SPSW3015 HUMAN SERVICES & COMMUNITY WELFARE PRACTICUM

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SPSW3015 Units: 10
Course Availability: Semester 2 – 2007 Callaghan Campus
Faculty: Faculty of Education and Arts
School of Humanities and Social Sciences

Teaching Methods: Experience Based Learning
Description: This course provides a mix of supervised field placement and on-campus workshops, which
integrate knowledge, values and skills relevant to students’ individual areas of inquiry and career path in the
Human Services. The overall agency-based component is for 12 weeks (which may be completed over
the semester as a block or by part-time).
Course Objectives: On completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate:
1. An understanding of, and experience in, organisational structures, policies and procedures community programs and direct practice (Micro, Mezzo and Macro spheres).
2. Increased understanding of social issues and problems.
3. Increased knowledge of the range and role of government and non-government agencies in the social and community services sector.
4. An ability to design, implement and evaluate an appropriate agency-based project.
5. An ability to develop and extend understanding and analysis of the relationship between ideology, knowledge, theory, values, ethics and skills.
6. Increased awareness and understanding of use of self.
7. An ability to demonstrate initiative, autonomy and self-directed work practice.
8. An appreciation of, and ability to undertake team work.

Course Content:
The course covers:
1. Context analysis - organisation, policy, political, theoretical, philosophical aspects;
2. Project design, implementation and evaluation;
3. Fieldwork and Direct Practice - skills, roles, responsibilities, ethical practices.

Modes of Delivery: Internal Mode
Assumed Knowledge: SPSW1001, SPSW1002 and SPSW2110 or equivalent.

Assessment Items:
1. Essays / Written Assignments: Mid Placement Report, 1,500 words, due mid semester.

Contact Hours: Seminar: for 2 Hour(s) per Week for the Full Term
Callaghan Campus
SPSW3015 Human Service and Community Welfare Practicum. Semester 2 - 2007
Workshop: Monday 9.00 - 11.00 [MCG28C]

Online Tutorial Registration:
Students are required to enrol in the Lecture and a specific Tutorial time for this course via the Online Registration system. Refer - http://studinfo1.newcastle.edu.au/rego/stud_choose_login.cfm

NB: Registrations close at the end of week 2 of semester.

Studentmail and Blackboard: Refer - www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/

This course uses Blackboard and studentmail to contact students, so you are advised to keep your email accounts within the quota to ensure you receive essential messages. To receive an expedited response to queries, post questions on the Blackboard discussion forum if there is one, or if emailing staff directly use the course code in the subject line of your email. Students are advised to check their studentmail and the course Blackboard site on a weekly basis.

Further Information
Details about the following topics are available on your course Blackboard site (where relevant). Refer - www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/

- Written Assignment Presentation and Submission Details
- Online copy submission to Turnitin
- Penalties for Late Assignments
- Special Circumstances
- No Assignment Re-submission
Studentmail and Blackboard: www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/
This course uses Blackboard and studentmail to contact students, so you are advised to keep your email accounts within the quota to ensure you receive essential messages. To receive an expedited response to queries, post questions on the Blackboard discussion forum if there is one, or if emailing staff directly use the course code in the subject line of your email. Students are advised to check their studentmail and the course Blackboard site on a weekly basis.

Written Assignment Presentation and Submission Details

Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date. Late assignments will be subject to the penalties described below.

Hard copy submission:

- **Type your assignments**: All work must be typewritten in 11 or 12 point black font. Leave a wide margin for marker’s comments, use 1.5 or double spacing, and include page numbers.
- **Word length**: The word limit of all assessment items should be strictly followed – 10% above or below is acceptable, otherwise penalties may apply.
- **Proof read your work** because spelling, grammatical and referencing mistakes will be penalised.
- **Staple the pages** of your assignment together (do not use pins or paper clips).
- **University Assessment Item Coversheet**: All assignments must be submitted with the University coversheet available at: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/forms/
- **By arrangement with the relevant lecturer, assignments may be submitted at any Student Hub located at**:
  - Level 3, Shortland Union, Callaghan
  - Level 2, Student Services Centre, Callaghan
  - Ground Floor, University House, City
  - Opposite Café Central, Ourimbah
- **Date-stamping assignments**: All students must date-stamp their own assignments using the machine provided at each Student Hub. If mailing an assignment, this should be address to the relevant School. Mailed assignments are accepted from the date posted, confirmed by a Post Office date-stamp; they are also date-stamped upon receipt by Schools.

NB: Not all of these services may apply to the Port Macquarie Campus.

