



**METROPOLITAN  
STATE UNIVERSITY<sup>SM</sup>  
OF DENVER**

**Department of Human Services  
and Counseling**

**Student Field Manual**

**Updated January 2021**

## What Students Need to Know about Field Placement

*“Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience.”  
David Kolb, 1984*

### Welcome to your field placement experience!

Internships offer you the opportunity to apply the knowledge gained from your courses to real life situations and gain hands-on experience in the field of Human Services. A central component of learning in internship is developing the ability to reflect upon your experience.

### Reflection – the key to experiential learning:

Reflection is the process of making meaning from your experiences. Your ability to reflect during your internship is crucial to the learning process and your personal growth and development. Your field placement will provide you with ample opportunities to “make meaning” in many different ways and in many different situations and relationships, including:

- Your own emotions, reactions, values, and behaviors;
- Your relationships with your supervisor(s), co-workers, clients, other professional colleagues, other students, and seminar instructor;
- The issues and problems the agency is working to address and the challenges the agency faces;
- The context the agency operates within;
- The context the clients live in;
- The values of different cultural groups.

### Who’s involved in the field course?

A team of individuals are involved in your field learning experience. While you will seek support and encouragement from friends and family, this manual defines and describes the roles of several key players in the field placement—inside and outside the University.

In the Human Services and Counseling Department at MSU Denver, your primary resources are the **field coordinator** and the **seminar instructor**. The field coordinator will meet with you for advising and placement support prior to the start of the field class. Your seminar instructor will teach the field class and handle all aspects of your placement throughout the semester. The seminar instructor and field coordinator will be your main points of contact at school, but you will contact the department chair for appeals in any of the processes defined in this manual.

In addition to the University support provided by your field coordinator and seminar instructor, you will have an assigned **field supervisor** at your placement agency. Your field supervisor will provide you with at least one-hour of scheduled, weekly supervision, as well as provide the day-to-day training and direction necessary to guide you through the hours you spend at the site.

### **Overview of Required Field Classes and Credits:**

The following information includes **departmental policies and procedures** relating to your placement. If you have questions about any of this information or need advising, please ask the field coordinator or your seminar instructor.

#### **Know your Degree Requirements and Catalog Year:**

Your **degree catalog year** outlines the classes you will be required to complete in order to graduate. Be sure to identify your catalog year and the corresponding field requirements on your **Degree Progress Report**. It is your responsibility to know your specific field requirements and to communicate this information to your placement agency and field supervisor.

To help you remember these important details, please use your Degree Progress Report (found in the Student Hub) as well as the this Student Field Manual to write-in your degree requirements here:

**Catalog Year:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Required Field Course(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Concentration:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Required Field Hours:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Prerequisites for Field Experience:**

You will complete your field experience(s) toward the end of your degree. In doing so, you will be able to apply the knowledge gained in your classes to the real-life situations you encounter during your placement.

#### **Prerequisites for HSP 2080: Practicum (\*HSP 4770: Internship I):**

- **HSP 1010**—Introduction to Human Services
- **\*HSP 1020**—Introduction to Trauma Informed Care
- **HSP 2020**—Small Group Dynamics
  - Nonprofit students take **HSP 2010** – Principles of Nonprofit Organization Administration
- **HSP 2030**—Theory and Practice of Counseling
  - Nonprofit students have a choice between **HSP 2780** – Building a Sustainable Nonprofit or **HSP 3510** – The People of Nonprofits
- **HSP 2070**—Pre-Field Placement Seminar
- **HSP 3330**—Ethical and Legal Issues in Human Services
- **\*HSP 3490**—Multicultural Issues in Human Services

\*2020-2021 Catalog Year and forward

#### **Prerequisites for HSP 4790: Professional Internship (\*HSP 4780: Internship II):**

- Completion of **all** General Studies courses (yes, this means math!)
- **HSP 2080**—Practicum (**\*HSP 4770**—Internship I)
  - **HSP 3090**—Practicum II (Addiction Studies students only)
- **\*HSP 3560**—Motivational Interviewing
- **\*HSP 3710**—Research Methods and Program Evaluation in Human Services

\*2020-2021 Catalog Year and forward

**Field Hour Requirements by Concentration for 2010-2019 Catalog Years:**

Catalog Year	Concentration	300 Hours	600 Hours	750 Hours	1050 Hours
2010-2019	Addiction Studies (ADD)				Required
2010-2019	High Risk Youth Studies (HRY)			Required	
2010-2019	Mental Health Counseling (MHC)			Required	
2010-2019	Nonprofit Studies (NP)			Required	

**Field Hour Requirements by Concentration for 2020-2021 and forward Catalog Years:**

Catalog Year	Concentration	300 Hours	600 Hours	750 Hours	1050 Hours
2020-2021	Addiction Studies (ADD)				Required
2020-2021	High Risk Youth Studies (HRY)		Required		
2020-2021	Mental Health Counseling (MHC)		Required		
2020-2021	Nonprofit Studies (NP)	Required			
2020-2021	Trauma Studies (TS)		Required		

**Number of hours and credits:**

Most field placements require students to complete a total of **300 hours** over a given semester. To accomplish this, students need to average 20 hours per week for 15 weeks (spring and fall semesters) or 30 hours per week for 10 weeks (summer semester).

If also completing a required 450-hour placement, students will need to average 30 hours per week for 15 weeks (spring and fall semesters—not available during the summer semester). Students may choose to complete the **450-hour requirement** on a **part-time** basis where they complete **225 hours a semester for two consecutive semesters** and are registered for 6 credit hours each semester. Students may register for part-time internship during the spring, summer, or fall semesters.

Be mindful of your full semester commitment when planning your hours at the agency. Students must complete their hours throughout the semester:

- Students cannot end their placement earlier than two weeks prior to the end of the semester.
- Students must complete all hours by the end of the semester—an inability to complete the hours during the semester will not warrant an incomplete.

Any concerns regarding hours must be discussed with the field coordinator **prior** to the semester.

