Silberman
School of Social Work
HUNTER

761: Foundation Practicum Education Syllabus Fall

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Day: Thursday
Time: 6PM – 7:50PM

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Practicum 761 is a foundational seminar course offered in conjunction with supervised practicum placements. This hybrid course requires students to engage in 14 hours weekly throughout the spring and fall semesters, totaling a minimum of 225 hours per semester (900 hours for the master's program). Students then attend seminar classes every other week for 1.5 hours virtually. These courses are designed to facilitate the integration of social work knowledge, skills, and values, employing ecosystems and strengths perspectives alongside a cultural competence model to develop essential foundation practice competencies for entry-level social work practice.

As core elements of the educational program, these courses bridge academic learning with practical application. Students apply classroom knowledge to real-world settings, developing proficiency in the person-in-environment framework, scientific inquiry, ethical decision-making, and critical thinking across micro, mezzo, and macro levels of practice. The practicum experience emphasizes strategies for engaging with diverse populations, advocating for human rights, and promoting social and economic justice. Through professional practicum instruction, students advance their learning and apply social work ethics and values in their interactions with clients and communities. This hands-on experience fosters the development of practice skills that enhance social well-being and prepare students for effective, ethical social work practice in diverse settings.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. **Integrate social work knowledge, values, and skills to develop culturally competent and ethical practice:** Students will demonstrate the ability to apply professional social work values, ethical standards, and culturally sensitive approaches in their practicum. They will critically analyze the historical and current context of social service delivery, recognizing the impact of social, economic, and environmental factors on client systems at micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

2. **Develop and apply evidence-based intervention strategies across diverse client systems:** Students will identify, select, and implement research-based, culturally appropriate interventions for clients and constituencies at all system levels. They will demonstrate proficiency in engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation processes, utilizing the person-in-environment framework and strengths perspective to inform their practice.

3. **Enhance critical thinking and self-reflection skills to promote professional growth:** Students will actively engage in supervision and consultation, demonstrating the capacity for self-awareness, critical analysis, and synthesis of multiple information sources. They will reflect on the impact of their own values, emotions, and behaviors on professional relationships and practice decisions, fostering continuous professional development.

4. **Advocate for social justice and human rights through ethical social work practice:** Students will identify relevant social justice issues and develop strategies to advocate for clients and constituencies at all system levels. They will apply the NASW Code of Ethics in addressing practice issues, demonstrating a commitment to advancing social, economic, and environmental justice through their practicum experiences.

CSWE COMPETENCIES AND PRACTICE BEHAVIORS

Students in this course will be evaluated on the following standards outlined by the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS 2022).

1. **PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY**

   The student identifies as a professional social worker and conducts self accordingly. Social workers serve as representatives of the profession, its mission, and its core values. They know the profession's history. Social workers commit themselves to the profession's enhancement and to their own professional conduct and growth.

2. **ETHICAL PRACTICE**

   The student applies social work ethical principles to guide professional practice. Social workers have an obligation to conduct themselves ethically and to engage in ethical decision-making. Social workers are knowledgeable about the value base of the profession, its ethical standards, and relevant law.

3. **CRITICAL THINKING**

   The student applies critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments. Social workers are knowledgeable about the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and reasoned discernment. They use critical thinking augmented by creativity and curiosity. Critical thinking also requires the synthesis and communication of relevant information.

4. **DIVERSITY AND DIFFERENCE IN PRACTICE**

   The student engages in diversity and difference in practice. Social workers understand how diversity characterizes and shapes the human experience and is critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation. Social workers appreciate that, as a consequence of difference, a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim.

5. **HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL ECONOMIC JUSTICE**

   The student advances human rights and social and economic justice. Each person, regardless of position in society, has basic human rights, such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living,

health care, and education. Social workers recognize the global interconnections of oppression and are knowledgeable about theories of justice and strategies to promote human and civil rights. Social work incorporates social justice practices in organizations, institutions, and society to ensure that these basic human rights are distributed equitably and without prejudice.