- **Do not fax or email assignments**: Only hard copies of assignments will be considered for assessment. Inability to physically submit a hard copy of an assignment by the deadline due to other commitments or distance from campus is an unacceptable excuse.
- **Keep a copy of all assignments**: It is the student’s responsibility to produce a copy of their work if the assignment goes astray after submission. Students are advised to keep updated back-ups in electronic and hard copy formats.

**Online copy submission to Turnitin**

In addition to hard copy submission, students are required to submit an electronic version of the following assignments to Turnitin via the course Blackboard website available @ www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au:

Assessment Task 2 is to be submitted to TURNITIN.

**Task 2 : Essays / Written Assignments: Final Field Placement Report, 2,500 words, due end of semester Academic Week 14, Monday October 29th, 2007.**
Prior to final submission, all students have the opportunity to submit one draft of their assignment to Turnitin to self-check their referencing. Assignments will not be marked until both hard copy and online versions have been submitted. Marks may be deducted for late submission of either version.

**Penalties for Late Assignments**

Assignments submitted after the due date, without an approved extension of time will be penalised by the reduction of 5% of the possible maximum mark for the assessment item for each day or part day that the item is late. Weekends count as one day in determining the penalty. Assessment items submitted more than ten days after the due date will be awarded zero marks.


**Special Circumstances**

Students wishing to apply for Special Circumstances or Extension of Time should apply online. Refer - ‘Special Circumstances Affecting Assessment Items - Procedure 000641’ available @ [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000641.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000641.html)

**Changing your Enrolment**

The last dates to withdraw without financial or academic penalty (called the HECS Census Dates) are:

For semester 1 courses: 31 March 2007

For semester 2 courses: 31 August 2007

For Trimester 1 courses: 18 February 2007

For Trimester 2 courses: 10 June 2007


Students may withdraw from a course without academic penalty on or before the last day of semester and prior to the commencement of the formal exam period. Any withdrawal from a course after the last day of semester will result in a fail grade.

Students cannot enrol in a new course after the second week of semester/trimester, except under exceptional circumstances. Any application to add a course after the second week of semester/trimester must be on the appropriate form, and should be discussed with the School Office.

To change your enrolment online, please refer to [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/enrolment/change-enrol.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/enrolment/change-enrol.html)

**No Assignment Re-submission**

Students who have failed an assignment are not permitted to revise and resubmit it in this course. However, students are always welcome to contact their Tutor, Lecturer or Course Coordinator to make a consultation time to receive individual feedback on their assignments.

**Re-marks & Moderations**

A student may only request a re-mark of an assessment item before the final result – in the course to which the assessment item contributes – has been posted. If a final result in the course has been posted, the student must apply under ‘Procedures for Appeal Against a Final Result’ (Refer - [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/forms/](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/forms/)).
Students concerned at the mark given for an assessment item should first discuss the matter with the Course Coordinator. If subsequently requesting a re-mark, students should be aware that as a result of a re-mark the original mark may be increased or reduced. The case for a re-mark should be outlined in writing and submitted to the Course Coordinator, who determines whether a re-mark should be granted, taking into consideration all of the following:

1. whether the student had discussed the matter with the Course Coordinator
2. the case put forward by the student for a re-mark
3. the weighting of the assessment item and its potential impact on the student’s final mark or grade
4. the time required to undertake the re-mark
5. the number of original markers, that is,
   a) whether there was a single marker, or
   b) if there was more than one marker whether there was agreement or disagreement on the marks awarded.

A re-mark may also be initiated at the request of the Course Coordinator, the Head of School, the School Assessment Committee, the Faculty Progress and Appeals Committee or the Pro Vice-Chancellor. Re-marks may be undertaken by:

1. the original marker; or
2. an alternate internal marker; or
3. an alternate external marker (usually as a consequence of a grievance procedure).

Moderation may be applied when there is a major discrepancy (or perceived discrepancy) between:

1. the content of the course as against the content or nature of the assessment item(s)
2. the content or nature of the assessment item(s) as against those set out in the Course Outline
3. the marks given by a particular examiner and those given by another in the same course
4. the results in a particular course and the results in other courses undertaken by the same students.

For further detail on this University policy refer - ‘Re-marks and Moderations - Procedure 000769’ available @ [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000769.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000769.html)

**Return of Assignments**

Students can collect assignments from a nominated Student Hub during office hours. Students will be informed during class which Hub to go to and the earliest date that assignments will be available for collection. Students must present their student identification card to collect their assignment.


**Preferred Referencing Style**

In this course, it is recommended that you use the use the Harvard in-text referencing system (similar to the APA system) for referencing sources of information used in assignments. Inadequate or incorrect reference to the work of others may be viewed as plagiarism and result in reduced marks or failure.