**Seminar Class:**

In addition to the weekly hour commitment at the agency, students must attend a seminar class every other week throughout the fall and spring semesters. Students attend a seminar class every week throughout the summer semester. Class assignments are based on your experiences at the agency. The in-class portion of your field experience may be somewhat different from a typical class. It is definitely not a lecture class. Rather, think of the class as a learning community in which everyone is there to support each other's learning and growth. The seminar instructor shares information, provides perspective, and offers tools to help you have a successful field experience.

## Before the Field Semester

### **HSP 2070—Pre-Field Placement Seminar:**

This one-credit class, taught by the field coordinator and offered every semester, is designed to prepare you for field placement and includes resume, cover letter, and interviewing support as well as recommendations and resources for searching and securing an appropriate placement site.

### **Registering for Practicum and Internship:**

You need to schedule a meeting with the **field coordinator** in order to be registered for practicum or internship. During this meeting you will discuss your possible placement site(s), receive department advising, and create a plan to graduate. **The field sections and appointments with the field coordinator are a first-come, first-serve basis.**

### **Policies Related to Field Registration:**

The following policies and procedures were adopted by MSU Department of Human Services and Counseling to support student success in the field placement experience.

- If you are in recovery from drug and/or alcohol addiction, the MSU Denver Department of Human Services and Counseling requires that you have been **clean and sober for a minimum of one and a half years (1 ½ years)** prior to registering for field placement.
- If you are on probation or parole, you are required to **complete** that probation/parole prior to field placement.
- You may not seek placement at an agency where you have been a client in the last five years.
- You must maintain at least a 2.0 GPA in order to qualify for field placement.

Additionally, you may be **placed on a temporary or permanent hold from field courses** if your history includes **one or more** of the following:

- A current incomplete or an incomplete in the previous four semesters
- Prior removal from a placement (either by the agency or the HSP department)
- An improvement plan from the HSP Professional Review Team
- A conviction (felony or misdemeanor) in the past two years
- A violation of the MSU Denver Student Code of Conduct

If any of these issues impact you, **you must disclose** this information to the field coordinator during your advising appointment. The field coordinator will work with you to determine a strategy to complete your MSU Denver degree.

### **Registering for Other Courses While in Practicum/Internship:**

Practicum and internship demand a lot of time and energy. For this reason, students are discouraged from taking more than 15-credits during a field placement semester. Students who wish to take more than 16-credits during a field semester need to discuss their schedule with the field coordinator. Students should plan to take internship during their final semester.

### **Finding a Placement Site:**

It is the **responsibility of the student** to secure a field placement. It is essential that you begin the process of finding a site well in advance (2-3 months is recommended) of the placement deadline. **You must have a placement by the deadline provided by the field coordinator (generally 3-4 weeks before the start of the semester) or you will be administratively dropped from the class.** The field coordinator has final approval of your placement agency and will support you through the placement selection process.

### **Criteria for Field Supervisors:**

Your field supervisor must have a **master's degree** in Human Services, Social Work, Counseling, Behavioral or Social Sciences or a related field. An exception to this requirement may be made if the supervisor has a bachelor's degree and at least 10 years of appropriate professional experience necessary to create a positive learning environment for you. To request an exception, students must have their proposed supervisor email their resume to the field coordinator.

### **Placement Site Approvals:**

Students complete an electronic Application for Academic Credit through Career Link (in the Student Hub). The form requires students to list their agency information, supervisor credentials, weekly schedule, primary responsibilities, and learning objectives. Upon submission, the field coordinator will review the site information and, if approved, the form will be sent electronically to your supervisor for completion.

### **Private Psychotherapy Clinic Settings:**

Field experience benefits students by providing exposure not only to client interactions but also to agency dynamics and industry challenges. For this reason, field placements in private practice, remote, or home-based settings are rarely approved. Instead, students are encouraged to explore larger agency settings that provide a wide range of services to clients.

Private practice settings will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis using the following criteria:

- engages with multiple external points of contact within the larger social services delivery system (e.g., schools, courts, families, etc);
- articulates a defined mission and agency policies and procedures that align with the Department of Human Services and Counseling;
- utilizes a structured intake process;
- provides diverse training opportunities for students to engage in differing treatment modalities (e.g., individual, couple, family, group);
- creates a learning environment where students progress on a continuum that begins with opportunities to shadow/observe and move towards co-facilitation of groups;
- offers a supervision plan that includes ongoing feedback.

**Note:** This is not an exhaustive list, rather, it is an attempt to explain the rationale behind site approval.

### **Unique Learning Experiences:**

**Each placement must be a new learning experience.** Students may accomplish this by completing placements at different agencies or by completing different responsibilities at the same agency. Different position responsibilities must be documented for continuing placements. Different agencies and/or responsibilities allow students to explore various career opportunities, grow their professional network, and learn new types and styles of supervision.

### **Using Your Employment for Practicum or Internship:**

It is permissible for you to use your job for practicum and internship hours but your position **responsibilities and tasks must go beyond your current job duties.** If you opt to use your employment (part-time or full-time) for Practicum or Internship, Metropolitan State University of Denver and the Department of Human Services and Counseling are not responsible or liable for situations that occur as a result of employment. If you are having difficulties as an employee, we strongly encourage you to discuss, handle, or resolve those issues through processes and structures available to you as an employee.

**Dual relationships cannot exist** between you and your proposed site and/or supervisor. Examples of this include: adjunct faculty who hold positions at a potential field placement or personal relationships developed prior to enrolling at MSU Denver. If you have any concerns about a potential dual relationship, please discuss your situation with the Field Coordinator.

#### **Supervision Hours:**

You must participate in the equivalent of **one hour per week** of individual or small group supervision. CAC certification requires that the group supervised include no more than six individuals. Keep your seminar instructor informed about the type of supervision you are receiving. Keep in mind that individual supervision offers a vital learning experience and support for your professional development and growth. Even if you plan to participate in group supervision, you must have some one-on-one supervision time with your supervisor to develop the learning contract and for evaluation.

#### **Addiction Certification:**

Students who are seeking hours towards the Certified Addictions Technician (CAT) must complete 1,000 hours of field service in agencies that provide services in the area of drug and alcohol addiction and be supervised by an individual with a **CAC III** or Licensed Addictions Counselor (**LAC**) in order for those hours to count toward certification. Your field supervisor will need to sign the **Work Verification Form (WVF)** to verify the hours that you worked. Details of the application process and the WVF can be found on the Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA) website at <http://www.dora.state.co.us>.

