

**VIRGINIA STATE  
UNIVERSITY**  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL  
WORK**  
**MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK  
PROGRAM**



**FIELD  
INSTRUCTOR  
ORIENTATION  
TRAINING**

Online Module 2  
Training 2022+



# FIELD INSTRUCTORS TRAINING

## **MODULE 2**

**Field as the Signature Pedagogy of the Social Work Curriculum**

# INTRODUCTION TO CSWE SOCIAL WORK ACCREDITATION

- Each school must follow a nationally standardized accreditation process. The Council on Social work Education (CSWE) is the accreditation body for BSW and MSW programs in the United States.
- When you hear people say EPAS- Educational Policy Accreditation Standards, these are the line-by-line accreditation standards that schools must follow for accreditation.
- Here is a link to the 2015 EPAS (the 2022 EPAS will be released in Fall 2022):

<https://www.cswe.org/getattachment/Accreditation/Standards-and-Policies/2015-EPAS/2015EPASandGlossary.pdf>

# THIS IS THE OPENING STATEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL POLICY 2.2 THAT GUIDES OUR WORK:

Signature pedagogies are elements of instruction and of socialization that teach future practitioners the fundamental dimensions of professional work in their discipline—to think, to perform, and to act ethically and with integrity.

Field education is the signature pedagogy for social work. The intent of field education is to integrate the theoretical and conceptual contribution of the classroom with the practical world of the practice setting.

It is a basic precept of social work education that the two interrelated components of curriculum—classroom and field—are of equal importance within the curriculum, and each contributes to the development of the requisite competencies of professional practice.

Field education is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated based on criteria by which students demonstrate their Social Work Competencies.

Field education may integrate forms of technology as a component of the program.

**AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE REQUIRED STANDARD IS  
THE FACILITATION OF PLACEMENTS FOR STUDENTS.  
THE PROCESS USED REGARDING STUDENT READINESS  
FOR FIELD**

Student  
Field  
Applicaton

- Determines professional interest; strengths
- Determines educational deficits or needs

Personal  
Interview  
with Field  
Office

- Determines for the field, legal conviction (Self-report), State Police report, barriers to placement
- Planned agency selection and prioritization

Student  
Interview  
with  
Agency

- After referral to the agency, agency interview and selection
- Student and agency responsibility (**MOU/Agreement, background checks, etc.**)
- Student informs the agency of any accommodations for the practicum

# WHAT IS A PRACTICUM? EMPLOYMENT VS. PRACTICUM VS. INTERNSHIP



**Definition:** A Social Work Practicum or Internship is a required part of the Social work curriculum where the student serves within an agency that provides a social work service and then uses the agency as the platform to integrate the learning from the classroom with the integration of new knowledge, skills and the development of professional identity

- **Competing Factors**
- **Different disciplines**-Social Work may be just a small part of the primary function of the host agency.
- **Multiple stakeholders**-Agencies must answer to funding agencies, political entities, clients, accrediting agencies
- **Decades of theories**-There can be a conflict between what is being taught in the school and what is being used by the agency.
- **Perceived roles vs real roles** -Students may have higher expectations of what they should be doing or vice versa.
- Job training vs volunteer training vs practicum vs internship

# LEGITIMATE PRACTICUM MODELS

- Based on where you are working, there may be very different expectations of what a practicum will entail.
- In the next slide we see the continuum of what different professions require and expect of students within their practicums.
- On the left, we see a typical experience for a medical student. Most likely, we have all been in a doctor's office and either a group or just one student will be shadowing the doctor. They do not touch the patient, and most of the time do not speak. On the far right we see a typical law classroom where students find their own experiences to clerk with judges or law offices.

# PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION MODELS



Medical/  
Health  
Profession



Social Work



Law





# SOCIAL WORK PRACTICUM

- In Social Work, we attempt to locate placements in organizations utilizing a model which is theoretically in the middle of these two other models. Students have a large say in the decision-making around where they are placed. Decisions are made collaboratively with the field staff and are based on their level of existing knowledge as well as what they need to learn and the style of learning that works best for them.
- We attempt to make sure that the agency will provide enough guidance, training, and supervision with some shadowing. As the student approaches the middle of the first semester, they are allowed to take some cases or projects independently but with the right level of supervision (what has been determined is for each individual student). Additionally, the assignments in the field are connected to the learning in the classroom.

# IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

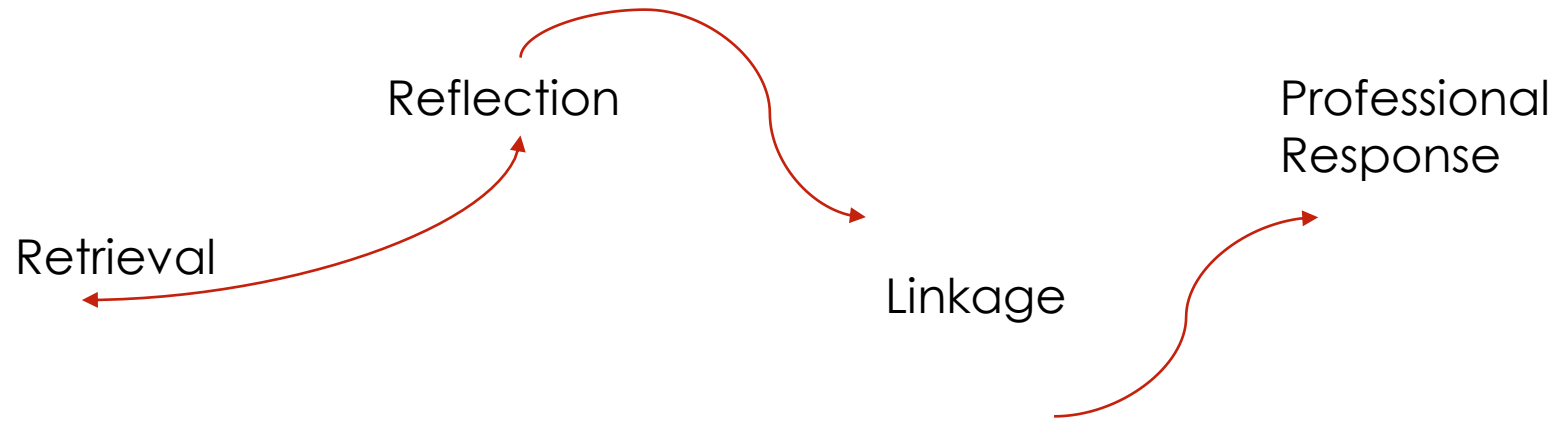
- In social work we have assumed that this type of pedagogical approach to integration takes place in field.
- Reflective discussion in-field instruction
- The role of the faculty field liaison
- The role of the seminar



# INTEGRATION OF THEORY IN PRACTICE DEMONSTRATION OF PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

- The unique bond between a field instructor and the student occurs through the integration of the theory and practice loop.
- Students will be interested in what you are doing, how you are doing what you are doing and why you are doing what you are doing.
- If there is a commonly used framework, model, or theory used in the organization, students will want to complete readings or webinars on that theory. You can feel free to direct them to that learning and allow them time in their field hours to learn about what you are using in your practice.
- Students may want to bring what they are learning in their classes to the agency. Students often can provide training or learning to other staff in your agency.
- Supervision is often the time to educate the student and discuss this process

# INTEGRATION OF THEORY AND PRACTICE (ITP)





# REFERENCES

- Field Instructor Resources on the University of Maine School of Social Work (2020).



**THIS ENDS MODULE 2  
YOU CAN PRINT THIS  
INFORMATION TO REFER TO, AS  
NEEDED**