6. **RESEARCH & PRACTICE**

   The student engages in research-informed practice and practice-informed research. Social workers use practice experience to inform research, employ evidence-based interventions, evaluate their own practice, and use research findings to improve practice, policy, and social service delivery. Social workers comprehend quantitative and qualitative research and understand scientific and ethical approaches to building knowledge.

7. **HUMAN BEHAVIOR IN THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT**

   The student applies knowledge of human behavior and the social environment. Social workers are knowledgeable about human behavior across the life course; the range of social systems in which people live; and the ways social systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving health and well-being. Social workers apply theories and knowledge from the liberal arts to understand biological, social, cultural, psychological, and spiritual development.

8. **POLICY PRACTICE**

   The student engages in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services. Social work practitioners understand that policy affects service delivery, and they actively engage in policy practice. Social workers know the history and current structures of social policies and services; the role of policy in service delivery; and the role of practice in policy development.

9. **PRACTICE CONTEXT**

   The student responds to contexts that shape practice. Social workers are informed, resourceful, and proactive in responding to evolving organizational, community, and societal contexts at all levels of practice. Social workers recognize that the context of practice is dynamic, and use knowledge and skill to respond proactively.

10. **ENGAGEMENT, ASSESSMENT, INTERVENTION, EVALUATION**

    The student social worker (a) engages, (b) assesses, (c) intervenes, and (d) evaluates with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Larkin S. (2023) A Field Guide for Social Workers: An Integrated Approach. 2nd ED. Cognella.

FIELD RESOURCES

- **Hunter Practicum Education Website**
- **Practicum Education Manual**
- **Process Recording Resource**
- **Sonia Login**

SONIA

The Sonia platform will serve as the central system for managing all aspects of practicum education. Students will use Sonia to complete and submit all required documents such as education plans, time logs, and midterm and final evaluations. Students are responsible for entering their hours on a weekly basis, which must be verified electronically by their Practicum instructor. Practicum instructors will use Sonia to review and approve student submissions, as well as complete evaluations and monitor progress throughout the placement. Faculty Practicum advisors will also use the platform to track student progress, review learning contracts and evaluations, and ensure that all Practicum requirements are being met.

AI STATEMENT & COGNITRAINER

In practicum, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is permitted when used responsibly to enhance your learning, deepen your understanding of course materials, encourage creative exploration, and support professional skill-building. These tools should never be used to misrepresent your abilities, replace critical thinking, or create work that deceives as to the conditions under which it was completed.

This cohort will also engage with an AI Tool, Cognitrainer, a professional learning platform designed to prepare social work students for the future of practice. Cognitrainer provides structured modules and simulations that help students explore ethical AI use in practicum education. By integrating Cognitrainer into your practicum, you will have the opportunity to build AI literacy as part of your workforce development, practicing how to responsibly and ethically evaluate and apply AI tools while maintaining client confidentiality, upholding NASW ethical standards, and centering human relationships. By engaging thoughtfully with AI and Cognitrainer, you are preparing to enter the social work workforce as a practitioner who is both grounded in ethics and equipped with the technological competencies required in a rapidly evolving practice environment

ASSIGNMENTS

- **Daily Time Logs: DUE THROUGHOUT THE TERM (175 Hours by FRIDAY DEC. 19)**
    - Students are expected to complete daily time logs in Sonia to reflect the hours that they completed each day at their practicum placement.
    - Students lunch hour break is expected to be reflected in Sonia as well.
    - For example, a typical business day is 9 am to 5 pm, totaling 8 hours. Subtracting 1 hour for a lunch break each day would be 7 hours.

- Students should have 14 hours per week in their Sonia time logs. Please note fall term is slightly shorter than the spring and students are expected to complete at least 175 hours to pass the fall semester.

