

West Chester University
Graduate Social Work Department
SWG 599: Specialized Field Practicum II
Syllabus

Course Instructor (Faculty Field Liaison)

Credit Hours: 3 Graduate Credit Hours

Department Mission Statement

Our mission is to prepare multiculturally responsive social workers to employ innovative methods of practice that promote the well-being of individuals, families and communities. We equip students to practice from a social justice perspective grounded in the realization of human rights.

MSW Program Goals

- Provide a quality Master of Social Work Program in accord with the standards of the Council on Social Work Education and the PA State System of Higher Education.
- Prepare graduates to practice competently and ethically in promoting well-being among multiculturally diverse individuals, families and communities
- Prepare graduates to consistently engage advocacy, policy and research skills in responding to ever-changing social and political settings.
- Prepare graduates to practice rights-based social work that promotes social and economic justice.

MSW Program Specialization

Advanced Practice with Individuals, Families, and Communities is an approach to social work that addresses well-being from a trauma-informed, recovery perspective grounded in human rights. Focusing on human rights as the key to social justice and sustainable wellness, practitioners regularly engage advocacy, policy and research. Our unique, simulation-based curriculum provides students opportunities to demonstrate competency in utilizing this approach as they prepare to respond to complex and contemporary issues in a range of interprofessional settings.

Student Learning Outcomes: Program

The WCU Graduate Social Work Department uses a competency-based, outcome performance approach to its curriculum consistent with the Educational and Policy Accreditation Standards (EPAS) of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE, 2015). Students take 30 credits of generalist content designed to offer opportunities to develop and demonstrate competency in nine core areas and 30 credits of specialized content specific to our MSW Program's Specialization: *Advanced Practice with Individuals, Families and Communities*. Course content across the curriculum is designed to provide students the knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive/affective processes needed to advance our department vision of preparing social work professionals who facilitate transformative social change.

Course Description

SWG 598 and SWG 599 are the first of two Specialized field practicum courses, each consisting of a structured field experience at an assigned practicum site for 18 hours per week during the academic semester. (For the academic year 2020-2021, Specialized students are only required to complete 16 hours per week to accommodate complications related to Covid.) Included in the 18 hours is a

mandatory 60-minute individual supervisory session with an approved Field Instructor, as well as at least 30 minutes of additional supervisory time in group or other settings. SWG 598 is taken concurrently with the corequisite, *SWG561: Specialized Practice I* and SWG 599 is taken concurrently with the corequisite, *SWG563: Integrated Seminar*.

During the Specialization Year of the curriculum, students take three concurrent practice courses in the fall semester: Specialized Practice with Individuals, Specialized Practice with Families, and Specialized Practice with Communities. This content is synthesized in an Integrative Seminar in the spring semester.

Student Learning Outcomes: Course

Students in this Specialized course will be expected to demonstrate competency in the following nine competency areas as evaluated by observable behaviors related to each:

Specialized Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Social workers are expected to recognize ethical and professional tensions apparent in practice, policy, and research scenarios by synthesizing the social work values presented in the NASW Code of Ethics. In the service of social justice through the realization of human rights for individuals, families, and communities, social workers will discern competing factors contained in ethical dilemmas and flexibly apply ethical frameworks for problem solving in such cases. Social workers will display and model consistent professional behavior in appearance, and in oral, written, and electronic communication. Social workers will be clear about their role and function while respecting and understanding the collaborative role of other professionals. Finally, social workers will model reflection and self-regulation of their personal values and maintain professionalism always.

Expected Specialized Practice Behaviors

1. Student identifies and resolves ethical dilemmas in practice with individuals, families and communities in ways that promote social justice and the realization of human rights.
2. Student conducts themselves professionally and ethically in communication and demeanor.
3. Student develops and maintains a professional social work role in interactions and collaborations with interprofessional team members and other practitioners.
4. Student uses supervision and consultation to ensure accountability and responsiveness to the dynamic, changing contexts of social work practice and policy environments.

Specialized Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

Social workers will demonstrate a nuanced understanding of dimensions of multicultural diversity and intersectionality when speaking about, writing about, and engaging with individuals, families, and communities. Social workers will extend their knowledge of the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination by presenting as learners and engaging clients and constituencies as experts of their own experience. Social workers will adopt a recovery, resiliency, and capacity building framework when collaborating with individuals, families, and communities to promote wellbeing from a social justice perspective grounded in the realization of human rights.