**Tip for success:** *Print a copy of the **Work Verification Form** from the DORA website. Be sure to discuss the form with your supervisor and have the work verification section of the form signed and completed by the end of your placement. Don't wait until you are ready to apply for your CAC certification to get your supervisor's signature.*

#### **Domestic Violence:**

If you are seeking State approval to work with domestic violence offenders and want your practicum/internship hours to count, your supervisor must be an approved **Domestic Violence Clinical Supervisor**. For information about the Standards for Treatment for Court Ordered Domestic Violence Offenders and provider qualifications, see the Colorado Office of Domestic Violence and Sex Offender Management website at <http://www.dcj.state.co.us/odvsom>.

#### **Background Checks:**

Each of you has a unique story, which draws you to the field of Human Services, and there are situations where that history may include arrests, convictions, or jail time. We strongly encourage you to consider running a Criminal History Check on yourself prior to field courses: <https://www.cbirecordscheck.com/Index.aspx?CLS=N>.

It is very important, as you formulate your place in this field, that you are aware that many felonies or combinations of misdemeanors may make you unable to find employment. Our high risk youth concentration is generally the most restrictive for individuals with criminal histories, and most agencies will require a background check before accepting students as interns. As such, please discuss your criminal history with the field coordinator. The earlier you have this conversation the more likely it is that you will be able to make informed decisions about your course selections and career path.

**Liability Insurance:**

Students in unpaid placements will be covered by the University's Workers' Compensation and Professional Liability insurance during the field semester. Even so, you may still want to consider purchasing your own liability insurance. There are a couple of ways for students to access insurance. One way is by becoming a member of the Colorado Association of Addiction Professionals (CAAP) which offers a discounted student membership rate. Joining CAAP automatically includes membership in NAADAC: The Association for Addiction Professionals. You are then eligible for any insurance policies available to members. If you want insurance, you are responsible for applying for and paying for the insurance.

Another option for insurance is through Healthcare Providers Service Organization (HPSO), which offers liability insurance for students for approximately \$30 per year. For details, see [www.hpso.com](http://www.hpso.com) or call 1-800-982-9491. The MSU Denver Department of Human Services and Counseling offers this information to assist you with finding insurance resources, not as an endorsement of HPSO.

**Field Placement Out-of-State or Abroad:**

Students interested in doing a field placement out-of-state or abroad must meet the following criteria:

- 3.25 or above cumulative GPA
- Recommendation from a full-time department faculty member

The field coordinator, field faculty, and department chair will review the request and send the response via email. If the request is approved, the student must meet with the seminar instructor prior to leaving town to discuss the placement. Any student approved to do the placement abroad, must register with the MSU Denver Study Abroad Advisor and show the field coordinator documentation that you have completed all paperwork required by the Study Abroad Office and have purchased study abroad insurance.

**Field Education Strategies for Remote/Virtual Learning:**

The following recommendations were created to support students when remote/virtual learning is required in order to continue to accrue field hours:

- Participate in remote meetings, support groups, or any other agency services
- Attend virtual meetings and relevant online trainings
- Contact clients to inform them how to access supportive services available to the community
- Create flyers with information about local services for basic needs and support groups offered to help with healing after traumatic experiences
- Create lists of referrals to other community resources that clients might need
- Develop awareness posts to be used on the agency's website and/or social media accounts

This is in no way an exhaustive list. Students should always work with their agency supervisor and seminar instructor to identify specific activities that support learning goals established in their learning contract as well as incorporate other activities that foster development of the field competencies.

**During the Field Semester****Field Seminar Attendance:**

As with any of your other classes, attendance and participation in the field seminar course is expected and mandatory. Per department policy, students who miss one quarter of a course will automatically fail. **The seminar instructor may drop any student from the class who misses the first class session of the semester.** Your instructor will define assignments and expectations for the course; however, these hours do not count toward your 300 or 450 hours of field experience. The course is designed to support student success in field placement as well as offer information, tools, and guidance to help you learn from your experience. The practicum and internship seminar classes are interactive and provide an opportunity for students to learn from each other and demonstrate their professional readiness for work in the field.

**Agency/Supervisor Responsibilities:**

Before beginning hours at your agency, work with your supervisor to complete an electronic Application for Academic Credit through Career Link (in the Student Hub).

**The Field Placement Supervisor Agrees to:**

- Provide one hour of Master's-level supervision per week throughout the placement
- Collaborate with the student in the development of a learning contract
- Participate in a site visit with the seminar instructor
- Provide ongoing feedback, including a mid-term evaluation and a final evaluation
- Review and uphold the policies and procedures outlined in the Supervisor Field Manual
- Provide an orientation to the agency and training for the student to be successful
- Demonstrate policies and procedures that meet professional and ethical standards
- Contact the seminar instructor as quickly as possible with concerns about the student

**The Student Agrees to:**

- Coordinate a site visit with the seminar instructor and field supervisor
- Uphold the Ethical Standards of Human Services Professionals and follow relevant guidelines in the CO Mental Health Statute (e.g. mandated reporting)
- Discuss concerns with the field supervisor and/or seminar instructor as quickly as possible
- Attend and participate in the seminar class
- Uphold the policies and procedures outlined in the Student Field Manual

**Safety and Scope of Practice:**

Given that MSU Denver students are undergraduates, you are not trained to perform some duties that might be expected of a graduate student in a field placement. As such, please be aware of the duties that are appropriate and inappropriate for you to do at the site.

**Students in unpaid placements MAY NOT:**

- Drive clients
- Restrain clients
- Provide individual psychotherapy for a client
- Lead psychotherapy groups without a qualified therapist present
- Open or close an agency
- Be left alone at an agency
- Provide direct observation of a urinalysis
- Have a case load of clients for which the student has sole responsibility

An exception can be made for students who are paid employees at an agency and are performing the activity as a part of the normal work expectation for that position and who have received training that supports safety for the student, staff, and clients.

