



SWK 425-81E: Field Instruction I

COURSE SYLLABUS: Summer 2025

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Ahfiya Howard, DrPH, LMSW

Office Location: Henderson Building, 3rd Floor

Office Hours: Monday (Dallas Campus), by appointment

Office Phone: (903) 468-3040

University Email Address: ahfiya.howard@etamuc.edu

Preferred Form of Communication: Email

Communication Response Time: Within 2 business days

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Textbook(s) Required:

Birkenmaier, J. & Berg-Weger, M. (2018). *The practicum companion for social work: integrating class and field work* (4th ed.). Allyn & Bacon.

[BSW Field Education Manual](#)

Software Required:

- Tk20

- D2L (in MyLeo)
- Microsoft Office 365
Access FREE at:
<https://inside.tamuc.edu/facultystaffservices/academictechnology/documents/Office-365-Students.pdf>

Optional Texts and/or Materials:

Other readings may be assigned throughout this course and will be available in D2L.

Course Description

Students enrolled in this course participate in educationally directed field practice under supervision in a social service agency. Students must complete 160 clock hours of work in the field agency and attend a weekly university-instructed campus seminar designed to help students process and understand field experiences. Prerequisites: SWK 2361, 2362, 2389, 322, 325, 328, 329, 331, 348, 350, 370. Permission from the department is required; a GPA of 2.5 overall in the major is required to enter the field practicum.

Restricted to social work majors.

Relationship to Other Courses

Generalist Practice in the Field provides a curriculum to assist students in integrating the knowledge, skills, and values taught in all social work courses previously taken, including SWK 322, 325, 328, 329, 331, 340, 348, 350, and 370, apply in the field practicum setting. Students must be enrolled in SWK 422 Integration and Practice and SWK 425 Field I during the summer semester.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) requires a competency-based approach to identify and assess what students demonstrate in practice. In social work, this approach involves assessing students' ability to demonstrate the competencies identified in the educational policy. Listed below are the competencies and associated knowledge, skills, values, and cognitive and affective processes that comprise the expected outcomes for this course.

	Activity/Assessment	Dimension
Competency 1: Students will demonstrate ethical and professional behavior.		
Use ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, Relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research	Completion of the required field paperwork Engagement in Online/In-Class Discussions Completion of the Agency Paper	Knowledge, Skills

	Activity/Assessment	Dimension
and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context		
Use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations	Completion of the required paperwork Engagement in Online/In-Class Discussions Completion of the Agency Paper	Knowledge Skills

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

In this course, you will utilize the Learning Management Systems (LMS) D2L for instructional and learning opportunities, submitting assignments, participating in online synchronous and asynchronous discussions, accessing resources, and completing quizzes/tests. Additionally, you will need the knowledge and skills to use Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, and Outlook Email. If you have any issues with using the various systems or software, you must contact support services and notify the Instructor of the technical issue.

Instructional Methods

This course will be delivered via synchronous and asynchronous sessions via D2L. It will consist of live class sessions, pre-recorded lectures, group engagement activities, and various assignments, including experiential learning and practical application of the content areas. In addition, small lectures, discussion activities, and workshops may provide instruction during this course.

Student Responsibilities and Tips for Success in the Course

As a student in this course, you are responsible for engaging in active learning and reaching out to the Instructor if problems or challenges interfere with optimal learning. Communication is vital when engaged in a fully online, virtual environment.

Expectations for success include:

1. Always demonstrate professional behavior, including respect for the Instructor and peers; being open to feedback and guidance throughout this class and the program.
2. Adhered to the School of Social Work and University student code of conduct and NASW Code of Ethics.
3. Begin reading the assigned text and supplemental readings as soon as possible, focusing on completing all readings prior to engagement with the Instructor or peers.

4. Prepare to engage in live class sessions, discussions, and other activities so you can be a contributor as well as a receiver of knowledge and skills.
5. Actively participate in engagement activities, including live virtual class sessions, online discussions, and interactive learning opportunities -as this is vital for learning and success in both this course and the program.
6. Work ahead when possible. Complete assignments ahead of the due date so you are prepared to submit them on the due date.
7. Sign in to the D2L course shell multiple times weekly to access updated announcements or posted resources.
8. Check your university email daily. This is the university, department, and Instructor's official method of communication.