Expected Specialized Practice Behaviors

1. Student extends their knowledge of the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination by presenting as learners and engaging clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences.
2. Student engages in anti-oppressive practice by identifying and suggesting ways to eliminate organizational or program activities that explicitly or implicitly reflect institutional racism, sexism, gender bias, disability bias, and/or other forms of bias/discrimination.
3. Student actively engages in multiculturally inclusive practice, assessment, intervention and evaluation strategies.

Specialized Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Human rights-based practice is a social work imperative. In pursuit of social justice and the realization of human rights, social workers will consider historical context and a trauma-informed perspective while critically assessing and mediating the ongoing effects of structural barriers on individuals, families, and communities. By practicing cultural humility and consistently applying a human rights lens to micro, mezzo, and macro efforts in interprofessional settings, social workers collaborate with and empower others to advocate for social, economic, and environmental justice on behalf of individuals, families, and communities.

Expected Specialized Practice Behaviors

1. Student uses cultural humility to learn from and educate individuals, families, and communities about the ongoing effects of structural barriers.
2. Student evaluates and critically analyzes organizational or legislative policies, funding mechanisms, and/or programs using a focus on human rights and social justice.
3. Student seeks out opportunities to observe and/or engage with major stakeholders or advocacy groups relevant to the promotion of human rights and social justice for the populations served by the agency.

Specialized Competency 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice

Social workers understand qualitative and quantitative research methods for evaluating practice and improving services to individuals, families, and communities. Social workers seek out and prioritize stakeholder input and theory to inform research design and scientific inquiry. Social workers recognize the role of research and evaluation in advancing the knowledge base of clients, practitioners, organizations, and policymakers. Social workers consistently interpret and use culturally relevant research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery that advances the realization of human rights and social justice.

Expected Specialized Practice Behaviors

1. Student translates research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery with individuals, families, and communities.
2. Student seeks and prioritizes stakeholder input to inform practice and research.
3. Student collects, organizes, analyzes, interprets, and/or disseminates data informing practice decisions or evaluating program processes or outcomes.

Specialized Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

Social workers represent, mobilize, and empower disenfranchised populations of individuals, families, and communities to have a voice and advocate in support or opposition to local, state,

national, and international policies. They promote the realization of human rights and social justice through engagement in individual and/or collective advocacy efforts. Social workers lead in developing and sustaining interprofessional collaborations to address complex and contemporary issues facing individuals, families, and communities. They synthesize ecological influences impacting social welfare policy relevant to the community, thus, creating a platform for policy change at micro, mezzo, and macro levels. They promote social transformation by fostering individual and collective problem solving, and by critically identifying and applying community organization methods in practice.

Expected Specialized Practice Behaviors

1. Student analyzes and advocates for policies and procedures that empower and enhance dignity for individuals, families, and communities consistent with the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
2. Student seeks out opportunities to engage in collective problem-solving with interprofessional stakeholders and communities to address complex issues.
3. Student represents, mobilizes, and empowers disenfranchised populations of individuals, families, and communities to have a voice and advocate in support or opposition to local, state, national, and/or international policies.

Specialized Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, and Communities

Social workers cultivate collaborative helping alliances across client systems drawing on theory and evidence to inform engagement. Utilizing an ecological perspective, social workers will build on generalist skills of empathy and reflection to engage multiculturally diverse individuals, families, and communities by employing knowledge of relationship dynamics and power differentials. Social workers will engage effectively with interprofessional groups, teams, and organizations to promote human rights and social justice in an ever-changing social and political context.

Expected Specialized Practice Behaviors

1. Student works collaboratively with multiculturally diverse individuals, families, and communities and interprofessional teams to establish goals and outcomes.
2. Student seeks out opportunities to engage in dialogues with stakeholders and other relevant members of the varied communities to promote inclusive practices that empower and respond to the needs of individuals, families, and communities.
3. Student applies an intersectional analysis of dynamics of power and privilege to engagement with vulnerable individuals, families, and communities.

Specialized Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, and Communities

Social workers will augment their assessment skill repertoire with additional culturally relevant evidence-based practices consonant with social work values, including those that are ecological, trauma-informed, and use a recovery approach. These specialized assessment methods incorporate interprofessional collaboration to address complex situations faced by multiculturally diverse clients who, often times, have had their human rights violated.

Expected Specialized Practice Behaviors

1. Student uses an ecological, trauma-informed, and recovery-focused perspective to inform the conceptualization of the needs and strengths of individuals, families, and communities.

2. Student assesses readiness for change from an ecological and multiculturally diverse perspective in practice with individuals, families, or communities and plans intervention strategies accordingly.
3. Student collects, organizes, and interprets data relevant to individual, family, or community systems to develop mutually agreed upon intervention plans and goals.

