administrative assessments and discussions with agencies.

## **Criteria for the Selection of Agencies**

1. The agency should have a commitment to training which is consonant with that of the Social Work Program.
2. There should be a correlation between the agency and Program's practice perspective to provide an integrated class-Practicum curriculum and a consistent learning experience for the student.
3. The agency's practice of social work is based upon recognized professional standards and is consistent with the Program's objectives and Practicum objectives.
4. The agency should provide a range of assignments on an ongoing basis which are appropriate to the student's educational needs. The student workload should reflect opportunity for involvement in different practice modalities as well as exposure to a diversity of people and problems.
5. The agency should make every attempt to provide the necessary space and resources for the student to carry out a professional role, including privacy for interviewing, desk and storage space, access to a telephone, clerical assistance, and reimbursement for expenses incurred in the performance of assignments.
6. The agency will be expected to participate with the Social Work Program in the development, monitoring, and review of a sound educational program.
7. The Agency adjusts the workload of the Practicum supervisor to make it possible for that person to provide the expected allotment of time to select assignments, review recordings, provide weekly supervision, prepare evaluation materials, confer with the faculty Practicum liaison, and attend seminar meetings or workshops at the University.

## **Criteria for the Selection of Practicum Supervisor**

1. A master's degree in social work from an accredited MSW program and at least two years post-master's experience. They should be licensed (LMSW or LCSW) and have taken the SIFI (Seminar in Field Instruction). If you or one of your Practicum supervisors needs the SIFI, Mercy University offers it on Tuesday mornings at the Dobbs Ferry campus.
2. Willingness to meet the Social Work Program's expectations for Practicum supervisors including reviewing and incorporating CSWE's core competencies and practice behaviors
3. Ability and willingness to attend Practicum orientations, meetings, and necessary (such as the SIFI)
4. Demonstrated practice competence and the potential ability to help students to learn.
5. Willingness to teach content and skills appropriate to generalist practice.

6. Familiarity with agency policies, program, and procedures and the nature of client needs.

### **Expectations of Practicum Supervisors:**

1. Knowledge of the Program's curriculum and practice orientation.
2. A flexible approach to practice that allows for a range of modalities including work with and on behalf of individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations.
3. Willingness to work collaboratively with the faculty Practicum liaison for the purposes of meeting student educational needs and to call upon the faculty liaison for consultation and guidance as needed.
4. Attendance at the Practicum supervisor's orientation and/or SIFI at the School that is required of new supervisors and completion of the course's assignment requirements.
5. Selection of educationally appropriate assignments for students that applies generalist practice and provides opportunities to learn and master CSWE's core competencies and behaviors.
6. Welcome and orient the student to the Agency and adhere to the provision of weekly scheduled individual supervisory sessions in the time allotments specified by the Social Work program.
7. The utilization of process recordings, educational plans, and other Practicum documents according to the Social Work program's guidelines.
8. Participation in an ongoing evaluative process with the student which includes the prompt submission of written semester evaluations following the Social Work program's guidelines and criteria.
9. Engage in ongoing dialogue with the Social Work faculty regarding the student's progress.
10. Be open to training opportunities provided by the Social Work faculty.

### **Emphasizing a Social Work Perspective**

In very rare circumstances, an agency, such as a community-based organization or grassroots organization, may not have an MSW on staff to supervise a social work student intern. The Practicum Coordinator must review and approve of any student conducting their Practicum in this type of situation. A member of the agency will be identified as the "task consultant" or "task supervisor," and to assure a strong social work perspective, will be thoroughly briefed on the Mercy University Social Work curriculum, CSWE's core competencies and behaviors, and NASW's Code of Ethics. However, the faculty Practicum liaison will then assume the role of supervisor, providing weekly supervision, and the Practicum Coordinator or other faculty will serve as the Practicum liaison. These arrangements will be documented in the student's Practicum education plan. All Practicum evaluations will be completed by the acting Practicum supervisor, the task supervisor, and the faculty liaison (Practicum Coordinator).

## THE PLACEMENT PROCESS

The Practicum Coordinator is responsible for assigning students to their Practicum placements. In making judgments, they draw information from various sources. Student preferences and learning needs are drawn from the student's Practicum application (see Appendix) as well as collateral meetings with a student's professors. Agency availability is determined by the educational opportunities and types of students, which are indicated on the agency application (see Appendix). Placement decisions are then based on the availability and educational suitability of a setting for each student.

### Agency Requests for Students

Each spring, the Practicum Coordinator contacts agencies in the community regarding their intern needs and interests for the coming academic year. These agencies write to the Practicum Coordinator regarding the number of students requested, the type and range of assignments, the proposed Practicum supervisors, and other information that might be helpful in placing students. This becomes the database from which the Practicum Coordinator works in finalizing Practicum placements each summer. The Practicum Coordinator is also active in recruiting, responding to, and assessing possible new Practicum placements.

### Students Placement Planning

During their junior-year spring semester, the Practicum Coordinator visits each Practice I (SOWK 322) to provide an Practicum orientation. Students who are continuing into the senior year must have a minimum 2.8 GPA. To be eligible for an Practicum, every student must complete an Practicum application (see Appendix) and submit a resume to the Practicum Coordinator by the due date. The Practicum Coordinator will also speak with faculty members regarding students' professional behavior within the classroom and readiness for the Practicum.

Students are encouraged to speak to their academic advisors and professors regarding any concerns or questions they might have about the Practicum process. The Practicum Coordinator also welcomes any students who have special considerations and need to consult with her on an individual basis.

Students are notified of their potential agency assignments during the summer (either late June or early July). They are required to check their Mercy Mavericks email daily for critical correspondence regarding their Practicums. When a student is informed of a possible placement, the Practicum Coordinator will also provide the student with important information about the information. Students are informed that they often must "interview" at the prospective agency before being accepted as an intern. The Practicum Coordinator reminds students to dress professionally, be punctual, and bring a fresh resume to the interview. After the interview, both the student and agency will confirm the Practicum match.

**PLEASE NOTE: Some agencies require additional screening requirements for students, which might include fingerprinting, background checks, immunizations, or health tests. For example, if students want to work with children, they might be fingerprinted and have a background**

check completed. Occasionally, the agencies pay for these additional screening requirements. However, students are cautioned to be financially prepared to cover this expense (see Appendix for Practicum application FAQs).

### Employment-Based Practicums

Students who are currently employed at a social service agency, hospital, school, etc., and who are interested in conducting their Practicum at their place of employment might be eligible for an employment-based Practicum. Aside from full cooperation from the agency regarding both the student's scheduling and educational needs, the following criteria must also be met to protect the role of the student as a learner in the Practicum setting:

- The proposed Practicum supervisor should be a licensed master's in social Worker with at least two years or more post-social work graduate experience. He or she will be expected to provide 1 1/2 hours of supervision per week and review process recordings. Ideally, they will have also completed the SIFI (Seminar in Field Instruction).
- Tasks that students should be assigned should be the equivalent of those assigned to First Year MSW students: direct practice, case management, group work, etc. Practicum Supervisors will be responsible for providing at least one and half hours of supervision per week as well completion of an educational plan, fall mid-semester evaluation, fall end-of-semester evaluation, and spring end-of-semester evaluation. They might also be encouraged to complete the SIFI (Seminar in Field Instruction), which is offered at Mercy University and runs from September through May. If the Practicum supervisor has taken the SIFI at another social work school in the greater NYC area, he or she does not need to retake the course.
- While preferable, Mercy University CANNOT dictate or suggest to agencies that they provide students comp time or time off to complete their Practicum. This is entirely up to the student's agreement with the place of employment. Keep in mind: this might result in students working their regular 35-hour work week along with additional hours for their Practicum.

**During the Practicum application orientation in their junior year Practice I (SOWK 322) class, the Practicum Coordinator reviews employment-based Practicum requirements with all students. Students interested in having an employment-based Practicum must also complete a separate application (see Appendix). The Practicum Coordinator will meet with the proposed Practicum supervisor either in person or via zoom prior to the start of the Practicum. Following these procedures, the completion of all Practicum documents, and submission of documentation of the prospective supervisors' credentials, the Practicum Coordinator will sign off on the employment-based Practicum agreement, which will be filed in the student's records.**

## PRACTICUM - ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### *SCHEDULES AND HOURS OF SUPERVISION*

The Mercy University Social Work program recognizes that each agency is different in its assignments and functions. The Practicum supervisor is the ultimate expert when evaluating how many assignments and the level of difficulty for each assignment that is available at their agencies. All assignments should have already been approved by the Social Work program regarding CSWE's core competencies and practice behaviors, however, the Social Work program does not dictate how many clients should be assigned to students. Students are required to have direct practice experience. They should be busy with social work tasks for at least 16 hours with 2 hours devoted to agency paperwork and one hour devoted to writing process recordings. Some adaptations to this schedule may be developed in certain circumstances (such as during the Covid pandemic), including a reduction of hours if approved by CSWE. Students will be made aware of adjustment to hours as they are determined and approved by the Program Director and Practicum Coordinator.

Students are expected to attend their Practicum placement for a specified minimum number of hours during the academic year. In computing hours, a "standard" day consists of 7 Practicum hours and 1 hour for a meal.

<i>Student Level</i>	<i>Annual Number of Practicum Hours</i>	<i>Number of Days Per Week</i>	<i>Number of Hours per week</i>
Senior	450	2-3 *	16

**\* Variations to the schedule can be made in agreement with the Practicum liaison, Practicum supervisor, and student.** All deviations from the standard schedule should be reviewed and approved by all parties in the Practicum experience.

Practicum placements do not end when the minimum number of hours are completed but remain in Practicum until the formal end of the Practicum term. (Refer to Practicum calendar). Students must make up any time falling below the requirement because of holidays, illness, or emergencies. Students and Practicum supervisors should maintain a record on the time sheet to ensure that the minimum number of hours is completed (see Appendix for time sheet template).

Student schedules are organized within agency hours. Students may be asked to work one evening a week. Student Practicum workdays are dependent upon required course schedules and may vary each semester. If any agency is open less than eight hours a day (e.g. a School system), Practicum supervisors (in agreement with the Practicum liaison) may arrange for students to do a required number of hours of recording at home to meet minimum hourly requirements.

### **Holidays and Vacations**

Students do not attend Practicums on agency holidays or on Mercy University holidays. The only two weeks that students have time off during their Practicum are the week between Christmas and New Year's, and the Mercy University spring break. *Students placed in School systems may encounter difficulty in meeting minimum hour requirements since Schools usually have both a*

*February and April vacation. Students in these settings should attend their Practicum during the University's spring break so they can meet Practicum hours and client commitments.*

Our policy is to respect students' observance of their major religious holidays. No student will be penalized due to religious observance, and students will be given opportunities to make up any missing Practicum hours due to religious observances.

If a student has difficulty meeting the Practicum hour requirements because of many holidays, the Practicum supervisor should seek help from the faculty Practicum liaison or Practicum Coordinator to discuss an alternative plan. In planning the student assignment, the Practicum supervisor should review the Practicum Calendar. Ultimately, it is the student's responsibility to keep track of and complete the required number of hours.

### **Student Absences Due to Illness**

If students are briefly absent from their Practicum because of illness or personal reasons (e.g., illness in the family) they must still meet the requisite hours of Practicum per semester. Plans for making up extended absences (e.g., prolonged illness) should also be discussed with the faculty Practicum liaison.

### ***STRIKES (Or other labor disputes) BY AGENCY PERSONNEL***

In the event of a work slowdown, work stoppage or strike by agency personnel, the Practicum Coordinator should be notified preceding the action if possible or immediately upon its occurrence. The decision as to whether students continue at the agency during a strike rest with the program's faculty, not with the agency. The program has as its objective the protection of the student's educational experience and decides based on this principle. A decision is made separately for each strike action depending upon the individual situation and is communicated to the agency.

The program will also communicate its decision to students and help them plan with their agencies about any special needs of their clients. The program will also discuss opportunities for students' participation in alternative learning experiences during the labor dispute. Any student who asks, in good conscience, for permission not to be forced to continue placement during a strike should be respected. However, discussion should ensue with the Practicum supervisor and faculty Practicum liaison as to how professional responsibilities will continue to be carried out to clients.

### ***HOME VISITS***

If students are assigned home or outside community visits, this should be clearly stated in the Educational Plan. Agencies are expected to take appropriate measures to ensure the safety of students. Any difficulties in agency/student planning or policy on home/community visiting should be raised with the faculty Practicum liaison or with the Practicum Coordinator.

Students and agencies should consider the following guidelines in planning home or community visits:

1. Students should consider visits between the hours of 9 AM and 4 PM.
2. Visit with an escort or co-worker in high-risk areas or situations.
3. Plan a route in advance. Use main streets for walking and stay away from alleys and entrances.
4. In subway travel, enter the middle car of the train where a conductor is present.
5. Consider meeting a client in a community meeting place (e.g. church, community center) if it is appropriate and feasible for the client.
6. If it is unsafe to enter a building alone, ask a community member or client to accompany you.
7. Carry official identification or a letter that establishes your status as an agency representative.
8. Use care in carrying purses and wearing jewelry.
9. Use caution in entering empty elevators.
10. In planning trips for client groups, arrangements should be made to have a person available to help in emergencies. (e.g. another worker).

### ***TRANSPORTATION AND REIMBURSEMENT***

Agencies are expected to reimburse students for expenses incurred as part of any Practicum assignment if they similarly reimburse staff. If a difficulty emerges in reimbursing students, contact the Practicum Coordinator. Students should not use their own vehicle to transport clients. Students may, however, drive an agency owned vehicle if they have the appropriate license and agency approval.

