

# **BSW Handbook**

**2009 – 2010**

**School of Social Work  
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**BSW Student Handbook  
School of Social Work  
Radford University**

**2009-2010**

**Waldron Hall  
(540) 831-7890**

<http://www.radford.edu/~sowk-web/>

In planning your course of study, you should become familiar with the BSW Student Handbook and the BSW 289 & 489 Field Manuals, as well as the Radford University Catalog. The purpose of the Handbook is

- To introduce students to the School of Social Work
- To serve as a resource in planning course work
- To articulate the policies and procedures of the School related to students' progression through the program
- To describe activities and opportunities provided by the School.

As professionals-in-training, it is the student's responsibility to learn and understand the purpose and values that guide the social work profession. Students are therefore strongly encouraged to read the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics, available at <http://www.naswdc.org/pubs/code/code.asp>. Students are also strongly encouraged to become members of at least one of a number of professional social work associations, such as the National Association of Social Workers, the Virginia chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, and the Society for Social Work and Research. A listing of web sites for these professional organizations is included at the back of this handbook.

Radford University does not discriminate with regard to race, color, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, veteran status, national origin, religion, or political affiliation in the administration of its educational programs, activities, admission or employment practices. Inquiries about this policy may be directed to the Social Equity Officer at 704 Clement Street. Telephone: voice (540) 831-5421; hearing impaired (540) 831-5128.

## Disclaimer

Because changes may be necessary from time to time, this document is intended for general information purposes only; it should not be construed as creating a contract between the School of Social Work and any person. The School and its faculty specifically reserve the right to make any changes it deems necessary at any time without advance notice in its policies, practices, academic programs, courses, schedules or calendars, including the elimination of courses, the modification of courses, and the cancellation or rescheduling of classes or other academic activities. This includes the right to correct clerical errors in any printed or online documents.

### **I. Radford University's Social Work Program**

The School of Social Work at Radford University gains its mission from the University's purpose to provide high quality educational programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels of study. The School is housed in the Waldron College of Health and Human Services, one of seven colleges of the University. The Waldron College provides students with programs of study for entry into and advancement within health-related professions. The programs combine a strong liberal arts and science base with discipline-specific study to develop graduates who contribute to the health and well-being of society. Programs are characterized by an emphasis on integrating theory with practice in the classroom and in on- and off-campus practicum experiences. The faculty are committed to teaching and promoting student development, to advancing scholarship within the disciplines and to providing professional service.

The Waldron College of Health and Human Services consists of three academic schools offering eight major areas of study. Depending on the choice of major, students in the College may elect to pursue a Bachelor of Science or a Bachelor of Arts degree. Majors in the School of Nursing receive the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) and Social Work students receive the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree.

The School of Social Work seeks to provide the highest quality professional social work education in a context of developing the student's ethical and intellectual capacities. The School recognizes that these capacities are realized in light of two certainties: the importance of family and community and the recognition that the enhancement of human potential depends upon a true appreciation of human diversity.

Taken all together, the School of Social Work focuses on the following: the education of competent professional social workers, both advanced and entry level; the enhancement of the quality of life for families and communities; and the recognition and appreciation of human differences.

The School of Social Work offers a comprehensive professional program designed to prepare professionals for the beginning generalist practice of social work. The undergraduate social work program and the master of social work program are accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. Both programs are reviewed and guided by the Professional Advisory Council of 50+ trained professional social workers.

The BSW program is offered through two sites: (1) at the Radford University campus and (2) the Radford University extended campus located at Virginia Western Community College in Roanoke, Virginia. Program options at both sites are similar in structure and are nationally accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. The basic BSW program is available at either site although course scheduling, and some policies and procedures differ depending on the site. Each student must choose one program, from which to be admitted and graduate, and must follow the policies and procedures for that specific site. Courses may be taken at either campus as arranged with a student's advisor. The social work program on the Radford campus offers a full time option to students while the VWCC extended site offers a 2 year full-time evening or a 3 year part-time evening program designed to accommodate working individuals.

### **Career Opportunities in Social Work**

A wide variety of job opportunities is available to a social work major with a bachelor's or master's degree. Social workers are professionals who are specifically educated to help people cope with a wide variety of human problems such as poverty, illness, unemployment, substance abuse and family or personal problems. They may do counseling and therapy or referrals for their clients or work in program planning, community organizing and policy development.

Social work majors may secure positions as program directors and coordinators, directors of services, supervisors or community organizers. Many social workers find employment in the areas of mental health, substance abuse, health care, court services, family planning, child welfare, school systems, social services, mental retardation, elderly services or family services/mediation.

Radford University's baccalaureate social work degree is accepted as the entry-level educational credential for beginning social work practice. Because of a highly structured curriculum, an emphasis on building counseling and problem-solving skills and the involvement of students in two internships (720 total hours in duration), human service agencies look very favorably upon the school's graduates. Competition for social work jobs is intense, but Radford's social work graduates are highly successful due to the relevant course requirements and experience provided by their internships. In addition, Radford graduates are eligible to apply for advanced standing in graduate social work programs, including the Radford M.S.W. program.



## **II. School Mission statement**

### **Context**

Located near the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains in Southwestern [Virginia](#) and nestled in the New River Valley, the University provides a serene setting for study and learning and for family-community gatherings. While numerous distinct cultures and a wide variety of communities fall within the boundaries of the University's interests, all believe in the importance and resilience of the family. The mutual influence between the University and the families and communities that surround it demands that University, family, and community collaborate toward their mutual goals.

The School of Social Work, grounded in the rural, small city context of Appalachia and Southwestern Virginia, builds on the strengths of its unique locale as a point of departure for understanding differences. The School and the University are committed to enhancing diversity of all kinds and are particularly interested in reinforcing a global perspective through the education of its students who will live, work, and contribute in a multicultural society.

The mission builds from the University's purpose and mission to provide high quality educational programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels of study. Consistent with the University's central focus, the School of Social Work seeks to provide the highest quality professional social work education in a context of developing the student's ethical and intellectual capacities. The School recognizes that these capacities are realized in light of two certainties: the importance of family and community and the recognition that the enhancement of human potential depends upon a critical understanding of the multitude of human perspectives.

### **Mission**

The School of Social Work at [Radford University](#) is committed to excellence in the education training of professional social workers, both advanced and entry level; the enhancement of the quality of life for families and communities; and the recognition and appreciation of human diversity. The highest quality social work education builds on the values and ethics of the profession, integrating the principles of social and economic justice, locally, nationally, and globally

The School serves as a leader for the profession in southwest Virginia and extends its own resources by participating in the life of surrounding communities--rural, semi-rural, and small cities--and contributing to family and community through a variety of means, including student internship programs, community partnerships, and faculty and student community services. The School further collaborates with these regional communities by stimulating scholarship and contributing to the knowledge base, through recognition of the importance of family and community and the need to enhance human potential

through a critical understanding of human diversity. The School also seeks to serve as a catalyst for change in the region, by enhancing and developing regional systems of communication through the advancement of technology.

### **III. BSW Mission statement & BSW Goals/objectives**

The overarching goal of the baccalaureate social work program is to prepare graduates for beginning generalist social work practice.

Graduates of the Radford University BSW program will be able to:

1. Practice within the values and ethics of the social work profession, including:
  - a. identifying and articulating one's own personal values;
  - b. explaining how one's own values impact assessment and intervention;
  - c. employing the NASW Code of Ethics in social work practice;
  - d. identifying ethical dilemmas affecting practice and services to clients;
  - e. resolving ethical dilemmas using appropriate decision-making processes;
  - f. practicing without discrimination on the basis of age, culture, class, ethnicity, disability, gender, national origin, race, religion, or sexual orientation; and
  - g. engaging in continued professional growth and development.
2. Demonstrate culturally competent practice for work in diverse cultural contexts including:
  - a. describing diversity within and between groups;
  - b. analyzing the forms and mechanisms of racism, oppression, and discrimination and their impact on client systems;
  - c. critically analyzing and applying culturally appropriate theories and knowledge about client systems within environmental contexts;
  - d. employing an ecological perspective in their work with diverse client systems.
3. Use practice knowledge, skills, and theory to promote alleviation of poverty, oppression, and other forms of social and economic injustice, including:
  - a. using theoretical frameworks to understand individual development and behavior across the life span
  - b. analyzing historical and current trends in social welfare policy and service delivery;
  - c. analyzing research relevant to service delivery;
  - d. using knowledge of economic, political, and organizational systems to analyze, influence, and implement policies consistent with social work values;

4. Function effectively within the structure of organizations and across service delivery systems, including:
  - a. using appropriate practice-relevant technologies within the context of organizational resources and facilities;
  - b. using supervision and consultation appropriately to improve practice and enhance services to clients; and
  - c. coordinating with and within service delivery systems , using internal and external resources professionally.
  