**Students ARE ENCOURAGED TO:**

- Shadow professionals in one-on-one sessions with clients and in groups
- Co-facilitate groups with an employee at the agency
- Participate in staff meetings and training opportunities
- Conduct intakes after proper training
- Write chart notes and complete other agency documentation after proper training
- Enter client documentation and other data into computer systems

### **Title IX: Protection from Discrimination and Harassment**

Title IX is a federal law that prohibits sex-based discrimination on college campuses. In accordance with Title IX, MSU Denver strictly prohibits acts of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, and dating. Your field placement, although off-campus, is an extension of the classroom. For this reason, **students are protected under Title IX even as they are acting as a student intern at their placement.** No student will be retaliated against or failed from a placement course for filing a complaint related to sexual misconduct or participating in an investigation. Students should consult their Seminar Instructor and Field Coordinator if they are experiencing harassment or discrimination. The Department will problem-solve any situation on a case-by-case basis to ensure that a student's graduation plan is not disrupted.

### **Worker's Compensation:**

- Students in an **unpaid** practicum/internship are covered by the **MSU Denver** Professional Liability and Worker's Compensation Insurance plan.
- Students in a **paid** practicum/internship placement are covered by the **agency** plan. Please ask your field supervisor for details of that plan.

Information about MSU Denver Worker's Compensation policies and procedures, including a list of providers/ locations/ hours, will be provided to you by the field coordinator. Keep in mind that you must use a MSU Denver approved provider for any medical treatment in cases of on-the-job injury at an unpaid placement. You must tell your field supervisor, field coordinator, seminar instructor, and the Metropolitan State University of Denver Office of Human Resources about the injury within 24 hours.

### **Federal Work Study:**

Some non-profit agencies may qualify to utilize Federal Work-Study Funds to pay students. The student must be awarded Federal Work-Study funds in order to qualify. The agency pays 25% of the total amount the student is awarded. For example, if a student receives an award of \$2500 per semester, the agency would need to pay \$625 of that amount. Details are available in the *Work-Study Handbook for Off-Campus Agency Supervisors* found on the Human Resources website.

## **Elements of a Successful Placement**

### **Professional Behavior and Dress:**

Arrive at your placement consistently and on time and behave in a respectful and professional manner. Ask your field supervisor about the protocol for missing work due to illness or emergency. You are expected to dress appropriately and professionally while in your field placement. Ask your field supervisor whether the agency has a dress code. If there is no specific dress code, discuss guidelines on appropriate dress with your field supervisor. Pay attention to your colleagues in the agency to see what the dressing norms are for the agency. If you are working directly with clients or the public, be aware of the impact of what you wear. Extremely flashy colors or jewelry, provocative clothing, or clothing with political statements may impede the helping relationship and/or create a negative impression for the public.

### **Developing a Learning Contract:**

In order to make the most effective use of your time in field placement, you will develop a learning contract that defines the learning goals you set for yourself and establishes learning activities that support your goals. Developing a learning contract should be done in collaboration with your field supervisor and will be explained in Pre-field Seminar and clarified by your seminar instructor. The learning contract provides focus to your field placement and clarifies your learning needs. **See Appendix D.**

**Effective use of Supervision:**

Your relationship with your field supervisor at your placement site is central to the learning experience. To make effective use of your supervision time and experience, be an active participant in the process. Be sure to prepare for meetings with your supervisor. Write a list of questions before the meeting. Be open and share your concerns with your supervisor.

Supervision meetings offer you an opportunity to clarify policies and procedures, seek feedback on your performance, and ask for guidance related to specific situations and clients. It also offers you a time to plan for activities and projects. Learning how to be open to feedback is a crucial element of professional and personal development. You may have to be assertive to get your supervision needs met in agencies where supervisors have limited time.

**Site Visits:**

Your seminar instructor will meet with you and your supervisor (in-person or virtually) at least once over the semester. This meeting provides an opportunity for you, your seminar instructor, and your field supervisor to discuss your performance as well as any feedback on the overall field placement experience. You may request an additional site visit if you need assistance resolving an issue at the placement agency. Additionally, if your field supervisor contacts your seminar instructor to discuss concerns, your seminar instructor and field supervisor may decide an additional visit is appropriate.

**Evaluation:**

Students in practicum and internship complete a **mid-term review** of their learning contract as part of the evaluation process. This is a great opportunity to renegotiate your learning goals with your field supervisor.

At the end of the placement, you and your field supervisor will each complete an electronic field evaluation. Your field supervisor will rate your success in the **Department of Human Services and Counseling Field Competencies (See Appendix C)**. Please schedule a time to meet with your field supervisor to review and discuss their feedback on the evaluation. Student and supervisor final evaluations are both required and will have an impact on your final grade for the class.

**Switching Placement Sites:**

Switching placement sites during the semester is strongly discouraged. There are times, however, when a change of sites may be the best option. Before making a decision to leave a placement site, you **must** have a conversation with your seminar instructor and receive permission to make the change. If your seminar instructor approves the change, it is your responsibility to speak to your field supervisor and give notice to the agency. Typically, two weeks' notice is considered appropriate. You must have your field supervisor complete the supervisor evaluation even if you were at the site only briefly.

Generally, you will lose the hours from your placement, but you may negotiate with your seminar instructor to determine if any of the hours from the previous placement will count. If the instructor allows you to keep the hours, you will need to provide a signed timesheet. A site visit/termination meeting with the field supervisor and seminar instructor will be the final step in the process of transitioning out of a field placement agency. It is an important learning process to handle the transition in a professional manner.

## **Professional Standards and Ethical Issues**

You are expected to maintain the standards of the Human Services profession defined in the **Ethical Standards of Human Services Professionals (See Appendix A)** developed by the National Organization for Human Services. The Department of Human Services and Counseling has a Professional Conduct Policy (**See Appendix B**) that may be applied in situations when student behavior in class or at an agency raises concerns.

You are expected to follow the **policies and procedures** defined by your placement agency as well as the MSU Denver Student Code of Conduct. Ask your supervisor for agency policies and procedures in your first week on the job. Read these policies and procedures carefully. If you have questions, ask for clarification.

If you are working directly with clients, you will also need to be aware of and follow the guidelines in the **Colorado Mental Health Statutes**. The statutes contains a list of prohibited activities and legal guidelines.