***INSURANCE COVERAGE:*** All students enrolled in an Practicum are covered by the University for professional liability. For further information or to request a copy of the Certificate of Liability Insurance, contact the Practicum Coordinator.

***AFFILIATION AGREEMENTS:*** Agencies who are required to maintain a formal affiliation agreement with the University can request and arrange this agreement with the Practicum Coordinator. Such requests should be made in advance since the Mercy University Office of General Counsel reviews all affiliation agreements. Typically, the Dean of Social and Behavioral Sciences signs and countersigns all affiliation agreements.

***IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENT STATUS:*** It is the policy of the Social Work Program and a professionally ethical principle that students identify themselves as students or interns in their work with clients and agency representatives. We urge that students identify themselves as social worker interns (not therapists) since they should feel pride and respect in identifying themselves by their profession.

### ***FEDERAL WORK/STUDY***

Students who have submitted a FAFSA (Free Application for Student Aid) and have been approved for work/study can possibly apply their monies towards their Practicum. This is considered a “community service” arrangement. Students can contact the Practicum Coordinator for more information, however, neither the Social Work program nor Mercy University determines a student’s eligibility for financial aid.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE AGENCIES**

It is important that close communication be maintained between the Social Work program and agency with the initiative coming from both. The agency's Practicum coordinator or educational coordinator should inform the Practicum Coordinator or faculty Practicum liaison immediately of any changes in Practicum placement arrangements and if any of the following changes or problems occur:

1. Change in agency addresses or telephone number
2. Changes in agency director and/or educational coordinator
3. Proposed changes in Practicum Supervisor
4. Pending strikes and labor/management disputes
5. Any significant tension in the agency that may affect student learning
6. Absence of the Practicum Supervisor from the agency for more than one week
7. Student absences for more than three days per semester.
8. Significant concern about student's performance or ability to meet Practicum criteria.
9. Ability to provide students with appropriate assignments consonant with Program's expectations.
10. Agencies wishing to offer a student a job concurrent with the course of their Practicum Placement, need to discuss this plan with the program’s Practicum Coordinator.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS**

It is the student's responsibility to initiate and maintain contact with his/her faculty Practicum liaison regarding any of the following:

1. Any difficulties with Practicum such as timing and educational suitability of assignments, availability, and helpfulness of supervision space and time to prepare process recordings at work, ethical issues, etc. that are not satisfactorily resolved with the Practicum supervisor/agency.
2. Initiate contact with the Practicum Coordinator if any Practicum placement issues are not satisfactorily responded to or resolved with the student's faculty Practicum liaison.
3. Students wishing to accept a job during their Practicum must discuss this plan with the Program’s Practicum Coordinator.
4. Plan and secure approval from your faculty advisor for registration for courses.
5. Meet with faculty Practicum liaison, maintain telephone and e-mail contact, and submit written assignments on time.

## STUDENTS EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTY IN THEIR PRACTICUM

Performance in the Practicum is a critical indicator of readiness for professional practice. It is important that concerns arising in the Practicum be discussed early and feedback regularly given. Concerns regarding an Practicum may be raised by the student, faculty Practicum liaison, or Practicum supervisor.

### Reasons for Practicum Difficulties

1. One possible issue student may need to discuss with their faculty liaison pertain to the **quality of their learning experience in the Practicum**, such as the quantity and suitability of their assignments or the availability and helpfulness of Practicum supervisor. After carefully exploring the problem, faculty Practicum liaisons may assist the student in raising the issue at the Agency, and/or (with the student's knowledge) they may directly contact the appropriate personnel at the Agency, and/or they may consult with the Program's Practicum Coordinator and consider a change of placement.
2. Circumstances in one's current life situation or a reconsideration of one's educational/career plans may lead to a decision **to request a leave of absence, or to withdraw from the Social Work Program or the University**. Students wishing to consider one of these options should review the Student Handbook regarding the required procedures and discuss their request with their faculty Practicum liaison. Concurrently the faculty Practicum liaison and Practicum supervisor should maintain contact and arrange a plan that ensures a student will terminate his/her work in a professionally responsible manner with clients and the Agency.
3. **If a student is at risk or unable to meet the expected level of performance criteria in the Practicum as set by the Social Work Program or unable to meet appropriate professional/educational standards**, the faculty Practicum liaison is expected to initiate a meeting with the student when a difficulty is first identified. Every effort should be made to understand the difficulty and to provide the student and Practicum setting with necessary support and specific guidelines for amelioration or resolution including a timeline.

The Social Work program has developed various structures and processes to assist and address difficulties students may experience in their Practicum. Whenever possible, the possible steps should be taken to resolve problems in the Practicum:

1. The student and/or Practicum supervisor who has identified a problem should attempt to resolve it by meeting together to discuss the problem and possible solutions. Both the supervisor and the student should inform the faculty Practicum liaison of any problems and of this meeting.
2. If the problem cannot be resolved by this meeting or a meeting is not a viable option, the student should contact his or her Practicum liaison who will then arrange to speak with both the student and the Practicum supervisor. At this point, the faculty Practicum liaison

will then schedule a meeting together with the student and Practicum supervisor. A written plan for remediation will be put into action.

3. Following this meeting, if the problem persists or is not resolved, the faculty Practicum liaison should inform the Practicum Coordinator. The Practicum Coordinator will then request a meeting with the student, faculty Practicum liaison, and possibly the Practicum supervisor and/or any other agency personnel indicated. The outcome of this meeting will depend on the nature of the student issue. However, possible decisions are listed below and might include the student being reassigned to a different agency or appearing in front of the Educational Review Committee.

If the problem(s) persists or the faculty Practicum liaison plans to give the student a failing grade, the following policies or options exist:

### **1. Counseling Out**

There may be mutual agreement among the student, faculty Practicum liaison, and student's academic advisor as to an appropriate resolution to a difficulty which may include the student's voluntary withdrawal or request for a leave of absence from the Program.

### **2. Educational Review Committee**

The Educational Review Committee (ERC) functions as a consultative and decision-making committee on problems or issues concerning the students' academic or Practicum performance, on students at risk in meeting expected standards in the class or in the Practicum and on the suitability of the student's educational experience for learning.

*Composition:* The Educational Review Committee is composed of three Social Work faculty members, including the Program Director who serves as Chair; and an elected student representative who attends if the student under review wishes him/her to be present.

*Function:* The primary functions of the Educational Review Committee are: 1) to provide consultation to the faculty advisor or faculty Practicum liaison and student on questions related to the student's academic and Practicum performance and the quality and appropriateness of the Practicum experience 2) to make depository judgments and offer alternative recommendations if the student fails to meet academic or Practicum requirements in the major, violates educational or professional ethics, or the student requests review of an educational issue in which the advisor and student did not agree or which may require an exception to policy. Decisions may include a change of Practicum, an extension of the semester, or in the case of failure, repetition of the semester in Practicum, probation, intermittence, or termination from the social work major.

*Procedures of referral and review:* A faculty member or student may initiate a request for Committee review. If the student's academic or Practicum performance is at risk or at a failing level, the following steps should usually be followed.

1. Emphasis should be on early identification of problems with the focus on exploration and problem identification including any variables in the academic course situation or Practicum placement that may be adversely influencing the student's capacity to learn and meet performance expectations. In the case of an Practicum issue, every effort should be made to address the problems at this level and will usually include meetings between the student, Practicum supervisor, and faculty member, each meeting with each other.
2. If the student is at risk or fails to meet the Social Work Program's academic course requirements, Practicum performance criteria, or standards for ethical/professional conduct, the student should be presented for review by the Committee.
3. The faculty advisor and/or faculty Practicum liaison (depending on where the problems are located) must send a written detailed summary to the Committee Chair at least four days prior to the meeting. **Please note: The Practicum Coordinator cannot serve as a student's advisor in matters relating to the Practicum.**
4. Students may bring a student advocate, who is a social work major, and should notify the Chair in advance. Students should also indicate if they want the student member present during the meeting. The Practicum supervisor will not routinely attend meetings of the ERC but may be invited at the discretion of the Chair. Faculty and students should direct any requests for attendance by the Practicum supervisor a week prior to the meeting. People outside of the Program cannot attend this meeting without advanced permission from the Chair.

Students are referred to the Student Handbook regarding a fuller description of their options and rights and of the policies and processes of the Educational Review Committee. The Practicum supervisor or Agency Coordinators should direct any questions they have about this process to the faculty Practicum liaison or Practicum Coordinator.

### **Unprofessional Behavior or Ethical Violations**

The Mercy University Social Work program is committed to the teaching and application of the NASW Code of Ethics (see Appendix for a Copy of the Code of Ethics). Unprofessional and unethical conduct is not tolerated. Students are expected to demonstrate respect in their interactions with fellow students, faculty, staff, clients, and others. They should regard the Practicum like a place of employment and should be dependable, punctual, and be open to constructive feedback. Additionally, very serious behaviors can result in immediate dismissal from the Social Work program. These include but are not limited to engaging in inappropriate relationships in the Practicum setting, using illicit substances, etc.

### **Appealing Practicum Evaluations and Practicum Grades**

If a student does not agree with his or her evaluation, he or she is welcome and encouraged to submit an addendum to their Practicum evaluation. This will be kept with the evaluation and placed in the student's file. Students are informed that signing their evaluations does not signify agreement with the evaluation but acknowledgement of its review.

Students who would like to appeal their Practicum grade should write a letter or email to the Practicum Coordinator explaining any circumstances surrounding the grade and the student's performance and a request for a grade change. The Practicum Coordinator will then consult the necessary parties (faculty liaison, Practicum supervisor, task supervisor, etc.) to ascertain the validity of the student's appeal. The Practicum Coordinator will then present these findings to the Program Director and a decision will be made regarding the appeal.

### **CHANGES IN PRACTICUM AGENCY**

Practicums are chosen after a thoughtful process. Once a student is assigned to an agency, it is expected that the student will complete the entire academic year at that agency. Disruption of an Practicum placement is not taken lightly and is the last resort when a resolution cannot be made within the student's current placement.

**Practicum changes MUST first be discussed with and approved by the Practicum Coordinator. Students who leave an Practicum without prior approval from their faculty liaison or Practicum Coordinator risk failing the Practicum.**

If a student is assigned a new agency, the student must 1.) terminate properly with the agency and clients 2.) say goodbye graciously via sending a thank you letter or e-mail to the Practicum supervisor and other agency personnel 3.) write a reflection paper about what the student thinks brought about the agency change and what steps the student will take to make the new assignment successful and 4.) submit a signed timesheet verifying any hours accrued at the first placement.

Please note that students cannot change agencies more than once during the academic year and may not be changed at all during the Spring semester.

### **ISSUES OF DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT**

Mercy University does not discriminate based on race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, or age in its admission decisions, in its access to programs and in its administration of educational policies. Grievance procedures are available to any student who feels they have been a victim of harassment or discrimination on these bases. Similarly, any such instance of discrimination or harassment should be reported to and discussed with the faculty Practicum liaison, Practicum Coordinator, or the Program Director who will inform victims of their rights and avenues for redress.

The Social Work Program assigns its students to Practicums based on a student's ability to perform the tasks of that assignment and without stigma. The Program expects the Practicum agencies not to discriminate or permit harassment based on race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, or age.

No student at the school may refuse an educationally suitable assignment to serve a client based on the race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, or age of that client. Agencies should report instances of such harassment or discrimination by a student to the faculty Practicum liaison and/or the coordinator.

## **DISABILITIES**

Any student with a documented disability (e.g. physical, learning, visual, psychological, hearing, etc.), who would like to arrange for reasonable accommodation, should contact the Mercy University Office of Accessibility. For obtaining reasonable accommodations contact the Office at (914) 674-7523, [accessibility@mercy.edu](mailto:accessibility@mercy.edu) or visit our website at [www.mercy.edu/student-affairs/access..](http://www.mercy.edu/student-affairs/access..) This should be done at the beginning of the semester. Any student who feels that he or she will have trouble on an Practicum assignment because of a disability is encouraged to discuss such concerns with the Practicum Coordinator or faculty Practicum liaison. Any issue concerning a student's health or disability will be maintained in strict confidence and will not be reported to an agency unless the student so requests in writing for the purpose of making reasonable accommodation for that disability.

## **OTHER STUDENT SERVICES**

Students who need additional emotional support can take advantage of Mercy University's counseling services and are encouraged to contact Student Services. For those students needing extra academic support or who are struggling with writing both in the classroom and in their Practicums, can seek assistance from the Learning Center.

## **ORIENTATION OF STUDENTS IN THE PRACTICUM**

### **Social Work Program's Orientation to Senior Year Practicum**

The Program provides an orientation to the Practicum program, conducted by faculty, prior to the student's first day in their Practicum placement. **THIS ORIENTATION IS MANDATORY.** The aim of the orientation includes preparing students to learn about the agency's function, social work role, clients' needs, and perceptions; learning about the use and nature of practice training, Practicum supervision and other consultation; acquainting them with Practicum policies, expectations, and student's rights in their Practicum placement and in the Social Work Program. Students receive a Practicum packet which includes paper copies of all Practicum documents, including the Practicum Education Manual and an At-a-Glance Practicum Requirements sheet (see Appendix). A student's signature of attendance at the orientation acts as written confirmation of receipt of the Practicum manual.