5. Use the generalist practice model with client systems of all sizes, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, including:
  - a. using knowledge and theories of individual, family, group, organizational, and community to assess interactions among individuals and other social systems;
  - b. applying relevant research findings to social work practice;
  - c. employing evidence-based best practices when using professional knowledge and skills;
  - d. using oral and written communication skills appropriate to client systems, colleagues, and community members;
  - e. applying critical thinking skills to social work practice;
  - f. working collaboratively with professionals from other disciplines; evaluating one's own practice effectiveness and sharing findings
  - g. appropriately;
  - h. demonstrating professional use of self through self awareness and appropriate use of supervision;
  - i. utilizing a strengths perspective in their work with diverse client systems;
  - j. employing appropriate social work roles of advocate, case manager, broker, enabler, facilitator, mediator, educator, and evaluator.

#### **IV. Pre-Social Work (PSWK) status**

Students typically enter Waldron College as pre-social work majors (designated PSWK) and are advised by the College Advising Office (Waldron Hall, room 351) and a faculty member in the School of Social Work. The Advising Office provides guidance regarding University policies and progression through general education. The faculty member prepares a plan of study for the student and provides an introduction to the policies and procedures of the School. Before being admitted to the major and to upper-division social work courses the student must complete pre-major requirements.

## **V. Communication & Advising**

### **Email**

The University and faculty communicate to students through email so it is important that students regularly check their email. Email accounts are provided to students upon admission. For further assistance with email, the Radford University Information and Technology website is

<https://java.portal.radford.edu/technologyatru/students/students.html>. Email accounts of faculty are provided on course syllabi and School materials; faculty and student accounts may also be found on the University's directory found on the main RU web page – [www.radford.edu](http://www.radford.edu). Though students may use email from other providers, the School of Social Work communicates to students through their Radford University email accounts.

### **Student Mail boxes**

Each student pre-major, once enrolled in SOWK 289, and each major is given a file folder as their School mail drop. Faculty will return papers in these folders and the School will transmit hard copy materials to students in their folders. These folders are in a box in Waldron Hall, Room 257, across the hall from the main social work office.

### **Updating contact information**

The student should notify the School office regarding changes in address, phone number, or email.

### **Bulletin boards**

Information of interest to students regarding the social work profession, job and internship opportunities, classes and workshops, are posted on the bulletin board over the copy machine in Waldron Hall, Room 257 across the hall from the main social work office. Other information of interest may be posted on individual faculty office doors.

### **Computer Labs**

There are a number of computer labs on campus. These labs have different operating hours and different software loaded on the computers. This information is found on the Radford University technology web page at

<https://java.portal.radford.edu/technologyatru/students/students.html>.

### **Library**

McConnell Library serves the University community as a resource for students. An online tutorial for use of the library can be found online at <http://lib.radford.edu/tutorial/index.asp>. In order to use many of McConnell Library's services, you will need to use your RU email account.

## **Academic advising**

While the student is ultimately responsible for making decisions about educational plans and meeting the requirements of the academic program, there is, in the Waldron College, an advising team to assist in these decisions. The team members include **the student**, the **faculty advisor**, and the **Advising Center staff**. Academic advising is a shared responsibility in which the student is encouraged to use the advising team, not just as a mechanism for acquiring a signature on a registration form, but rather as a continuous process of clarification and evaluation of progress toward educational and life goals. Making and keeping regular advising appointments, planning class schedules in conjunction with the advisor, and monitoring progress toward the completion of the degree program are all ways that the student can ensure the success of this process.

**This is a reminder that completing all degree requirements is the responsibility of the student.** Students need to use this manual, along with the University Catalog. Many university requirements are described in detail in the Catalog, but not in this manual. A **few** of those requirements are listed below:

- ✓ **At least 45 credits must be completed at Radford University. Students may repeat up to three courses, and withdraw from five courses, while at Radford University.**
- ✓ **At least 50% of major requirements, as defined by the Department, must be completed at Radford University.**
- ✓ **Of the last 39 credits for the degree, 30 must be completed at Radford University.**
- ✓ **To graduate with Latin Honors (distinction), the student must graduate with at least a 3.5 overall GPA and complete at least 60 credits at Radford University.**

## **Disability support**

The Disability Resource Office (DRO) provides assistance for students who have a documented disability and qualify for accommodations according to the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990). The DRO is a part of the Center for Counseling and Student Development. For more information, students can review the DRO website at <http://www.radford.edu/~dro/>.

## **Student Counseling Services**

While pursuing your academic career, developing your own interpersonal skills will be just as important to your future as the grades you make. Some of your developmental tasks will include dealing with emotions, becoming more independent and interdependent, continuing to discover who you are (identity issues), managing interpersonal relationships, clarifying career and lifestyle goals, and developing a sense of confidence and competence.

# **VI. Field Education**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Field education is an essential component of the full educational program offered by the School of Social Work. In field education, students have the opportunity to apply concepts and skills and to test their own abilities to work ethically and effectively with people who are seeking social work help.

The partnership between the School and the agency is a natural and necessary characteristic of field education. The field education agency provides a microcosm of the profession at work. The resources of agencies, including line staff, supervisors and administrators, provide critical components of the educational process.

The program could not proceed without the involvement of students with the agency and with the people the agency serves. Here students observe a group of seasoned professionals going about their tasks: the field instructor models the attitudes, behaviors and skills expected of the competent professional; the agency's programs reflect important social policies and issues whose analysis, implementation or change are important aspects of the student's learning. In addition, the operation and management of the agency provide important insights and understandings about the administration of social services.

Concurrently, the School contributes to the agency's goals and ongoing operation. The faculty's knowledge and skill and the scholarship produced by the faculty are offered for the improvement of services. The presence of students in the agency illustrates the promise for the future and the possibilities inherent in education. Taken all together - the agency, the field instructor, the faculty and the student - are the incorporation of a comprehensive educational experience.

This field manual represents the School's effort to clarify the components of the School: its mission, objectives, curriculum as well as the vital components of field education in the MSW program. It is hoped that the manual will assist all those involved in field education to carry out their respective roles.

The School, including faculty and students, are grateful to the agencies who so willingly share in the education of future generations of social work practitioners.

Elise Fulmer, PhD, Director, School of Social Work

Alice King-Ingham, PhD, BSW Coordinator

Deneen L. Evans, MSW, Coordinator of Field Education

Beth Deskins, MSW, Field Coordinator for Extended Programs

## **Field Education Program**

The field experience is an integral part of the Social Work Program. It is a special kind of learning experience which complements and "gives life" to classroom learning. It gives the students the opportunity to learn about people, about social problems, about service delivery systems, about helping, and about yourself as a helping professional. Students are placed in an agency to experience educationally directed experiences through which they can translate the knowledge, values, and skills acquired throughout the curriculum into professional practice with clients. The agency field instructor and the university faculty liaison closely collaborate to achieve this in the field instruction program. This is done through a semester long internship within a local human service agency. Students are able to observe and work directly with professionally trained and educated social workers within the context of generalist social work practice.

Social work seniors are required to successfully complete a 400 hour internship during their final semester, either in the Spring or Summer semester. This is done through 14 weeks of the semester interning 28-29 hours per week. This is the SOWK 489 course. Students are also expected to complete a 3 credit hour senior seminar class (SOWK 490) that is a co-requisite of the SOWK 489 course.