- **Education Plan: DUE FRIDAY, OCT. 17**
  - This document outlines your learning assignments for the academic year at your practicum placement and must be completed and reviewed by you and your practicum instructor.
  - This form is to completed and approved in by your practicum instructor in Sonia (step 1 out of 3) and then it is to be reviewed/approved by the student (Step 2 out of 3).
  - These 2 steps are due by Friday, October 17th. Once these 2 steps are completed, then your practicum advisor can approve the education plan in Sonia (step 3 out of 3)

- **1 Monthly Process Recording: DUE LAST FRIDAY OF EACH MONTH**
  - One process recording is due by the last Friday of the Month. Please submit just 1 process recording with your practicum instructor's comments.
  - This process recording must be uploaded into Sonia and in PDF format. Once you upload and approve (step 1 out of 2), then your practicum advisor will approve the process recording (step 2 out of 2).
  - Click here for Hunter's Process Recording Resources in the handbook

- **Mid-Semester Checklist Form: DUE DATE FRIDAY NOV. 7th**
  - This form is to be completed your practicum instructor and evaluates your progress of your practicum placement mid way through the first semester.
  - This form is to completed and approved in by your field instructor in Sonia (step 1 out of 3) and then it is to be reviewed/approved by the student (Step 2 out of 3).
  - These 2 steps are due by Friday, Nov. 7h. Once these 2 steps are completed, then your practicum advisor can approve the education plan in Sonia (step 3 out of 3)

- **Mid-Year Evaluation Form: DUE DATE FRIDAY DEC. 12**
  - This form is to be completed your practicum instructor and evaluates your progress of your practicum placement over the course of the first semester.
  - This form is to completed and approved in by your practicum instructor in Sonia (step 1 out of 3) and then it is to be reviewed/approved by the student (Step 2 out of 3).
  - These 2 steps are due by Friday, Dec. 12th. Once these 2 steps are completed, then your practicum advisor can approve the education plan in Sonia (step 3 out of 3)
  - Upon review, the practicum advisor will submit the final fall grade to Hunter Student Services.

GRADING

Honors (97.5>): Indicates consistently outstanding achievement equivalent to an A+ or better. It reflects work that meets all of the requirements for a grade of Credit but that, in addition, demonstrates exceptional capacity for critical thinking which includes the contextualization, synthesis of main issues, integration of ideas from several readings, recognition of debated points, and creative application of material to practice and contemporary policy issues.

Credit = completion of hours, attendance of seminars, and satisfactory evaluation
Credit (82.5+): Indicates an acceptable graduate-level work equivalent to a B or better. It reflects a combination of satisfactory completion of all coursework**,** the quality of written and oral communication, adequate class participation, and regular and on-time class attendance. This includes the ability to accurately report on the content of the readings, to identify main ideas, to draw relevant conclusions, to self-reflect on the material, to apply the material to practice and contemporary policy issues, and to reference assigned readings, Grades of Credit are given for work within the A to B Range.

No Credit (<82.5): A grade of no-credit indicates a combination of poor quality of work on assignments; insufficient mastery of reading and lecture materials, weak descriptive and conceptual skills, minimal class participation; and excessive absences or lateness. No Credit grades are given to work that is determined to be below a grade of B.

ASKED TO LEAVE PRACTICUM = NO CREDIT

Incomplete: Grades of Incomplete may be given at the discretion of the instructor. Instructor and student must agree to a date for completion of the work. Failure to meet the agreed upon date will result in an automatic No Credit. Students who do not achieve Credit level work at the end of a course may not receive an incomplete grade.

Requests for a letter grade must be submitted via email to your professor by the end of the second week of class.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Attendance Policy

1. Hybrid Class: Class attendance is required; more than three unexcused absences may result in a grade of No Credit (NC). Please inform the professor before class if you will not be in class and make plans to make up missed work if necessary;

2. Classes missed for religious reasons are excused:
    a. Religious policy: Any student who is unable, because of his/her religious beliefs to attend classes on a particular day or days shall, because of such absence, be excused. It is necessary to inform the professor in advance so that a plan can be made to make up the work missed as a result of the absence(s).