An in-text citation names the author of the source, gives the date of publication, and for a direct quote includes a page number, in parentheses. At the end of the paper, a list of references provides publication information about the source; the list is alphabetised by authors' last names (or by titles for works without authors). For further information on referencing and general study skills refer - ‘Infoskills’ available @ [www.newcastle.edu.au/services/library/tutorials/infoskills/index.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/services/library/tutorials/infoskills/index.html)

**Student Representatives**

Student Representatives are a major channel of communication between students and the School. Contact details of Student Representatives can be found on School websites.

**Student Communication**

Students should discuss any course related matters with their Tutor, Lecturer, or Course Coordinator in the first instance and then the relevant Discipline or Program Convenor. If this proves unsatisfactory, they should then contact the Head of School if required. Contact details can be found on the School website.

**Essential Online Information for Students**

Information on Class and Exam Timetables, Tutorial Online Registration, Learning Support, Campus Maps, Careers information, Counselling, the Health Service and a range of free Student Support Services is available @ http://www.newcastle.edu.au/currentstudents/index.html

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### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

**OVERVIEW**

The Bachelor of Social Science [Community Welfare-Human Services Major] prepares students for innovative and creative practice in the dynamic field of the community welfare sector and the broad arena of human services. The program integrates theory and practice from the fields of political, behavioural, and social sciences to equip students for key roles in development, organization, management and delivery of community welfare and human services. Drawing on an experience-based model of teaching and learning, the program equips students to contribute to capacity-building and strength-based practice with individuals, communities and organizations to create a more just, equitable, and sustainable society.

Students undertaking the Community Welfare-Human Services stream in the Bachelor of Social Science have the option of doing a Practicum/Field Study in a community or government agency. The Practicum/Field Studies involves both project planning and project implementation. Students generally undertake the Practicum/Field Studies in the third year of their full time degree or part-time studies program.

The Human Services Practicum/Field Studies is expected to have a substantive direct-practice/project focus in order that students may consolidate the learning gained throughout their degree, and prepare for their transition to professional life. The project focus also provides agencies with an opportunity to accomplish projects for which they might not otherwise have the personnel resources.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

The Human Services & Community Welfare Field Practicum component aims to promote professional development and competence.

The objectives of the Field Practicum are to provide students with:

- an understanding of, and experience in, organisational structures, and policies and procedures;
- increased understanding of social issues and problems;
- increased knowledge of the range and role of government and non-government agencies in the social and community services sector;
- an opportunity to design, implement and evaluate an appropriate human services agency-based project;
- an opportunity to conceptualise and apply appropriate social enquiry methodologies;
- an opportunity to develop and extend understanding and analysis of the relationship between ideology, knowledge, theory, values, ethics and skills;
- an understanding of the skills (Micro, Mezzo and Macro) required of the human service/community welfare and/or public sector worker;
- increased awareness and understanding of use of self;
- an opportunity to demonstrate initiative, autonomy and self-directed work practice;
- an appreciation of, and ability to undertake team work.

### 3.0 FIELD PRACTICUM DATES - 2007

The Practicum/Field Studies is individually negotiated between each student and agency to suit the circumstances of both parties. Students are required to have completed their Practicum/Field Studies project.
by the end of semester 2. Semester 2 finishes on Friday 2RD November 2007. Prior to implementing their projects students are required to have successfully completed a project proposal and working agreement as outlined in section 8.

4.0 **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

4.1 **Agency Role**

In accepting a student agencies are asked to:

- provide a Supervisor who will accept overall responsibility for the student within the agency;
- evaluate the student’s performance in the prescribed manner;
- provide a suitable project at an appropriate level (*see section 5.0*);
- provide the student with some period of observation and orientation into the various working areas of the agency.
- Provide a report on the student’s performance (*see attachment A*).

4.2 **Responsibilities of Students**

The success of the Practicum/Field Studies will largely depend on the ability of students to take responsibility for their own learning needs.