### **Student Arrival at the Agency**

Students will be advised by their Practicum supervisor on what time they are expected to arrive on their first day of Practicum. If this time is not suitable, the agency notifies the Program's Practicum Coordinator in advance and we strongly encourage Practicum supervisors to contact the student by mail or by telephone to rearrange arrival time, as well as to give transportation directions. Students should not be asked to visit the agency prior to the first day of Practicum unless prior permission has been given by the Program's Practicum Coordinator. Practicum Supervisors (or agency educational coordinators) should be available to greet the student upon their arrival at the agency.

### **Orientation Program in the Agency**

An orientation program in the agency should be viewed as an ongoing process during the first few weeks in placement, concurrent with the students moving into their beginning assignments. It is helpful if students are offered information about agency functions, services, and procedures, but not overwhelmed with data. The student will especially want to know "What will I be doing here?" Therefore, information about the kinds of assignments and specific tasks they will be carrying out will be useful and should be provided in simple, understandable terms.

### **Types of Assignments**

Consonant with their level of readiness and training, interests and prior experiences, students should be assigned a varied workload. We recognize that some agencies may not be able to provide as full a range of assignments as others. Workloads should reflect opportunities for multi-level interventions (individual, family, group, community) as well as exposure to a diversity of people and problems. Students should be assigned work with different time dimensions and foci (e.g. crisis intervention, intake, short- and long-term contacts) and they should be able to address directly the interactions between clients and their environment.

Secondary assignments may be developed to broaden a student's learning. An agency may wish to assign the student to another service in its own setting or in the community. This secondary assignment can be supervised by the Practicum supervisor (in tandem with a task consultant) or by another professionally trained social worker designated by the agency and approved by the advisor.

### **Preparation of Students for their Assignments**

For every assignment it is important to prepare students carefully as they move into each facet of their work. It is assumed that students will be given the needed data to begin the assignment. For example, Practicum supervisors need to assist students in anticipating (tuning in to) clients' reactions, perspectives, and feelings, so they can reach out to them in helpful ways. It is also important to assist them in preparing a telephone call to a client or for a meeting with an organizational representative. Preparation should also include an interview plan, offering a service, ideas for further exploration, ways of demonstrating interest and concern, etc.

### **Accountability between the Practicum Supervisor and Agency with the School**

Practicum supervisors are encouraged to contact the faculty Practicum liaison to discuss ideas or questions about specific assignments for their student. If the Practicum supervisor/agency encounter obstacles in providing students with sufficient or educationally suitable work (e.g. assignments are not available at the expected time), they should contact the faculty liaison to discuss the problem. Faculty Liaisons will discuss with Practicum supervisors a description of their student's assignments and overall workload after the beginning weeks of the academic year.

## **SOCIAL POLICY AND RESEARCH-BASED ACTIVITIES AND ASSIGNMENTS**

### **Introduction**

Agencies are strongly encouraged to create opportunities for our students to have experiences to learn about the influence of social policy on social work practice and the role of research in practice. As our students learn about social policies and research in the classes, we want them to make connections to social work practice in the field. It is important that students conceptualize how greater societal social policies impact on social service agency policies and how this, in turn, has impact on a direct practice with clients.

### **Assignments Which Demonstrate How Social Policies Affect Practice**

A student's placement will determine which social policies are most influential to his/her practice, e.g., family and children's services, aging, chemical dependency. A Practicum supervisor's awareness of those policies and discussion of them with the student is a beginning place. For example, an agency that provides services for the chronically mentally ill will undoubtedly encounter clients' reactions to legislature that seeks to limit the rights of the chronically mentally ill. Practicum supervisors' awareness of "front burner" social policy issues for their area of practice will help students begin to think about the impact of these issues on their practice. Our Program encourages our students to think in terms of what constrains and enhances social and economic justice, and our goal is for students to extend that thinking into practice. We feel that it is important that students begin to question social policy that interferes with, rather than promotes, social and economic justice, and to understand the impact that this has on their practice.

Below we have provided some examples of assignments and activities which will demonstrate to students how social policies affect practice.

#### **1. Connecting Class Assignments to the Practicum**

- Each student takes, in the fall of the Senior year, one of two "required electives" specific to his/her area of practice. Here, an assignment is given which requires the student to inquire and write about social policies which directly affect his/her clients in such areas as delivery of services, eligibility criteria, allocation of resources.

The student and Practicum supervisor are encouraged to discuss these connections. Practicum supervisors can help students think about what social policies drive allocation decisions for their client population. For example, an issue that is often driven by social policy, especially the larger societal context's, is who is admitted for services and what are the reason(s). For example, many agencies have agreements with psychiatric hospitals to provide immediate aftercare to their discharged patients, thereby creating waiting lists of other applicants for services. Another example is in geriatric services where Practicum supervisors can help

students begin to think about such issues as how resources are distributed, e.g., institutional care, home care, community care.

- Encourage students to think in terms of “case to cause.” For example, when students are assisting clients with specific concrete needs – such as housing, employment, medical care – encourage students to think about how they can extend their advocacy efforts beyond the need of the individual client. Students have assisted their agencies in organizing clients for letter writing campaigns to their legislators on such issues as welfare reform and immigrants and public benefits.
- Show students the specific regulations (OMH, JCAOH, ACS, DSS) that guide the practices of the agency and explain how those regulations are interpreted by the agency and applied to the population that the agency serves.

## 2. Administrative meetings, committees, and coalitions

- Mercy University Social Work program encourages agencies to involve students in staff and other administrative meetings in which regulatory and policy issues are discussed. Students should also become involved in coalition(s) to which the agency belong(s). Students can attend the coalition meetings and participate in activities of the coalitions, e.g., lobbying for legislature that is advantageous to the populations served. This past year one of our students identified that the proposed Family Health Plus program would greatly assist her clients and testified about this to the State legislature.

## **Assignments That Demonstrate the Role of Research in Practice and Program Evaluation**

Increasingly, regulatory bodies and funding sources are demanding that both workers and agencies utilize research-based intervention strategies or demonstrate the effectiveness of their methods via such measurement tools as outcome studies. We want our students to be familiar with the issues surrounding the role of research in practice, as well as to experience research itself in practice. Following are some suggestions about how Practicum supervisor can provide students with assignments which demonstrate the role of research in practice and program evaluations.

- If your agency has an in-house research department, this will provide ready-made opportunities for our students to gain experience with practice and program research, and we ask such agencies to work with us to create these opportunities.
- Most agencies have standing committees which address practice-related issues, e.g., Quality Assurance Committees, Consumer Satisfaction Committee, Ethics Committees. These, as well, provide students with direct experience of such pertinent concerns as accountability.
- From time to time, agencies appoint task forces or ad hoc committees to research a specific area of concern and to form recommendations. We would consider serving on such a committee to be a very good learning experience for a student.

- Still another possibility is for the Practicum supervisor to work with the student in assessing the need for a new service and, when appropriate, having the student implement that new service.
- Involve the student in a quality improvement project. One Practicum supervisor had his student conduct a "missed appointment" survey for the service, with the goal of gaining understanding about this phenomenon and seeking ways to improve the service. Another Practicum supervisor had the student conduct a records review to determine if clinicians were meeting a specific program compliance standard - in this case, whether clinicians had documented quarterly communication and case coordination with Child Protective Services.
- Have students utilize goal attainment scales (in-house or other) to track client progress - are clients attaining goals? Engage student in practice evaluation based upon findings. Revise goals and reassess when indicated.
- Demonstrate to the student how agency-gathered statistics are used, for example, in most agencies' demographic information and daily contact statistics are used when applying for grants and awards or in developing or evaluating programs. Statistical information is also gathered and used to support the need for maintaining services which are currently being provided.

### **Assignments That Demonstrate the Role of Influencing Communities, Organizations & Social Policy Spring Semester of Senior Year**

Students are required to prepare a grant proposal and in-class presentation on an organizational or community change project based on their grant proposal. In preparation for this they should consult with their Practicum supervisor about the organization, community needs and what current policies are in place to address those needs. The Practicum Supervisors' knowledge and expertise can and should be used to help guide and influence the student's grant proposal. Students can choose to use PowerPoint or other video/computer technology for their presentation. For the presentation students are required to:

- Describe their agency, its size, mission, and major services offered.
- Describe the community, what makes it a community and the leaders of this community.
- Describe their change goal and the problem it sought to address.
- Describe their grant proposal to their peers and what criteria they used to develop it.
- Explain what grant source they used and why they selected these tactics and what are the planned outcomes.
- Evaluate their change efforts and assess whether they will be successful.
- Evaluate whether their efforts have generated any new ideas about their social work, career goals and future.

Through this assignment and consultation with their Practicum supervisor students develop a comprehensive awareness of the social worker's role on a micro, mezzo, and macro level. They learn to engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate their organization, the community in which they serve and the social policies governing the service provision.

## PROCESS RECORDINGS

### FUNCTION OF RECORDING

Recording is viewed as a major learning tool for students at all levels of training. It also serves as a form of accountability and should help students to improve their provision of service and assist them in organizing their work.

### TYPES OF RECORDINGS

#### *Process Recordings*

Process Recordings can be written on:

1. Client interviews
2. Group meetings
3. Telephone contacts
4. Contacts with environmental representatives (e.g., teacher, nurse, landlord, team meetings, etc.)

Process recording is a highly detailed form of recording. It should capture the major elements and process of a contact (interview, group meeting, etc.). Preparing a record helps the student to reflect and think about a piece of work. Students should be asked to record in different areas of practice, e.g. individual, group, work with system representatives.

Mercy University's process recording is a hybrid form that incorporates both narrative and verbatim elements. A record should include brief identifying data (e.g. the name of the client and the # of the interview); a description in chronological order of what happened in the interview/meeting including actions, observations, interaction, and select dialogue; a section on the student's own reactions, impressions, assessment, questions, connections to classroom concepts, reflection on diversity and social justice issues, and future plans.

#### *Journals*

1) Journals may be used to focus supervisory discussions on specific tasks or assignments. In a journal, students may record plans, progress notes/summaries, an assessment of their work and issues/questions for discussion in conference. A journal is particularly useful in settings where there are multiple weekly contacts or planning tasks. Students can keep weekly records of these contacts or activities, so that Practicum supervisors are kept informed and can initiate pertinent issues. Journals should be submitted in advance and reviewed prior to the supervisory conference.

#### *Summary Records*

Many agencies have their own guidelines for intake, bio-psycho-social, assessments, progress, referral, transfer, or closing summaries. Those records required of the agency's social workers may appropriately be required of students. Practicum supervisors should provide the student with some guidelines (and sample) for writing required agency summaries and preparing chart notes.

### *Supervisory Agendas*

To help students optimally utilize their supervision sessions, they can also submit a supervisory agenda to their practicum supervisors that outlines their concerns and questions for that week.

## **USE OF PROCESS RECORDINGS**

Students should submit records sufficiently in advance of their supervisory conference. They should also submit process recordings to their faculty liaison on a regular basis. This day should be specified on the Educational Plan. It is imperative that the Practicum supervisor carefully read students' records prior to the conference. The record becomes the basis for discussion and learning in the conference itself. Both Practicum supervisor and student are urged to prepare agendas that are specifically related to the records. Practicum supervisors may wish to write marginal comments for their own use on student records but should not give them to the student prior to the conference.

Process recordings and journals are viewed as learning tools and do not belong in permanent agency records. They should be kept in a confidential agency file. If students need access to records for school assignments, all identifying data must be fully disguised.

## **RECORDING EXPECTATIONS**

All students are expected to write records throughout their student training. Practicum supervisors may designate some variations in recording expectations, based on student learning needs or agency requirements. However, the Social Work Program provides overall parameters for its recording expectations for students in the Practicum.

The Practicum coordinator should ask the student to record on newly assigned work and then to move to other types of recording (e.g. journal, summary) as the student gains a sense of direction and mastery. Hence, students should not be asked to write process recordings on every assignment they carry at full load.

**Students should submit 1 process recording weekly and be provided enough time to complete this work.** (Other required written expectations should be factored into the number of hours provided.)

Agencies should provide students with space and time to prepare records during their Practicum hours. Special arrangements to complete process recording at home in situations where students can not complete the full weekly complement of Practicum hours at the Agency should be discussed with the faculty Practicum liaison. For example, students placed in School systems may need to get Practicum hour credit for preparing records at home since Schools may not be open for eight hours daily.

## PRACTICUM SUPERVISION

### **Purpose**

The conference between the student and Practicum supervisor has 2 major purposes. The first function is educational; the focus is on helping students to learn and to improve their skills. The second function is administrative; students are accountable to the agency for the services they provide.

The conference is the place where students can reflect upon and analyze their own practice and explore alternative or newer modes of helping to broaden their practice repertoire. Such risk taking can occur in an open environment where free expression is positively sanctioned and new ideas are forthcoming from both the student and the Practicum supervisor. Risk taking, necessary for learning in the Practicum, cannot occur in an atmosphere that is judgmental or punitive.

The center of the conference is the student as practitioner not the management of the case. The primary focus of the conference should be on the student's agenda and the mutual review of process recordings. To achieve this focus, students should be provided time and space during the Practicum to prepare records and they should submit their materials sufficiently in advance of the conference for the Practicum supervisor to fully review them. Students and Practicum supervisors may want to each work from their own set of records, and in such instances, the duplication of records is necessary.

### **Structure and Expectations**

Practicum supervisors are expected to meet with their student for at least a 1 and a ½ hour individual, weekly supervisory conference. In most instances, students and Practicum supervisors meet once a week for the full amount of time. In some instances, the time for conferences may be split so that there is ample time for Practicum supervisors and students to address the quick, changing pace of activities. Students and Practicum supervisors often converse periodically throughout the week on issues of importance. Group supervision is a desirable educational supplement to individual supervision and should not be held in lieu of the time specified for individual supervision.