3. On-time class attendance is expected and appreciated.

4. Each unexcused absence from class will affect the final grade.

14hr/week schedule:

A typical business day is 9 am to 5 pm, totaling 8 hours. Subtracting 1 hour for a lunch break each day, the required weekly internship hours total 14.

9am-5pm = 8 hours
8 x 2 = 16 hours
16 – 2 = 14 hours, required weekly for your internship (2 hours are taken out for lunch).

Zoom Student Professionalism Expectations:

As we strive to maintain a professional and respectful learning environment, it is important that all students adhere to the following expectations for professionalism during Zoom sessions:

1. **Punctuality:** Please join the Zoom meeting at least 5 minutes before the scheduled start time. This ensures that you are ready when the session begins and reduces disruptions.
2. **Background and Environment:**
    - Use a neutral and non-distracting background. Virtual backgrounds that are simple and professional are encouraged if your immediate environment is not suitable.
    - Ensure your environment is quiet and free from interruptions. Inform household members of your schedule to minimize noise and disruptions.
3. **Camera Use:** We ask students to keep their camera on during the session to foster a more connected and engaging learning experience. This helps replicate the interactive nature of a physical classroom.
4. **Microphone Etiquette:** Mute your microphone when not speaking to avoid background noise
5. **Engagement:**
    - Be an active participant. Engage with the content, respond to discussions, and ask questions.
    - Avoid multitasking during the session to maintain focus and respect for others' contributions.
6. **Language and Behavior:** Use respectful and appropriate language at all times. Professionalism includes how we communicate with peers and instructors.
7. **Preparation:** Come prepared with the necessary readings or assignments completed. This shows respect for the educational process and maximizes your learning.
8. **Confidentiality:** Respect the privacy of discussions and personal information shared in the virtual classroom. Do not record sessions without permission.
9. **Technical Preparedness:**
    - Ensure your technology (computer, camera, microphone) is working properly before the session.
    - Familiarize yourself with Zoom's features (e.g., chat, raise hand, mute/unmute) to participate effectively.

By adhering to these expectations, we create a productive and respectful learning environment that benefits all participants. Let's make the most of our time together and ensure a successful and professional virtual classroom experience.

Recording of Remote Classes:

The statement and policy below comes from CUNY Office of Academic Affairs: As is the case with many colleges and universities that have chosen online and distance learning modalities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, faculty utilizing Zoom, Blackboard Collaborate and other digital technology to deliver course curriculum/material must be sensitive to issues of privacy. To that end, faculty offering classes through web conferencing digital technology like Zoom must not record a student in a class session without the student's consent. Similarly, CUNY discourages students from recording the sessions unless such recording is part of a reasonable accommodation under the law or is not prohibited by campus policy. To obtain consent, faculty who wish to record their class sessions must provide the following announcement, in emails, and/or class syllabus, to enrolled students and verbally at the opening of the first class session:

Students who participate in this class with their camera on or use a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded solely for the purpose of creating a record for students enrolled in the class to refer to, including those enrolled students who are unable to attend live. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the "chat" feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live.

For Hunter College academic/video policy updates, please reference the following link:
http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/provost/repository/files/Academic%20Updates_%20August%202020.pdf

COURSE WORK & PATH TO LICENSURE

Licensing Support Central is a resource accessible through Blackboard, within the Student Information Corner. Students are urged to review the materials available there as they proceed through the course curriculum. There are many tools available for students' own use to consolidate learning and prepare for the national ASWB exam to become an LMSW.

HUNTER COLLEGE/SSSW POLICIES

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:
The Office of AccessABILITY provides accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The students who are eligible for reasonable accommodations during classroom, testing, and or internships include those with any psychiatric, physical, learning, medical or temporary conditions that limit their overall academic functioning. All information is kept confidential and only released with the student's written permission.