The precise scheduling of hours (days, evenings, weekends) may vary according to the agency needs, clients' schedules, and opportunities for student learning experiences. This is arranged between the student and the agency field instructor. In this process, the student works closely with the university field liaison and seminar instructor. Both are social work faculty members who provide leadership in the weekly seminar, visits the field site, and work cooperatively with the field instructor to maximize the student's learning experience. The field instructor is the individual in the agency who provides the direct supervision of the student's experiences.

## **Admission to Field**

Students majoring in social work participate in a minimum of 520 hours of direct practice in an actual human service agency. This is considered the highlight of the program and occurs through **two** internships under the supervision of a trained professional social worker. The first internship opportunity occurs during the pre-social work phase usually in the sophomore year through a ten-hour-per-week placement for a minimum of 120 hours, and the second during the professional social work phase for 400 hours, along with a three-hour weekly seminar, for an entire semester (Spring or Summer) during the senior year. In addition to submission of the portfolio to the student's advisor, an application is required for admission into both courses. Once the application is completed, it is to be turned into the Coordinator of Field Education. An interview will then be conducted with each student to better determine his or her placement. These experiences foster the integration of empirical and practice-based knowledge and promote the development of the student's professional competence in the area of generalist social work practice.

## **Field Policies**

### **Admission to Field Instruction Program**

To be eligible for field instruction, a student must:

1. Complete all academic coursework required to graduate with a BSW.
2. Possess a GPA of 2.7 in social work courses and overall GPA of 2.5.
3. Have no unresolved concerns regarding professional behavior, as outlined in the Waldron College Standards of Professional Practice Education.
4. Have access to transportation to and from field agency.

## **Field Instruction Placement**

Initial planning for the senior field experience begins with the student's admission to the School of Social Work.

1. The student works with the assigned faculty advisor in identifying educational needs and learning experiences desired, occupational plans, and a tentative semester for field instruction.
2. The student notifies the Field Coordinator in writing, of intent to enroll, by April 1 for placement the following spring/summer.
3. The student completes an application form and returns it to the Field Coordinator by September 15 for placement the following spring/summer.
4. The student meets with the Field Coordinator and a tentative match between the student and an agency is made.
5. The agency is notified of the tentative placement. The student contacts the agency for a placement interview. The student brings to the agency a current resume' for the interview.
6. If the student and the agency agree to the placement, (the student must meet any additional requirements set forth by the placement agency, i.e. fingerprints, drug screens, background check, immunizations), the student is officially placed at the agency. If the student and the agency do not agree, the matter is referred to the Field Coordinator.

## **Schedule of Field Experience**

The student is expected to intern full-time at the agency for an academic semester for 400 hours. The precise scheduling of hours (days, evenings, weekends) may vary according to the agency needs, client's schedules, and opportunities for student learning experiences. This is arranged between the student and agency field instructor. **Any exceptions to this block placement must be approved by the student's Academic Advisor, Field Coordinator, and BSW Program Coordinator.** The student participates in field instruction seminars held at the main campus or extended campus during the course of the field placement. These seminars include an orientation on the first day of the academic semester and weekly three-hour seminars.

## **Absence from Field Placement**

There may be times when a student misses a regular scheduled field time due to illness or special situations. This time must be made up. Making up this time is to be arranged between the student and field instructor.

## **Holidays**

Field agencies honor Radford University holidays as indicated by the academic calendar. Exceptions to these are by mutual agreement between the student and field instructor prior to the beginning of the field placement. Arrangements for continuing of client services for which the student is responsible are worked out between the student and the field instructor. This agreement must be included in the learning agreement.



## **Liability Insurance**

All students enrolled in the field education program at Radford University are required to carry personal liability insurance in the amount of 1 million/3 million. Please see website, [http://sowk-web.asp.radford.edu/field/field-forms/field-forms\\_1.html](http://sowk-web.asp.radford.edu/field/field-forms/field-forms_1.html) for liability insurance resources. Students are responsible to submit a copy of individual liability coverage to the field office by January 10 (Spring) and April 10 (Summer). If an employment-based practicum has been approved for the student, while in the role of a student at the agency, the student MUST have individual liability insurance in their name. Students cannot be a part of group coverage.

## **Student Confidentiality Waiver**

The School of Social Work has adopted a Student Confidentiality Waiver. The field placement is a vital component of your social work education, and every effort possible must be made to match each student with the most appropriate placement. As such, each student should carefully read the waiver and sign it to assist the School in ensuring that any potential problems with field placements may be avoided. See form on website, [http://sowk-web.asp.radford.edu/field/field-forms/field-forms\\_1.html](http://sowk-web.asp.radford.edu/field/field-forms/field-forms_1.html)

## **The Calendar**

Students will negotiate holidays with the field agency prior to the beginning of the field placement. This agreement must be included in the learning agreement.

Students must complete all field hours over 14 weeks of the semester. Exceptions might be granted for rare circumstances and on a case-by-case basis. Any exception to a 14 week internship must be approved by the Field Coordinator.

## **Assigning Grades/Attending Seminars**

The Seminar Instructor teaching the field seminar will assign the grade for SOWK 490. Seminar attendance and performance will enter into the grading process. Seminars must meet weekly for 2-3 hours in face-to-face format. Case presentations will be incorporated into the seminar. Students are expected to attend all seminar sessions. The Field Liaison, after consulting with the Field Instructor, will assign the grade for SOWK 489. Students must complete all of the hours required for field. These hours will not include time spent in seminar.

## **Field Instruction with Current or Former Employer**

It is the expectation of the School of Social Work that students complete field practicum in new settings. However, in special circumstances, an option to have an Employment-Based Field Practicum is available. The practicum must be educationally focused, and must meet the educational objectives of the BSW curriculum. The intended goal of an employment based practicum is to allow the student to continue employment while completing an educationally appropriate field practicum supervised by a BSW/MSW practitioner.

### **Expectations of Agency:**

- A.** The agency must offer sufficiently diverse educational experiences that will enhance the student's knowledge base and degree of expertise;
- B.** Documentation that the student is not a probationary employee (or that probation has been waived by the agency) or is an employee in good standing
- C.** The agency administrator must agree that students complete their required field practicum hours and have time to attend classes and field seminars. It is expected that the student discuss and

- negotiate the required time with their employer.
- D. Radford University School of Social Work requires all students to purchase individual liability insurance coverage. If the employment based practicum is approved the student must submit proof of student liability insurance distinct from their agency coverage.
  - E. The agency must be affiliated formally with the School of Social Work and agree to provide the student with a Radford University approved agency field instructor. The Field Instructor must have a BSW/MSW degree from an accredited institution and have two years postgraduate experience. The assigned Field Instructor is expected to attend all orientation and scheduled field academy seminars.
  - F. The proposed field instructor is not the student's job supervisor and has a MSW degree plus two years post grad experience (for MSW students) or a BSW degree plus two years experience for BSW students. If an approved field instructor is not available, the Field Coordinator will collaborate with the agency to designate an onsite task supervisor and appoint an external field instructor to conduct the weekly educational supervision.
  - G. Field assignments in the agency must have an educational focus, must differ significantly from the student's current or past job assignments, and must be in a different (i.e. separate) program area.

### Expectation of Students:

#### **Process**

***(Students must submit written documentation that explicitly addresses the agency expectations)***

Student must meet with their advisor to discuss the proposal and submit a completed proposal packet to the field office **(Semester before field begins)**.

BSW (489) spring placement	10/1
BSW (489) summer placement	2/1
MSW (641)	3/1
MSW (791)	3/1

It is the student's responsibility to forward the proposal to the Field Coordinator. Due to the amount of mail received during the admissions process it is advised that all students submitting employment based proposal contact the field coordinator to ensure proper receipt of the proposal.

1. Proposal should contain:
  - A. Justification and description of the proposed placement with the learning objectives. Students must provide a description of the proposed field placement responsibilities and how they demonstrate the achievement of the learning objectives.
  - B. Provide a current job description and the name of the current supervisor.
  - C. Provide field placement job description, completed agency agreement, the name of approved field instructor and completed field instructor sheet with resume'.
  - D. List the difference between the current job and the proposed placement. Students who are using a new job must provide documentation of start date.  
**NEW job is defined as new employment within three months of beginning practicum.**
  - E. Letter of approval from an agency executive responsible for human resource decisions. Should contain the following:
    - i. Agency executive in charge of human resource decisions and the
    - ii. Current supervisor must provide the field office with written documentation approving the employment based field placement.