The Program recognizes the multiple demands on the time of Practicum supervisors, however, regularly scheduled uninterrupted meetings are essential to the educational process. Hence, we ask Practicum supervisors to set a practical time and to secure space in which interruptions are minimal and phone conversations are deferred. The time agreed upon for meetings between Practicum coordinators and students should remain a priority in their respective schedules. Because conferences are viewed as the major arena for teaching/learning, failure on the part of either party to follow our Program's expectations would be deemed a serious abrogation of responsibility. Practicum supervisors should let the faculty Practicum liaison know if they are having trouble in maintaining the requisite supervisory time schedule.

## EVALUATION OF STUDENTS' PRACTICUM EDUCATION

The following evaluation responsibilities reflect the policies of the Program. Practicum supervisors should follow this structure. Any request for deviating from this format or process should be directed to the faculty Practicum liaison, who will in turn seek consultation from our Practicum Coordinator.

**Every student should have a Fall mid-semester evaluation and an evaluation at the end of each semester.**

**Mid-semester evaluation.** A mid-semester evaluation should be submitted to the faculty Practicum liaison mid-way through the semester, about 7<sup>th</sup> week in placement. Practicum supervisors and students should discuss this evaluation during a supervision session, and students should be notified in advance so they and the Practicum supervisor can prepare in advance. This is a time for students and Practicum supervisor to discuss how the students began, how s/he is progressing in the various performance areas and learning, and what specific skills require attention in the remainder of the semester. Extenuating circumstances that may have affected the student's learning should also be discussed (e.g. insufficient volume or suitability of assignments).

**End of semester evaluations.** At end of each semester, it's the Practicum supervisor's responsibility to initiate an evaluation meeting with the student and write an evaluation of the student. Practicum supervisors should follow our Guide in writing evaluations.

**Timetable.** Approximately one month prior to the due date of the evaluation, the Practicum Coordinator will send directions and face sheets for each student to the agency.

### Appealing Practicum Evaluations and Practicum Grades

If a student does not agree with his or her evaluation, he or she is welcome and encouraged to submit an addendum to their Practicum evaluation. This will be kept with the evaluation and placed in the student's file. Students are informed that signing their evaluations does not signify agreement with the evaluation but acknowledgement of its review.

Students who would like to appeal their Practicum grade should write a letter or email to the Practicum Coordinator explaining any circumstances surrounding the grade and the student's performance and a request for a grade change. The Practicum Coordinator will then consult the necessary parties (faculty Practicum liaison, Practicum supervisor, task supervisor, etc.) to ascertain the validity of the student's appeal. The Practicum Coordinator will then present these findings to the Program Director and a decision will be made regarding the appeal.

### THE EVALUATION: *PURPOSE*

**The three major purposes of an evaluation include:**

1. An opportunity for students and Practicum supervisors to "*take stock*:" to evaluate what students have learned and where they are now, as well as to consider what extenuating circumstances affected professional learning, e.g., a paucity of assignments, degree of helpfulness of the Practicum supervisor.

2. An opportunity for students and Practicum supervisors to pull together and conceptualize what skills and learning needs they should focus on in the immediate future.
3. This document is a form of accountability from the agency to the Program and becomes a permanent part of the student's Program record.

## **THE WRITTEN EVALUATION: *PROCESS***

### **Evaluation Conference**

Practicum supervisors should discuss the process for evaluation with their students well in advance of their evaluation conference. Both the Practicum supervisor and student should prepare individually through review of the student's work by rereading student's records, their respective conference notes, and the Program's evaluation guideline and criteria. During the evaluation process, both student and Practicum supervisor should share the initiative in evaluating performance. Assessments of skills and identification of patterns should be supported by illustrations. A brief and informal reflection on the evaluation conference itself may be a useful way to end the conference.

### **Written Evaluation**

It is the Practicum supervisor's responsibility to write a draft of the final evaluation following the evaluation conference. The student should be given some time to read, reflect, and assimilate the content. The Practicum supervisor and student should meet to review the evaluation draft. If objections or differences are raised and the Practicum supervisor agrees, then changes should be made in the evaluation. If, however, the Practicum supervisor does not agree, then the final text could present the perceptions of both the student and Practicum supervisor. Students should be informed of their right to prepare and submit a rebuttal to their evaluation. After changes are made, students should see their evaluation in its final form. Both student and Practicum supervisor sign the evaluation face sheet which should be attached to the written text and sent in duplicate to our Office. Signing the evaluation indicates the student has read his/her evaluation. If the student is not in agreement with the evaluation, the Practicum supervisor should note that at the end of the evaluation. Practicum supervisors are asked to make a recommendation if they feel a student has failed to meet the Practicum performance standards. However, it is the faculty Practicum liaison who carries responsibility for making the final determination and granting the grade. **Students must achieve a grade of C in their Practicum to remain as a social work major.** Requests for an individual exception to this Policy must be made to the Educational Review Committee.

### **Copies of the Evaluation**

The Program asks agencies to provide a final copy of the evaluation to students. If students prepare a rebuttal/addendum they should provide the Practicum supervisor, the Program Practicum Coordinator, and their faculty Practicum liaison with a copy.

# APPENDIX

**CODE OF ETHICS**  
*of the National Association of Social Workers*

Retrieved from: <https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics>

## Social Work Program Acknowledgement of Program Requirements

Dear Student:

Thank you for your interest in the Social Work major. The Program will review both your interview responses as well as your writing sample and will send you a letter of determination within a few weeks.

As discussed during your interview, you acknowledge, and you understand:

- Once admitted into the Program, you must maintain a GPA of 2.8
- During your senior year, you are required to complete a 450-hour Practicum at an agency that will be assigned to you.
  - You will complete 225 hours during the fall semester and 225 hours in the spring semester
  - You must conduct your Practicum within the regular business week (Monday through Fridays from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.).
  - You **cannot** conduct your Practicum solely during evenings and weekends. There are no exceptions to this.
  - Even though you may currently be employed at an agency, hospital, or other human service organization, this does not guarantee you can conduct your Practicum at the place of your employment
- You must conduct yourself professionally. This means dressing appropriately and interacting professionally with your peers and supervisors both on and off campus.
- You will abide by the National Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics. To view this Code, please follow this link: <http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/default.asp>.

A copy of this signed form will be kept in your student file. If you have any questions or concerns regarding these requirements or this acknowledgement form, please do not hesitate to contact a Social Work faculty member.

---

Student

---

Social Work Faculty

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## AGENCY PLACEMENT REQUEST

Dear Educational Coordinators and Practicum Supervisors:

Thank you for your interest in hosting BSW social work interns for the upcoming academic year (from mid-September to May/June, including January).

Attached please find an Agency Request form for you to complete at your earliest convenience. The following are a few quick points of information for your review:

- Students must accrue 450 hours per academic year or 225 hours per semester.
  - This breaks down to 16 hours per week or
  - 2- 3 days per week at your agency
- Practicum supervisors **MUST** be MSWs (from a CSWE –accredited program) with at least two years post-graduate experience. They should be licensed (LMSW or LCSW) and have taken the SIFI (Seminar in Field Instruction). If you or one of your Practicum supervisors needs the SIFI, Mercy University offers it at the Dobbs Ferry campus.
- Undergraduate assignments should include direct practice with individuals and if possible, work with families, groups, organizations, and communities.
- Students will submit two process recordings per week to Practicum supervisors
- Practicum supervisors should provide at least an hour and a half of direct one-on-one supervision per week, review/provide feedback on process recordings, and evaluate the student three times a year (twice in the fall and once in the spring).

**All Practicum supervisors are expected to attend the Practicum Supervisor Orientation in September.**

**An Practicum manual, calendar, and necessary documents will be provided.**

### The Matching Process

Once you complete the attached agency form, please email it back to Emily Murphy, (emurphy4@mercy.edu). Professor Murphy will contact you to verify receipt.

- In March, Professor Murphy will contact you (either via phone or email) with the name of a potential student intern for your agency. She will include the student's contact information as well as copy of the student's Practicum application and resume.
- At the same time, Professor Murphy will also provide the student with contact information for the agency. **It is the student's responsibility to contact the either the Practicum supervisor or educational coordinator (depending on agency preference) to set up a meeting to discuss schedules, pre-Practicum requirements (background checks, medical exams, etc.), and tasks.**
- Following this meeting, please email Professor Murphy to indicate that the student assignment has been solidified.
- A welcome packet will follow.

**Social Work Placement Request**  
**Please return to Emily Murphy**  
**Fax: 914.674.7413**  
[emurphy4@mercy.edu](mailto:emurphy4@mercy.edu)

**AGENCY:**

**PROGRAM:**

**ADDRESS:**

**Name of agency liaison to Mercy University:**

**Phone:**

**Email:**

**Fax:**

1. **How many student interns are you requesting?** \_\_\_\_\_
2. **Do you provide weekend or evening hours? If so, please indicate which nights and weekend days:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please indicate where each student will be placed and who will be the Practicum Supervisor.**

Name of Practicum Supervisor:

SIFI certified? \_\_\_\_\_

Site/Department:

Days of week/Hours Needed:

Address:

Telephone

Email:

Tasks:

**Please feel free to make additional copies of this page  
if you are interested in more than three students.**

## AGENCY REQUIREMENTS OF STUDENTS

**Agency Name:**

Some agencies ask students to meet certain requirements prior to starting work at their organization. Students are informed of these requirements before the matching process.

Please complete the check the items your agency requires:

- |   |     |    |
|---|-----|----|
| 1. Full physical exam   | Yes | No |
| 2. Tuberculosis (TB) test   | Yes | No |
| 3. Proof of immunizations   | Yes | No |
| 4. Drug testing   | Yes | No |
| 5. Proof of U.S. Citizenship  | Yes | No |
| 6. Proof of legal residence (e.g. Visa or Green Card)   | Yes | No |
| 7. State Central Registry (SCR) child abuse clearance   | Yes | No |
| 8. Finger printing, criminal background check   | Yes | No |
| 9. Would your agency be willing to provide a placement to a student with a felony conviction? |     |    |
|   | Yes | No |

Does your agency request training prior to the start of the Practicum in September? If so, please specify:

Are there other requirements that the student should be aware of?

### PRACTICUM SUPERVISOR FORM

**Please include a copy of your CV or resume and license to this form.**

**Name:**

**Agency:**

**Title with Agency:**

**Length of Time in Title:**

**Education (please include schools, degrees, and graduation dates):**

**Have you had previous supervisory experience with students?**

**If you have completed the SIFI, please list the school and date of completion:**

## Undergraduate Practicum Application Packet

An application form for the Practicum placement is attached. This packet provides an overview of the process of applying for an Practicum for the next academic year. Additional information and answers to your questions will be provided during a fieldwork presentation Practice I class. You can also refer to the attached **Practicum FAQs** for additional help.

### What to submit:

- This application
- A copy of your resume

**There will be a mandatory Practicum orientation in September.  
All students MUST attend this.**

*\*Practicum is a required 12-credit course during your senior year (SWK 431: Practicum I in the Fall and SWK 432: Field Practicum II in the Spring). To apply for the Practicum, you must have completed all of the prerequisite courses in social work and have a GPA of at least 2.8. Co-requisite courses for the Practicum include SWK 423: Practice II (Fall) and SWK 424: Practice III (Spring). A syllabus for Practicum will be provided during the September Practicum orientation. This will include a breakdown of how you will be graded for this course. This includes professional and ethical conduct in the Practicum and timely submission of assignments. \**

### **Some important points to remember:**

- ♣ Mercy University selects all Practicum agencies. **Students should not contact agencies to arrange a placement. If there is a placement you have in mind, please attach a contact name and number to this application. Professor Murphy will make an appointment with the agency.**
- ♣ Each student must complete **450 hours for the full academic year (225 hours in the Fall semester, and 225 in the Spring semester)**. Students are in placement two to three (3) full days a week depending on the agreement made with your agency. Students are required to attend their Practicum throughout the month of January. You should be accruing **16 hours each week**.
- ♣ The Practicum placement will begin when classes start in September and will continue until May or June. The only “breaks” in Practicum placement are the week or so between Christmas and New Year’s Day (December 25<sup>th</sup> through January 1<sup>st</sup>) and the week of the Mercy University’s Spring Semester Break.
- ♣ All students are placed at the same agency for both semesters.
- ♣ Students assume **all** responsibility for making appropriate personal plans and schedules - including childcare, employment, and class schedules - that will allow them to be in the Practicum at least two full days each week.

**Please note: Practicum hours must be conducted during normal working hours: Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-8 p.m. Some late afternoon and evening hours may be possible, but you must be available at least two full days during the week during regular working hours of the agency. Agencies that provide one weekend day are very rare, and you will need to discuss this with Emily Murphy prior to being placed. The program does not guarantee any student a placement that will include weekend or evening hours.**

## Agency Selection

You will be notified about your placement typically around May or June. This notification will include the names and telephone numbers for the agency and Practicum supervisor or educational coordinator. You should contact the Practicum supervisor or educational coordinator to arrange an interview with him or her during the summer.

The matching of students with agencies is based upon:

- (1) An evaluation of the student's progress in the program
- (2) Interest expressed by the student in specific areas of practice (See areas of Practice page)
- (3) The availability of an appropriate site in a specific Practicum placement

## Textbooks and Course Costs

There are no required textbooks for Practicum. Please keep in mind that the Practicum is a 6-credit course for both the Fall and Spring semesters. This means that for a total of 12 credits, you will not need to purchase any books.