### **Confidentiality:**

Confidentiality of client information is required by codes of ethics as well as legal standards. Agencies should have client confidentiality policies and procedures in place. Ask your field supervisor for details. The Colorado Mental Health Statute requires that you protect client confidentiality except in very specific situations.

### **Dual Relationships:**

A dual relationship occurs when you develop a relationship with a client (or supervisor or co-worker) that is outside the bounds of your relationship as a helping professional. The most typical dual relationship is forming a friendship or dating relationship with a client. Never date or make sexual comments to a client, and avoid friendships with clients. During your placement, it is wise to avoid dual relationships with supervisors and co-workers as well. There are other forms of dual relationships beyond dating and friendship. For example, being personally employed by a client, supervisor, or co-worker or employing a client or co-worker is a dual relationship. Speak to your field supervisor and seminar instructor if you are confused about a particular situation.

Here are a few key questions to consider:

- Is there a potential for a negative impact on the client?
- Will this relationship or potential relationship interfere with my duties as a professional or my professional judgment and objectivity?
- Is there a potential for a negative impact on my ability to successfully complete my practicum/internship?
- Could this relationship have a negative impact on my relationship with my supervisor, co-worker, or client?

**Tip for Success:** *Avoid all relationships with clients, supervisors, and co-workers that could violate a professional code of conduct or have a negative impact on your client or your field placement experience.*

### **Self-Disclosure:**

Self-disclosure is the process of revealing personal information to a client. Self-disclosure opens up the potential for boundaries to be blurred and may shift the focus away from the client's needs. Some self-disclosure may be appropriate depending on the client population and the context of the disclosure, but it can be difficult to judge when you've crossed a line.

**Tip for Success:** *When in doubt, do not self-disclose. Discuss any concerns you have about self-disclosure with your field supervisor and seminar instructor.*

**Removal from a Placement Setting:**

Any student whose performance is evaluated as unsafe, substandard, or professionally inappropriate by the seminar instructor or the field supervisor, in consultation with the chair and the field coordinator, may be removed from the placement setting and the field placement class. Additional sanctions may be sought through the MSU Denver Student Conduct Process for any violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

If you are terminated by the agency and/or are terminated from the placement agency because you are evaluated as unsafe, substandard, or professionally inappropriate by the seminar instructor, in consultation with the field coordinator and field supervisor, you will fail the field placement class. You can appeal this grade via the professional review process.

If you were not terminated but the field supervisor has serious and ongoing concerns about your performance and professional behavior, your final grade will be dropped by one letter grade and you will need to go through a professional review prior to taking your next field placement class.

**Grievances:**

Grievances may be filed with an individual's professional organization, with an accrediting agency, or with the state agency responsible for regulating the profession, such as the Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA). **Undergraduate students are not required to be registered with DORA unless the student already has a CAC or other form of state certification.** A client still has the right to file a grievance against a student through DORA even if the student is not registered with DORA. Grievances may be filed based on violation of an ethical or professional standard or violation of a law. Grievances are most often filed for sexual misconduct or violation of confidentiality. Disciplinary actions will occur if a grievance is filed against a mental health professional and the Board (coordinated by DORA) has reasonable cause to believe that the complaint has some merit.

## **Additional Resources**

The **Access Center**, located in Suite 122 in the Plaza Building, provides information about how to access accommodations for students with disabilities. Their website is: <http://msudenver.edu/access/>.

The **College to Career Hub (C2Hub)**, located in Suite 270 in the Administration Building, coordinates an online database, **Career Link**, of jobs, internships, and volunteer opportunities. You can access the Career Link database through the Student Hub.

The C2Hub also offers guidance on resume development and interviewing skills. To access their website, go to: <http://msudenver.edu/career/>.

**Credit for Prior Learning** (Prior Learning Assessment) is available to students through the Registrar's Office in the Student Success Building. Interested students must have at least two years of full-time human services experience in an area related to their concentration. To receive credit, students will develop a Portfolio that shows evidence of prior learning in place of one practicum course. **All students must take HSP 4790, Professional Internship.** Students in Addictions Studies who have a minimum of four years of experience in the field and at least a CAC I can request permission to do a portfolio for two Practicum classes. If you think you have experience that might qualify you for the Portfolio option, speak to the advisor for your concentration area and the field coordinator. To access their website, go to: <https://msudenver.edu/registrar/priorlearningassessment/>.

The **Counseling Center**, located in Tivoli 651, is a free support service for students. During your field placements you may be working with clients who are facing difficult life circumstances, including trauma or experiences of violence. If you find that intense emotions are triggered by your field experience, please schedule an appointment with the Counseling Center. To access their website, go to: <https://msudenver.edu/counsel/>.

The **Office of International Studies**, located in Suite 360 in the Administration Building, provides students with options for placement outside of the United States. To begin the search process, students must meet with a Study Abroad Advisor. To receive credit for an international placement, students must purchase study abroad insurance and provide documentation to the field coordinator of all completed paperwork required by the Study Abroad Office. To access their website, go to: <http://www.msudenver.edu/internationalstudies>.

## **Appendix A: Ethical Standards of Human Service Professionals National Organization for Human Services, Adopted 2015**

### **Preamble:**

Human services is a profession developed in response to the direction of human needs and human problems in the 1960's. Characterized by an appreciation of human beings in all of their diversity, human services offers assistance to its clients within the context of their communities and environments. Human service professionals and those who educate them promote and encourage the unique values and characteristics of human services. In so doing, human service professionals uphold the integrity and ethics of the profession, promote client and community well-being, and enhance their own professional growth.

The fundamental values of the human services profession include respecting the dignity and welfare of all people; promoting self-determination; honoring cultural diversity; advocating for social justice; and acting with integrity, honesty, genuineness and objectivity.

Human service professionals consider these standards in ethical and professional decision making. Conflicts may exist between this code and laws, workplace policies, cultural practices, credentialing boards, and personal beliefs. Ethical-decision making processes should be employed to assure careful choices. Although ethical codes are not legal documents, they may be used to address issues related to the behavior of human service professionals.

Persons who use this code include members of the National Organization for Human Services, students in relevant academic degree programs, faculty in those same programs, researchers, administrators, and professionals in community agencies who identify with the profession of human services. The ethical standards are organized in sections around those persons to whom ethical practice should be applied.