SEMINAR COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This course requires that students demonstrate effective time-management skills. Students must keep a [weekly timesheet](#) and social work journal. Each week, the seminar will cover a topic of relevance to the field practicum experience. These topics are detailed at the end of this syllabus under "Course Outline/Schedule." Each student must engage in a discussion exercise or watch a lecture on that week's topics. The Field Liaison will assign the final grade based on the student's performance at the internship site and completion of the requirements of this course. Ensure that you read the [BSW Field Education Manual](#), particularly the roles and responsibilities of all the parts (Field Education Director, Field Coordinator, Field Liaison, Field Instructor, Task Supervisor, and Student).

GRADING

The Field Practicum is graded based on multiple outcomes. Each student will be evaluated by their Field Instructor and Field Liaison and other Agency or Department Faculty as assigned to the student. The grading will also include seminar participation based on time spent signed in BrightSpace course shell, input from the Field Liaison (Instructor of this course), and timely submission of required internship documentation. The Faculty Liaison shall determine the final grade by assigning a letter grade for the student's performance during the semester.

If the final field evaluation is lower than a "C," the student will fail the course, as well as the field practicum.

*** Failure to complete the required clock hours per semester in the practicum setting automatically constitutes a failing grade.

Field Documentation & Assessments

Field Documentation	Responsible	Due
Time Sheets	Student	Weekly in TK20
Field Journal	Student	Weekly in D2L
Chapter Reading Assignments	Student	Weeks throughout the semester
Student, Field Instructor & Field Agency Contact Form	Student	Week 1 (Laserfiche form)
Confidentiality Agreement	Student	Week 1 in TK20
Field Schedule	Student	Week 2 in TK20
Field Safety Plan	Student	Week 2 in TK20
Field Learning Contract	Student	Week 3 in TK20
Acknowledgement of Learning Contract	Field Instructor	Week 3 in TK20
Agency Presentations	Student	Begins Week 3
Discussion Exercises on Video Lectures	Student	Weeks throughout the semester
Midterm Evaluation: Check-ups conducted over Zoom or phone	Field Liaison	Scheduled with each Student and their Field Instructors
Student Evaluation of Placement	Student	Week 9 in TK20
Field Practicum Assessment	Field Instructor	Week 9 in TK20
Acknowledgment of Reviewing the Learning Evaluation	Student	Week 10 in TK20
Field Instructor Evaluation Input of Program	Field Instructor	Week 10 in TK20
Evaluation of Learning Field Practicum	Field Liaison	Week 10 in TK20

GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90%-100% of total points

B = 80%-89%

C = 70%-79%

D = 60%-69%

F = 59% or Below

Evaluation for the course grade is according to the following formula:

Assessments	Value
Field Journal	25 pts.
Reading/Participation	10 pts.
Documentation	40 pts.
Agency Presentation	25 pts.
Field Evaluation	100 pts
TOTAL	200 pts.

1. Field Journal (25 pts)

The field journal is a log or journal to help you integrate your field experience and classroom learning. This journaling method will enable you to explore your reactions to the agency, your clients, and your professional development.

The journal is also a mechanism for two-way communication. It allows you to share information with me and for me to give you feedback directly. This information will not be shared with your Field Instructor (unless there is a concern and I ask your permission first).

You will not be graded on writing mechanics, but you will make an effort to write legibly commensurate with a senior student in this Social Work program.

The more descriptive you are, the more valuable your journal will be. However, do not write "The Great American Novel". Be direct and concise as possible! You should have an entry for **each day** you are in the field. Your entries should be at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of a page long per day spent at the internship site. The following questions are intended to guide your thinking and entries in your journal:

- Summarize the activities or tasks in which you participated during the week. Does this summary reflect tasks and goals established in your learning plan? Can you identify them? (2.5 pts)
- Select a social work skill (e.g., listening, observing, record keeping, interviewing, problem-solving, confronting, facilitating a group) discussed in class. Were you satisfied with your skill level? Explain. (5 pts)
- What happened during the day that was important? Challenging? Forced you to use creativity or judgment? (5 pts)
- What were your feelings about the day's events? Were there particularly strong emotions as a result of something someone said or did? (5 pts)

- What questions do you have unresolved about the day? About a client situation, agency policy, or a value dilemma. (5 pts)
- What did you discover about yourself – your strengths, weaknesses, skills, or personality? (2.5 pts)

2. Reading Assignments/Participation (10 pts)

Assigned chapters are listed in the schedule, and you are expected to read the assigned chapter for the week. You will need to purchase the textbook. The textbook listed above will be the same one we will use during the Fall Semester.