### **However:**

Some agencies require screening procedures. For example, if you want to work with children, you might be fingerprinted and have a background check completed. You might also be drug tested or need to have a physical to be medically cleared. Unfortunately, sometimes the agency does not pay for this and asks the student to bear the cost. **Please be prepared financially for this possibility and for any additional commuting costs to/from your agency and home.**

## Employment-Based Practicums: For Those Already Employed at an Agency

If you already work at an agency and would like your employment to be considered your Practicum placement, please indicate this request on your Practicum application. Additionally, you must fill out a separate Employment-Based Practicum Application.

Professor Murphy will contact you directly to discuss your Employment-based placement. **You cannot start your Practicum until the placement is approved by the social work department.**

**APPLICATION FOR PRACTICUM PLACEMENT**  
**Please PRINT**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (work) \_\_\_\_\_ (cell) \_\_\_\_\_

Mercy Maverick email\* \_\_\_\_\_

**\*You must check your Mercy Maverick email regularly throughout the summer.  
Please indicate the preferred phone number where you can be reached.**

Practice I Professor: \_\_\_\_\_

Valid Driver's License:  YES  NO

Are you willing and able to drive to an Practicum placement if it is not located near public transportation?

YES  NO

Please describe any volunteer or paid social work-related experiences. Include type of experience, setting, responsibilities, and length of time in each setting. Use additional paper if necessary.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you feel comfortable providing services in any language(s) other than English? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please list: \_\_\_\_\_

Please specify any special accommodation to consider in planning for your Practicum placement.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Social Work Interests: List three **areas of practice** in which you are interested  
(Do not list specific agencies. Please refer to areas of Practice section):

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_

Is there **ONE** area of practice in which you would prefer not to be placed?

\_\_\_\_\_

If you have any special schedule needs, please indicate what these are:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate if you are considering an Employment-based placement:  YES  NO

Additional comments: Please discuss any information which will assist the faculty regarding the selection of your Practicum placement. You may note concerns about transportation, childcare, employment, health factors, etc.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

NAME (print)

Date

## Social Work Areas of Practice

This list includes *general* areas of practice of student placements. Please do not feel that you must limit the three areas of practice which you list on your Practicum application to the following.

The areas of practice of recent Practicum sites include services in the areas of:

- aging (community outreach, adult day program, and nursing home)
- child welfare (foster care and residential care)
- community centers
- community health
- disabilities
- domestic violence
- HIV/AIDS services
- homeless services
- hospital (inpatient and outpatient)
- mental health (inpatient and outpatient)
- school social work (elementary, middle, high school)
- substance abuse rehabilitation
- vocational services

## PRACTICUM APPLICATION Q&A

### 1. Can I submit my application electronically?

No. Please do not email your application. If you submit via email, you run the risk of your application getting lost in cyberspace or directed into a spam box.

### 2. What if I am interested in doing my Practicum at my place of employment?

Students who are *already employed* at a social service agency, hospital, school, etc., might be interested in conducting their Practicum at the place of their employment. However, there are very specific guidelines that must be met before this type of placement can be approved. Please be sure to indicate on your application that you are interested in conducting an **EMPLOYMENT-BASED Practicum**. You will meet with Professor Murphy to discuss details.

### 3. What if my application is late?

Late or incomplete applications will only be reviewed after those applications that arrived on time and are complete. This may result in the student not being placed in his or her first choice of area of practice or geographic location.

### 4. I work from Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Can I do my Practicum only on weekends or in the evenings?

You **MUST** be available for at least one-week's day for your Practicum. If you are finding that you cannot rearrange your schedule to do this, you might want to consider postponing your Practicum for another year until your schedule becomes more flexible. Please note that there are not many agencies that can accommodate weekend hours. The Social Work Program cannot guarantee an Practicum that includes evening or weekend hours.

### 5. Can I find my own placement?

No. There are specific requirements that agencies must meet to host an intern. Please do not contact agencies or organizations to inquire about Practicum opportunities. If you are employed at an agency and would like to complete your Practicum there, please indicate you would like to do an **EMPLOYMENT-BASED Practicum**.

### 6. How and when will I be notified of my placement?

During the spring months, you will be notified of your placement via your Mercy Mavericks email. You **MUST** check this email every day.

## PRACTICUM FAQS

### Page 1

#### 1. After I receive my notification, what steps will I need to take?

Your Practicum assignment email will include the name and contact information of the Practicum supervisor or educational coordinator at your agency. You should call this person as soon as possible to arrange a meeting with him or her to discuss agency screening requirements, work schedules, and specific tasks you will be completing as an intern.

*You should treat this meeting like a job interview: dress professionally, arrive on time, and bring a fresh copy of your resume. You should also make sure your voicemail greetings and phone ringtones and ring backs are appropriate.*

#### 2. What if my agency takes a while to respond to my attempts to arrange an interview?

Keep in mind that during the summer, many people go on vacation. Practicum supervisors in schools especially might be difficult to contact. Be patient. If you continue to have trouble, please contact Professor Murphy.

#### 3. What's the difference between an educational coordinator and Practicum supervisor? Why might they be at two different locations?

Some agencies, especially larger ones with many different programs, designate one person to communicate with the schools of social work to recruit student interns. This person is usually called the **educational coordinator**. He or she will interview you to see where you fit best within their agency.

Your **Practicum supervisor** is a licensed MSW who will supervise your learning experience, review your process recordings, and meet with you for weekly meetings (supervision). For example, you might interview with your educational coordinator in Manhattan but be placed in one of the agency's programs in the Bronx, closer to where you live.

#### 4. When does Practicum start? Can I start early and finish later?

Your Practicum will start in September. Your assignment letter will have the exact date for the week you should begin your Practicum. You cannot start early or finish late. This includes those students with Employment-Based Practicum assignments. You must follow the field calendar and accrue your hours on a weekly basis. You cannot accumulate more hours at the beginning or the end of the semester to make up for absences. This disrupts the continuity of the educational experience.

#### 5. What if my agency wants me to start later?

Some agencies hold a student orientation for all their interns from various schools on one specific date, which may be later than Mercy's start date. Talk with your Practicum supervisor and discuss how you can make up these specific missing hours later in the semester.

## PRACTICUM FAQS

### Page 2

#### **6. What kind of screening requirements might I need to start working in an agency?**

This depends on the agency. If you want to work with children, be prepared to be fingerprinted and have a background check completed. You might also be drug tested or have a physical to be medically cleared. Unfortunately, sometimes the agency does not pay for this and asks the student to bear the cost. **Please be prepared financially for this possibility.**

#### **7. What types of tasks will I be doing during my Practicum?**

This depends on your agency, but tasks might include case management, direct practice, counseling, running groups, and attending staff meetings, medical rounds, or case conferences.

#### **8. What's the difference between a task supervisor and an Practicum supervisor?**

Your Practicum supervisor holds an MSW and is licensed. He or she will be conducting weekly, one-hour supervision with you as well as completing all your Practicum evaluations. In some cases, agencies assign a task supervisor to students, since the Practicum supervisor might be offsite sometimes. This person will supervise you on daily tasks but will report back to the Practicum supervisor.

#### **9. What if I don't like where I'm placed?**

Please know that most students are very anxious when they start their Practicum and often want to change placements before giving their agency a shot. You should treat your Practicum like a job. Act professional. Give it a chance. If there are serious ethical concerns or personal issues, then you should speak with your faculty advisor or Professor Murphy.

#### **10. What/who is a faculty advisor/liaison?**

A faculty Practicum liaison (also known as your faculty liaison) is an adjunct professor (yes, Practicum is 6-credit per semester course) who is assigned to you throughout the year. He or she is the first person you should contact if you experience any concerns in the Practicum. You will have mandatory meetings and submit assignments to your faculty advisor throughout the year. He or she will also help determine your grade for Practicum at the end of each semester. More information about faculty liaisons will be provided at the Practicum orientation in September.

#### **11. What if I put off my Practicum for another year?**

Talk with your advisor about this. It's better to know now if the Practicum is not right for you, then to register for courses and drop them later when you might incur financial issues. Check your credits, too. You might have to finish other classes before applying to Practicum.

While it's the agency's responsibility to provide an educationally rich experience, it is still your role to act professionally and do the best you can. Often, MSW graduate programs ask for your Practicum evaluation from the practicum supervisor you had while an undergraduate student, so it's important that you make a good impression. Practicums can often lead to great job networking and employment, so please take this seriously! If you don't think you can do the Practicum next year due to financial or scheduling issues, then talk to your advisor now.

**EMPLOYMENT-BASED PRACTICUM PLACEMENT AGREEMENT**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

AGENCY NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT'S CURRENT SUPERVISOR: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT'S CURRENT JOB RESPONSIBILITIES: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

PROPOSED PRACTICUM SUPERVISOR:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Please attach completed Curriculum Vitae form or a copy of practicum supervisor's resume)

PRACTICUM SUPERVISOR CONTACT INFORMATION:

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

Has the Practicum supervisor completed a Seminar in Field Instruction in New York? \_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIBE THE PROPOSED PRACTICUM ASSIGNMENT (Please **be specific**; attach additional paper if needed):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURES:

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Practicum Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Educational Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## EMPLOYMENT-BASED PRACTICUM INSTRUCTIONS

### Employment-Based Arrangements: For Those Already Employed at an Agency

If you would like the agency where you are employed to be considered an Employment-Based placement, please indicate this request on your application. You must still fill out a regular Practicum application and submit it by **April**. You cannot start your Practicum until the placement is approved by the social work department.

**\*\*Your employment-based arrangements must be set and complete prior to August\*\***

#### Requirements:

- ♣ You must be an employee of your agency for *at least* 6 months prior to applying for an Employment-Based Practicum.
- ♣ Your proposed Practicum should preferably take place in a different department than your employment. You should also be assigned different tasks than what you are employed to do
- ♣ Your Practicum supervisor must be a licensed MSW with at least a year or more post-grad experience. He or she will be expected to provide 1-2 hours of supervision per week and review your process recordings. Ideally, they will have also completed the SIFI (Seminar in Field Instruction).

#### Suggested Steps for Employment-Based Arrangement:

- ♣ Talk to your current supervisor about the possibility of conducting your Practicum at your agency. From this conversation, you will be able to gauge how willing he or she and the agency are to consider this.
- ♣ If it seems possible, ask your current supervisor who she or he might suggest as an Practicum supervisor, keeping in mind the requirements (licensed MSW, etc.).
- ♣ Indicate on your Practicum application that you are interested in doing an Employment-Based Practicum.
- ♣ Talk with this Practicum supervisor in depth. This person and you should review the employment-based Practicum application and complete it together.
- ♣ Submit the application to Professor Murphy. She will then contact you to set up a meeting between the proposed Practicum supervisor, you, and her. Your current supervisor is welcome to attend as well.
- ♣ Following this meeting, Professor Murphy will either make suggestions for your Practicum or sign the agreement. **This must be done prior to August!**

## **THINGS TO REMEMBER ABOUT EMPLOYMENT-BASED PRACTICUM ARRANGEMENTS**

1. The tasks that you should be assigned at your agency should be the equivalent of those assigned to First Year MSW students: direct practice, case management, group work, etc. Practicum Supervisors will be responsible for providing at least one and a half hours of supervision per week as well completion of an educational plan, fall mid-semester evaluation, fall end-of-semester evaluation, and spring end-of-semester evaluation. They might also be encouraged to complete the SIFI (Seminar in Field Instruction), which is offered at Mercy and runs from September through May. If the Practicum supervisor has taken the SIFI at another social work school in the greater NYC area, he or she does not need to retake the course.
2. While preferable, Mercy University CANNOT dictate or suggest to agencies that they provide students comp time or time off to complete their Practicum. This is entirely up to your agreement with your place of employment. Keep in mind: this might result in students working their regular 35-hour work week along with 16 additional hours for their Practicum.
3. If you work at an agency that has not had Mercy interns before, the organization might require an Affiliation Agreement. This is a document that must be executed, negotiated, and signed by both Mercy University and your agency's legal departments. Please know that completing this document takes time, so the sooner you make your Practicum arrangements, the faster the Practicum department will be able to handle this.



# Practicum at a Glance...

## STUDENTS....

- Must complete **450 hours per academic year**. This means from September through December; they must accrue 225 hours. From January to May, they must accrue 225 hours.
- Will be in the Practicum 16 hours per week, or **2- 3 days per week**. They cannot conduct their Practicums solely during evenings and weekends. Any special arrangements must first be approved by the Practicum Coordinator.
- **\*\*Cannot carry over hours from the Fall to the Spring semester!\*\***
- Can observe religious holidays but must make up this time before the end of the semester.
- Should be provided 1 ½ hours of supervision per week
- Are required to submit one (1) process recording to their internship supervisor per week.
- **MUST** go to their faculty liaison **FIRST** in case of an issue in Practicum.

Please remember, you are given a **letter grade (A, A-, etc.) for this 6-credit course** based upon your *responsiveness to your faculty liaison* and timely submissions of process recordings and other Practicum documents to Practicum supervisors and faculty liaisons. The final grade is comprised of your Practicum evaluations, feedback from your faculty liaison and Practicum supervisor, professional conduct, and other requirements specified in the Practicum Education Manual.

On the back of this sheet is the Practicum calendar. Please be sure to highlight important due dates.