## F. Completed Field Application

3. Field Committee will review the proposal and provide the student with a written decision within 30 days.

**The process to coordinate and approve an employment based practicum is lengthy. Please allow time to complete the forms and submit them to the field coordinator in a timely manner.**

### **Changing Placements**

Field instruction placements continue throughout the academic year. Changes in placements only occur when there are extraordinary circumstances. Changes are not made as a matter of course. Should problems arise in the field placement, the following procedures are to be followed:

1. Student is encouraged to voice their concerns immediately to the Field Instructor and to the Faculty Liaison.
2. Student, Field Instructor, and Faculty Liaison discuss concerns with all parties, regardless of the source of the perceived or identified problem.
3. If the problem cannot be resolved, the Faculty Liaison contacts the Field Coordinator.
4. The Field Coordinator determines, in consultation with the Faculty Liaison, whether the placement is to be terminated. If the placement is not terminated, the Faculty Liaison, the student, and the Field Instructor are expected to continue problem solving until the situation is resolved.
5. If the field placement is terminated, the Field Coordinator discusses other options with the student. The Field Liaison will then complete the Field Placement Change Request form that is provided in Appendix d. The student, Field Liaison, Field Instructor, Advisor and Field Coordinator sign the document and then it is entered into the student's academic file. The Field Coordinator may wish to consult with the MSW Coordinator, in working out a resolution to the problem.
6. The Field Coordinator will make at least one further attempt to place the student in a field agency.
7. If a field placement cannot be secured, the matter is referred to the BSW Coordinator and Director for disposition. The decision regarding the student's continuation in field is made by the Director. (See the BSW Student Handbook for Course and Field Review Processes.)

## **Field Agencies**

### **Selection**

Students in the Field Instruction Program are placed in human service agencies under public or private auspices. Either an agency or the Radford University School of Social Work may initiate the procedures designating an agency as a field instruction site. The Coordinator of Field Instruction and the agency executive negotiate a working relationship based on the criteria stated below.

If a working relationship is successfully negotiated by the Coordinator of Field Instruction and the agency executive, a written statement of this agreement is sent to the appropriate agency representative. The agreement is signed by the Coordinator of Field Instruction, the Agency Director (or his/her designated representative), the Director of the School of Social Work and Radford University's Director of Material Management/Contracts.

## **Criteria**

1. The agency's philosophy, goals, programs, and policies are compatible with professional social work standards.
2. The agency board, administrator, and staff are committed to the field instruction program, its goals and objectives, and due process protection of students as a significant function and responsibility of the agency.
3. The agency is in good standing in the community. It qualifies for membership in those standard setting bodies - national, state and local - appropriate to its field of practice.
4. The agency's staff is large enough to maintain and develop its basic program without reliance on students.
5. The agency administrator and staff are willing to cooperate with the university in planning for supervision and evaluation of placed students.
6. The agency can make available desk space, supplies, telephones, and clerical services for the use of the Field Instruction student. The agency can make available a qualified field instructor for the placed student.

## **Criteria for Selection of Field Instructors**

Field Instructors are chosen on the basis of:

1. Practice competence.
2. Skill in teaching and supervision.
3. Positive approach to social work education.
4. Ability to be creative and imaginative.
5. Ability to relate the student's field experience to academic learning.
6. Social work education.

Field instructors are committed to meeting the requirements as outlined on page 11, under Roles and Expectations, The Agency.

## **Roles and expectations**

### **Student**

While the Field Coordinator, the Field Instructor and the Faculty Liaison work to provide a quality field instruction experience for students, the student is expected to fulfill a number of responsibilities falling under two categories: the placement process and the agency experience.

Once the student begins the field placement, the student

1. Has agency expectations made clear, is prepared for and receives supervision on a regular basis, is actively involved in the social work tasks of the field setting, and participates in the evaluation process.
2. Acts as a mature, professional person at the assigned agency. The NASW Code of Ethics is used as one criterion for determining what is professional conduct.
3. Maintains confidentiality on matters pertaining to clients.
4. Arranges for transportation to and from the agency and, when necessary, arranges for off-campus living accommodations.
5. Negotiates with the agency field instructor a learning contract at the beginning of the placement.

6. Notifies the agency field instructor if the student must be absent from the field placement.
7. Completes all written assignments satisfactorily.
8. Participates in the field placement seminars held at the University.
9. Prepares for and constructively uses supervisory conferences.
10. Arranges with the agency field instructor for the termination or orderly transfer of cases or projects before leaving the agency.

### **Faculty Liaison/Seminar Instructor**

The roles and responsibilities of the liaison include:

1. Monitoring and assessing agencies, Field Instructors, and students' learning experiences, including the review and approval of the student's learning agreement;
2. Assisting students with the integration of course work and practicum;
3. Assisting Field Instructors with developing teaching skills and providing them with course outlines and other materials;
4. Assisting in resolving problems between students and Field Instructors or other agency issues
5. Meeting with the student and the Field Instructor a minimum of three times during the academic semester; and
6. Assigning the student a grade in consultation with the agency Field Instructor at the end of the semester;
7. Coordinating and facilitating the field placement seminar.

### **The Agency**

1. Interviews a prospective field student and accepts or rejects a student.
2. Considers the student for placement without respect to race, ethnic origin, gender, sexual preference, age, religion, disability (unless student is not able to function in the agency setting with accommodations), or political belief.
3. Designates a qualified Field Instructor who has the major responsibility for structuring the student's learning experiences. The Field Instructor must:
  - a. Oversee the student's learning experience, ensuring that the experience is educational in nature;
  - b. Participate in carrying out the educational objectives of the field instruction curriculum;
  - c. Oversee the development of the Practicum Learning Agreement with the student;
  - d. Provide a range of appropriate practice experiences aimed at the student's professional growth;
  - e. Provide a minimum of one hour of one-to-one or group supervision per week;
  - f. Meet with the Faculty Liaison a minimum of three times per semester;
  - g. Engage in telephone consultation when necessary;
  - h. Provide an orientation for field students;
  - i. Attend twice yearly field instruction seminars at the University;
  - k. Provide input into the ongoing development of the School's curriculum and program;
  - l. Recommend student's semester grade.
4. Provides the field instructor with adequate time to carry out responsibilities to the student.
5. Advises the Faculty Liaison and/or Director of Field Instruction of policy and service changes in the agency.
6. Provides necessary space and facilities (such as telephone, clerical services, and access to client records) for each student.
7. Provides the student with transportation or mileage reimbursement, for field assignments that take the student outside of the agency. If agency policies do not permit this, the student is informed of this before the field assignment is accepted

## **SUGGESTED FIELD PLACEMENT EXPERIENCES**

Agencies differ from one to another and situations within agencies change, just as students differ and change. The development of a stimulating program by the individual field instructor is the essence of good education. Nevertheless, there are certain types of experiences that should form the foundation of any student's field instruction experiences.

The following should be developed by the field instructors in their own settings and in the most meaningful way possible to the student.

1. Orientation:

The students will be strangers in the agency and will need some orientation. Some advance preparation is helpful, such as prepared desk space, personnel forms, agency literature. The first several days should be structured. There should be introductions to the staff and director. Some familiarity with office procedures should be provided the student. Orientation should be a learning experience in how to become acquainted with all new agencies.

2. Development of Professionalism:

The student needs to know how she/he is to be designated at the agency and how she/he is related to the work of the agency. She/He needs to have a recognized place there and understand the role of the others in the agency. This is the first step toward the development of a professional self.

Next is the development of a professional relationship with the supervisor. She/He needs to understand the nature of their relationship, the purpose and place of supervision, the time scheduled for her/his conferences, and her/his responsibility in making the supervisory experience as meaningful as possible. Confidentiality was learned in the classroom. It should be internalized in the field instruction through working with individuals, groups, and the community. Self-awareness and the conscious use of self should be a significant part of the developing professionalization of the student.

