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Introduction

Field studies are an essential part of the preparation of a student to enter the field of human services. Field studies allow the students to apply the theory and knowledge they have learned in the classroom through "hands-on" experience in a human services agency, under the supervision and guidance of an experienced human services professional. Field studies provide a unique opportunity for students to learn about themselves, the clients, the organizations and the environments of the helping professions. Students in field sites are expected to conduct themselves as professionals, to follow agency policies and procedures, and to adhere to the highest standard of ethical behavior. Site supervisors are to guide and direct the student in the placement, assuring that they have the training and supervision necessary to carry out tasks, have the opportunity to observe and participate in the work of the organization, and to act as role models for the helping professions.
Preconditions for Field Study

In order to enroll in field studies students must be juniors, must have a 2.0 GPA, and must have successfully complete HD1004 and HD2004 Human Development I and II, HD2335 and HD2336, Principles of Human Services I and II. Before the end of the semester immediately preceding the time in which they plan to do field studies students must:

- meet with the Field Studies Coordinator
- register for the appropriate number of credits
- be accepted by a site, and
- complete the field studies enrollment form.

Successful Completion of Field Studies

Students must successfully complete 6 credits (288 hours) of field study. Credits may be earned through a single block placement or through two semesters each with a minimum of 3 credits. Students splitting their field studies over more than one semester may opt to continue at a single placement or have two placements.

Field studies are graded on an A-F scale. Grades are awarded based upon the quality of academic assignments made by the Field Studies Coordinator, as well as the evaluation of the field site supervisor, for the student’s work on site, and appropriate documentation of time spent in the placement. All assignments and documentation responsibilities are described in the syllabus for field studies, which will be distributed to students at the beginning of each term.

Students are bound both by the Honor Code of Virginia Tech as well as agency or organizational policies concerning professional and ethical behavior.
Learning Objectives for Field Studies

By the end of their field studies students should be able to:

1. Understand a service delivery system, including the authority behind its work, its philosophy, its methods of delivering services, and its relationship to other organizations in the community.

2. Understand the knowledge and skills required to perform as a professional in an organization, and to have demonstrated an ability to carry out specific responsibilities within that service delivery system.

3. Articulate the legal and ethical obligations placed upon professionals in the service delivery system, and to have demonstrated the ability to uphold them.

4. Demonstrate the ability to assess their own performance as a helper in the system, including the identification of personal characteristics, which facilitate or inhibit helping, professional strengths and weaknesses, and the ability to use supervision appropriately.

Learning Contract

Within the first few weeks of placement the student will draft a learning contract, which is signed by the student, the site supervisor and the field studies coordinator. The purpose of the learning contract is to assure that both the student and the supervisor agree on expectations for the semester. While the learning contract can be revised as circumstances dictate, it is a useful tool for ensuring that the student and agency have the same expectations of the field study.
The learning contract should include, at a minimum, objectives to ensure that the student:

1. Has an opportunity to understand the agency's goals, operations and role within the larger community.

2. Observes the roles that professionals play in the organization, and has assignments that allow him/her to experience professional behavior as part of the organization's staff.

3. Has an opportunity to observe and practice professional behavior and the application of professional ethics.

4. Has the opportunity to use and benefit from professional supervision, and demonstrates the ability to use supervision appropriately.

A sample outline of a learning contract can be found in Appendix A.
Coordinator's Responsibilities to Site Supervisors and Students

The Field Studies Coordinator is to:

• ensure that students enter field studies at the appropriate time in their course of studies, and that they understand what is expected of them to successfully complete this part of their educational experiences;
• assist students in locating and securing positions in field study agencies in a timely manner;
• recruit and retain qualified agencies and organizations to act as field studies sites;
• oversee the field study experience, providing guidance and assistance to students and site supervisors as needed; and
• administer the academic requirements of field study, and assess student performance in academic assignments as well as on-site performance.

Field Site Supervisors' Responsibilities

Agency or organizational staff who accept students for field study should be prepared to:

• assure that the students are able to carry out their learning contracts through meaningful professional experiences on-site;
• provide supervision to the students, including helping the students to reflect on what they see and practice in the agency; and
• work with the field studies coordinator to assess the students' performance and to address any problems or special circumstances which might arise.
Student Responsibilities

Students in field studies are expected to:

1. adhere to all the policies and procedures of the field site agency;
2. conduct themselves as though they were employees of the field agency; adhering to accepted practices concerning dress, attendance, and professional behavior;
3. work independently on assigned tasks but seek supervision as appropriate;
4. work with field site supervisor to assure the goals of the learning contract are met; and
5. meet all academic requirements on a timely basis.