**PRACTICUM EDUCATIONAL PLAN**  
**Social Work Program**

An educational plan serves to outline the student, agency, and school’s expectations for the Practicum experience. Its purpose is to formulate the student’s specific learning goals within the agency’s mission, services, and functions and in conjunction with the Council on Social Work Education’s 2022 designated core competencies and behaviors (Please refer to the attached list). It should be initially constructed in the first few supervision sessions, however, can and should be revisited and revised as needed throughout the length of the Practicum. Faculty liaisons will take the Educational Plan into consideration when assessing the student’s grade for the Practicum. They will compare the content listed below with the final Practicum evaluation and might make suggestions to the agency or Practicum supervisor on how to optimize the student’s learning experience.

**Name of Student:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Practicum Agency:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Agency Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Practicum Supervisor:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Practicum supervisor**

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Practicum supervisor**

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Faculty Advisor:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Length of Plan**                      **From:** \_\_\_\_\_ **To:** \_\_\_\_\_

- I. Assignments\*:** Students are required to have direct practice assignments. This can include case management, supportive counseling, etc. to individuals, families, and groups. They should have the opportunity to learn engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation skills. *E.g. “Student will provide ongoing supportive counseling to three clients and will co-lead one social skills group.”*
  
- II. Professional and Interdisciplinary Relationships:** Please indicate any significant persons the student will be interacting with. *E.g. “Student’s practicum supervisor is Ms. H, but on Mondays, she will report to Mr. J if the practicum supervisor is out of the office.”*

**III. Meetings:** *E.g. “Student will attend staff meetings on Mondays at 2 p.m. and case conferences on Fridays at 10 a.m.”*

**IV. Supervision:** Students are required to receive 1 1/2 hours of supervision per week. This can include 1 hour of formal individual supervision and 1/2 hour of group supervision or informal supervision. *E.g. “Student will have formal individual supervision every Tuesday morning from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and group supervision every Monday after staff meetings.”*

**V. Process Recordings:** Students are required to submit 1 process recording per week to their practicum supervisors to review, comment on, and hand back to the student. Please indicate which day these process recordings should be submitted for discussion in supervision.

Monday     Tuesday     Wednesday     Thursday     Friday

**VI. Work Schedule:** Students must complete 450 hours per academic year (225 hours per semester). If students must miss fieldwork for illness or personal issues, it is expected that s/he makes up these hours during the semester.

**Student is in Practicum for:**  16 hours (2-3 days per week)

Monday \_\_\_\_\_  Tuesday \_\_\_\_\_  Wednesday \_\_\_\_\_  Thursday \_\_\_\_\_  Friday \_\_\_\_\_

**VII. Special Considerations or Accommodations (e.g. Equipment, bilingual services, etc.).**

**Practicum supervisor's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Faculty Advisor's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

\* The mission of the Social Work Program at Mercy University is to prepare students for generalist social work practice and to serve diverse and at-risk populations. The Program seeks to provide students with an education that will prepare them with the knowledge and skills to deal with the professional, societal, and ethical issues they will face in contemporary social work practice. The Program is also dedicated to the enhancement of the quality of life for people, to effecting change by addressing adverse conditions that impede the achievement of social justice, and to educating students to act humanely and with integrity. The Program is committed to providing a high level of education and attentiveness to our students and to creating and enhancing their opportunities to contribute to their communities and the profession.





**PROCESS RECORDING OUTLINE**

**Student's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Interview:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Client:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(To protect confidentiality, disguise client's name and any other identifying information)

**Location of Interview (e.g. Office, home, hospital room, etc.):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Persons Present:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(List all who participate in the session)

**Interview or Session #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Purpose of the Contact/Goal of the Session:**

**Background Information/Client Information:**

**Pre-engagement Comments & Preparation (eg. Did you read the client's chart? What have you done to prepare yourself for this session?):**

**Narrative (Please give a detailed summary of your entire contact with the client):**

**Verbatim Section. To the best of your ability, please use the following grid to record *word-for-word* a meaningful moment, exchange, or event that took place in the session. You should include both verbal and nonverbal communication. Think carefully about the thoughts and feelings you experienced during this conversation. Your practicum supervisor will write his or her comments in the last box.**

Verbatim Dialogue	Feelings/Reactions	Observations/Analysis	Skill Used	Practicum Supervisor's Comments

## **PROCESS RECORDING OUTLINE**

**Impression/Interview Assessment:**

**Additional Assessments:**

**a. Diversity Issues Identified (Age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation):**

**b. Social or Economic Justice or Policy Issues Identified:**

**Plans/Future Action:**

**Link to Classroom Readings or Concepts:**

**Questions/Issues for your Practicum supervisor:**

## PROCESS RECORDING OUTLINE---SAMPLE

**Student's Name:** John Smith

**Date of Interview:** October 15, 2022

**Client:** Theodore H.

(To protect confidentiality, disguise client's name and any other identifying information)

**Location of Interview (e.g. Office, home, hospital room, etc.):** Office

**Persons Present:** Theodore and his mother, Julie

(List all who participate in the session)

**Interview or Session #:** 2

### **Purpose of the Contact/Goal of the Session:**

This is the second session with Theodore and his mother. During the last session, Theodore's mother expressed concern about finding appropriate services for Theodore's learning disability. I am hoping to provide some clarification regarding programs that might be suitable for him.

### **Background Information/Client Information:**

Theodore is a 9-year-old boy of Irish and German descent who was referred to the school social work intern for his angry outbursts in class and oppositional behavior.

### **Pre-engagement Comments & Preparation (e.g. Did you read the client's chart? What have you done to prepare yourself for this session?):**

I read through Theodore's chart and spoke to several teachers regarding their concerns about Theodore. I also inquired if his behavior had changed since my first session with him, one week ago. Since his mother asked me to look up resources to help him with his learning disability, I also researched some options.

### **Narrative (Please give a detailed summary of your entire contact with the client):**

Theodore and his mother arrived at my office on time. Theodore presented as alert and active and proceeded to pick up toys in my office without saying hello to me. His mother, Julie, presented as tired and reported she had just left her work, even though her boss had cautioned her about taking too much time off to handle school issues for her child... *Please continue writing an entire summary of the session with as much detail as you can recall.*

**PROCESS RECORDING OUTLINE----SAMPLE**

**Verbatim Section.** To the best of your ability, please use the following grid to record *word-for-word* a meaningful moment, exchange, or event that took place in the session. You should include both verbal and nonverbal communication. Think carefully about the thoughts and feelings you experienced during this conversation. Your Practicum supervisor will write his or her comments in the last box.

<b>Verbatim Dialogue</b>	<b>Feelings/Reactions</b>	<b>Observations/Analysis</b>	<b>Skill Used</b>	<b>Practicum Supervisor's Comments</b>
<b>Theodore:</b> This is boring I want to go home.	Surprised.	I thought Theodore liked coming to my office	Reflective listening	
<b>Julie:</b> That's rude, Theodore. Apologize to the social worker.	Fear	Uh oh. Is Theodore going to lose his temper in my office?		
<b>SWI:</b> Theodore, did you see my new toy I got last week? I think you might like to play with it.	Cautious.	I am hoping to de-escalate this moment and keep both mother and son in the room with me.		

**Impression/Interview Assessment:**

Overall, I thought this session went well. I was able to calm both Theodore and his mother down during a tense moment. I feel that Theodore might be very frustrated, since he expressed several times he'd rather be playing with his friend at recess than spending time in my office with his mother.

**Additional Assessments:**

- c. Diversity Issues Identified (Age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation):**

Because Theodore is a smart student, I believe his teachers are having a hard time accepting that he has a learning disability. I believe they think that he is misbehaving or going through a phase.

- d. Social or Economic Justice or Policy Issues Identified:**

Currently the school has a policy that dictates that students who act out during class must be immediately removed. I feel like this makes Theodore feel more ostracized and frustrated. Perhaps I could speak with the teachers about helping Theodore manage his frustration in a less disruptive way.

## **PROCESS RECORDING OUTLINE----SAMPLE**

### **Plans/Future Action:**

I provided Julie with some referrals to special learning centers to help Theodore with his disability. I also reminded her of the option of having Theodore tested again by the school psychologist. I will follow up with her via phone on Friday and speak to the school psychologist after that conversation.

### **Link to Classroom Readings or Concepts:**

In Practice I class, we talked about the different roles that social workers assume. I believe I would like to be more of an advocate for Theodore.

### **Questions/Issues for your Practicum Supervisor:**

1. Are there other ways to engage a child who is showing outward frustration and discomfort during a session?
2. When clients get upset in my office, how would you suggest I handle the situation?
3. What other referrals could I provide to Theodore and his mother?

## SAMPLE GROUP WORK PROCESS RECORDING

*Group for cardiac patients in a Veteran's Administration Hospital - First meeting*

**Pre-engagement comments:** During my initial interview with each prospective group member, I left them my card and the date and time of the first group meeting. All the members are on the same hospital floor, so the morning prior to the meeting I went to each member's room to remind them about the meeting and to check if they had any questions or problems in getting to the meeting room. Mario and Frank needed someone to help with their wheelchairs, so I alerted the floor nurse, Louise, who offered to assist both of them. Tom was having second thoughts about attending, but Bill overheard us talking, and he good-humoredly persuaded Tom to try the group at least one time.

I bought cookies and soda set up the conference room in advance for our meeting.

**Attendance:** 9 members were present: Mario, Hector, John, Bill, Frank, Lenny, Andy, Peter, Tom. One member, Luis, was too ill to leave his bed today.

### **Seating Chart:**

**Narrative:** I greeted each member as they came in the room and they seated themselves around the large table. Most knew one another and they talked informally in advance. Within a few minutes everyone had arrived and took some refreshments. After brief introductions, I said--as I had explained to each of them individually - that they were invited to participate in a four-session group for patients who had experienced recent heart attacks. I said I thought they could be helpful to each other since many had similar concerns about their illness, about their hospitalization, about the reactions of their families, and what the future had in store.

Bill indicated that it was the specific problem of work which worries him the most. Mario, Hector, and John agreed. In an agitated way, Bill continued, "if the doctor won't let me go back to longshoreman's work, what can I do? It's been twenty-seven years of my life and I always put in an honest day. Now the doctor says give it up. What kind of bullshit is that? Doesn't he realize that I have family and financial obligations?" Lenny agreed, stating angrily that the doctors didn't care that a medical recommendation could destroy a man's life.

I asked if they were mostly annoyed about what their doctors said, or how they said it, or both?

Hector explained that he thought it was a doctor's responsibility to make recommendations in order to protect health, no matter what the economic consequences were. He, for example, has ended up on relief, and that's been hard to swallow. Bill responded with intensity that no doctor was ever going to do that to him, and he let out a barrage of angry words. Mario suggested that Bill was doing what he has stopped doing---taking out the anger at the doctor's recommendation on his own heart. Hector said he understood Bill's being fighting mad because he, also, is having a hell of a time living with his "bum ticker." He is just beginning to calm and realize that it will never be the same. Bill shook his head in disbelief, "How can I be calm, I have a family to take care of?" Lenny explained that he also has a family, but getting excited and upset will only lead

to another heart attack Andy supported Bill, adding that this was certainly hard for a family man. Peter exclaimed, "Bullshit, common sense will tell a man that health is the only important thing and everything else has to become second. Most members agreed that if they let themselves get excited or experience too much pressure, they would only hurt themselves.

Bill became angry again, telling group members that they had to be as dumb as the doctor to be forgetting their problems. Bill's eyes teared as he shouted, "if the doctor says give up longshoreman work and truck driving where I feel like a real man, what am I going to do? Who is going to hire me? What good am I?" Lenny suggested Bill calm down. Mario suggested Bill talk to his boss and ask about a light job.

Bill felt insulted by the suggestion and shouted that he has pride and isn't going to degrade himself and tell the boss to pity him...to give him crumbs...to kiss his ass. What kind of man did Mario think he was, anyway? Mario answered, "I think you are a good man and I respect you. I know a wounded animal has to fight for his brood. But Bill, you have brains, you have to listen to your body and accept its limit. It takes a man to talk to your boss about lighter work."

I suggested that it seemed some of them have made peace with their hearts, while others were still fighting it. Either way, I realized how much pain they were under. Peter implored Bill to take it easy, to accept his heart condition. Bill insisted that his boss wouldn't give him light work because it would raise insurance rates. He described his boss as being "between sweat, shit, and the floor," that he wasn't a man. At this point, Bill began to sob. The air was heavy with painful silence.

Several of the members tried to change the subject, but I encouraged the others to share their struggles. Walter referred to the mortgage and his family's food needs. Hector talked about his pension and how it helps. In a disgusted tone, Bill wanted to know what he was going to do with an \$80-a-month pension. Mario spoke quietly, but firmly. "Bill, I can see you are a big man, strong, and you can beat anybody here in a fight, but I'm gonna tell you something, you gotta stop crying and be a real man, that means accept what is, do what has to be done, face the facts. You want to help your family, you ain't gonna help them by killing yourself. You have to cut down on your expectations, do what the doctors say, and start to build a new life. "Everyone waited for Bill's reaction. He stared at Mario as if trying to decide what to do. After a while, he said, "I guess I could sell my home and buy a smaller one. My oldest son can go to work." Peter put his hand on Bill's back, saying that it was much better to be a live father than a dead one. Hector agreed, suggesting that they were all afraid of the same thing, but handle it differently. Each group members' common objective: "Life!" Bill said how helpful the guys have been. He continued, "I'm a man, and I'll do what has to be done. I'll even talk to my wife about working, and you know how hard that is for Italians." Peter responded that as a black man, he learned a long time ago about wives going to work, and it didn't make it any easier.

At the end, I asked what they thought of our first meeting, and many said it was helpful to see that others struggle with the same kinds of problems. Mario's comment caught the essence: "It's like we are in the same boat trying to keep from drowning. Talking can help us to stay afloat. "We agreed on the place and time of our next meeting.