Students are expected to:

- participate in pre-Practicum/Field Studies interviews and workshop sessions;
- identify individual learning goals;
- meet with the Supervisor prior to the commencement of Practicum/Field Studies in the agency to gain an understanding of the agency role, needs and background issues relating to the project, and to plan the work project;
- develop a working agreement (*see section 8*) which establishes specific learning goals and tasks, working arrangements, roles, responsibilities, resources, supervision, etc;
- submit a project proposal (*see section 8*)
- design, implement and evaluate an appropriate project;
- ensure that there is a half-time check of progress. If any areas of difficulty arise that cannot be resolved with the Supervisor, the Practicum/Field Studies Coordinator must be contacted by either the student or Supervisor (*see section 9*)
- demonstrate appropriate initiative, self-direction and autonomy;
- demonstrate appropriate requests for guidance;
- demonstrate ethical behaviour including confidentiality, respect, and non-judgmentalism, sensitivity, etc;
- demonstrate appropriate professional behaviour including punctuality, appropriate, respect for agency rules and procedures, reliability, etc;
- continually monitor and review their skills development, attitude, knowledge, and ability to work cooperatively with Agency staff and clients;
- make full use of supervision by planning an agenda and identifying important areas to discuss with the Supervisor;
- complete required Practicum/Field Studies project, and assessment tasks;
- actively participate in the evaluation process with the Supervisor.

4.3. **Responsibilities of Supervisors**

It is expected that Supervisors will endeavor to:

- be accessible to students, and available for regular contact;
- be available for interview and contact with the student prior to commencement of Practicum/Field Studies, so that both can agree on goals, project and tasks;
- identify an appropriate project to be undertaken by the student during the Practicum/Field Studies, and provide the student with experience of the typical work within the Agency (*see section 6.0*);
- provide information and explanation which enables the student to fully understand the agency objectives and their role within it;
- provide a model of professional practice;
• endorse the learning contract/project working agreement within the first ten days of Practicum/Field Studies (see section 9.1);
• act as a mentor for the student’s professional development via regular supervision meetings, noting any concerns and providing constructive feedback about the student’s performance;
• complete the half-time check with the student at the appropriate time, and contact the Practicum/Field Studies Coordinator if there are difficulties (see section 10);
• complete the Evaluation Report with the student (see section 11);
• inform the Practicum/Field Studies Coordinator of significant changes taking place in the agency which could affect the Practicum/Field Studies.

4.4. Responsibilities of the Practicum/Field Studies Coordinator

The Human Service and Community Welfare Coordinator is a full time member of the teaching staff of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences with teaching responsibilities in the Community Welfare-Human Services specialisation. The Coordinator is expected to:
• discuss with students in classes related to fieldwork or with students individually expectations and preparation for Practicum/Field Studies;
• provide support to Supervisors in the field – e.g, information about courses, student expectations, etc;
• consult with Supervisors and provide support regarding students progress where necessary.

Contact details for the Human Services & Community Welfare Field Practicum Coordinator for 2007 are:
Name: Dr Alex Beveridge
Discipline Convenor: Community Welfare/Human Services.
Phone: 02 4921 6772
Fax: 02 4921 6933
E-mail: Alex.Beveridge@newcastle.edu.au

If necessary Agencies may contact:
Ms Gillian Turnbull
Placement Co-ordinator
Professional Experience Unit
Faculty of Education and Arts
Hunter Schools Office (HA80)
Hunter Building
University of Newcastle
University Drive
Callaghan NSW 2308
Phone 49215497
Fax 49216941
Gillian.Turnbull@newcastle.edu.au

5.0 FIELD PRACTICUM PROJECTS

5.1 PROJECT SCOPE

As mentioned previously agencies are asked to provide a project for the student to undertake whilst on Practicum/Field Studies. The project should be:

• relevant to the student’s future professional and employment goals;
• challenging yet not overwhelming; and
• relevant and useful to the agency.

Examples of possible project categories include:

• needs analysis;
• program design and development;
• evaluation;
• community education programs.

5.1.1 Needs Analysis
Agencies are often required to explore unmet needs, provide justification for funding applications and tenders, seek management approval for new programs/services, prepare submissions to enquiries, etc. A needs analysis can provide valuable quantitative and qualitative information.

Students could thus contribute to a needs analysis by:

- conducting comprehensive literature and program searches;
- reviewing relevant demographic and statistical data;
- consulting with stakeholder groups, such as other agencies, and key informants, ensuring consistency with University and agency ethical guidelines;
- compiling a written report based on investigations.

5.1.2 Program Development

Agencies may be seeking to implement a new program such as an activity group, an outreach program, a specific intervention program, an education program, or a self-help group etc. Students could contribute to development of a new program by:

- investigating programs elsewhere;
- searching for program materials;
- collaboration with various action research groups;
- promoting the program;
- acting as an observer-participant;
- providing coordination support;
- documenting program design and implementation;
- assisting with monitoring and review.

5.1.3 Evaluation

An agency may be interested in reviewing current programs and developing plans for future developments/changes/resources/priorities, etc. A student could contribute to an evaluation project by:

- undertaking relevant literature review;
- collecting and analysing feedback from participants, referral agents, and other stakeholders;
- reporting information gathered.

