Social Work Field Education 1

Teaching Period: Sem 1 2012

Course Code: HWSS1137

School: 365H Global Studies, Soc Sci & Plng

Career: Undergraduate

Campus: City Campus

Primary Learning Mode:

Primary learning mode is face to face through a 70 day supervised placement, preceded by a briefing in semester 1, integrative seminars on campus during placement and case study.

Credit Points: 36

Teacher Guided Hours: 36 per semester

Learner Directed Hours: 99 per semester

Course Coordinator: Christine Craik

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Course Coordinator Location: 8.7.18

Course Coordinator Availability: By appointment

Additional Staff Contact Details

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Pre-requisite Courses and Assumed Knowledge and Capabilities

Course Description

Field Education 1 is a major component of the Social Work course. It is directed at preparing students for effective beginning professional practice, in relation to social work with individuals, families and small groups.

You will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between services offered and the organisational context of practice, and the consequent implications for service delivery. An understanding of the wider structural factors affecting the distribution of power and resources in society will also be expected.

Field Education 1 will build on previous Social Work Theory and Practice Courses. In particular, the core course Social Work Theory and Practice 3A (Working with Individuals) will be developed as preparation for the placement experience, and Social Work Theory and Practice 3B (Social Work with Families and Groups) which runs concurrently with the placements, will draw on your field experience where possible. The combined program will form the major direct practice opportunity in the BSW course for social work practice with individuals, families and small groups.

Objectives/Learning Outcomes/Capability Development

At the conclusion of the course, students will have:
1. Demonstrated competence in assessment of individuals and families, which takes account of the socio-economic structure of their lives, as well as their psycho-social situations;
2. Demonstrated knowledge and skills for working in crisis situations, and for short and medium-term work with individuals and families;
3. Shown a beginning-capacity to use social group work knowledge and skills for different purposes and with a range of people;
4. Demonstrated capacity for working effectively as part of a team within an organisation;
5. Shown awareness of, and capacity to work within, the organisational and social policy contexts of the particular direct service;
6. Demonstrated an understanding of, and be able to work within, the theoretical frameworks used in the placement agency, and a capacity to critically reflect on their use and application;
7. Demonstrated an understanding of power, authority and accountability in social work practice in various contexts; and,
8. Demonstrated skills in reflective and ethical practice, in consultation, and in self-evaluation.

Overview of Learning Activities

You will be able to engage in a variety of lectures and smaller classes.

Details of Learning Activities

BSW Field Education 1 is directed towards preparation for effective beginning professional practice in social work with individuals, families and small groups. Although the focus in placement is on direct service, students are also expected to demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the
service users, the programs, policies, organisation, administration and community context of the agency, as well as the broader structural factors affecting the distribution of power and resources in society.

In accordance with the requirements of the professionally accrediting body for social work education (Australian Association of Social Workers - AASW) the principal learning activities for Field Education 1 will be provided through a placement structure that consists of 70 days (or equivalent, of the total 140 days stipulated for the BSW), in supervised practice in a relevant organisation. Field Educators who meet the accreditation requirements of the AASW will provide supervision.

Through this course students will have the opportunity to strengthen and develop their professional skills, knowledge and values within a workplace-learning environment. Students will be required to demonstrate an understanding of organisational and community contexts of practice, as well as effectively dealing with the ethical dilemmas that are likely to be encountered. Placements may focus on community organisation, program development, policy development and/or research and may include a component of direct practice work. Students will be expected to analyse the practice setting by drawing on a range of theoretical perspectives, in particular those concerning power and exclusion, and to develop appropriate responses.

This course requires students to actively draw from previous knowledge and experience when determining their specific learning goals while they are on placement. This includes integrating previously studies material, especially in social work theory and practice and in field education as well as prior workplace learning.

The Case Study is a major requirement of third year and a pass in this assessment component is necessary to pass Field Education 1. The Case Study focuses on a student’s work with an individual, a family or a group. It should be a detailed report describing the individual/family/group and their contexts, together with the student’s thinking and action. It will also be a tool to assist students in the process of reflecting on and assessing their own practice. Refer Section 12.9 BSW Field Education Manual 2012.

**Teaching Schedule**

- Field Education Briefing Workshops in first semester
- Placement planning and preparation in consultation with the 3rd year field education coordinator and other relevant staff
- 70 days field placement
- Learning plan / midway review / final report
- Integrative seminars
- Case study

Preliminary consultation leading to placement allocation and referral.

For students undertaking placements in Victoria a series of three integrative seminars will be held monthly, dates to be advised. Students are expected to attend seminars held whilst on
Student is assigned a liaison person responsible for: educational consultation, monitoring, evaluation of learning opportunities and performance, mediation and problem solving.

References

Other Resources:
RMIT University BSW Field Education Manual 2011.

RMIT Library
The University Library provides extensive services, facilities and study space as well as comprehensive collections of books, periodicals and other course related materials, such as DVD’s, magazines, slides, films etc. Computer laboratories with access to a wide range of desktop publishing software are also available. The library also has an expanding virtual collection of electronic resources and networks, including product data, e-books, electronic journals and newspapers, web based tutorials, online reference and document delivery services etc., all of which are accessible on campus, and off campus 24 hours per day. More information on library resources and services can be found at: http://www.rmit.edu.au/library
If you need additional support, visit RMIT's Learning Lab, either in person or online: http://www.dlsweb.rmit.edu.au/lsu/

Overview of Assessment
You will be able to prepare assessment tasks with a total word length or equivalent of 4,000 words.

Assessment Tasks

Placement Core Learning Areas
1 - Values, ethics and professional practice: Awareness of contextually relevant ethics in accordance with the AASW Code of Ethics: Awareness of contextually relevant ethics in accordance with the AASW code of Ethics.
2 - Organisational context: An understanding of the organisational, legal and political contexts of human services processes: An understanding of the organisational, legal and political contexts of human services processes.
3 - Use of knowledge in practice: An understanding of theories and methodologies relevant to practice and ability to reflect critically upon their use and application: An understanding of theories and methodologies relevant to practice and an ability to reflect critically upon their use and application.
4 - Processes, skills and relationships: An ability to form constructive relationships with individuals, groups and communities including user groups, colleagues, professionals and people in other significant roles / positions.
4.1 - Communication Skills:
4.2 - Assessment, Intervention, Referral and Evaluation:

4.3 - Group & Team-work Skills:

5 - Self learning and professional development: The ability to take responsibility for one’s own learning and development, and to perform at a level of competence appropriate to a beginning social work practitioner, including the skills to manage one’s future career and the transition from university to professional practice.

6 - Research: Recognition of research as an integral part of social work practice; demonstrating knowledge and understanding of all types and stages of social research.

7 - Social policy: An understanding of the legislative and social policies which influence the different fields of practice including knowledge of relevant legislative and policy frameworks.

**Assessment**

Performance in field education will be assessed using the framework of 7 core learning areas, as developed by the Combined Schools of Social Work.

In order to demonstrate this and maximise their learning students will have, together with their field educator developed a learning plan that identifies tasks and ways to measure them against each of the 7 broad learning areas. This includes taking maximum responsibility for their own learning and professional development.

**Assessment Tasks**

- Attendance at placement briefings
- Participation in integrative seminars whilst on placement
- Satisfactory completion of the 70 days field placement, or equivalent.
- Satisfactory completion of an evaluation report by student and field educator/ supervisor on placement performance (Final Placement Report).
- Satisfactory completion (PASS ) of Case Study drawing upon placement experience.