**Impressions:** I feel good about this meeting. I thought that my ability to immediately describe the

focus of the group helped members to recognize they all share common concerns and helped them to get started right away on issues that were important to them. The group may have also moved quickly into the work because of its short-term focus and the fact that many knew each other. The men were especially concerned about their changing role from one of independence to dependence as well as the potential economic losses. I am not sure how well I conveyed that I understood issues of anger and pride and perhaps of feeling helpless and demeaned. Members moved in very quickly to offer suggestions and those still struggling may have felt their concerns were minimized.

**Plans:** I will follow up and remind each member about the next meeting. I think I will have to assume the initiative in reaching for feedback from the last meeting and help them to get started again. I will be listening more closely next time and point out possible efforts to gloss over struggles by their admonitions to each other to be more rational etc. I also need to find ways to let them know I do understand as I may have seemed too bland, too neutral, too much like I was directing "traffic" and not really weaving with them through the traffic.

**Questions/Issues:**

- 1) The hardest part of this meeting for me was listening to the strong feelings expressed by Bill, although perhaps he was the most real. I worried about losing control of the group yet how much expression to encourage in a first meeting. I would like to review that piece of the meeting closely, especially by trying to imagine how members might have experienced the interchanges.
- 2) I would also like to help them discuss their reactions to the doctors and other staff and how they might take on more empowering roles as patients. Let's discuss strategies as well as the risks (theirs and mine).
- 3) I'd also like to talk with you about my introduction to some of the themes I hear about in the group during team meetings.

*Note: Parts of this record excerpt were drawn from *The Life Model of Social Work Practice* by C. Germain and A. Gitterman. Columbia Press.*

## STUDENT INTERVIEW WITH A COLLATERAL CONTACT

(Interview with a teacher in an Urban Elementary School)

Pre-engagement Comments: All the girls from the agency's elementary school group told me they had failed Mr. R's course. Millie told me that her mother had received a letter concerning Millie's behavior in the class. I called Mr. R to set up an appointment to meet with him at the school.

### Interview with Mr. R on 11-30

Mr. R met me in the general office as planned. I asked him if he was Mr. R and I introduced myself and said I was a social work intern at the X Family Center. I didn't get much out except my name when he asked me why I wanted to see him. I said that I worked with a group of girls who are having difficulty in elementary school and he seemed to have several of them in his classes. I mentioned a couple of names and he jumped in saying that the only reasons he failed anyone was if they got below 50 on the exam, and he really didn't believe in charity grades. His tests were so amazingly simple that anybody should be able to pass them. And he started, pulling out exam papers, etc., for me to see. I said, "Mr. R, you don't have to justify your grades to me, really. He said, "Yes, I know", and went on to do so and show me how easy his homework assignments are, and how there is no excuses for the kids not to do them, and no excuse for their failing to pass his tests.

It became noisy in the office so Mr. R and I went upstairs and he got this list. Then we went into the teachers' room to talk. I took this opportunity to start all over again. I told him where I was from and the purpose of the group. He said he had take na course in the summer about teaching in "this kind of a school, in this kind of a neighborhood" and he knew there were such things as "ego building" grades and tests, to make a kid feel good, but he didn't think it was right to give a kid a good mark when he didn't work for it. I said I could see it was a dilemma for him. Then I mentioned that Milly's mother had received a letter from him about her behavior. He said, "Oh yes, she is continually creating a disturbance.always talking and turning around. I finally got fed up and when I get fed up I send a letter home-not that it does any good." I said I thought Milly took the letter to heart. She was pretty upset about it and just burst into tears when her mother told me about it. He seemed surprised and said that Milly was a nice girl and he liked her. Then he said that she just talked all the time. I said that she had just mentioned something about there being some conflict I the class between the Black and the Hispanic girls, and I asked him if he had noticed anything. He said there was none of that in his classes, no discrimination.he wouldn't stand for it. They knew that he treated them all alike.I said I was sure that he did but I was talking about among the kids themselves. He said he hadn't noticed anything.

There was an awkward silence.

He said that he still didn't understand why they didn't do their homework. It is so easy and wouldn't take any time at all. He said Milly never did hers. I said I knew that Milly is in the middle of a real family crisis at this point and that the apartment is really in confusion most of the time. He said, you mean that she couldn't find a quiet place to do her homework, for an

hour? I said that it would be hard. He then said you have to learn to concentrate sometime and that there was an afternoon study center. I added, “an afternoon play-center-I guess I’m saying that I think you’re asking for more self-discipline than a lot of kids have.”

Then I began to feel that I was pushing too much and I said, “I guess you’re probably tired of hearing what problems the kids have at home and that you should be more understanding-it doesn’t make your job any easier.” He said that he supposed kids had to be given a lot of credit for coming to school at all, with all they have to content with at home. It would be easier for them not to come at all. I said, sometimes, it seemed like it.

I felt sort of lost at this point, but it was a less tense moment between us. I decided to end our meeting asked if I could meet with him again next month when we both had a better sense of these girls and how we might work together to help them. He readily agreed, shook my hand and walked me to the door and we said good-bye.

### **Summary**

This was a hard interview for me. Mr. R approached the meeting as if I was going to criticize him and I hadn’t anticipated that reaction. Then when he started to talk about “this kind of school”, I found myself getting angry. He is a talkative man in his late 30’s and teaching here for his second year. I wouldn’t be surprised if he was overwhelmed by the large class (35 kids). I never got to my agenda to try to figure out with him why the kids might be neglecting their homework and feeling so isolated in this class, and how we might address this.

### **My Agenda**

1. I would like to discuss how I might have responded to his defensive position and whether I provoked it.
2. I didn’t get anywhere with trying to understand the racial tensions in the class and what his perception may be. I’d like to review that piece.
3. In “contracting”, I never ascertained what he might like to talk about in relation to the kids we both work with, and we need to think that through for our next meeting. I also didn’t focus or explain my agenda in seeing him. I’d like to plan next steps.
4. I think I ought to call Milly’s mother, but I don’t know what to say since we didn’t talk much about Milly or this note.

**FALL MID-SEMESTER PRACTICUM EVALUATION**  
**Social Work Program**

**Date of Evaluation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Student:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Practicum Supervisor:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Practicum Supervisor Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Practicum Agency:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Period Covered:**      **From:** \_\_\_\_\_      **To:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Please check the appropriate box to indicate the student’s performance. **Please remember you are evaluating the student on BEGINNING skills and whether or not they are emerging in their practice. Students should only be evaluated on those skills that they have had opportunities to practice.** Please be sure to refer to the student’s Educational Plan for guidance.

- **Needs Improvement = Student does not utilize this skill**
- **Average = Student makes frequent attempts with some success at utilizing this skill**
- **Above Average: Student frequently utilizes this skill with a lot of success**
- **N/A = Student has not had the opportunity to utilize this skill**

It is recommended this evaluation is discussed and completed during a supervision session with your student. It is the student’s responsibility to submit this evaluation to his or her faculty liaison.

<b>Beginning Generalist Direct Practice Skills</b> (CSWE Competency 2.1.10)	<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Above Average</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Engagement (Active listening, demonstration of empathy, etc.)				
Assessment (e.g. Biopsychosocial)				
Contracting with mutually agreed upon goals				
Interviewing techniques				

<b>Beginning Generalist Indirect Practice Skills</b> (CSWE Competency 2.1.9)	<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Above Average</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Understands agency's function and mission				
Complies with agency's policies				
Is aware of agency's community resources				

<b>Use of Supervision</b> (CSWE Competency 2.1.3)	<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Above Average</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Timely submission of process recordings				
Quality of process recordings				
Prepares for and effectively utilizes supervision				
Receives constructive feedback well and incorporates it into practice				

<b>Professional Development</b> (CSWE Competency 2.1.1)	<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Above Average</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Punctuality				
Dresses professionally				
Collaborates with colleagues in a collegial and respectful manner				
Completes needed agency documentation in a timely manner				

**Overall Rating of Student's Performance:**

( ) Needs Improvement    ( ) Average    ( ) Above Average

**Additional Comments:**

**Practicum's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

To the student: Your signature on this form indicates that you have read this evaluation. In the event that you do not agree with any aspect of this assessment of your performance, append a statement describing the area of disagreement and reasons for them.



STUDENT NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your continued dedication and work with Mercy students. We hope this semester has been a good one for both you and the students.

Attached please find the new End-of-Semester practicum evaluation. This evaluation has been revised in congruence with the Council on Social Work Education's (CSWE) 2022 Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards, which designates the field practicum as the "signature pedagogy" of social work education.

CSWE has identified 9 core competencies that students should master by the completion of their social work education. "Each competency describes the knowledge, values, skills and cognitive and affective processes that comprise the competency at the generalist level of practice, followed by a set of behaviors that integrate these components" (p.8).

According to CSWE "assessment of student learning outcomes is an essential component of competency-based education," (p. 8). Assessment provides evidence that students have successfully demonstrated the integration and application of the core competencies and component behaviors in their practice. Assessment also provides us with the opportunity to determine whether our students have demonstrated the level of competence necessary to enter professional practice, which in turn shows that our program has been successful in achieving our goals. We use this assessment information to improve our social work field education program and the tools used to evaluate learning outcomes.

We appreciate the time and effort you put into the End-of-Semester Practicum evaluation, and we value all that you do to ensure our students have a successful Practicum at your agency.

Please rate your student each practice behavior with the following evaluation rubric:

- 1 = Not Competent:** Student does not utilize this practice behavior despite opportunities
- 2 = Emerging Competence:** Student understands the importance of and makes attempts at utilizing this practice behavior with occasional success.
- 3 = Competent:** Student makes frequent attempts with success at utilizing this practice behavior
- 4 = Advanced Competence:** Student consistently utilizes this practice behavior with success
- NR = Not Rated:** Student has not been provided an opportunity to utilize this practice behavior

At the end of the **FIRST semester (December)**, it is expected that students do not receive scores higher than a "2" or a "3" unless the student is performing at an exceptional level. Please provide specific examples of students' work in the spaces provided.

This evaluation should be reviewed in supervision with the student. It is expected that students should be aware of any serious performance issues prior to the end of the semester. Following review, both the practicum supervisor and student will sign the evaluation; however, the student's signature ONLY indicates review of the evaluation and not necessarily agreement. Students are welcome to write a rebuttal to be appended to the review.

**All evaluations should be submitted directly to the student's Practicum liaison.**

Again, the Social Work Program at Mercy University greatly appreciates and values the work that you do with our students.

Sincerely,

Emily Murphy, LMSW  
Internship Practicum Coordinator  
[Emurphy4@mercy.edu](mailto:Emurphy4@mercy.edu)

**SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM**

**End-of-the-Semester Practicum Evaluation**

Student Name:

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Supervisor:

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Supervisor Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency:

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Practicum Liaison:

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Period Covered:                      Fall \_\_\_\_\_                      Spring \_\_\_\_\_

Brief Agency/Program Description:

Description of Student Assignments:

## End of Semester Evaluation- Work Ethic

Please rate the student on their overall work ethic while in their Practicum.

**KEY: 1 = Not Competent; 2 = Emerging Competence; 3 = Competent; 4 = Advanced Competence; NR = Not Rated**

<b>Professional Standards Behaviors</b> (Please see full description in the Field Education Manual)	<b>Comments:</b>	<b>Final Score:</b>
Basic abilities to acquire professional skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication Skills</li> <li>• Interpersonal Skills</li> <li>• Cognitive Skills</li> <li>• Physical Skills</li> </ul>		
Mental and Emotional Abilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stress management</li> <li>• Emotional and mental capabilities</li> <li>• Character</li> <li>• Organization</li> <li>• Self-esteem/confidence</li> </ul>		
Professional Performance Skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional commitment</li> <li>• Professional Behavior</li> <li>• Self-awareness</li> <li>• Ethical obligations</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Teamwork</li> <li>• Leadership</li> </ul>		
Scholastic (Practicum) performance:		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meets Practicum requirements (hours, expectations)</li> <li>• Productivity</li> </ul>		
Commitment to diversity, social justice, and human rights standard: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respect for all</li> <li>• Promotes/advocates for social justice</li> </ul>		

**End of Semester Core Competencies Evaluation:**

Please rate the student on their demonstration of the core competencies in their field education placement.

**KEY: 1 = Not Competent; 2 = Emerging Competence; 3 = Competent; 4 = Advanced Competence; NR = Not Rated**

<b>Competency</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Final Score:</b>
<p><b>Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior</b></p> <p>Social workers:</p> <p>A. Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics within the profession as appropriate to the context;</p> <p>B. Demonstrate professional behavior; appearance; and</p>		

<p>oral, written, and electronic communication;</p> <p><b>C.</b> Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and</p> <p><b>D.</b> Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.</p>		
<p><b>Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice</b></p> <p>Social workers:</p> <p>A. Advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community system levels; and</p> <p>B. Engage in practices that advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.</p>		
<p><b>Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (A DEI) in Practice</b></p> <p>Social workers:</p> <p>A. Demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels; and</p> <p>B. Demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-</p>		

<p>awareness, and self- regulation to manage the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working with clients and constituencies, acknowledging them as experts of their own lived experiences</p>		
<p><b>Competency 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice</b></p> <p>Social workers:</p> <p>A. Apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and programs; and</p> <p>B. Identify ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research methods to advance the purposes of social work.</p>		
<p><b>Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice</b></p> <p>Social workers:</p> <p>A. Use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services; and</p> <p>B. apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.</p>		

<p><b>Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</b></p> <p>Social workers:</p> <p>A. Apply knowledge of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, to engage with clients and constituencies; and</p> <p>B. Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to engage in culturally responsive practice with clients and constituencies.</p>		
<p><b>Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</b></p> <p>Social workers:</p> <p>A. Apply theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as other culturally responsive and interprofessional conceptual frameworks, when assessing clients and constituencies; and</p> <p>B. Demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing a mutually agreed-upon plan</p>		
<p><b>Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</b></p>		

<p>Social workers:</p> <p><b>A.</b> Engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals; and</p> <p><b>B.</b> incorporate culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies.</p>		
<p><b>Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</b></p> <p>Social workers:</p> <p><b>A.</b> Select and use culturally responsive methods for evaluation of outcomes; and</p> <p><b>B.</b> critically analyze outcomes and apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.</p>		

## SUMMARY OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

**1. Student's strengths:**

**2. Student's Challenges or Areas for Additional Improvement**

**3. Student Comments:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Supervisor** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Student** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Practicum Liaison** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date**

\*To the student: Your signature on this form indicates that you have read this evaluation. If you do not agree with any aspect of this assessment of your performance, append a statement describing the area of disagreement and reasons for them.