5.1.4 Community Education/Promotion Strategies

An agency may be engaged in a particular action, promotional or educational campaign, to which a student could contribute valuable time and energy, and perhaps manage/coordinate a particular segment. For example students could assist by:

- researching previous campaigns;
- consulting with particular target groups to provide and/or seek information which might inform the campaign;
- drafting media releases;
- helping staff information/advocacy stands at particular events;
- contributing to the design and implementation of campaign evaluation strategies;
- contributing to documentation of campaign activities.

6.0 EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS

6.1 Work Routines

A student has the same responsibility as a staff member in matters such as punctuality and regular attendance, keeping appointments, or advising the Supervisor if illness prevents attendance. Throughout Practicum/Field Studies students must make a commitment to be available at the times specified in the working agreement. The Supervisor certifies the completion or non-completion of the negotiated project. Any variation from the negotiated project needs to be made by agreement with the Supervisor.

Students are expected to contact their Supervisor if they are unable to attend Practicum/Field Studies on a specified day. If time is lost through illness or misadventure the time must be made up. If a student has
extended absences or irregular attendance the Supervisor should contact the Practicum/Field Studies Coordinator immediately.

6.2 Ethics and Values

Students are expected to demonstrate professional and ethical behaviour. This includes:

- observing oral and written procedures regarding agency confidentiality;
- demonstrating acceptance and non-judgmental attitude, non-discrimination on grounds of age, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability;
- awareness of the responsibilities and constraints of professional behaviour including:
  - commitment;
  - accountability;
  - responsibility and appropriate initiative;
  - cooperative colleague relationships;
  - acceptance of ethics and values;
  - self-discipline;
  - time-management;
  - non-exploitation for satisfaction of own needs.

6.3 Standards of Behaviour

Students are expected to exhibit a reasonable level of maturity and good judgement consistent with the requirements of sound professional principles. The learning goals for Practicum/Field Studies can be deemed not to have been met if the student exhibits any of the following:

- Violence or threats of violence.
- Substance use or abuse which interferes with performance.
- Illegal or criminal behaviours.
- Sexual contact with agency clients.
- Sexual harassment.
- Discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation.
- Misconduct as defined in the University Student Discipline Rules.

University rules governing satisfactory progress allow for a student’s enrolment in a subject to be terminated by the Head of School offering that subject if the student does not maintain a rate of progress considered satisfactory by the Head of School. In determining whether a student is failing to maintain satisfactory progress the Head of School may take into consideration such factors as unsatisfactory attendance or failure to complete at a satisfactory standard academic or professional components specified for the subject. The student will be given prior written notice of the intention to consider the matter, with brief particulars of the grounds and a reasonable opportunity to make representations either in person or in writing or both. As noted in the following notes students may avail themselves of the special consideration policy and adverse circumstances guidelines (*see following overview from university policy documents*). A student whose enrolment in a subject is terminated shall be deemed to have failed that subject. The student may appeal to the Faculty Board.

7.0 Administrative & Insurance Matters

The University of Newcastle insurance policy responds to injury and damage that a student may cause to persons or property through negligence whilst on Practicum/Field Studies. *See ongoing notes for a more extensive overview of insurance coverage.*

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Placement of students in government and non-government organizations entails consideration of a range of matters such as transport, insurance, occupational health, client safety, agency security and harassment. Arrangements in relation to these issues are outlined below.
TRANSPORT

Costs associated with travel to and from placement are to be borne by the student. Whilst on placement students must not use their own cars without the explicit written permission from the agency and the agency is expected to provide appropriate reimbursement of costs.

It should be noted that use of personal vehicles for placement activities is at the student’s own risk.

Students who use personal transport for placement business should have comprehensive insurance.

INSURANCE

**Personal Accident Insurance**

Newcastle University Sport currently has in force a Personal Accident and Injury Insurance Policy for all enrolled students on a 24 hour day basis 365 days a year. It also has a component for overseas travel. Such insurance covers students for injuries occurring during their University program. It is an accident cover only and does not cover illness. Questions regarding this insurance cover should be directed to the Newcastle University Sports (NUSport) Development Officer (located in the Forum, Sports and Aquatic Centre). Please note that if the recovery procedure is covered by Medicare then the rebate recovered is all that can be claimed. Additional procedures such as physiotherapy, which is not able to be claimed through Medicare, may be claimed through the NUSport Accident/Injury Insurance Policy.

The University has a personal accident cover, which has additional coverage to NUSport (NUSport has the first layer), for students engaged on practical placement authorised by and under the control of the University.