3. Agency Presentations (25 pts)

As a future social worker eager to apply your professional skills, it is essential to understand your agency, including its impact on the world and the world's impact on it.

Thus, in this assignment, you are tasked with researching the agency you are assigned at for your field. Using appropriate resources, you are to examine your agency's characteristics in reference to the social work profession, highlighting the services it provides.

In 8-10 PowerPoint slides, provide the following information:

- Name, location, years in service (1 pts)
- Brief history of the agency (2 pts)
- Agency's goals/mission statement and comparison to your learning contract and NASW values (2 pts)
- Detailed description of services provided (5 pts)
- Definition and description of the characteristics of the population(s) your agency serves (eg, low-income, at-risk youth, adolescents, and adults) (5 pts)
- A description of the sources of funding for your agency (5 pts)
- A description of your agency's organizational structure, OMHC (you could include the agency's organizational chart) 8. Include 2 peer-reviewed references (5 pts)

You will make your presentation live or on video, which will then be made available to your classmates. Further instructions will be provided at the start of the semester.

4. Documentation (40 pts)

- Agency Contact Form (5 pts)
- Time Sheets (10 pts)
- Confidentiality Form (5 pts)
- Safety Form (5 pts)
- Learning Contract (10 pts)
- Student Field Practicum Evaluation Form (5 pts)

5. Field Evaluation (Field Instructor) (100 pts)

6. Reading Assignments/Class Participation (10 pts)

Due Date Policy

Late work will be reduced by 25% for the first day and then 5% for each day after.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are the technical requirements:

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

Interaction with Instructor Statement

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor via email. The Instructor will respond to email queries within two business days.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may require the Instructor to modify it during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures

Ethical Behavior

The School of Social Work expects all students to conduct themselves in an ethical, professional manner in the classroom and field settings consistent with the [NASW Code of Ethics](#).

University Code of Conduct

Texas A&M University-Commerce has established standards of conduct to create and foster an environment that facilitates student learning and development. Students and university student groups are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that demonstrates respect for the rights and property of others and is consistent with the educational goals and mission of the university. This Code of Student Conduct ("Code") focuses on personal responsibility and accountability for students' actions and the impact those actions may have on the greater community. To access student academic and behavioral expectations for students refer to the [Student Guidebook](#).

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

TAMUC Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage (or copy/paste the following URL in your web browser:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>)

If a student believes the final grade is unfairly impacted by attendance requirements, an appeal can be made. This appeal process is explained in ["Student Appeal of Instructor Evaluation" - Procedure 13.99.99.R0.05](#).

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty, see the following procedures:

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10](#)
[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)
[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

University Rules on Research

Students involved in conducting research and/or scholarly activities at Texas A&M University-Commerce must also adhere to standards set forth in [University Procedure 15.99.03.R1 Ethics in Research, Scholarship, and Creative Work](#).

AI use in the course

Texas A&M University-Commerce acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that can generate text or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the course instructor.

Any use of such software must be documented. Undocumented use constitutes academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow the use of such software entirely for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided, the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web URL:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

A&M-Commerce Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connections to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

School of Social Work & Council on Social Work Education-Specific Policies

Course Engagement

Final Evaluation and Grade Depend on both Classroom Attendance and Participation. Inadequate participation or lack of required time commitment in each class significantly affects students' grades. No matter the course venue, students must engage in a comparable amount of time. Expectations of both Face-to-Face classes and those with Online components include time spent reading and studying course material. To earn a level of competency within a specific course, students must demonstrate mastery of BOTH content and active engagement.

Mastery of content areas is evidenced by the successful completion of course assignments such as written papers, group project deliverables, tests/quizzes, and other tangible products designed by instructors to evaluate knowledge and skills.

Additionally, the Social Work Profession is built upon human interactions and building human relationships – which is defined as engagement. Engagement in each course is the meaningful involvement in interactions with the Instructor, peers, and outside stakeholders as appropriate (such as contacting a social worker to interview for a required assignment or interviewing for an internship). Within the classroom setting, whether virtual or Face-to-Face (F2F), students must actively participate in 80% of engagement activities as outlined by individual instructors. These activities may include, but are not limited to, participation in live, synchronous virtual classes, attending a F2F course when appropriate, interacting with peers in posted discussions, and collaborating in group interactive projects.

Students must meet standards for content mastery on tangible assignments and meet the threshold of active engagement of the time set during a semester by the Instructor.

Instructors are experts in each course content area and set the standards for students to meet to successfully complete each course.

