



# Practicum Instructor Newsletter

## What's New at WSU School of Social Work

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#### We have a new name!

Earlier this year, the Office of Field Education was renamed the Office of Practicum Education to ensure the use of inclusive language and practice. Specifically, we have removed the term “field” from our curriculum and replaced it with “practicum”.

Changing terminology can be challenging, and a complete change can take time, but we thank you for joining in the effort and your patience as we transition.

### New child welfare training initiative coming to WSU

More funding support for future child welfare workers will be available at the Wayne State University School of Social Work as part of a child welfare training initiative recently authorized by the State of Michigan and soon to launch at several public universities in the state. Funding for the initiative comes from Title IV-E, a federal funding program that helps states pay for the costs of operating their child welfare systems and training the workforce.

“Social workers bring an important perspective and skill set to child welfare practice, focusing on family strengths and prioritizing family preservation alongside child safety,” Social Work Assistant Professor Bryan Victor noted. “We also want a child welfare workforce that reflects the local community, and as Detroit’s School of Social Work it is important that Wayne State take an active role in training and support the next generation of child welfare leaders.”

Angela Olivera will serve as the school’s program coordinator for Wayne State’s Title IV-E child welfare training initiative. In that role, Olivera will provide mentorship to participating students, develop a series of lectures and learning opportunities to enhance student training and maintain close working relationships with child welfare agencies across Southeast Michigan.

Once the initiative launches - anticipated in the coming year - participating students will be eligible to receive up to \$5,000 per semester in stipends along with dedicated mentorship and child welfare training opportunities provided by Olivera. In exchange for each stipend, students will commit to six months of work in a child welfare agency following graduation.

Due to the heightened need for social work professionals within the child welfare sector and the financial burden of tuition costs, it’s important for WSU to offer a Title IV-E training program. The program will effectively prepare students for a career in child welfare and also makes obtaining an MSW more affordable.

# Practicum begins August 28, 2023

## KEY DATES

### FALL 2023

Practicum Begins – August 28

Practicum Ends – December 10

#### Due Dates:

Learning Plan	Sept. 22
Process Recording/PRAC SIS #1	Sept. 22
Process Recording/PRAC SIS #2	Oct. 6
Process Recording/PRAC SIS #3	Oct. 20
Process Recording/PRAC SIS #4	Nov. 3
Process Recording/PRAC SIS #5	Nov. 17
Midterm Evaluation	Oct. 20
PIASC	Dec. 8

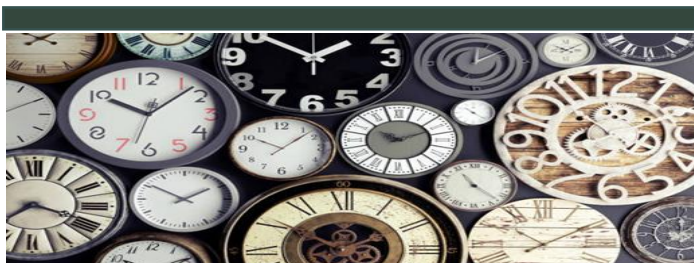
### WINTER 2024

Practicum Begins – January 2

Practicum Ends – April 19

#### Due Dates:

Learning Plan	Jan. 26
Process Recording/PRAC SIS #1	Jan. 26
Process Recording/PRAC SIS #2	Feb. 9
Process Recording/PRAC SIS #3	Feb. 23
Process Recording/PRAC SIS #4	March 8
Process Recording/PRAC SIS #5	March 22
Midterm Evaluation	Feb. 23
PIASC	April 12



In accordance with the Council on Social Work Education guidelines, the total clock hours for social work students for the 2023-24 school year are as follows:

- BSW = 230 hours per term
- MSW Foundation = 225 per term
- MSW Advanced – 2-day (16 hr.) placement = 225 hours per term
- MSW Advanced – 3-day (24 hr.) placement = 338 hour per term

## Practicum Hours

Students are expected to have regularly scheduled practicum days and all scheduling arrangements should be discussed with their practicum instructor prior to beginning practicum placement. Practicum days should be 8 hours and students with an evening/weekend placement must attend practicum with **no less than 4-hour blocks of time.**

An explanation and example of the student assignments can be found at the following link to our website:

[Documents and forms - Practicum Education - Wayne State University](#)

- Learning Plan
- Process Recording:
- PRAC SIS:
- Supervision Agenda

# PRACTICUM INSTRUCTOR RESOURCES

## New Practicum Instructor Training Sessions 2023-24



The Office of Practicum Education offers 6 seminars annually with free CEU's awarded for attendance. Sessions will be virtual except for Sessions 4 & 5 which are online self-studies.