### **Responsibility to Clients:**

STANDARD 1 Human service professionals recognize and build on client and community strengths.

STANDARD 2 Human service professionals obtain informed consent to provide services to clients at the beginning of the helping relationship. Clients should be informed that they may withdraw consent at any time except where denied by court order and should be able to ask questions before agreeing to the services. Clients who are unable to give consent should have those who are legally able to give consent for them review an informed consent statement and provide appropriate consent.

STANDARD 3 Human service professionals protect the client's right to privacy and confidentiality except when such confidentiality would cause serious harm to the client or others, when agency guidelines state otherwise, or under other stated conditions (e.g., local, state, or federal laws). Human service professionals inform clients of the limits of confidentiality prior to the onset of the helping relationship.

STANDARD 4 If it is suspected that danger or harm may occur to the client or to others as a result of a client's behavior, the human service professional acts in an appropriate and professional manner to protect the safety of those individuals. This may involve, but is not limited to, seeking consultation, supervision, and/or breaking the confidentiality of the relationship.

STANDARD 5 Human service professionals recognize that multiple relationships may increase the risk of harm to or exploitation of clients and may impair their professional judgment. When it is not feasible to avoid dual or multiple relationships, human service professionals should consider whether the professional relationship should be avoided or curtailed.

STANDARD 6 Sexual or romantic relationships with current clients are prohibited. Before engaging in sexual or romantic relationships with former clients, friends, or family members of former clients, human service professionals carefully evaluate potential exploitation or harm and refrain from entering into such a relationship.

STANDARD 7 Human service professionals ensure that their values or biases are not imposed upon their clients.

STANDARD 8 Human service professionals protect the integrity, safety, and security of client records. Client information in written or electronic form that is shared with other professionals must have the client's prior written consent except in the course of professional supervision or when legally obliged or permitted to share such information.

STANDARD 9 When providing services through the use of technology, human service professionals take precautions to ensure and maintain confidentiality and comply with all relevant laws and requirements regarding storing, transmitting, and retrieving data. In addition, human service professionals ensure that clients are aware of any issues and concerns related to confidentiality, service issues, and how technology might negatively or positively impact the helping relationship.

**Responsibility to the Public and Society:**

STANDARD 10 Human service professionals provide services without discrimination or preference in regards to age, ethnicity, culture, race, ability, gender, language preference, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, nationality, or other historically oppressed groups.

STANDARD 11 Human service professionals are knowledgeable about their cultures and communities within which they practice. They are aware of multiculturalism in society and its impact on the community as well as individuals within the community. They respect the cultures and beliefs of individuals and groups.

STANDARD 12 Human service professionals are aware of local, state, and federal laws. They advocate for change in regulations and statutes when such legislation conflicts with ethical guidelines and/or client rights. Where laws are harmful to individuals, groups, or communities, human service professionals consider the conflict between the values of obeying the law and the values of serving people and may decide to initiate social action.

STANDARD 13 Human service professionals stay informed about current social issues as they affect clients and communities. If appropriate to the helping relationship, they share this information with clients, groups and communities as part of their work.

STANDARD 14 Human service professionals are aware of social and political issues that differentially affect clients from diverse backgrounds.

STANDARD 15 Human service professionals provide a mechanism for identifying client needs and assets, calling attention to these needs and assets, and assisting in planning and mobilizing to advocate for those needs at the individual, community, and societal level when appropriate to the goals of the relationship.

STANDARD 16 Human service professionals advocate for social justice and seek to eliminate oppression. They raise awareness of underserved population in their communities and with the legislative system.

STANDARD 17 Human service professionals accurately represent their qualifications to the public. This includes, but is not limited to, their abilities, training, education, credentials, academic endeavors, and areas of expertise. They avoid the appearance of misrepresentation or impropriety and take immediate steps to correct it if it occurs.

STANDARD 18 Human service professionals describe the effectiveness of treatment programs, interventions and treatments, and/or techniques accurately, supported by data whenever possible.

**Responsibility to Colleagues:**

STANDARD 19 Human service professionals avoid duplicating another professional's helping relationship with a client. They consult with other professionals who are assisting the client in a different type of relationship when it is in the best interest of the client to do so. In addition, human services professionals seek ways to actively collaborate and coordinate with other professionals when appropriate.

STANDARD 20 When human service professionals have a conflict with a colleague, they first seek out the colleague in an attempt to manage the problem. If this effort fails, the professional then seeks the assistance of supervisors, consultants, or other professionals in efforts to address the conflict.

STANDARD 21 Human service professionals respond appropriately to unethical and problematic behavior of colleagues. Usually this means initially talking directly with the colleague and if no satisfactory resolution is achieved, reporting the colleague's behavior to supervisory or administrative staff.

STANDARD 22 All consultations between human service professionals are kept private, unless to do so would result in harm to clients or communities.

#### **Responsibility to Employers:**

STANDARD 23 To the extent possible, human service professionals adhere to commitments made to their employers.

STANDARD 24 Human service professionals participate in efforts to establish and maintain employment conditions which are conducive to high quality client services. Whenever possible, they assist in evaluating the effectiveness of the agency through reliable and valid assessment measures.

STANDARD 25 When a conflict arises between fulfilling the responsibility to the employer and the responsibility to the client, human service professionals work with all involved to manage the conflict.

#### **Responsibility to the Profession:**

STANDARD 26 Human service professionals seek the training, experience, education and supervision necessary to ensure their effectiveness in working with culturally diverse individuals based on age, ethnicity, culture, race, ability, gender, language preference, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, nationality, or other historically oppressive groups. In addition, they will strive to increase their competence in methods which are known to be the best fit for the population(s) with whom they work.

STANDARD 27 Human service professionals know the limit and scope of their professional knowledge and offer services only within their knowledge, skill base, and scope of practice.

STANDARD 28 Human service professionals seek appropriate consultation and supervision to assist in decision-making when there are legal, ethical or other dilemmas.

STANDARD 29 Human service professionals promote cooperation among related disciplines to foster professional growth and to optimize the impact of inter-professional collaboration on clients at all levels.