**Public Liability Insurance**

The University has a public liability insurance policy that includes a worldwide cover, which protects the University, any employee or any person for whom the University may be responsible against claims which may be brought by third parties for injury to third parties and/or damage to third party property in those instances in which the University may be proven legally liable. In addition, coverage is extended to sponsoring employers who accept students on practical placement which are a formal requirement of their course. The policy limit for this insurance is in excess of $20m.

**Professional Indemnity Insurance**

This policy indemnifies the University of Newcastle against legal liability for claims by third parties for breach of professional duty by an employee or any person for whom the University is responsible eg students, by reason of any negligent act, error or omission in conduct of University business. The policy limit for this insurance is in excess of $10m. The policy includes a worldwide cover but excludes USA and Canada. For incidents in the USA and Canada the University of Newcastle is a self insurer.

Please note: The University does not have Professional Indemnity policy coverage for students in medicine and nursing - midwifery. In respect of these students the University is a self insurer.

**Workers’ Compensation Insurance**

Students are not deemed to be employees of the University. They would therefore not be entitled to cover under Workers’ Compensation Insurance.

Any questions in relation to the above should be directed to the Manager, Risk & Insurance.

Further information on insurance can be accessed online at: [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/service/insurance/prac_placement.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/service/insurance/prac_placement.html)
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

Students undertaking a placement within the NSW Department of Health will need to provide evidence that they have been immunised against certain communicable or infectious diseases. Details of the department’s policy can be found on their website at www.health.nsw.gov.au. A copy of this policy will also be available to students on their course Blackboard site. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that they have complied with all requirements in this policy prior to commencing on placement. A placement may be discontinued if the student cannot produce evidence of having complied with this policy.

CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS

All government and many community organizations require students to undergo Criminal Record Checks (CRC), Prohibited Persons Employment (PED) checks and Working With Children checks prior to commencing placement. Students routinely undertake these checks as part of enrolment at University or may be undertaken by an agency accepting a student for placement.

Checks undertaken on initial entry to University require students to complete paperwork for the relevant authority. A letter affirming completion of the process is subsequently sent to the University. The student is advised and asked to collect and sign for a clearance card. If the student is not cleared then no clearance card is issued.

In those agencies where an annual check is required a copy of the letter detailing the results of the checks will be sent to the agency initiating the process. Should the check reveal an offence the agency will undertake a risk assessment to determine whether the nature of the offence by the student puts clients, customers or staff at risk should the student undertake a field placement in that context. Many offences will not be deemed to constitute a barrier to undertaking a placement. However serious offences include:

- sexual offences,
- offences involving assault and/or injury to another person
- fraud
- other offences that are directly relevant to the duties to be performed during placements.

In some agencies students may also be required to sign confidentiality agreements.

If you are identified as a prohibited person and the university is unable to arrange, through its normal avenues placements necessary for the completion of your degree requirements, you will not be able to meet the requirements of your program and therefore will be unable to graduate. Enquiries should be directed to The Director, Student Administration services, the University of Newcastle on (02) 49216969. For further information:
http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/admissions/policyprohibitedemployment.html

Students with any concerns regarding this process should consult their Course Convenor.

HARASSMENT

Students should also be aware that sexual harassment or any other undesirable or unwelcome conduct by or towards students is a very serious matter. There are several avenues for advice and assistance. An appropriate response might range from advice and counselling to disciplinary action, including legal action.

Any student with concerns about issues of sexual harassment, or any other undesirable or unwelcome conduct should raise the matter with a relevant member of staff of the University. This will usually be the University liaison person.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Students should be aware that their actions and their reports may be subject to scrutiny by bodies other than the agency or the University. For example, clients have the right under Freedom of Information legislation to see files and documents concerning them.
8.0 WRITTEN WORK/ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

Students must satisfactorily meet all the requirements for SPSW 3015.

8.1. Project Proposal

In general students undertaking a discrete project will be expected to verbally elaborate a project plan as part of their classroom assessment for SPSW3015. The project plans would normally cover the following:

i. introduction to:
   - the report,
   - the agency,
   - the project,
   - authors role;

ii. background, such as:
   - agency description,
   - explanation of issue,
   - target group,
   - relevant literature,
   - previous research,
   - relevant statistics, etc;

iii. project proposal, including details such as:
   - objectives,
   - desired outcomes,
   - proposed strategies and rationale,
   - resources,
   - budget,
   - timeline
      i. ethical practices to be observed
      ii. evaluation
      iii. bibliography
      iv. appendices where relevant - eg agency organisational chart, mission statement, etc

8.1.2 Field Practicum/Project Working Agreement

In order to establish and maintain a clear working relationship with their Supervisor and agency, students are expected to develop a working agreement with the Supervisor prior to undertaking the project. The working agreement is intended to be open for re-negotiation should circumstances require.