If you have any of the conditions listed above, or you are not sure if you qualify for accommodations, please contact the office for further information and a meeting with a counselor. **Please note, in order to receive an accommodation, you must provide current and appropriate documentation.** Registering **early in the semester** with the Office of AccessABILITY will ensure your accommodations in a timely manner so your condition won't affect your academic progress. The office is located in room East 1214 of Hunter College at 68th Street, phone: (212) 772-4857. fax: (212) 650-3449. VP: (646-755-3129).

Hunter College Academic Integrity/Dishonesty:
Academic integrity is a guiding principle of the Hunter College learning community because all students should have the opportunity to learn and perform on a level playing field.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, obtaining an unfair advantage, and falsifying records or documents (see examples) whether intentional or not.

Hunter College upholds the right to promote academic integrity on its campus as an educational institution of the City University of New York. The College has the responsibility to review all charges of academic dishonesty and implement sanctions, including, but not limited to, failing the course, official transcript notation, suspension

or expulsion from the College when it has been determined that academic dishonesty did occur. Please click here to see a full list of disciplinary sanctions.

For more information on Hunter College's Academic Integrity Policy, please click here.

Professional Code of Conduct:
Students are expected to comply with the College's policies and regulations outlined in the Campus Code of Conduct and Student Handbook.

In accordance with the emphasis on ethical conduct in the social work profession, students are expected to incorporate the highest ethical standards in every element of their work and to conduct themselves in ways that manifest the maturity and emotional stability necessary to function as professionals. Examples of poor academic performance and misconduct that will subject the student to disciplinary action or dismissal from the program include the following:

1. Violations of the College policy on Academic Integrity (e.g., plagiarism).
2. Behavior determined to be a violation of College or School policies or regulations.
3. Behavior determined to be a violation of the profession's ethics (e.g., the NASW Code of Ethics).
4. Behaviors that do not meet professional expectations and standards, which include generally accepted standards of professional conduct, personal integrity, or emotional stability.
5. Behaviors determined to be unprofessional conduct towards colleagues, faculty, or staff.

COURSE OUTLINE: FALL 761

WEEK 1 & 2 (8/25-9/5): WELCOME TO PRACTICUM EDUCATION

- Hunter Closed Monday 9/1 for Labor Day
- Biweekly Seminar 9/4/2024

Seminar Learning Objectives & Outcomes:

- Students will review Zoom expectations and co-create class norms on how they will interact with each other in the course and participate in conversations.
- Students will be able to define practicum education, outline its critical role in social work graduate programs, and describe the expectations and responsibilities of students, practicum instructors, and faculty liaisons within field placements.
- Students will be able to explain the integration of classroom learning with practical practicum experiences, recognize ethical considerations and professional boundaries relevant to practicum settings, and understand the evaluation process and criteria used to assess their performance in practicum education.
- Ensure that students will complete an orientation on the agency's safety and crisis management protocols to ensure readiness in crisis situations.

Reading(s):

- Chapter 1, pp 1-26
- "Key to the Best Internship Experience": https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z-Kg9hVDPmU

WEEK 2 & 3 (9/8-9/19): PROCESS RECORDINGS AND USE OF SELF IN PRACTICUM

- Biweekly Seminar 9/25/2025
- Practicum begins on 9/8/25

Seminar Learning Objectives & Outcomes:

- Students will be able to articulate the definition of social work and describe how Master of Social Work (MSW) programs offer unique advantages and training opportunities compared to other fields of study.
- Students will be able to articulate the concept of 'use of self' in social work practice and demonstrate an understanding of professionalism in practicum settings
- Students will be able to identify and analyze critical elements within process recordings to inform practice.

Reading(s):

- Chapter 2, pp 38-51
- Use of Self in the Field: https://www.socialworker.com/feature-articles/field-placement/An_Introduction_to_Use_of_Self_in_Field_Placement/

WEEK 4 & 5 (9/22-10/3): ROLE OF SUPERVISION & EDUCATION PLANS

- Biweekly Seminar 10/9/2025
- Virtual site practicum visits begin
- 9/22-9/24 - no classes
- 10/1-10/2 - no classes

Seminar Learning Objectives & Outcomes:

- Students will be able to explain the role of supervision in social work, prepare effectively for supervision sessions, and identify strategies to best utilize these opportunities to enhance their professional growth and service delivery.
- Students will be able to define what an education plan is and learn the step-by-step process for creating effective and tailored education plans that meet the specific needs of their clients or educational programs.