3. Interviewing:

Each student has studied and has experience in interviewing. The field instructor should add to this base by assisting the student to plan, conduct, and evaluate her/his interviews. Field instruction is an educational program and not an apprenticeship, so specific instruction in this area is essential.

4. Developing relationships:

The development of relationships is a fundamental part of generic social work and experiences should be planned to enhance this ability of the student. As the semester progresses, this experience should extend to experiences that develop professional relationships. The student should be helped to see what such a relationship entails, and that there is a need to demonstrate the beginning professional use of self.

5. Groups:

The student must have some awareness of the importance of groups and develop some skills in relating to them. The student needs to understand the principles of group dynamics and be able to apply these principles in practice.

6. Community Activities:

The student needs to understand the relationship of the agency to the total community. Identification of community social problems and other agencies working in the same field is a first step in accomplishing this objective. Attendance at community meetings and participation in

planning community change is desired wherever possible.

7. Obtaining information, analyzing situations, and working toward change:  
The students involved in field experience will have taken a variety of courses in the Social Work Program, including Social Welfare and Social Work Practice courses. The field experience should provide them with the opportunity to apply the generic concepts of social work. Reading cases and observing others is an excellent beginning, but the students will need to be involved in actual work with the clients. They need experience in obtaining information, analyzing situations, and planning change. It is essential that all students have experience in assessing and working through problems with individuals, groups, and the community.
8. Summaries, correspondence, and recordings:  
Every student should have experience in recording social work data, summarizing material, and writing letters.
9. Evaluation:  
The student should learn that evaluation and feedback are important in the field of social work. Self-evaluation is an important part of this evaluation process and should be a continuous process. The final evaluation of the student should be a recapitulation of previous developments.

## **THE STUDENT-AGENCY LEARNING AGREEMENT**

The Student-Agency Learning Agreement is an approach to learning in the field instruction program. The agreement is developed jointly by the student and the agency field instructor in the beginning weeks of the field placement and revised periodically. The faculty field instructor will assist the student in the actual writing of the learning agreement. The purposes are:

1. To facilitate a practice centered and diversified learning experience for the student that fits within the overall goals and programs of the agency.
2. To give the student an opportunity to participate in the planning of the field placement.
3. To ensure that the student understands the agency's expectations of the student.
4. To identify criteria for measuring progress.
5. To facilitate a practice-centered and diversified learning experience for the intern that fits within the overall goals and programs of the agency.
6. To give the intern the opportunity to participate in the planning of the field placement.
7. To ensure that the intern understands the agency's expectations of the student.
8. To identify criteria for measuring progress towards meeting established learning objectives.

### **Guidelines**

1. The agreement is flexible. It can be changed-or adapted as the student's learning opportunities change during the course of the field placement.

Example: It may be agreed that the student will plan and carry out a fund raising project for the agency. In the course of the field placement, circumstances make this impossible. The agreement, then, is accordingly revised or adapted.

2. The agreement begins with a description of the student's field assignment. This includes an identification of the range of learning opportunities available to the student. The information may be shared at the time of the initial interview.

Example: The student placed at the agency will have the opportunity to do intake, short-term counseling, crisis phone intervention, writing formal social reports, and editing a newsletter.

3. The second part of the agreement contains the student learning goals and the specific behavioral objectives the student chooses to do in coordination with the agency to achieve those goals. **The learning goals correspond to the objectives of SOWK 489/490** as they fit with the program goals of the agency, as well as the personal learning goals of the student.

Example: Learning goal - to learn more about human service agencies used by the field placement agency.

Behavioral Objectives: By specified date the student will be able to describe orally (or in writing) to the satisfaction of the field instructor the programs and services of five agencies used by the field placement agency.

### **Learning Agreement Format**

Each intern will develop a learning agreement around the given five goals. The agreement will contain (1) each goal, (2) several measurable, dated, behavioral written objectives for each goal, and (3) tasks for achieving the objectives. Each goal, accompanying objectives, and tasks and criteria should be typed on a separate page.

## **FIELD EVALUATION PROCESS**

Evaluations are an integral part of student learning. Ongoing evaluation of a student's progress in field is essential to analytical development and self growth. It is encouraged that each student undergoes continuous evaluation of their own professional skills and educational integration of coursework into the field setting. Therefore, a formal midterm and final evaluation process is to be done. Midterm and final evaluations are completed by both the student and the agency field instructor, on separate forms. This is an opportunity for the student and field instructor to engage in further dialogue as to the student's adjustment to the practicum setting, their emerging strengths, and any limitations or concerns regarding student's performance.



The staff of Student Counseling Services knows the importance of being able to sit down and share your innermost concerns with a professional counselor in a confidential setting. All currently enrolled Radford University undergraduate and graduate students are eligible for counseling services at the Student Counseling Services free of charge. For more information, visit the Student Counseling Services website at: <http://www.radford.edu/~ccsd-web/#A>

### **The Office of Substance Abuse and Sexual Assault Education**

The Office of Substance Abuse and Sexual Assault Education is dedicated to increasing knowledge and awareness of substance abuse, sexual assault, and other student health issues as well as decreasing the negative consequences associated with high risk alcohol & other drug use and sexual assault. The Substance Abuse and Sexual Assault Education Office provides the following services:

**Educational Resources** on the topics of Substance Abuse, Sexual Assault, Dating Violence, and other student health issues.

**RU Aware Program:** An educational class for the RU Drug & Alcohol policy violators.

**Counseling** for students dealing with issues surrounding sexual and dating violence and/or substance abuse.

**Advocacy and support** for sexual assault victims.

**Consultations** for students, parents, faculty and staff.

**Presentations and Trainings** for the RU community on substance abuse and sexual assault issues.

**Peer Educators:** A student group dedicated to raising awareness about student health issues that sponsors campus wide awareness events and educational programs for residence halls and other organizations. The SASAE office advises and supports the students in Peer Educators.

The phone number is 831-5709; the website is: <http://www.radford.edu/~sasae/> and email address is: [sasae@radford.edu](mailto:sasae@radford.edu)

### **Faculty office hours**

Faculty are in their offices for set hours during the week. These hours are posted outside their office doors and are also provided on their course syllabi for that semester. When student schedules conflict with faculty office hours, students should contact the faculty member to arrange other meeting times.

## **VI. Student Rights & Responsibilities**

### **Professional and Ethical Standards**

#### RU Honor Code

The Radford University Honor System provides the foundation for a university community in which freedom, trust, and respect can prevail. In accepting admission to Radford University, each student makes a commitment to support and uphold the Honor System without compromise or exception. The students of Radford University believe that individuals have the right to compete fairly, to keep what they have earned, and to have others accept their word without question. Individuals have the responsibility to be honorable in their own conduct and to insist other students act honorably.

Lying, cheating, and stealing are considered to be acts of dishonor, and will, therefore, cause a student to be subject to temporary or permanent suspension from the university community. Students who commit an honor violation or any members of the Radford University community who have knowledge that a student has committed an honor violation are expected to comply with the reporting procedures.

The Honor Code: I do hereby resolve to uphold the Honor Code of Radford University by refraining from lying, from stealing or unauthorized possession of property, and from violating the Standards of Student Academic Integrity. [www.radford.edu/~dos-bzuti/honorcode.htm-2k](http://www.radford.edu/~dos-bzuti/honorcode.htm-2k) [www.radford.edu/~dos-web/pledge.htm-13k](http://www.radford.edu/~dos-web/pledge.htm-13k)

Students should also familiarize themselves with the Standards of Student Conduct, available from the Dean of Students Office or on the web at [www.radford.edu/~dos-web/](http://www.radford.edu/~dos-web/).

As students in the Waldron College, students also need to be aware of the *Waldron College Standard for Professional Practice Education*. This document sets out Standards for Professional Practice Education that apply to students enrolled in the Waldron College of Health and Human Services at Radford University involving the health, welfare, and safety of people across the lifespan. The Waldron College has distinct expectations of students that are in addition to those outlined in the Radford University Student Handbook. These standards are linked to students' abilities to become effective health and human service professionals and are provided so that students can be clear about expectations and procedures to address practice performance. The ultimate goal of the standards is to help students become successful health and human service professionals.