Specialized Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, and Communities

Effective interventions with clients and constituencies requires a sensitivity to readiness for change and a depth of knowledge about the range of best practice and evidence-informed interventions applicable for individuals, families, and communities. Social workers understand theories of trauma and recovery relative to individual, family, and community functioning, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to effectively intervene with client systems. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing, and implementing evidence-informed interventions to achieve goals in micro, mezzo, and macro practice. Above all, social workers value the importance of collaboration in interventions, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may require multi-level and interprofessional collaboration along with client feedback to advance social justice and realize human rights.

Expected Specialized Practice Behaviors

1. Student implements client-centered interventions that enhance resiliency, support recovery, and build capacity with individuals, families, and communities.
2. Student adapts interventions to account for the unique ecosystemic context of individuals, families, and communities.
3. Student takes a proactive approach to intervention strategies, working collaboratively to build client or community capacity to develop, implement, and sustain their own solutions to problems.

Specialized Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, and Communities

With evaluation being a critical aspect in the delivery of social services, social workers will competently evaluate their evidence-based social work practice and promote professional accountability. This, in turn, advances practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social worker's participation on interprofessional teams will utilize multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to create and implement evaluation plans to monitor processes and assess outcomes for individuals, families, and communities. Social workers also recognize the importance of dissemination of practice evaluations through professional venues to advance the realization of human rights and social justice.

Expected Specialized Practice Behaviors

1. Student uses supervision to evaluate own practice effectiveness and the effectiveness of intervention strategies used in practice.
2. Student applies culturally relevant theories of human behavior and stakeholder input to guide evaluation of practice with individuals, families, and communities.
3. Student analyzes, monitors, and evaluates interventions and program processes and outcomes.

Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

The following assignments have been designed to assess students learning outcomes in this course.

Assignment	Course Outcomes/ Competencies Measured	% of Grade
<i>Learning Agreement</i>	Specialized Competency 1	10
<i>Professional Self-Reflection</i>	Specialized Competency 1	15
<i>Participation in SWG561 Classroom Discussions about Field</i>	Specialized Competency 1 Specialized Competency 2 Specialized Competency 7 Specialized Competency 9	15
<i>Mid-Semester Evaluation</i>	Specialized Competency 1 Specialized Competency 2 Specialized Competency 3 Specialized Competency 4 Specialized Competency 5 Specialized Competency 6 Specialized Competency 7 Specialized Competency 8 Specialized Competency 9	15
<i>Final Field Evaluation</i>	Specialized Competency 1 Specialized Competency 2 Specialized Competency 3 Specialized Competency 4 Specialized Competency 5 Specialized Competency 6 Specialized Competency 7 Specialized Competency 8 Specialized Competency 9	30
<i>Final Self-Evaluation</i>	Specialized Competency 1	15

Required Text

None

Course Expectations

- Students are expected follow the Graduate Social Work Department's *Standards for Professional Behavior* at all times. The policy can be found on the Program's website: <https://www.wcupa.edu/education-socialWork/gradSocialWork/Professional-Behaviors.aspx>

Additionally, Students are expected to comply with the University's policies on Academic Integrity and Student Conduct, as outlined in the Graduate Catalog: <http://catalog.wcupa.edu/graduate/>

- *Respectful interactions* – Students are expected to interact with Field Instructors, colleagues and peers in a respectful, professional manner (e.g. active listening, use of non-discriminatory language, use of constructive debate and feedback, appropriate and professional use of email).

Field Hours

The MSW Program publishes a Field Calendar each semester with specific dates pertinent to Field Practicum. Generalist Students must complete 224 hours (196 hours in AY 20-21) and Specialization Students must complete 252 hours (224 hours in AY 20-21) of Field Practicum over the course of each semester in accordance with the Field Calendar. A regular weekly schedule is negotiated with the Field Instructor and approved by the Field Liaison in the Learning Agreement at the beginning of the semester. Because these are required practicum hours, any days or hours that are missed for illness or other reasons must be made up. Hours should be made up during the semester at times negotiated with the Field Instructor. In certain circumstances, hours can be made up over breaks the Thanksgiving, Winter and Spring breaks with prior approval from the Field Instructor and the Field Liaison. Students are not permitted, however, to accumulate hours over breaks and end their field practicum early in the semester.

Students are expected to keep records of their weekly practicum and supervision hours and submit them to the Faculty Field Liaison monthly once approved and signed by the Field Instructor. Falsification of Time Logs constitutes a violation of Academic Integrity. Field Log forms can be found on the MSW Program website: <https://www.wcupa.edu/education-socialWork/gradSocialWork/fieldEducation/fieldDocuments.aspx>

Students with a field placement in a school setting should take the field placement school's fall, spring or holiday breaks rather than WCU's to avoid losing too many practicum days/hours.