The process of writing the working agreement provides a means of clarifying project goals and agency expectations from the beginning of Practicum/Field Studies. The working agreement can assist the student and Supervisor to:

- establish the formal and informal process for consultation and exchange of ideas and information;
- establish the basis of good rapport and respect;
- establish the parameters of the Practicum/Field Studies project and keep the focus on objectives;
- ensure that the student, Supervisor and agency are operating on the same assumptions and so avoid misunderstandings and communication breakdowns;
- establish a realistic timeframe for the project and other Practicum/Field Studies activities, with a focus on time management and project stages;
- identify how self-directing the student can be and what students are allowed or not allowed to do in the organisation.

Content of Working Agreement The working agreement is an agreement about student learning goals and Practicum/Field Studies/project management.

Learning Goals
In terms of learning goals the student should specify what their learning goals are for the Practicum/Field Studies and the strategies by which these goals will be met. The project will usually provide the strategies by which most of the learning goals will be met.

In identifying learning goals students should consider the following possible areas of learning.

**Organisational Structures and Practices** - agency structure, funding, policies, philosophy, goals and objectives, staffing (numbers, professions, etc resources, planning, services, recording practices).

**Professional Practice** - agency methods, social issues addressed by agency.

**Ethics and Values** - personal, professional, agency.

**Practice Skills** - interpersonal relationships, team work, written and oral communication, social enquiry, critical thinking, policy analysis and development, project administration and management.

**Work Practices** - time management, self-direction, autonomy, computer use, work planning.

**Practicum/Field Studies Project Management**

The working agreement should specify the following aspects of Practicum/Field Studies project management.

**Project details** - nature of the project and expectations about objectives, outcomes, student role and responsibilities.

**Working relationship** - supervision and reporting arrangements, including expectations around autonomy and self-direction.

**Working arrangements** - dates of Practicum/Field Studies, days and hours student is to work on project, access to agency resources such as photocopier, computer, desk, phone, fax, and travel.

**Publicity** - if relevant, specification of constraints over the timing and content of media releases, media interviews and their implications.

**8.2 SPSW3015: Human Services and Community Welfare Field Practicum**

Assessment of SPSW3015 is based on the following pieces of work.

- a mid-Practicum/Field Studies report;
- a Practicum/Field Studies report.
- a presentation to fellow students reviewing the Practicum/Field Studies project.
- Supervisor’s Report (see Attachment A)

In accordance with assessment policy students who fail to submit any assessment item will be deemed to have failed the subject. Written work will be assessed on a pass/fail basis. All items must be passed satisfactorily to gain a pass in SPSW3015.

**8.2.1 Mid-Practicum/Field Studies Report**

Students and Supervisors are asked to review progress at mid-Field Studies. This is to ensure that the student knows how s/he is progressing at this point. A summary of this review, plans for the remainder of Field Studies and decisions arising from the process are to be submitted by the student in a Mid-Field Studies Report.

The mid-Field Studies review should focus on the workplace agreement which provides a reference point for reflection on experience to date and contributes to planning for the remainder of Field Studies. The Mid-Field Studies report should summarise progress towards learning objectives, strengths and areas for development and plans for the remainder of Field Studies.
In a situation where a student’s performance is considered to be below a satisfactory standard, the mid-Field Studies review should state the criteria to be met for the student’s performance to be considered satisfactory.

8.2.2 Field Studies Report

The Field Studies Report is submitted at the completion of Field Studies and should provide a comprehensive review of the Field Studies experience and student learning. As such it should cover the following:

- overview of major Field Studies activities and learning experiences;
- brief report on project outcomes;
- review of learning objectives and degree to which these were met, analysing individual, project, agency and other factors which influenced level of achievement;
- outline of future professional development needs and goals.

The Field Studies Report should be well structured, clearly written, comprehensive and analytical. It should be approximately 1500 words in length.

8.2.3 Presentation

Students will be required to present a review of their project at a class meeting in week 14 of semester 2. A time for this meeting will be negotiated with the class. Each student will have half an hour for presentation and questions and will be expected to address:

- An overview of the project.
- A review of strengths and limitations of the project.
- Reflections on learning through conduct of the project.