Class Attendance and Participation

Face-to-Face Classes

Students are expected to attend classes scheduled to meet Face-to-Face, reflecting the responsibility inherent in developing as a social work professional. Roll call will be taken regularly. Students are expected to be on time and prepared to participate when class begins, as well as, be present throughout the entire class meeting. Classroom exercises, discussions, role plays, guest speakers, and other in-class experiential exercises are essential for a student's professional learning and continued development of self-awareness.

For classes that meet once a week, students can be absent up to 2 times through the semester with no penalty. If **3 absences** occur, the overall grade will be **dropped 1 letter grade**. If **4 absences occur** (25% of the scheduled classes), the student will be **dropped 2 letter grades** or may result in failing the class.

Online, Web-Enhanced Or Blended Classes

Just as students are required to attend face-to-face classes, students are required to log in and participate in online components. To receive credit for attendance online via D2L, students must log in and complete assignments in a timely manner. Not logging in to D2L to review the instructional material and completing assignments online during the appropriate time is the equivalent of an absence for each week this occurs.

Final evaluation and grades depend on both presence and participation. Students' grades will be significantly impacted by inadequate participation or lack of required time commitment each week established by each Instructor. Students are expected to spend a comparable amount of time in the online learning environment as they would in class (3 hours a week in the classroom). In addition, as in traditional F2F classrooms, students are expected to invest time in reading and studying class materials.

Student Conduct

Students preparing to become professional social workers must adhere to the *University Code of Conduct*, *Department Code of Conduct* and the *National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics*.

Department Code of Conduct

The Academic and Professional Issues Committee (API) hearing is the formal path of due process for a student in regard to the concern being expressed. A student will be referred to the School of Social Work's API by faculty, field instructors, or faculty field liaisons when a concern arises regarding academic and student conduct and/or professional preparation. When "a student who fails to meet the professional expectation of the field for which he/she is preparing may be suspended from further study in that program by the department administering that program" as demonstrated through ethical and/or legal violations; aberrant disregard for School of Social Work Code of Conduct or other concerns as determined by the [Academic and Professional Issues Committee](#).

Graduate Students have the right to appeal to the Graduate Dean according to [University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.39](#).

Undergraduate Students have the right to appeal to the Dean of the College of Education and Human Services according to [University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.41](#)

COURSE OUTLINE / SCHEDULE

***See the Documentation Table on p. 5 to follow up with the Field Instructor on their documentation due date.

Week	Class Content and Readings	Assignments & Documentation Due
Week 1 06/02/2025	Introduction to Field Practicum & Use of Tk20 Readings: Syllabus & Ch. 1; NASW Code of Ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time Sheet • Field Journal • Student, Field Instructor & Field Agency Contact Form • Confidentiality Agreement
Week 2 06/9/2025	Introduction to Field Practicum & Use of Tk20 Reading: Ch.1 cont'd; NASW Code of Ethics cont'd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time Sheet • Field Journal • Field Schedule • Field Safety Plan
Week 3 06/16/2025 Holiday: June 19th (Juneteenth)	Socialization into the SW Profession & Learning Plan Development Reading: Ch. 2; NASW Code of Ethics cont'd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time Sheet • Field Journal • Field Learning Plan/Contract
Week 4 06/23/2025	Socialization into the SW Profession & Learning Plan Development Reading: Ch. 2 cont'd; NASW Code of Ethics cont'd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time Sheet • Field Journal • Agency Contact Form, Safety Plan, Confidentiality Form, Learning Contract Due: Sunday, June 22nd
Week 5 06/30/2025 Midterm Exam Week Holiday: July 4th (Independence Day)	Safety in the Social Work Setting Readings: Ch. 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time Sheet • Field Journal • Agency Presentation
Week 6 07/07/2025	Safety in the Social Work Setting Readings: Ch. 3 cont'd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time Sheet • Field Journal • Agency Presentation

Week 7 07/14/2025	Making the Most of Supervision Reading: Ch. 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time Sheet • Field Journal • Agency Presentation
Week 8 07/21/2025	Organizational Context Reading Ch. 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time Sheet • Field Journal • Agency Presentation
Week 9 07/28/2025	Organizational Context Reading Ch. 5 cont'd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time Sheet • Field Journal • Field Evaluation- Field Instructor • Student Evaluation of Placement
Week 10 08/04/2025	Semester Wrap-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All items below are due Monday, Aug. 4th • Time Sheet • Field Journal • Field Evaluation- Field Instructor • Student Evaluation of Placement