All students will be expected to read the Waldron College standards. Students will be asked to sign an acknowledgement verifying their intent to abide by these standards. The form will be kept in the student's file. The Code is found at: [www.radford.edu/~wchs-adv/manuals/Standard%20of%20Professional%20Practice.pdf](http://www.radford.edu/~wchs-adv/manuals/Standard%20of%20Professional%20Practice.pdf) The Standards for professional practice cover communication as well as interpersonal, cognitive, physical, and professional performance skills. Also covered is an overview of emotional and mental abilities necessary for professional practice. These include stress management and emotional and mental capabilities. Professional commitment, professional behavior, self awareness, and ethical obligations are covered. Finally, the sources of evidence are provided, followed by the accommodations for disabilities.

Persons who teach and supervise students, along with program coordinators, assess student academic performance and apply their professional judgment to determine if standards are being met during a student's educational career. Professional judgment is the capacity to assess a situation by applying the values and knowledge of related professionals, combined with a professional's own experience and practice wisdom. It also represents the application of knowledge, values, and skills to make decisions in an ethical and competent manner.

### NASW Code of Ethics

#### *Preamble*

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. A historic and defining feature of social work is the profession's focus on individual well-being in a social context and the well-being of society. Fundamental to social work is attention to the environmental forces that create, contribute to, and address problems in living.

Social workers promote social [and economic] justice and social change with and on behalf of clients. "Clients" is used inclusively to refer to individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are sensitive to cultural and ethnic diversity and strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice. These activities may be in the form of direct practice, community organizing, supervision, consultation, administration, advocacy, social and political action, policy development and implementation, education, and research and evaluation. Social workers seek to enhance the capacity of people to address their own needs. Social workers also seek to promote the responsiveness of organizations, communities, and other social institutions to individuals' needs and social problems.

The mission of the social work profession is rooted in a set of core values. These core values, embraced by social workers throughout the profession's history, are the foundation of social work's unique purpose and perspective and include service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity,

and competence. This constellation of core values reflects what is unique to the social work profession. Core values, and the principles that flow from them, must be balanced within the context and complexity of the human experience. The NASW Code of Ethics is found at: <http://www.naswdc.org/pubs/code/code.asp>

### **Remediation and Suspension/Dismissal from the Program**

When a faculty member or field instructor observes or is notified of academic or professional performance problems, s/he will discuss the issues with the student in question. If the issues are not severe in nature and are believed to be easily corrected, she/he will contact the student's advisor who will meet with the student to review the concerns. Together, they will devise a *written plan* of remediation which will be signed by the student, the advisor, and the faculty member or field supervisor. The concerns and a copy of the remediation plan will be communicated to the BSW Coordinator immediately. If it is related to the internship, the Field Coordinator will also be notified at this point.

Official processes, possibly leading to dismissal from the program will be initiated if a remediation plan is developed and not completed successfully. The BSW Coordinator will begin formal review processes. For VWCC students, the Roanoke Site Coordinator will work with the BSW Coordinator. GPA concerns will be monitored by the coordinator who will keep the advisor informed. The advisor, and possibly the BSW Coordinator, will meet with the student about the concerns and policies.

An undergraduate student shall be placed on academic probation or possibly terminated from the BSW Program and/or Radford University if one or more of the following occurs:

- (1) having a cumulative GPA below a 2.5;
- (2) Failure to pass a required social work course after two attempts
- (3) Failure to adhere to the Radford University Honor Code;
- (4) Failure to adhere to the Waldron College Standards for Professional Practice;
- 5) Failure to adhere to the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics; or
- (6) Failure to comply with the Standards of Student Conduct.

If the student whose performance has resulted in termination believes extenuating circumstances exist which might justify reinstatement, he/she may request in writing, that the BSW Coordinator consider these circumstances. The BSW Coordinator *may* convene a committee to review the request; the BSW Coordinator will choose the members of the committee. The decision is final.

Requests for reinstatement shall be made no later than three *classroom days* after the commencement of classes in the next semester following termination or suspension.

### **Copyright**

For guidance on copyright issues, please refer to the Library's website:  
<http://www.radford.edu/~libr-web/copyright.html>.

### **Class Attendance**

Students are expected to attend all classes.

### **Inclement Weather Policy**

Students should check with the University switchboard (831-5000) to see whether classes have been delayed or cancelled. If the University opens late, students are still required to attend the remainder of a class that began before the university opened. (For example, if the class is 9 am – 11 am and the University opens at 10 am, students must attend the class from 10 am – 11 am.)

### **Policy regarding eating/drinking in classrooms**

Most social work classes on the Radford campus are held in Waldron Hall and on the Roanoke extended campus at the Thomas Center or the Roanoke Higher Education Center. These classrooms contain technology that may be affected by liquid and foreign matter. Therefore, students are discouraged from eating or drinking in classrooms.

### **Instructor/Course evaluations**

Students have the opportunity and responsibility in each class to evaluate the class and the instructor. In addition, information from students is gathered periodically through surveys, focus groups, and student interviews. The purpose of this information is to provide data for program evaluation and to determine if students are really meeting the student objectives of the program. The focus of this effort is formative and helps determine areas of strength and those in need of improvement.

### **Textbooks**

Textbooks required for each class are listed on each course's syllabus. Texts may be purchased through the Radford University bookstore. Other sources include off-campus bookstores and online sites, like [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).

### **Job Placement Assistance**

The Office of Experiential Learning and Career Development provides assistance with vocational assessments and career searches. Further information may be found at their web site: <http://www.radford.edu/~celcd/>. Faculty in the School of Social Work can also provide vocational advice.

## **VII. Curriculum**

### **Introduction**

The BSW program is offered through two sites: (1) at the Radford University campus and (2) the Radford University extended campus located at Virginia Western Community College in Roanoke, Virginia. Program options at both sites are similar in structure. The Council on Social Work Education has accredited both sites. . The basic BSW program is available at either site although course scheduling, and some policies and procedures differ depending on the site. Each major must choose one program, from which to be admitted and graduate, and must follow the policies and procedures for that specific site. Courses may be taken at either campus as arranged with a student's advisor. The social work program on the Radford campus offers a full- time option to students while the Roanoke extended campus offers a 2 year full-time evening or a 3 year part-time evening program designed to accommodate working individuals.

## **Requirements**

Students majoring in social work participate in a minimum of 610 hours of direct practice in an actual human service agency. This is considered the highlight of the program and occurs through two internships under the supervision of a trained professional social worker. The first internship opportunity occurs during the pre-social work phase usually in the sophomore year through a ten-hour-per-week placement for a minimum of 120 hours, and the second during the professional social work phase for thirty-five hours per week, plus a three-hour weekly seminar (38 hours total), for an entire semester during the senior year for a minimum of 490 hours.

All undergraduate social work majors take the same basic course work, called a generalist concentration, which prepares them for entry level practice in any setting. Required courses include human behavior and the social environment, social welfare policies and services, research, counseling interventive methods, and field instruction and internships. Students also have the option of taking one or more elective courses in child welfare, crisis intervention, international social welfare practice, gerontology, and conflict mediation to prepare them for special areas of interest. Students are required to take a minimum of 120 credit hours to graduate, of which 50 credit hours are General Education courses, 57 credit hours are Social Work base courses and 13-15 credit hours are elective courses.

The following listing provides courses that constitute the curriculum plan of the BSW major at Radford University. **Note: No academic credit is awarded for life experience, either before or during a student's pursuit of a degree.**

### **Curriculum Plan**

#### General Education Courses

CORE 101

CORE 102

CORE 201

CORE 202  
BIOL 103 (Environmental Biology) **or** BIOL 105 (Concepts of Biology)  
BIOL 104 (Human Biology)  
MATH 114  
SOCY 121/ANTH 121 (Cultural anthropology)  
PHIL 111, 112, 113, **or** 114  
PSYC 121 (Introductory Psychology)  
ECON 101 (Survey of Economics), 105, 106 (Principles of Economics), **or** POSC 110 (Introduction to Politics)  
STAT 200

#### Base Courses

PSY 361 Psychology of Personality **or** PSY 343 Social Psychology  
PSY 439 Abnormal Psychology  
PSY 250 (Psychology of Diversity), SOC 250 (Social Inequality), **or** SOC 331 (Minority Groups)

#### Pre-professional Social Work Courses

SOWK 200 Introduction to Professional Practice – Introduction to the various fields and issues related to the helping professions; focuses on the academic, legal, and professional requirements, culture, knowledge base, ethical issues and history of the helping professions.