**Mercy University  
Social Work Program  
Student Evaluation of Practicum Placement**

The purpose of this evaluation is for continued development of quality Practicum placements to ensure our students learning needs and expectations are met. This evaluation will be used by Professor Murphy, the Practicum Coordinator and Dr. Carol Bennett- Speight, Program Director, Social Work Program to assess and enhance the social work Practicum education program at Mercy University. Each student is asked to complete this evaluation and return it directly to Professor Murphy. We value and appreciate your time and honesty in filling out these evaluations. We hope you had a great senior year Practicum placement and learning experience and look forward to receiving your feedback. Thank you.

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_ Dept. /Program: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please assess your Practicum supervisor according to the following key:**

4= Excellent    3= Good    2= Fair    1= Poor

1. Provided a thorough explanation of the agency, their mission, and my role as a social work intern.	4	3	2	1
2. Helped me adjust to the work environment and made me feel comfortable and welcome in the agency and the community.	4	3	2	1
3. Created a safe and confidential space to explore, develop and enhance my experiences as a social work intern with their agency.	4	3	2	1
4. Identified, communicated, and maintained the expectations of this placement and supervision.	4	3	2	1
5. Encouraged and demonstrated behavior consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics and other relevant ethical standards to guide social service delivery and practice.	4	3	2	1
6. Encouraged and engaged in mutual assessment of my learning needs and progress on an ongoing basis.	4	3	2	1
7. Was able to effectively bridge the social service delivery at the agency with what I was learning in the classroom.	4	3	2	1
8. Encouraged self- reflection	4	3	2	1
9. Provided constructive feedback on my performance	4	3	2	1
10. Met with me regularly for supervision	4	3	2	1

11. Met with me on the spot as needed	4	3	2	1
12. Encouraged me to critically assess and evaluate my practice performance	4	3	2	1

**II. Please indicate the teaching methods used by your Practicum supervisor throughout your Practicum placement (Check all that apply):**

- Demonstrated interviewing by having me observe her/him during client interactions
- Required process recordings and discussed them in supervisory conferences
- Was consistent in meeting of supervision
- Asked me to participate in staff meetings and/or other agency meetings
- Facilitated my networking within the agency and community
- During supervision he/she asked questions that enabled me to explore my awareness of self as a social worker and my feelings related to assignments and client systems
- Arranged for me to observe other staff member’s interactions with client systems
- Observed my client interactions and provided feedback and guidance
- Used Role play with me to demonstrate skills and processes
- My practicum supervisor was approachable and available to talk to about my assignments and client interactions.
- My field instructor created a safe space where I felt comfortable processing and learning from client interactions and experiences in the field.
- Other (please describe):

**Comments:**

**III. Please rate your Practicum placement agency and assignments using the following scale:**

4- Excellent    3- Good    F- Fair    P- Poor

1. The agency’s attitude toward students is positive and supportive.	4	3	2	1
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2. The agency is knowledgeable about the Mercy Bachelors in Social Work Program and is supportive of our educational goals and objectives.	4	3	2	1
3. The learning environment at the agency was stimulating and challenging.	4	3	2	1
4. My Practicum assignments were relevant to my learning needs and goals.	4	3	2	1
5. My Practicum assignments exposed to working with diverse populations.	4	3	2	1
6. The agency is open to suggestions and contributions by students.	4	3	2	1

**Comments:**

IV. Please check any of the following statements about your Practicum placement with which you AGREE.

- I felt prepared for my Practicum experience.
- I did not feel prepared.
- I felt I could use my coursework to help me in the Practicum.
- I frequently felt overwhelmed and overworked.
- I enjoyed going to my Practicum placement.
- I dreaded going to my Practicum placement.
- I had nothing to do.
- I had too much to do.
- I had just the right amount to do.
- My supervisor was always available when I needed her.
- My supervisor valued our supervision time and was consistent in meeting with me.
- My supervisor was often unavailable and frequently rescheduled our supervision times.
- I felt comfortable with my supervisor.
- My supervisor and I just didn't click.

- I enjoyed my client assignments.
- I felt challenged by my client assignments.
- Overall, I enjoyed my Practicum experience.
- Overall, I did not enjoy my Practicum experience.
- I recommend my placement for future students.
- I do not recommend my Practicum placement.

**Comments:**

V. Overall assessment of Practicum experience

- 1) What were the strengths of your placement?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2) If you could change anything about your Practicum placement what would it be?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3) What can Mercy do to better prepare students for their Practicum experience?

VIII. My recommendation for continuing use of this Practicum placement agency and/or supervisor: (Please check all that apply)

- Definitely continue
- Do not use this placement
- Continue to use this placement only if the following conditions are met (PLEASE BE SPECIFIC)

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mercy University  
Social Work Program  
Practicum Agency Assessment**

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_ Dept. /Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please assess the Practicum supervisor according to the following key:**

4= Excellent    3= Good    2= Fair    1= Poor

- |  |          |            |               |                  |
|--|----------|------------|---------------|------------------|
| 1. The agency provided a thorough orientation of the agency’s purpose, goals, missions and policies for the student.   | <b>4</b> | <b>3</b>   | <b>2</b>      | <b>1</b>         |
| 2. The agency provided clear expectations about the student interns role   | <b>4</b> | <b>3</b>   | <b>2</b>      | <b>1</b>         |
| 3. The student’s work environment is adequate and appropriate for their learning needs.  | <b>4</b> | <b>3</b>   | <b>2</b>      | <b>1</b>         |
| 4. Student participates in staff and/or clinical team meetings?  |          |            | <b>Always</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> |
| • If never, please explain:  |          |            |               | <b>Never</b>     |
| 5. In- service trainings are offered to the student  |          | <b>Yes</b> |               | <b>No</b>        |
| • If yes, is the student able to take advantage of the trainings?  |          | <b>Yes</b> |               | <b>No</b>        |
| 6. Student has the opportunity to interact with other professionals?   |          | <b>Yes</b> |               | <b>No</b>        |
| 7. Assignments are appropriate for the student?  |          | <b>Yes</b> |               | <b>No</b>        |
| 8. Assignments are diverse and provide opportunities for the student to bridge what they are learning in the classroom with what they are doing in practice? |          | <b>Yes</b> |               | <b>No</b>        |
| 9. Student has individual clients?   |          | <b>Yes</b> |               | <b>No</b>        |
| 10. Student has the opportunity to facilitate group work?  |          | <b>Yes</b> |               | <b>No</b>        |
| 11. Student has the opportunity to engage in a community engagement assignment?  |          | <b>Yes</b> |               | <b>No</b>        |
| 12. Student has exposure to organizational and program development?  |          | <b>Yes</b> |               | <b>No</b>        |
| 13. Level of commitment of the agency to student supervision   | <b>4</b> | <b>3</b>   | <b>2</b>      | <b>1</b>         |

14. Agency recognizes students as learners	<b>Yes</b>		<b>No</b>	
15. Agency provides special learning opportunities for students	<b>Yes</b>		<b>No</b>	
16. Agency provides time for supervision	<b>Yes</b>		<b>No</b>	
17. Agency allows time for SIFI attendance	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>NA</b>	
18. Overall assessment of the agency for Practicum supervisor	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
19. Overall recommendation for continuation of Practicum site	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Conditional</b>	

**Conditional (explain any conditional recommendation):**

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Faculty Practicum Liaison: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of visit: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mercy University  
Social Work Program  
Practicum Supervisor Evaluation by Faculty Practicum Liaison**

*Practicum Supervisor:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Agency:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Student:* \_\_\_\_\_

**Please assess the Practicum supervisor according to the following key**  
**4= Excellent                  3= Good                  2= Fair                  1= Poor**

1. The Practicum supervisor helped the student understand the agency's purpose, mission and policies?	4	3	2	1
2. The Practicum supervisor gave clear expectations about the student's role at the agency?	4	3	2	1
3. The Practicum supervisor gave appropriate assignments to meet the students learning goals and objectives?	4	3	2	1
4. The Practicum supervisor provides adequate supervision?	4	3	2	1
5. The Practicum supervisor is available to on-the-spot supervision as needed?	4	3	2	1
6. The Practicum supervisor communicated any concerns about the student's skills and interactions with clients and/or the agency in a timely manner?	4	3	2	1
7. The Practicum supervisor was willing to work with the student to ensure their learning needs were appropriately addressed.	4	3	2	1
8. The student felt comfortable with their Practicum supervisor.	4	3	2	1
9. Please rate the teaching skill of the Practicum supervisor.	4	3	2	1
10. Please rate the Practicum supervisors's attitude towards Mercy University:	4	3	2	1
11. The Practicum supervisor requires regular process recordings	4	3	2	1
12. Please rate the Practicum supervisor's expectation of the student:	4	3	2	1
	4	3	2	1

14. Special factors to be considered in matching students to this Practicum supervisor:

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15. Recommendation to use this Practicum supervisor again:

**Yes   No**  
**Conditional**

**Conditional (explain any conditional recommendation):**

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Faculty Practicum Liaison: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of visit: \_\_\_\_\_

**Rubric: Practicum I (SOWK 431)**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Not Competent (1)</b>	<b>Emerging Competence (2)</b>	<b>Competent (3)</b>	<b>Advanced Competence (4)</b>
<b>End of Semester Evaluation 25%</b>	Student was not competent in their field placement and did not demonstrate an understanding of the 10 core competencies outlined in their End-of-Semester Evaluations.	Student exhibited an emerging competence and understanding of the 10 core competencies outlined in their End-of-Semester Evaluations.	Student was competent in their field placement and demonstrated an understanding of the 10 core competencies outlined in their End-of-Semester Evaluations.	Students exhibited advance competency and a clear understanding of the 10 core competencies outlined in their End-of-Semester Evaluations.
<b>Integrative Seminar Attendance and participation in the online discussion board 25%</b>	Student did not participate in the online Field Practicum Seminar.	Student participate in two out of the four seminars and minimally posted on the discussion board.	Student attended all four seminars but only minimally participated in the online discussion board.	Student attended and actively participated in all of their Integrative Seminars. Student consistently contributed to the online discussion board.
<b>Process Recordings 25%</b>	Student did not turn in the required process recordings to their faculty field liaison.	Student handed in two out of the four required process recordings and demonstrated an emerging understanding of the core competencies and social work skills being utilized in their work with clients.	Student handed in three out of the four required process recordings and demonstrated a competent understanding of the core competencies and social work skills being utilized in their work with clients.	Students handed in all of the assigned process recordings and exhibited an advanced understanding of the core competencies and social work skills being used in their work with clients.
<b>Course Assignments #1-4 25%</b>	Student did not complete assignments #1-4.	Student completed two of required assignments.	Student completed three of the required assignments.	Students completed assignments #1-4.

**Rubric: Internship Practicum II (SOWK 432)**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Not Competent (1)</b>	<b>Emerging Competence (2)</b>	<b>Competent (3)</b>	<b>Advanced Competence (4)</b>
<b>End of Semester Evaluation 25%</b>	Student was not competent in their field placement and did not demonstrate an understanding of the 10 core competencies outlined in their End-of-Semester Evaluations.	Student exhibited an emerging competence and understanding of the 10 core competencies outlined in their End-of-Semester Evaluations.	Student was competent in their field placement and demonstrated an understanding of the 10 core competencies outlined in their End-of-Semester Evaluations.	Students exhibited advance competency and a clear understanding of the 10 core competencies outlined in their End-of-Semester Evaluations.
<b>Integrative Seminar Attendance and participation 25% (includes posts on discussion board)</b>	Student did not participate in the online Field Practicum Seminar.	Student participate in two out of the four seminars and minimally posted on the discussion board.	Student attended all four seminars but only minimally participated in the online discussion board.	Student attended and actively participated in all of their Integrative Seminars. Student consistently contributed to the online discussion board.
<b>Process Recordings 25%</b>	Student did not turn in the required process recordings to their faculty field liaison.	Student handed in two out of the four required process recordings and demonstrated an emerging understanding of the core competencies and social work skills being utilized in their work with clients.	Student handed in three out of the four required process recordings and demonstrated a competent understanding of the core competencies and social work skills being utilized in their work with clients.	Students handed in all of the assigned process recordings and exhibited an advanced understanding of the core competencies and social work skills being used in their work with clients.
<b>Course Assignments #5-8 25%</b>	Student did not complete assignments #5-8.	Student completed two of required assignments.	Student completed three of the required assignments.	Students completed assignments #5-8.