STANDARD 30 Human service professionals promote the continuing development of their profession. They encourage membership in professional associations, support research endeavors, foster educational advancement, advocate for appropriate legislative actions, and participate in other related professional activities.

STANDARD 31 Human service professionals continually seek out new and effective approaches to enhance their professional abilities and use techniques that are conceptually or evidence based. When practicing techniques that are experimental or new, they inform clients of the status of such techniques as well as the possible risks.

STANDARD 32 Human service professionals conduct research that adheres to all ethical principles, institutional standards, and scientific rigor. Such research takes into consideration cross-cultural bias and is reported in a manner that addressed any limitations.

STANDARD 33 Human service professionals make careful decisions about disclosing personal information while using social media, knowing that they reflect the profession of human services. In addition, they consider how their public conduct may reflect on themselves and their profession.

**Responsibility to Self:**

STANDARD 34 Human service professionals are aware of their own cultural backgrounds, beliefs, values, and biases. They recognize the potential impact of their backgrounds on their relationships with others and work diligently to provide culturally competent service to all of their clients.

STANDARD 35 Human service professionals strive to develop and maintain healthy personal growth to ensure that they are capable of giving optimal services to clients. When they find that they are physically, emotionally, psychologically, or otherwise not able to offer such services, they identify alternative services for clients.

STANDARD 36 Human service professionals hold a commitment to lifelong learning and continually advance their knowledge and skills to serve clients more effectively.

**Responsibility to Students:**

STANDARD 37 Human service educators develop and implement culturally sensitive knowledge, awareness, and teaching methodologies.

STANDARD 38 Human service educators are committed to the principles of access and inclusion and take all available and applicable steps to make education available to differently-abled students.

STANDARD 39 Human service educators demonstrate high standards of scholarship in their scholarship, pedagogy, and professional service and stay current in the field by being members of their professional associations, attending workshops and conferences, and reviewing and/or conducting research.

STANDARD 40 Human service educators recognize and acknowledge the contributions of students to the work of the educator in such activities as case material, grants, workshops, research, publications, and other related activities.

STANDARD 41 Human service educators monitor students' field experiences to ensure the quality of the placement site, supervisory experience, and learning experience towards the goals of personal, professional, academic, career, and civic development. When students experience potentially harmful events during field placements, educators provide reasonable investigation and response as necessary to safeguard the student.

STANDARD 42 Human service educators establish and uphold appropriate guidelines concerning student disclosure of sensitive/personal information which includes letting students have fair warning of any self-disclosure activities, allowing students to opt-out of in-depth self-disclosure activities when feasible, and ensuring that a mechanism is available to discuss and process such activities as needed.

STANDARD 43 Human service educators are aware that in their relationships with students, power and status are unequal. Human service educators are responsible to clearly define and maintain ethical and professional relationships with student; avoid conduct that is demeaning, embarrassing or exploitative of students; and always strive to treat students fairly, equally and without discrimination.

STANDARD 44 Human service educators ensure students are familiar with, informed by, and accountable to the ethical standards and policies put forth by their program/department, the course syllabus/instructor, their advisor(s), and the Ethical Standards of Human Service Professionals.

## **Appendix B: Department of Human Services and Counseling Professional Conduct Policy**

In order to achieve a degree in Human Services and Counseling, students are required to meet academic, personal, professional, behavioral, and ethical standards that go above and beyond the ability to pass academic classes. The goal of the Department of Human Services and Counseling is to support student academic success as well as success in the field and in graduate school. The following expectations and procedures are designed to provide guidance to support student success in the field.

Academic expectations: The student must maintain ethical behavior in their academic performance. Work must be original to the student. Appropriate use of citation is required for all papers. Students must maintain a C or higher in all Human Services and Counseling classes. Written and oral skills must be clear, organized, grammatically correct, and set a professional tone. Academic dishonesty will be reported to the Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution Office.

Behavioral Expectations: The student must display professional conduct in the classroom, the Human Services and Counseling Office, in field placement sites and during interactions with other students and faculty. Students are expected to attend and participate in class, and be punctual. Students are expected to be able to accept and work with constructive feedback, making any changes necessary if behavioral concerns are addressed by staff, a faculty member, or by the HSP Professional Review Team.

Personal and Professional Expectations: Students must take responsibility for their actions, be able to work independently, show diplomacy, set appropriate boundaries, operate effectively under professional ethics and codes of conduct, and demonstrate personal characteristics conducive to working in the counseling and human service profession.

Given the rigorous nature of the standards in the field of Human Services, the Department developed the following procedure to support student success.

Students will go through a formal Professional Readiness Review as part of the course requirements for HSP 2070, Pre-field Seminar. The Professional Readiness Review defines seventeen field competencies that students must meet in order to be effective in the classroom and in the field. (See the expectations at the end of this policy.) This process is intended to create a space for open and honest feedback and dialogue about student performance and appropriateness for the field between students and faculty in the Department of Human Services and Counseling.

Department faculty are encouraged to give feedback to students on an ongoing basis throughout their educational career at MSU Denver. If a faculty member has a concern about a student's behavior, academic performance, or professional demeanor, the faculty member will meet with the student to discuss his/her observations as well as strategies for positive change. Students are expected to meet with their Human Service faculty members upon request and to respond to the feedback in a professional manner. If the student is in violation of the Student Code of Conduct, the behavior will be reported to the Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution Office.

If the issue is not resolved, the student refuses to meet with the faculty member, or faculty continue to note concerning behavior or issues, the Chair of the Student Review Committee (SRC) and the

Department Chair will be notified. The Chair of the SRC will contact the student to set up a meeting with the student, the faculty member(s) who expressed a concern, and at least one other faculty member who will facilitate the meeting. The focus of this meeting is to discuss the concern in a supportive environment and to assist the student to strategize ways to improve performance in the area of concern. The review meeting is intended to be informative. Students are expected to participate in review meetings. However, if a student refuses to participate with department faculty in this process, the meeting will be held and the SRC will develop recommendations relating to the concern expressed by faculty. In both cases, the student will receive an email following the meeting which will summarize what was discussed at the meeting and will include departmental recommendations to support positive change.