SOWK 210 Interventive Methods I – Introduces the theories, concepts, and basic skills involved in helping persons in the delivery of human services. Emphasizes interviewing and problem-solving skills. (pre- or co-requisite: SOWK 200)

SOWK 289 Pre-professional Field Instruction – Students are placed in a human service agency for 10 hours per week. They intern in an observational and assisting manner with practicing human service professionals. Students attend required integrated seminars. (prerequisite: SOWK 210)

SOWK 309 Introduction to Social Work Perspectives (**Roanoke only**)- Designed to prepare Roanoke students for successful admission to, progression through, participation in, and graduation from the BSW program

SOWK 317 Generalist Issues and Practice (**Roanoke only**)- Introduces undergraduate students to the distinctive attributes of professional social work practice

#### Professional Social Work Courses

SOWK 300 Human Behavior and the Social Environment I – Provides an overview of social and behavior science theory influencing

- understanding of human behavior and the social environment. Special emphasis on understanding individuals and families. (Prerequisite: Psych 121, Socy 110, Anth 121, Eng 101, Eng 102, Bio 104; Admission to SOWK *major* )
- SOWK 301 Human Behavior and the Social Environment II – Builds upon theories drawn from the social and behavioral sciences to further our understanding of the human condition. Special emphasis on collectivities (groups, communities and organizations). (Prerequisite Psych 121, Socy 110, Socy 121/Anth 121, four University CORE courses, Bio 104; Admission to the SOWK Major; Co-requisite SOWK 300)
- SOWK 320 History of Social Welfare – Reviews the historical development of social work as a profession and social welfare as an institution in western civilization with a focus on post-13<sup>th</sup> century developments. Emphasis is placed on a developmental lifespan approach. (prerequisite: Hist 112, Econ or POSC 120 ; admission to SOWK major)
- SOWK 321 The Foundations of Social Policy – Provides students with a conceptual framework for analyzing social policy and its impact on the development of human service programs. (prerequisite: SOWK 320)
- SOWK 350 Social Work Research – Introduction to basic methods and techniques used in social work research. Emphasis is placed on common procedures utilized in social work research, particularly as they apply to social work policy and practice. (prerequisite: Eng 101, Eng 102, and STAT 200; admission to SOWK major)
- SOWK 422 Interventive Methods II (Ind/Fam) – Integrates the student’s knowledge base in human behavior in the social environment with specific skills needed to work with individuals, couples, and families. Students gain both theoretical and experiential knowledge. (prerequisite: Psych 121, Socy 110, Anth 121, Phil, Comm 114 , SOWK 301, admission to SOWK major)
- SOWK 423 Interventive Methods III (Groups) – Integrates the student’s knowledge base in human behavior in the social environment with specific skills needed in working with groups. Both theoretical material and a “hands on” experience in working with groups are included in this course. (admission to SOWK major, SOWK 300,)
- SOWK 424 Interventive Methods IV (Org Skills) – Integrates the student’s knowledge base in human behavior in the social environment with specific skills needed in working with neighborhoods, communities, agencies, and institutions. Both conceptual frameworks and experience in working with large groups are included. (admission to SOWK major; SOWK 301)
- SOWK 489 Field Instruction Placement – Provides block field



placement involving one semester of practice social work in a human service agency or institution with trained supervision. Graded pass/fail. Admission to field is based on: student has maintained a 2.5 overall GPA, and 2.7 in social work courses, has completed all required social work courses, all other required courses, satisfactorily completed the final portfolio, satisfactorily completed a readiness for field review and has obtained the approval of the BSW Curriculum Coordinator. Student must provide transportation to and from field sites

SOWK 490 Integrative Seminar - Focuses upon the major elements of social work practice: assessment, intervention, policy implications, ethical imperatives, and evaluation. Taken concurrently with the internship and through a series of assignments, the student tests the content of social work practice with experiences in field agencies. Additional resources and fees are required. (co requisite: concurrent enrollment in SOWK 489)

### **Independent Study**

Independent Study courses are offered by several departments and are designed to permit students to independently investigate specific problems or areas of interest under the direction of a faculty adviser. An Independent Study course must be approved by BSW coordinator, the BSW Curriculum Committee, and the Director prior to the deadline for adding courses in the term in which the study is to be undertaken. A complete and detailed program proposal must be submitted by the student. Independent Study courses may be taken either on a pass/fail basis or for a letter grade. No student may apply more than six hours of credit for Independent Study toward graduation requirements.

A faculty member may offer a maximum of six credit hours of Independent Study per semester.

Required courses are not approved for independent study.

### **Course Repeat Policy**

A student may repeat required Social Work courses only two times. If the student is unable to pass a required social work course after the second attempt, the student will be dismissed from the program. A passing grade is a "C".

### **Admission to Social Work Major**

Applicants must meet the following criteria for admission into the Social Work major from pre-Social Work:

1. Have a minimum overall GPA of 2.5; have passed with a "C" or better in each of the following courses: SOWK 200, SOWK 210, BIOL 104, PSYC 121, SOCY 110, ENG 102, and ANTH 121.
2. Have received a "P" in SOWK 289 or 309 in Roanoke or if applying while concurrently in that course, have received a mid-term evaluation of "P." Students who apply while in SOWK 289 (309) will receive a provisional acceptance if all other academic requirements are met until they complete SOWK 289 (309) with a grade of "P."
3. A completed application to the major in Social Work (available from the School of Social Work office (room 206 Waldron Hall) or online at <http://www.radford.edu/~sowk-web/bsw-applmajor.htm> with accompanying prerequisite documentation. This documentation includes the student's completed portfolio. This must be submitted to the School of Social Work by the application deadline which is typically in the sixth week of the semester. Applications for admission are reviewed in the fall and in the spring semesters.
4. As part of the admissions process, interviews are conducted by the School of Social Work Undergraduate Committee to determine acceptance into the major.

Students transferring from a Community College with which Radford University has an articulation agreement are still required to take SOWK 289 (SOWK 309 in Roanoke), apply to, and be accepted into the major before taking upper level courses.

### **The Portfolio**

An educational portfolio is a picture of what the student has learned and accomplished throughout his/her academic career. It is compiled of graded written assignments, tests and other creative works that are relative to the field of social work. The Portfolio allows the student to physically take all of their knowledge with him/her when they leave Radford. The goal is to make the student actively responsible for and aware of his/her learning process. The Portfolio provides a structure for the student to monitor and assess their growth and development, personally, professionally and academically. It should make the student more aware of him/her self, and his/her environment.

The Portfolio is divided into **three** sections.

- **Section I** is made up of the student's application, resume, letters of reference, and cover letter.
- **Section II** contains the student's plan of study developed by the student and the academic advisor in the School of Social Work. This is a written plan of ALL the

classes the student has taken and will take in order to meet the BSW requirements. The plan of Study must be signed by the advisor.

- **Section III** is divided into the following eight categories: Human Behavior in the Social Environment, Social Welfare Policy and Services, Research, Social Work Practice, Field Instruction, Social Work Values and Issues, Social and Economic Justice and Populations-at-risk, and Diversity. These are the major areas that the Council for Social Work Education established as being vital to the social worker. Everything that the student puts in this section of the Portfolio requires a 1-2 paragraph reflection explaining why this work is included in that particular subsection.

The portfolio should be kept in a 3-ring binder. It should include title pages and a table of contents. Each paper and the reflection should be placed in a clear plastic report cover.

### **Portfolio Information Process**

All students will be introduced to and reminded of the Portfolio in SOWK 200, 210 and 289 or SOK 309 and 317 (VWCC). Time is spent in SOWK 289/309 to help the student build the portfolio. During this time the course instructor will go over the Portfolio requirements and expectations. In the beginning of every semester in all social work classes, the instructor will remind students of the Portfolio. They will also discuss where any papers that the student will write in that particular course can be placed in the Portfolio. If, at any time, the student has any questions about the Portfolio, they are to ask their advisor, professors or the undergraduate coordinator.