Problem Solving Procedures

If a student is experiencing any kind of difficulty with the field study, s/he should take the following steps:

1. Discuss the problem in a professional, issue-oriented manner with the field site supervisor, and try to resolve the matter at this level.
2. If it cannot be resolved at a site level the student should contact the field studies coordinator who will work with the student and the site supervisor.
3. Students have a right to expect that agencies, which accept them will provide adequate supervision and work assignments to fill the committed time.
**If a field site supervisor** is dissatisfied with a student's performance, s/he should take the following steps:

1. Discuss the issue immediately with the student so that the problem can be resolved by the student and supervisor together, as would happen with a permanent employee.

2. The Field Site Supervisor may work with the student to modify the Learning Contract, if need be, to help address the issue.

3. If this approach is not satisfactory the Field Site Supervisor should contact the Field Study Coordinator immediately, who will then work with the agency and student to address the problems and take corrective action.

4. Agencies have a right to expect that students will complete their learning contracts as well as appear for work on-time and as scheduled, show enthusiastic effort in performing assigned tasks, and uphold all agency policies and procedures.

5. Field site supervisors are encouraged to contact the Field Study Supervisor at any time that they have any questions or concerns, so that issues are addressed timely.
Appendix A: Sample Learning Contract

Goal 1: To understand the mission, purpose and activities of (name or organization).
   
   Objective 1: I will have read background material provided by the agency by .....(date)....
   
   Objective 2: I will have interviewed the agency director and heads of each department to understand what the different jobs done within the agency by (date).

Goal 2: To understand how (name of organization) relates to the helping community.
   
   Objective 1: I will learn which organizations our agency works with by (date).
   
   Objective 2: I will sit in on at least two meetings that involve our agency and outside organizations.

Goal 3: To observe and practice (job title) skills.
   
   Objective 1: I will observe two workers carrying out interviews with clients.

   Objective 2: I will be an intake worker for the agency 4 hours/week, interviewing clients for eligibility for our agency.

   Objective 3: I will help plan and carry out a group activity for our clients.
Objective 4: I will answer the agency phone 4 hours per week to help direct clients to our services or to other services in the community.

Goal 4: To reflect on my work with the agency and to get feedback about what I have observed.

Objective 1: I will meet with my supervisor twice a month to discuss issues that have come up and to discuss my own progress.

Objective 2: I will meet with my supervisor as needed to discuss any concerns or questions I have regarding ethics or professional behavior in different situations.
Appendix B: Evaluation Forms

Evaluation is an important part of the field experience. Agency field site supervisors should plan a schedule of regular meetings with students to answer discuss what students are experiencing in field placement, and to give them feedback on their performance. In addition we have set up several times for more formal, written evaluation of the student. This helps us to assure that students are performing adequately in the field, and that they are getting feedback that they can use to develop their professional skills.

This Appendix includes forms, which should be copied and used by the student and the field supervisor. Included here are:

- a mid-term evaluation of the student to be completed by the field supervisor;
- a final evaluation of the student; and
- an evaluation of the field supervisor to be completed by the student.

Students will be held responsible for assuring that all evaluation forms are completed and submitted on a timely basis. These evaluations will comprise part of their grade for the field study program.

It is strongly recommended that students and supervisors sit down to discuss all the evaluations before they are submitted to the Field Coordinator. This practice mirrors "real life" employee evaluations and will help the students to get used to talking reflectively about their work experiences.
Mid-Term Evaluation of Student

Student: ________________________________ Date: ________________

Site Supervisor: _________________________

Agency/Org: ____________________________ Phone: __________________

1. Overall, the student is performing: (check the answer that best fits)

- ___ significantly above acceptable performance
- ___ above acceptable performance
- ___ at an acceptable level of performance
- ___ below acceptable performance
- ___ at an unacceptable level of performance

2. What are the student's strengths in placement?

3. What are areas of weakness that the student needs to address in the remainder of the placement?

4. Additional comments?

Please sign to indicate that this evaluation has been discussed by the supervisor and the student. Student's may attach a response sheet to this form if they wish.

Supervisor's Signature: ________________________________

Student's Signature: ________________________________
HUMAN SERVICES FIELD STUDY  
HD 4964  
FINAL EVALUATION

Student Name: ________________________________
Agency: ________________________________
Supervisor: ________________________________
Phone #: ________________________________

The following scale was developed to aid in the evaluation of the student’s field study performance:

1  Far Below Average - Performance usually far below expected level.
2  Below Average - Performance usually somewhat below expected level.
3  Average - Performance usually at expected level.
4  Above Average - Performance usually above expected level.
5  Outstanding - Performance usually far above expected level.
N/A Does not apply to this placement.

Using the scale below, circle the number which best represents your evaluation of the student's field study performance.