Students with employment, caregiving, or other responsibilities who are unable to attend their regular field practicum hours per week may be eligible for an "extended" Field Practicum. The "extended" program allows Students in certain field sites to design a schedule that satisfies an average of 12 hours (10 hours in AY 2020-2021) per week over a longer period of time. Proposals for the extended program must be formally submitted to and approved by the Director of Field Education prior to the start of the semester. They are then submitted to the Faculty Field Liaison and to the Field Instructor with the Learning Agreement. Refer to MSW website for details: <https://www.wcupa.edu/education-socialWork/gradsocialwork/fieldEducation.aspx#fieldDocs>

Schedule & Attendance**

Students are expected to negotiate a regular weekly schedule with the FI. ... Adherence, Students are expected to "attend" Field Practicum regularly and arrive (in person or remotely) when expected, prepared to engage in the assigned tasks. Students must notify Field Instructors and any other pertinent individuals of their lateness or absence ahead of time. Failure to attend Field Practicum with regularity and punctuality will constitute a violation of the *Standards for Professional Behavior*. (**Attendance in AY 20-21 may be in person or remote, depending on individual field placement arrangements.)

Students are expected to "attend" Field Practicum Monday and Tuesday of Thanksgiving Week IF these are regularly scheduled days. Students are not expected to be at Field Practicum during the following times:

- Labor Day
- Wed, Thurs or Fri of Thanksgiving Week
- Mon-Fri of spring break, (unless a school placement has different spring break dates)

- After the last day of the semester (assuming hours have been completed and unless a student is doing an approved “extended” field placement)

Clients are often best served when Students are available on a consistent basis. Students often choose to continue to work over the breaks, especially those in the second year of field practicum or who are in sites where this would be particularly important to client well-being.

If the University closes for inclement weather or other reasons, Students are still expected to attend Field Practicum unless the field site closes or delays opening, in which case Students are not expected to attend, but are expected to make up the field hours. If a Student feels that travel is unsafe, s/he must alert the Field Instructor and arrange to make up the hours at another time. The Student and the Field Instructor are encouraged to create a contingency plan for how the Student activities will be handled in the Student’s absence. Students are expected to attend Field Practicum regularly and arrive when expected, prepared to engage in the assigned tasks. Students must notify Field Instructors and any other pertinent individuals of their lateness or absence ahead of time. Failure to attend Field Practicum with regularity and punctuality will constitute a violation of the *Standards for Professional Behavior*.

ACADEMIC & PERSONAL INTEGRITY

It is the responsibility of each student to adhere to the university’s standards for academic integrity. Violations of academic integrity include any act that violates the rights of another student in academic work, that involves misrepresentation of your own work, or that disrupts the instruction of the course. Other violations include (but are not limited to): cheating on assignments or examinations; plagiarizing, which means copying any part of another’s work and/or using ideas of another and presenting them as one’s own without giving proper credit to the source; selling, purchasing, or exchanging of term papers; falsifying of information; and using your own work from one class to fulfill the assignment for another class without significant modification. Proof of academic misconduct can result in the automatic failure and removal from this course. For questions regarding Academic Integrity, the No-Grade Policy, Sexual Harassment, or the Student Code of Conduct, students are encouraged to refer to the Department Graduate Handbook, the Graduate Catalog, the Ram’s Eye View, and the University website at www.wcupa.edu.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have a disability that requires accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), please present your letter of accommodations and meet with me as soon as possible so that I can support your success in an informed manner. Accommodations cannot be granted retroactively. If you would like to know more about West Chester University’s Services for Students with Disabilities (OSSD), please visit them at 223 Lawrence Center. Their phone number is 610-436-2564, their fax number is 610-436-2600, their email address is ossd@wcupa.edu, and their website is at www.wcupa.edu/ussss/ossd. In an effort to assist students who either receive or may believe they are entitled to receive accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the University has appointed a student advocate to be a contact for students who have questions regarding the provision of their accommodations or their right to accommodations. The advocate will assist any student who may have questions regarding these rights. The Director for Equity and Compliance/Title IX Coordinator has been designated in this role. Students who need assistance with their rights to accommodations should contact them at 610-436-2433.

EXCUSED ABSENCES POLICY

Students are advised to carefully read and comply with the excused absences policy, including absences for university-sanctioned events, contained in the WCU Graduate Catalog. In particular, please note that the “responsibility for meeting academic requirements rests with the student,” that this policy does not excuse students from completing required academic work, and that professors can require a “fair alternative” to attendance on those days that students must be absent from class in order to participate in a University-Sanctioned Event.