The portfolio is then updated by the student and submitted to his or her major advisor in the semester before enrollment in the senior field experience (SOWK 489). The advisor will evaluate the portfolio and it must be deemed passing for the student to enter into the senior field experience. Below are the specific requirements and evaluative criteria for the portfolio.

## **Radford University School of Social Work Portfolio Requirements and Evaluation Criteria**

### **Section I**

#### **Resume and Other Related Materials**

Required for application to the SOWK major and SOWK 489

Official application

Resume:

- Resume should be in proper format and on quality paper
- Include only current and relevant information

- Presentable and ready to give to a prospective employer
- May be completed with the help of Loretta Criner from the RU Career Services Center. (phone 540-831- 5374)
- The school of Social Work will offer a resume workshop as part of SOWK 210. It will take place early in the semester so that the student can have their resume completed on time. A second resume workshop will be offered to students before they apply to SOWK 489 so that their resume can be properly updated.

#### Letters of reference

- Must be submitted unopened in an envelop with a signature by the referring source across the flap

### **Section II Plan of Study**

Required for application to the SOWK major and SOWK 489

- Completed with and signed by the student's advisor, provide the most recent plan in your portfolio
- Complete and current – update the plan of study each semester (if applicable)

### **Section III Knowledge and Skills for the Generalist Practice of Social Work**

\*\*\*This section requires that the student write a reflection piece (typically 1-2 paragraphs) stating why he/she chose to put this particular work in this section of their portfolio.

\*\*\*The student can include graded works from ALL of their classes, not just social work classes.

\*\*\*If the student does not have enough academic works to include in their portfolio, he/she can do work on their own. This can include writing a short reflection on a magazine, journal or newspaper article. The student can also include handouts from conferences they have attended or speakers they have seen.

### Human Behavior in the Social Environment

- § (Required for application to the SOWK major and SOWK 489)  
Include information about which theories the student prefers and some justification for their choice. This information can come from courses in social work, biology, psychology, sociology, etc.
- § (Required for application to SOWK 489)  
Demonstrate that the student is able to apply at least one theory to an event, meeting, interview, or observation of a real life event

### Social Welfare Policy and Services

- § (Required for application to the SOWK major and SOWK 489) Demonstrate knowledge of the relationships between various sectors of society and how they develop. This can come from courses in political science, economics, etc.
- § (Required for application to SOWK 489)  
Show that the student has a knowledge of and respect for the history of social work as a profession and policy analysis

### Research

- § (Required for application to SOWK 489)  
Demonstrate proper use of research questions and research methods  
Demonstrate ability to analyze findings and draw conclusions  
Demonstrate an understanding of the ethics of conducting research

### Social Work Practice

- § (Required for application to the SOWK major and SOWK 489) Include a process and summary recording
- § (Required for application to SOWK 489)  
Include a self assessment, genogram, and a family bio-psycho-social assessment (if available)

### Field Instruction

- § (Required for application to the SOWK major and SOWK 489)  
Include a learning agreement. It is to be completed and signed by the student, field liaison and field supervisor.  
Include the mission statement, goals, programs and activities of the agency in which the placement occurred.

### Social Work Values and Ethics

- § (Required for application to the SOWK major and SOWK 489)  
Include the NASW Code of Ethics and the student's personal response to the Code

May include the student's *Life Book* project (or other product if student has not done a Life Book project)  
Demonstrate any other areas in which the student has strong personal values or beliefs

#### Social and Economic Justice and Populations-at-risk

- § (Required for application to the SOWK major and SOWK 489)
- Provide information demonstrating what areas of social and economic injustice are most important to the student and why
  - Include information about the population(s) that the student is most interested in working with and why
  - Include information about the population(s) the student has difficulty working with and why
  - Explain what areas of social work promote justice and how they do so
  - Include information on various forms of oppression
  - Include information about any other populations with which the student has worked

#### Diversity

- § (Required for application to the SOWK major and SOWK 489)
- Demonstrate that the student has gained knowledge and understanding of various cultural and demographic groups other than their own

#### **Transfer Students**

The Mental Health Technology program at VWCC and the program at New River Community College are the only programs having a programmatic articulation agreement with the School of Social Work. Students who have graduated with an Associate's degree from a Virginia Community College have met the general education requirements of Radford University. Other students who transfer from other four-year institutions or from community or technical colleges outside of Virginia should have their transcripts evaluated by the Registrar's Office to determine course equivalencies and remaining requirements.

#### **VIII. Student Organizations**

Social work majors have the opportunity to participate in five social work organizations on either campus.

□ Phi Alpha is the National Social Work Honor Society and its membership is comprised of those social work students who have achieved and maintained academic distinction. The chapter is a student-run organization. Membership is open to all social work majors.

- The Social Work Club sponsors activities such as social events, community service projects, and various academic committees within the School of Social Work.
- Two student advisory councils, one in Radford and one in Roanoke, interact with school faculty to address issues of concern related to the social work educational experience. Representatives of the student body participate in the School of Social Work official academic meetings.
- A National Association of Black Social Workers student chapter is available for students of color.
- The Radford University National Association of Social Workers (NASW) student chapter provides social work students an opportunity to become active in the profession's leading organization. Members are afforded an opportunity to enhance their knowledge over issues impacting the profession, attend specialized training workshops at discounted rate, and network with professionals in the field. Students participating in the student chapter are encouraged to join NASW, which offers a special student rate. Membership applications may be obtained at the school.

## **IX. FINANCIAL AID OPPORTUNITIES**

**School of Social Work** (540-831-7689) [www.radford.edu/~finaid](http://www.radford.edu/~finaid)

- **Child Welfare Educational Stipend**  
Stipend is for students interested in working in public child welfare. The child welfare stipend recipient must work 9 months in child welfare for a Virginia DSS for every year stipend is received (stipend is \$8,000/year). There are some additional requirements for stipend students (see stipend brochure for additional information).

### **Student Loans**

- **Federal Perkins Loan**  
Funded by federal government but is administered directly by Radford University.
- **Federal Stafford Student Loan**

### **Work Programs**

- **Federal Work-Study Program**  
Federal program provides part-time jobs on campus for students with financial need as determined by the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
- For financial aid information for international students, please visit the financial aid website at: <http://www.radford.edu/~finaid/intg.html>

For additional information about financial aid opportunities visit the financial aid website at: <http://www.radford.edu/~finaid/grprog.html> or call the financial aid office at 540-831-5408.



## **X. Professional Organizations**

Association for the Advancement of Social Work with Groups <http://www.aaswg.org/>

Institute for the Advancement of Social Work Research <http://www.iaswresearch.org/>

International Federation of Social Workers <http://www.ifsw.org/>

Latino Social Workers Organization <http://www.lsw.org/>

The National Association of Black Social Workers  
<http://www.nabsw.org/mserver/Default.aspx>

National Association of Social Workers <http://www.naswdc.org/>

Rural Social Work Caucus <http://www.uncp.edu/sw/rural>

School Social Work Association of America <http://www.sswaa.org/>

The Society for Social Work and Research <http://www.sswr.org/>

Virginia Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers  
<http://www.naswva.org/>

### **Social Work Related Web Sites**

[Virginia Board of Social Work](http://www.dhp.state.va.us/social/default.htm) <http://www.dhp.state.va.us/social/default.htm>

[Council on Social Work Education](http://www.cswe.org/) <http://www.cswe.org/> , nonprofit national association recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation as the sole accrediting agency for social work education in the US.

[New Social Worker](http://www.socialworker.com/home/index.php) <http://www.socialworker.com/home/index.php> , a magazine for students and new graduates

[Social Work Search](http://www.socialworksearch.com/) <http://www.socialworksearch.com/>, a search engine devoted to social workers and other helping professionals.

[World Wide Web Resources for Social Workers](http://www.nyu.edu/socialwork/ip/) <http://www.nyu.edu/socialwork/ip/>, from New York University's School of Social Work.

