

APPENDIX C – FOUNDATION FIELD GUIDELINES AND FORMS

CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

THE UNIVERSITY OF AKRON
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

JOINT MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

FOUNDATION FIELD Student Integrative Learning Contract and Student Evaluation

Field education is the component of the MSW curriculum that provides an opportunity for the student to gain experience in the application of social work theories and constructs, as well as develop self-awareness, through the utilization of “self” in working with client systems. The Student Integrative Learning Contract is designed in a manner that provides an opportunity for each student to develop learning objectives, assignments and tasks, in conjunction with the field instructor, to reflect the student’s learning needs and learning level, the agency’s purpose and client population, as well as the Program’s expectations and guidelines. Foundation I and II competencies are delineated under Foundation Field Objectives and Learning Experiences.

The student draws upon the Program’s expectations and guidelines, as well as experiences unique to the agency, to develop the Student Integrative Learning Contract, which reflects the student’s learning needs and learning level. The Contract brings together theory and practice, instructor and student, as well as agency and School, through its direct relationship to the actual course work of the student. The Student Integrative Learning Contract operationalizes and specifies the areas of the student’s learning the first semester and serves as the building block for the second semester. The student and field instructor work together to develop, implement, and evaluate the Contract, which involves:

- assessing the student’s learning needs, level, and styles in order to maximize the student’s learning;
- formulating learning objectives and assignments in order to direct the learning experiences toward the student’s needs and level, as well as the agency’s purpose and function;
- delineating incremental tasks in the practice experience that will insure a progression in the student’s growth and development; and
- evaluating the student’s performance and accomplishments with consideration of

- ❖ AFFECTIVE OUTCOME = What has the student learned to value and believe, and developed into new awareness?
- ❖ COGNITIVE OUTCOME = What new knowledge and understanding has the student gained?
- ❖ SKILL OUTCOME = What will the student be able to do?
- ❖ OPERATIONAL OUTCOME = What impact has the student made on the agency?

STUDENT INTEGRATIVE LEARNING CONTRACT

General Guidelines

The Program’s expectations are that:

1. The learning contract should be viewed by the student and field instructor as a binding agreement between the student, field instructor, and agency which represents the learning needs and level of the student, as well as needs, functions, and policy guidelines of the agency;
2. The learning contract is reflective of the theoretical constructs that the students are expected to have learned in the course work during the foundation year;
3. The learning contract allows for the student to participate in learning opportunities throughout the agency.

The **incremental tasks** that form the basis for the evaluation process should reflect the psychological states that are conducive to the student's growth and development, which are:

1. The task is perceived as being meaningful;
2. The task depicts the student's responsibility for its outcome;
3. The task is developed in a manner that the student and field instructor are able to determine whether or not outcome is satisfactory.

The characteristics inherent in the development of tasks that can achieve these psychological states are:

- **Skill variety** – Will task provide an opportunity for the student to increase the number and variety of skills and talents as it is being carried out?
- **Task completion** – Will the task provide an opportunity for the student to complete it from beginning to end?
- **Task significance** – Will the task be developed to help the student understand the degree of impact that it has on the lives and work of people in the organization?
- **Autonomy** – Will the task assist the student in exploring ways to increase independence and discretion in determining work procedures within the agency's protocol?
- **Feedback** – Does the task provide opportunities for feedback from the task itself, as well as from coworkers and supervisors?
- **Interpersonal relationships** – Does the task provide opportunities to work more closely with clients, or with people in other parts of the agency, or other members in the work unit?
- **Training** – Does the task provide for an opportunity for growth through on-the-job training, especially seminars?

STUDENT INTEGRATIVE LEARNING CONTRACT

Specific Instructions

The student in conjunction with the field instructor develops the Student Integrative Learning Contract. The contract should include learning objectives with incremental tasks designed as the road map to accomplish specific, measurable and achievable objectives, as well as consider the learning needs and style of the student and all potential learning experiences in the field setting. The learning contract is a joint effort with the field instructor and the student functioning as partners, with the faculty field liaison providing advising and consent functions. The activities of these key actors are:

KEY ACTOR

RESPONSIBILITIES

Faculty liaison	Contact field instructor and share information regarding responsibilities of the agency and the School.
Student	Gain information about the agency through reading pertinent material and meeting with appropriate staff at all levels to determine congruity with the Program's expectations and opportunities to apply knowledge and skills developed in the course work.
Field instructor	Participate in field instruction training to become familiar with the Program's expectations and curriculum, as well as how to facilitate the student's learning process.
Student	Complete draft of learning objectives, identify learning experiences, and share this with the field instructor.
Field instructor	Ascertain the student's learning needs, level, and style and, mutually finalize learning objectives, as well as determine incremental tasks designed to accomplish the student's learning objectives.
Student	Complete teaching-learning contract for appropriate signatures.
Faculty liaison	Meet with the field instructor and student to review the contract.
Student	Perform tasks in a competent manner applying knowledge and skills learned in the process of participating in course work.
Field instructor	Monitor and evaluate student's performance in correlation with performance dimensions for the outcome measures as defined in each of the three major learning areas, as well as confer with students weekly.
Faculty liaison	Review the student's performance and evaluation, the field instructor's recommended grade, and assign a grade.