REPORTING INCIDENTS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

West Chester University and its faculty are committed to assuring a safe and productive educational environment for all students. In order to meet this commitment and to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and guidance from the Office for Civil Rights, the University requires faculty members to report incidents of sexual violence shared by students to the University's Title IX Coordinator. The only exceptions to the faculty member's reporting obligation are when incidents of sexual violence are communicated by a student during a classroom discussion, in a writing assignment for a class, or as part of a University-approved research project. Faculty members are obligated to report sexual violence or any other abuse of a student who was, or is, a child (a person under 18 years of age) when the abuse allegedly occurred to the person designated in the University protection of minors policy. Information regarding the reporting of sexual violence and the resources that are available to victims of sexual violence is set forth at the webpage for the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at <https://www.wcupa.edu/admin/diversityEquityInclusion/aboutUs.aspx>.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

All students are encouraged to sign up for the University's free WCU ALERT service, which delivers official WCU emergency text messages directly to your cell phone. For more information, visit www.wcupa.edu/wcualert. To report an emergency, call the Department of Public Safety at 610-436-3311.

ELECTRONIC MAIL POLICY

It is expected that faculty, staff, and students activate and maintain regular access to University provided e-mail accounts. Official university communications, including those from your instructor, will be sent through your university e-mail account. You are responsible for accessing that mail to be sure to obtain official University communications. Failure to access will not exempt individuals from the responsibilities associated with this course.

Wellness

As social workers, we regularly interact with people who are in vulnerable states often with experiences of oppression and trauma. To do this work ethically, we must ensure that we are well. We must actively engage in activities and practices that support our own wellness, whatever that is – wellness is personal. It may include things such as exercise, yoga, meditation, dancing, prayer or journaling. Whatever it is, we must make it a priority if we are to commit to working with vulnerable populations.

We must also be willing and able to recognize when we are not well and be prepared to seek support and/or make changes. Workers, and even students, who fail to do this are at risk of secondary trauma and eventual burnout. Once we are “burned out” we are no longer able to engage in ethical practice and can put others at risk, even unknowingly.

If you are concerned about your own wellness while a student in the MSW Program, please reach out to a trusted friend, a family member, a professional, your instructor or your advisor. Connection is important when you are feeling overwhelmed.

Other resources include:

- WCU Counseling & Psychological Services:
<https://www.wcupa.edu/SERVICES/stu.cou/default.aspx>
- Philadelphia campus students may contact Counseling & Psychological Services at 610.436.2301 or wcucc@wcupa.edu and request an appointment with a counselor on the Philadelphia campus. For more info about counseling on the Philadelphia campus please see: <https://www.wcupa.edu/admin/philly/students.aspx#counselingServices>.
- Free Yoga & Meditation at WCU:
<https://www.wcupa.edu/healthSciences/contemplativeStudies/default.aspx>
- Campus Recreation Center: <https://www.wcupa.edu/services/CampusRec/>
- Free guided meditations: <https://www.uclahealth.org/marc/mindful-meditations>

Grading Scale

A letter grade will be assigned based on performance in the course, according to the following scale:

Grade	Quality Points	Percentage Equivalents	Interpretation
A	4.00	100-93	Superior graduate attainment
A-	3.67	92-90	
B+	3.33	89-87	Satisfactory graduate attainment
B	3.00	86-83	
B-	2.67	82-80	
C+	2.33	79-77	Attainment below graduate expectations
C	2.00	76-73	
C-	1.67	72-70	
F	0	< 70%	Failure

D grades are not used. Refer to the Graduate Catalog for description of NG (No Grade), W, & other grades.

No Grade Policy

All required hours and associated work must be completed by the end of the semester. Students will not be assigned a “No Grade” to finish incomplete work without prior, written permission such as an approved *Extended Hours Plan*. Further, all NG grades must be converted to final grades before students are permitted to start the next Field Practicum course.

Field Practicum Policies

- Students in the MSW Program must earn a B or better in all field practicum courses. Any grade of a B- or lower in a field practicum course must be repeated with remediation. Only one field practicum course may be remediated and a grade of B or better is required before continuing on to the next practicum course.

- If an MSW Student is referred by the Field Director to three field placements and not accepted due to unprofessionalism, the Program reserves the right to suspend the placement process. The student may reapply for field placement the next academic year.
- Students who are removed from field placement agency for violations of Academic Integrity may immediately receive an F for the course and be removed from field and dismissed from the Graduate Social Work Program.