If the recommendations are not followed and/or the behaviors seem to be ongoing, a follow up review meeting will be convened. This meeting will include the student, a faculty member to chair the meeting, any faculty who have expressed concerns about the student's behavior, and three professionals who are not members of the Department. The three additional professionals will include a representative from the dean's office and may include faculty from departments like Social Work, Psychology, Women's Studies or other similar disciplines, a professional from the student's concentration area, or a Field Supervisor. The three external participants will serve as a recommending body to the Department. They will send a written recommendation to the Department Chair and SRC Chair following the meeting about the what next steps should occur in the process. These next steps may include, but are not limited to:

- Developing a Behavioral Contract with expected outcomes and consequences clearly outlined;
- Requiring counseling or some other form of appropriate intervention;
- Removing a student from a specific class;
- Requiring the student to meet certain expectations prior to engaging in field work classes;
- Dismissing the student from the major. In this case, the student will be referred to Academic Advising to review major options or the Center for Individualized Learning to develop an individualized degree.

The Department Chair will review and implement the recommendations. The student will be informed via letter and/or email regarding the recommendations. Students are welcome to meet with the Chair for clarification on next steps in the process. Students who have concerns about the recommendations, can write a letter of appeal to the Dean of the School of Professional Studies. The Dean's decision will be final.

## Appendix C: Department of Human Services and Counseling Field Competencies

### Core Competencies (Departmental Learning Objectives):

1. **Attitude:** The student is enthusiastic about the field of Human Services and is able and willing to cooperate with field supervisors, co-workers, other interns, and the public.
2. **Agency Analysis:** The student is able to understand the context of the agency, i.e. the infrastructure, organization, and the contributions to community life.
3. **Ethical Knowledge:** The student demonstrates an understanding of ethical issues and a knowledge of all ethics codes that may apply in the setting.
4. **Ethical Dilemmas:** The student does not engage in activities that are contrary to the ethical standards and is able to use ethical decision-making when situations are not clear-cut.
5. **Cultural Knowledge:** The student is aware of: the impact of cultural diversity (in the broadest sense of the term); their own personal culture; the various ways in which an individual's multiple aspects of identity interact.
6. **Cultural Sensitivity:** The student is able to interact with individuals in meaningful ways that demonstrates an understanding of the impact of culture on personal style, values, perspectives and experiences.
7. **Professional Writing Skills:** The student produces clear professional writing as appropriate to the placement such as grants, reports, case notes, evaluations and assessments, marketing materials, etc.

### Direct Service Delivery Skills:

1. **Interpersonal Communication Skills:** The student communicates clearly and appropriately with field supervisors, clients, co-workers, and the public.
2. **Accepts Feedback:** The student is receptive to feedback.
3. **Utilizes Feedback:** The student responds to feedback in a professional manner by adapting the feedback into future performance.
4. **Assertiveness:** The student is able to initiate and communicate appropriately in individual and group settings.
5. **Manages Conflict:** The student utilizes communication to effectively manage conflict.
6. **Appropriate Intervention Skills:** The student is able to provide the service that is appropriate to the field placement site (for example: intake interviews, group facilitation, customer service, case management, mentoring, treatment planning, events coordination, educational presentations, fund-raising, grant writing, etc.).
7. **Problem Solves:** The student uses critical thinking skills and applies knowledge to solve problems.
8. **Self-Awareness:** The student is willing to examine his/her own feelings, values, and behaviors and is aware of his/her own strengths and challenges.
9. **Self-Care:** The student actively practiced self-care by establishing boundaries, seeking support when necessary, and taking steps to lead a healthy lifestyle.
10. **Professionalism:** The student presents him/herself in a professional manner through appropriate attire and personal grooming.

## Appendix D: The Learning Contract

Developing a learning contract is a crucial step in actively engaging in your field placement. In conjunction with your field supervisor and with the guidance of your seminar instructor, you will develop a set of goals and learning activities to help guide your learning process during your field experience. The learning contract functions as a plan, guide or map for learning. Keep in mind that the learning contract should remain flexible and be re-visited and updated as appropriate. The following material about learning contracts is quoted directly from Chapter Five of *The Successful Internship: Transformation and Empowerment* by H. Frederick Sweitzer and Mary A. King (1999) to help guide you in understanding the difference between a goal and a learning activity, as well as to understand the role of assessment.

A **goal** is a general statement about what you want to learn and/or accomplish. It is not a statement about what you are going to do. "I want to lead groups with adolescent alcoholics" is not a goal. "I want to improve my group facilitation skills" and "I want to understand several ways to work with teenage substance abusers" are goal statements. If you are not sure about a particular statement, just ask yourself whether it makes it clear what you want to learn.

Setting goals keeps you focused. Setting goals also keeps others focused. Your learning contract should be negotiated with and agreed to by you, your supervisor, and your instructor. Ideally, what you do should flow from what you want to learn, and the goals and objectives describe your learning. You will be specifying learning activities as well, but these may change for one reason or another. If you are clear about the goals, you can choose an alternative activity that will bring you to the same end point. Developing a learning contract provides an opportunity for you to **initiate a conversation with your field supervisor about goals and expectations**. This conversation is crucial to your success!

There are three main categories for your goals:

**Knowledge goals** describe **new information** you want to learn, such as:

- Understand how the criminal justice system in this state operates for drug offenders.
- Know what services are available for the physically challenged in this city.
- Be more familiar with common physical problems experienced by people in their seventies.

**Skill goals** describe things you want to **learn to do**. Here are some examples:

- Be able to intervene in a crisis at the shelter.
- Learn to write a case report.
- Improve oral presentation skills.

**Personal growth and development goals** involve the ways in which you hope to grow and change as a person. Here are some examples:

- Understand why I have trouble being patient sometimes.
- Learn to be more assertive.
- Become more open-minded and less judgmental about poor people.

**Learning activities** are the types of experiences and tasks you will perform to reach your goals and objectives. Examples of learning activities include: shadowing another professional in the agency; writing a case report; co-facilitating a group.

**Assessment** is a chance to see where your strengths are and where you need to improve. You should think about how you want your progress to be assessed. Examples of assessment activities include: being videotaped; surveying clients or co-workers; being observed and given feedback; writing a case study for review.

**Signatures:** The student, agency supervisor, and seminar instructor will all sign your final Learning Contract.