9.0 STUDENT IN DIFFICULTY

Evaluation is an ongoing process between student, Supervisor and the Field Studies Coordinator, and in almost all cases the relationship proceeds smoothly. However, where problems arise they should be discussed promptly, in a specific and constructive way which will allow for the relevant changes to be made. If it is considered by the Supervisor or the Field Studies Coordinator that the student is not meeting the requirements of Field Studies, then the student should be informed of this concern and the reasons for it. The following guidelines outline some specific steps and processes to be followed.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES IN THE CASE OF PLACEMENT BREAKDOWN

Withdrawal from a Course Containing a Placement


Changing your Enrolment

The last dates to withdraw without financial or academic penalty (called the HECS Census Dates) are:

For semester 1 courses: 31 March 2007
For semester 2 courses: 31 August 2007
For Trimester 1 courses: 18 February 2007
For Trimester 2 courses: 10 June 2007
Students may withdraw from a course without academic penalty on or before the last day of semester and prior to the commencement of the formal exam period. Any withdrawal from a course after the last day of semester will result in a fail grade.

Students cannot enrol in a new course after the second week of semester/trimester, except under exceptional circumstances. Any application to add a course after the second week of semester/trimester must be on the appropriate form, and should be discussed with relevant program officers at one of the available Hubs.

To change your enrolment online, please refer to
http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/enrolment/change-enrol.html

The Community Welfare and Human Services Field Studies placement in the Bachelor of Social Science will continue for the full 12 week Block except in certain circumstances.

These include:
The student being asked to leave the agency by the field educator due to inappropriate behaviour.
The student’s progress toward learning goals for the subject is of such a poor standard as judged by the field supervisor that it would not be possible to meet the required standard in the available time.
The agency is no longer viable for a placement for reasons such as funding, staffing, limited learning opportunities, occupational health and safety, or sexual harassment.
The personal circumstances of the student do not allow the student to continue.

In such circumstances the following procedures apply:

The student or agency supervisor contacts the university liaison person who then interviews both parties separately and together.
The appropriate documentation is submitted through the liaison person to the course coordinator and then to the School Examinations Committee. In a contested situation this will include reports from the field supervisor, the student and the university liaison person.

A School Examinations Committee will determine whether:
- the student can be allocated another placement to complete the field education requirements,
- withdrawal without penalty on compassionate grounds due to personal circumstances is warranted; or
- the student has failed the placement.

The Examinations Committee will consider allocation of another placement if progress has been satisfactory and it is through no fault of the student that the original placement could not continue. The Committee will determine on educational grounds the number of days to be completed in this placement to allow for a full and fair assessment of the student’s performance.

A student can be deemed by the Committee to have failed a placement at any time during the placement for failing to make satisfactory progress towards learning goals, serious breaches of agency protocols, or for breaches of the standards of behaviour listed above.

BACKGROUND READINGS


*Leedy, P. D., & Ormrod, J. E. (2001) Practical Research: Planning and Design, New Jersey: Merrill/Prentice Hall (this text is highly recommended as an excellent resource)


THE UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE

SCHOOL of HUMANITIES and SOCIAL SCIENCES

SPSW3015 HUMAN SERVICES & COMMUNITY WELFARE FIELD PRACTICUM

ASSESSMENT REPORT

NOTES TO SUPERVISORS

1. Refer to the Field Studies Manual for Guidance

2. If necessary, please attach additional comments.

3. Please discuss with student and have them sign the report.

3. Please complete and return within a fortnight of the end of the Field Studies to:

Dr ALEX BEVERIDGE
Discipline Coordinator: Community Welfare & Human Services Stream
Bachelor of Social Sciences
School of Humanities & Social Science
The University of Newcastle
University Drive
CALLAGHAN 2308
Phone: 02 4921 6772
STUDENT: __________________________________________
PART A: CHECKLIST OF BASIC TASKS
1. Has the student completed the Field Studies Project?
   YES       NO
2. Was the student able to complete a Field Studies working agreement?
   YES       NO
3. Did the student attend at all times as required by the Supervisor?
   YES       NO
4. Was there a mid-Field Studies review?
   YES       NO
5. Was it satisfactory?
   YES       NO
If no to any of the above, please elaborate below:
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________

PART B: PROFILE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY</th>
<th>(1) Unsatisfactory</th>
<th>(2) Satisfactory</th>
<th>(3) Good</th>
<th>(4) Very Good</th>
<th>(5) Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Approach to tasks</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Oral Communication Skills</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Written Communication Skills</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Organisation of Resources, time, etc</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Working with Staff</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Ability to Work Autonomously</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PART C: GENERAL REPORT

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

STRENGTHS AND ABILITIES:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

SIGNED:

AGENCY SUPERVISOR: ________________________________
STUDENT: ________________________________
DATE: ________________________________