DIRECT PRACTICE

Direct practice takes the form of work with both small and large client systems including experience with all phases of practice from initial assessment to termination and evaluation, and work with at risk and vulnerable populations. The assignments may include:

- forming partnerships with both small and large client systems, through building empowering relationships that acknowledge clients' rights and respect their strengths and uniqueness, in order to promote clients' well-being and improve their quality of life;
- developing multidimensional assessments with client systems that engage the client's needs and resources, as well as maintain the integrity of the agency's service delivery system;
- advocating on behalf of the client with other systems in order to facilitate the client's obtaining services;
- developing natural and formal alliances to provide support systems for clients;
- providing case management activities to achieve client-oriented and system-oriented objectives;

- participating in an agency or community project in which an opportunity exists to apply beginning skills in large system practice (e.g., work with a volunteer group, an agency board of directors, a client advocacy group, or self-help group involved in community action).
- engaging the intervention modalities and utilizing intervention strategies that address the client problem situation;
- documenting all client activity and student functioning in compliance with the agency's policies and procedures.

The student's learning objectives and tasks are normally based on the recommended assignments, which reflect the Program's expectations and guidelines. The student and the field instructor develop learning objectives that are:

- **Specific:** The student knows exactly what he/she is trying to accomplish
- **Measurable:** The student is clear about the target he/she is progressing toward
- **Positive:** The student's and the field instructor's attitude affect outcome success
- **Achievable:** The student should believe that objectives are realistic and relative to his/her learning level, learning need, and learning style.

SERVICE IMPACT

Service impact refers to that area of professional practice in which students contribute to changes in agency policies and services and in broad social policies affecting clients. This area also involves contributions to changes in organizational work cultures affecting agency and interagency work groups and staff relationships. Service impact assignments may include:

- collaborating with ongoing and ad hoc work groups, such as agency and interagency teams, communities, and staff meetings;
- discussing the impact of agency and community policies, procedures, and work cultures on clients, agency services, staff relationships, and students.
- Engaging action research around modification of agency policies or procedures, developing a proposal on relevant agency issues, developing new services, and evaluating existing services;
- Visiting social service agencies in the community, various legislative bodies, and other institutions to observe activities that impact client services and staff activities;
- Participating in grant writing, outcome measurement, and needs assessment.

The student's learning objectives and tasks are normally based on the recommended assignments, which reflect the Program's expectations and guidelines. The student and the field instructor develop learning objectives that are:

- **Specific:** The student knows exactly what he/she is trying to accomplish
- **Measurable:** The student is clear about the target he/she is progressing toward
- **Positive:** The student's and the field instructor's attitude affect outcome success
- **Achievable:** The student should believe that objectives are realistic and relative to his or her learning level, learning need, and learning style.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Professional Learning refers to students learning to become social work professionals. This is the area where students assume responsibility for their growth and development as professionals. Students should develop clarity around learning level, learning style, as well as problematic areas of learning that may exist. Additionally, students learn to take responsibility for educational progress, with support of the field instructor, to ensure cognitive, affective and skills development. The assignments may include:

- collaborating with the field instructor regarding learning experiences focusing on the continuous examination and assessment of the student's performance;
- documenting student performance through process recording, audio-visual taping, and/or observation, showing how the student actually performs under certain conditions and how the student describes and assesses his or her own practice;
- critiquing one's own work and learning to do so in a balanced way;
- drawing case material from a variety of resources and orally presenting a case to the field instructor, agency staff or interagency team;
- developing documentation skills in agency records of accountability, such as progress notes, proposals, memos, and reports;
- achieving learning objectives;
- preparing for field instruction and/or other professional consultation;
- familiarizing oneself with and following agency policies and procedures;
- developing personal management skills, such as time, stress and anger management;
- functioning in compliance with the values and ethics of the social work profession.

The student's learning objectives and tasks are based on the recommended assignments, which reflect the Program's expectations and guidelines. The student and the field instructor develop learning objectives that are:

- **Specific:** The student knows exactly what he or she is trying to accomplish
- **Measurable:** The student is clear about the target she or he is progressing toward
- **Positive:** The student's and the field instructor's attitude affect outcome success
- **Achievable:** The student should believe that objectives are realistic and relative to his or her learning level, learning, need, and learning style.