SESSION 1: *Beginnings and the Adult Learner*, Sept. 13, 2 CE's

SESSION 2: *The Gatekeeper: Task & Teaching*, October 18, 2 CE's

SESSION 3: *Evaluation, Preparation, & Student Concerns*, Nov. 15, 2 CE's

SESSION 4: *Beginning Again and Educational Challenges*, Online/Self-Study, Dec. 13 – Jan. 10, 3 CE's

SESSION 5: *Teaching Termination*, Online/Self-Study, Jan. 17 - Feb. 14, 1 CE

SESSION 6: *The Ending Phase of Practicum Instruction and Reflections*, Mar. 15, 2 CE's

All sessions will be held from 12:30 – 2:30 pm excluding online courses.

To register for the seminars, please call or email the Office of Practicum Education at: (313) 577-4446 or [practicum\\_education@wayne.edu](mailto:practicum_education@wayne.edu)

## Welcome Back Seminar & Orientation for Practicum Instructors

**August 31, 2023**  
**10:00 am – 11:30 am**

All practicum instructors are invited to join us as we prepare for a new year in Social Work practicum. Become familiar with the people and processes involved in the Office of Practicum Education. We are committed in supporting you and your student for a successful practicum experience.

This seminar will provide an overview of our practicum education program, basic requirements, and supports available for our practicum instructors. Join us 10:00 – 10:30 am as we welcome you back and provide introductions of the practicum education team and updates to our program. The last hour will be dedicated to training and orientation for new practicum instructors and those seeking a refresher, from 10:30 – 11:30 am.

RSVP is optional but highly encouraged. If you have specific questions, please submit your question in the Registration RSVP to allow time to provide you with the best response. RSVP at: [Welcome Back Seminar & Orientation for Practicum Instructors Fall 2023 - Wayne State University](#)

LOCATION: Zoom

- <https://wayne-edu.zoom.us/j/94892698054>
- Meeting ID: 948 9269 8054
- Passcode: 098849

## Corrective Acton Plan

When concerns about a student's performance arise, the instructor and/or student should contact the Faculty Liaison who will identify the issues and suggest steps to resolve. If problems persist, a Correction Action Plan (CAP) will be written by the Practicum Instructor and student, outlining the responsibilities and outcomes expected of both parties. The Liaison will monitor progress towards changes. The CAP will be posted in IPT at the Liaisons request. For more info: [Corrective action plan - Practicum](#)

## Role of the Practicum Instructor

Practicum instructors supervise students at their placement site, with their primary role being educational. A **practicum instructor** is a Masters-level Social Worker (LMSW) with 2 years post-MSW experience and is eligible for licensure in the State of Michigan, or another qualified individual identified by the Wayne State University School of Social Work.

A practicum instructor:

- Assures that the student placement experience is educational.
- Explains the educational purposes to appropriate agency staff.
- Establishes suitable working conditions for student learning, including adequate space and other necessary supports for carrying out responsibilities.
- Helps students to plan their educational experience in class and practicum.
- Discusses work satisfactions and concerns about practice, practicum instruction, agency experience, and class work with students.
- Learns the practicum and class curricula.
- Selects suitable assignments in consultation with the faculty liaison.
- Develops and maintains a system of student record writing.
- Prepares for practicum instruction conferences, including reading student recordings.
- Holds weekly conferences with the student.
- Evaluates student performance periodically during the term and at the end of each term.
- Meets periodically with the assigned faculty practicum liaison to discuss assignments, review work, and recommend marks.
- Informs the assigned faculty practicum liaison of any concerns about progress, activities, and any other issues.
- Prepares evaluation reports as required by the school.
- Works with the assigned faculty practicum liaison to evaluate the agency's relation to school and curricula as they relate to student learning experiences.
- Attends classes, meetings, and participates in workshops and institutes that may enhance practicum instruction skills; and
- promptly informs the agency and the School of any changes affecting student education.

### Practicum Instructor Meetings with Student

Practicum instructors are *required* to meet with students weekly for at least one hour to provide supervision. Practicum instructors may meet individually or as a group, depending on the nature of work performed. This meeting should be used to discuss and reflect on student concerns regarding client, agency, and practicum placement issues. The practicum instructor should ensure that the student is fulfilling the needed core competencies, including review of completed assignments via the IPT system and verification of required hours.