**KNOWLEDGE OF AGENCY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>(1) Understands agency policy and practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>(2) Carries out agency procedures in a responsible and accountable manner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>(3) Makes appropriate use of agency resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>(4) Shows interest in learning about all parts of the agency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>(5) Dependable/regular and prompt attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>(6) Organizes and plans time use/sets priorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>(7) Prompt in work assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>(8) Works well under supervision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>(9) Accepts responsibility willingly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>(10) Assumes leadership as appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>(11) Has ability to criticize own performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>(12) Attends and contributes appropriately to meetings, conferences, and seminars</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PERSONAL QUALITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>(13) Enthusiastic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>(14) Courteous/respectful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>(15) Exhibits mature judgments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>(16) Is flexible/adaptable to change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>(17) Relates well to others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>(18) Exhibits appropriate personal appearance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SERVICE DELIVERY SKILLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>(19) Exhibits knowledge of human service delivery skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>(20) Maintains appropriate interaction with clients</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PLEASE COMMENT ON STUDENTS OVERALL PERFORMANCE:

STUDENTS OVERALL PERFORMANCE
If you were to assign this student a grade based on his/her performance during this semester's field placement with your agency, what grade would you assign?

____ A  ____ C  A = Outstanding
____ A-  ____ C-  B = Above Average
____ B+  ____ D+  C = Average
____ B  ____ D  D = Below Average
____ B-  ____ D-  F = Far Below Average
____ C+  ____ F

Evaluator's Signature: ______________ Date: ____________

My signature indicates that this evaluation form has been shown to me, and discussed with me.

Student's Signature: ______________ Date: ____________
STUDENT EVALUATION OF FIELD PLACEMENT SUPERVISOR

Student Name: ______________________   Agency: ______________________
Supervisor: ________________________   Date: __________________________

Please rate the following items as they apply to your supervisor.

1 = almost never   2 = rarely   3 = sometimes   4 = often   5 = almost always

I. Providing information and Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Please Circle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Conveyed agency requirements to the student</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Conveyed understanding of supervisor's role to the student</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Communicated knowledge effectively.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Gave clear instructions on work assignments.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Defined new or unfamiliar terms.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Provided information that was valuable to the student's professional development.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Demonstrated expertise in the area for which supervision was provided.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Provided suggestions for client intervention when needed.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Guided the implementation of procedures that were new to the student.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. When asked a question, gave a complete answer in terms the student could understand.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II. Supervisory Responsibilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Please Circle</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11. Showed preparation in delegating work to the student.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Remained up-to date regarding agency activities and policies.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Provided adequate amount of direct supervision.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Presented challenging thought-provoking ideas and work experience.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Allowed time to be available for questions or discussion of problems.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Conveyed opinions regarding student's strengths.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Conveyed opinions regarding student's weaknesses.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Offered advice concerning how a student could improve areas of weakness.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Provided opportunities to meet with the student for discussion about the Directed Field Experience.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Provided periodic evaluation of the student's work.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Evaluated student's performance fairly.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

III. Communication Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Please Circle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22. Encouraged the student to express thoughts and feelings about the work experience.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Listened attentively to the student.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Showed respect and understanding toward the student.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
l = almost never      2 = rarely     3 = sometimes     4 = often     5 = Almost always

25. Showed sensitivity toward the student's ability and progress.  1 2 3 4 5
26. Used terms that the student could easily understand and that were consistent with his/her professional development.  1 2 3 4 5
27. Maintained emotional maturity when faced with a conflict or problem.  1 2 3 4 5
28. Displayed an appropriate sense of humor.  1 2 3 4 5
29. Displayed appreciation and praise for hard work or individual accomplishments.  1 2 3 4 5
30. Encouraged feedback from the student about the supervisory process.  1 2 3 4 5

IV. Facilitating Student Independence

31. Encouraged input from the student on ideas regarding agency intervention.  1 2 3 4 5
32. Incorporated student’s ideas into problem solutions.  1 2 3 4 5
33. Exhibited flexibility by allowing a variety of valid procedures for agency intervention.  1 2 3 4 5
34. Motivated the student to develop professional skills.  1 2 3 4 5
35. Conveyed constructive criticism when errors were made.  1 2 3 4 5
36. Encouraged independence in the student's professional development.  1 2 3 4 5

V: Professional Mentoring

37. Maintained ethical responsibilities to agency and individual clients.  1 2 3 4 5
38. Maintained the confidentiality rule of the agency regarding clients and other personnel.  1 2 3 4 5
39. Displayed enthusiasm for profession and agency.  1 2 3 4 5
40. Conveyed confidence in professional interactions.  1 2 3 4 5
41. Modeled the appropriate speech and conduct of a professional.  1 2 3 4 5
42. Maintained professional appearance appropriate for the agency.  1 2 3 4 5
43. OVERALL SUPERVISORY EFFECTIVENESS.  1 2 3 4 5

COMMENTS

Student Signature: ___________________  Supervisor’s Signature: ___________________