Reading(s):

- Chapter 3, pp 57-78

WEEK 5 & 6: (10/6-10/17): WELLBEING AND SAFETY IN PRACTICUM

- Hunter Closed Monday 10/13/24 for Indigenous Peoples Day
- Biweekly Seminar 10/23/2025
- Educational plans are due 10/17/25

Seminar Learning Objectives & Outcomes:

- Students will be able to identify signs of stress and burnout and learn strategies to effectively manage their mental and physical well-being while navigating the challenges of their fpracticum education.
- Students will understand key safety protocols and practices to ensure both personal safety and the safety of clients during practicum placements.
- Students will learn to establish and maintain professional boundaries during their school/placement time off and holidays to support personal well-being and work-life balance.

Reading(s):

- Chapter 4, pp 79-90
- NASW [National Association of Social Workers]. (2021, February). Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers. Retrieved from: https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics

WEEK 7 & 8 (10/20 - 10/31): PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION IN PRACTICUM

- Biweekly Seminar 11/6/2025
- Monday 10/20 - no classes

Seminar Learning Objectives & Outcomes:

- Students will learn to accurately and efficiently document case notes, reports, and correspondence, ensuring that all written communications are clear, detailed, and appropriate for their intended purpose.
- Students will understand and integrate ethical considerations and confidentiality requirements into all written and oral communications, safeguarding client information.

Reading(s):

- Chapter 6, pp 109-134

WEEKS 9 & 10 (11/3 - 11/14): JUSTICE & CULTURAL HUMILITY IN PRACTICUM

- Biweekly Seminar 11/20/2025
- Mid Semester Checklist due on 11/7

Seminar Learning Objectives & Outcomes:

- Students will be able to define social justice and human rights in the context of social work and explain the concept of cultural humility. They will identify how these principles are applied to advocate for equity and access, as well as understand the importance of cultural humility in effectively engaging with diverse client populations during their practicum placements.
- Students will be able to thoroughly review and understand the mid-year evaluation process and expectations, enabling them to effectively prepare for and engage in self-assessment and feedback sessions to enhance their learning and performance in their practicum placements.

Reading:

- Chapter 8: pp.157-180

WEEKS 11 & 12 (11/17 - 11/28): SOCIAL WORK ETHICS

- Biweekly Seminar 12/4/2025
- Virtual Practicum Site Visits completed by 11/26
- No classes Thurs-Fri 11/27-11/28 for Thanksgiving

Seminar Learning Objectives & Outcomes:

- Students will be able to articulate the core principles of the Social Work Code of Ethics and recognize its application in guiding professional conduct and decision-making processes in their practicum placements.
- By the end of this seminar, students will engage in practical exercises that enhance their skills in ethical decision-making, preparing them to handle complex situations ethically and professionally in their future social work practice

Reading(s):

- Chapter 7: pp136-155

WEEK 13 & 14 (12/1-12/19): REFLECTING ON YOUR FIRST SEMESTER OF PRACTICUM

- Biweekly Seminar 12/18/2025
- Last day of practicum for first semester 12/19
- Mid-Year Evaluation due on 12/12

Seminar Learning Objectives & Outcomes:

- Students will be able to critically assess their own professional growth and development throughout the first semester of their practicum placement, identifying strengths and areas for improvement for their second semester.
- Students will evaluate how they have integrated classroom learning with practical application in the social work field, and identify key lessons learned that can be applied in future semesters.

Readings:

- Freeman, K. (n.d.). Starting where the student is: Reflections of a first-year social work student. *SocialWorker.com*. https://www.socialworker.com/feature-articles/field-placement/starting-where-the-student-is-reflections-of-a-first-year-social-work-student/