### Task Supervisor

If the practicum instructor is not able to provide daily supervision, then a task supervisor must be assigned. A task supervisor is responsible for the day-to-day supervision of tasks performed by the student, excluding the minimum hours of weekly supervision provided by the assigned practicum instructor. Task supervisors are not required to have two years of post-MSW experience or be a LMSW. However, the task supervisor must be employed at the practicum placement site in a similar area as the student doing practicum work and be responsible for performing social-service-type tasks. A task supervisor should meet all objectives listed for a practicum instructor, except weekly supervision, and is encouraged to attend New Practicum Instructor Seminars.

## Faculty Liaison: Angela Olivera



### Role of the Faculty Liaison

The Faculty Liaison is a member of the school staff or faculty who serves as a liaison between the student, the practicum instructor, and the staff of the practicum placement site. Each student is assigned a Faculty Liaison upon starting a practicum placement. The Faculty Liaison meets with the practicum instructor and student to specify and clarify assignments and concerns, assess student process recordings, make recommendations to the Office of Practicum Education, review student evaluations, and grade the student in practicum work. The Faculty Liaison can also discuss career plans with students and suggest courses that will enhance employment options.

#### Faculty Liaisons:

- Develop plans with the agency and deal with practicum placement issues related to the school;
- serve as a conduit between the school and agency;
- interpret the school's various programs for practicum instructors and agencies;
- help students plan their educational experience in practicum;
- discuss student concerns about practicum instruction, and agency experiences;
- work with the practicum instructors to ensure that student practicum assignments reflect the practicum work curriculum and student needs;
- ensure that the school's standards for practicum work instruction are upheld;
- review student progress with practicum instructors;
- act as educational consultants to practicum instructors to enhance their practicum-education skills;
- grade students, after consulting with practicum instructors;
- discuss any problems related to student education in practicum placement with the Director of Practicum Education; and
- provides feedback to agencies.

Each student registered for practicum education will be assigned a Faculty Liaison. The Faculty Liaison will make a minimum of two practicum visits per academic year for students in full time and part-time BSW and MSW programs. **The first visit should be scheduled no later than the end of the first month of practicum work.** The Faculty Liaison will schedule a subsequent practicum visit at the beginning of the second semester.

**Concerns with Practicum Placement:** Should a problem arise with a student's progress or with the agency environment, the faculty practicum liaison will work with the student and practicum instructor to create a corrective action plan.



WAYNE STATE  
School of Social Work

The School of Social Work is open to the public Monday – Friday 8:30 am to 5:00 pm. Staff are working on a flexible schedule including both in the office and remotely. Therefore, appointments are recommended and can be made via email or phone.

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Practicum Instructor: Savana Brewer



## Becoming a Successful Practicum Instructor

You possess the knowledge, skills, and teaching ability to supervise a student but how do you ensure that you give them a worthwhile practicum experience? There are several keys to success for new practicum instructors.

**Open Communication.** Sit down with the student and ask them about their goals and expectations for this placement. Go over your experience, and expectations of them and the consequences for their not meeting mandatory expectations. Discuss advocacy with them. If they are not feeling challenged or are not getting the experience they hoped to get, encourage them to speak up in a professional manor. Having open conversations lets your intern know that you are approachable even though you have the authority.

**Be realistic about expectations.** Practicum instruction takes a serious investment in time, at least one hour per week in supervision plus additional time for providing feedback on student assignments and preparing evaluations. Successful practicum instruction also requires providing meaningful assignments and opportunities to students. Make sure your agency can give *you* the time and resources needed for supervision so you can provide the student the necessary attention.

**Balance flexibility and structure.** Social work students have different styles of learning, and practicum instructors unwilling to adapt to different learning styles will likely face resistance. “Just as we, as social workers, start where our clients are, we need to do the same thing with students” says Roberta Thomas, LCSW, social worker. But students also can suffer if there is a lack of structure and clear communication about expectations and boundaries.

**Be creative.** Just because you work for a small agency doesn’t mean you can’t provide a variety of practicum experiences. Consider how you can incorporate topics or concepts that are outside of the scope of your business into your supervision session. No student wants to be bored—enhance the learning experience.

**Stay connected.** You are not alone; your Faculty Practicum Liaison is an important resource and should be consulted if problems arise with your intern. Also, take advantage of training opportunities offered by the Office of Practicum Education. This is a good opportunity to reach out to other practicum instructors and share advice.

**Be positive yet honest about social work.** A positive practicum instructor can not only relieve the anxiety a student entering practicum may be feeling but can also shape a student into a confident future social worker. It’s also necessary to be honest when a student is not doing well. Establish a process to follow if this happens. Address the problem with the student and create a plan of action to address those concerns. If this doesn’t work, contact the Faculty Practicum Liaison who can initiate a corrective action plan with the student.