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# *Applied Sociology Practicum*

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*Program Handbook*

**Department of Sociology and Social Work**

**University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point**

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*Revised 2024*

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## Preface

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We are pleased to present this program handbook and description of the Applied Sociology Practicum program at UWSP. The objectives of this manual are to:

- (1) aid in orienting students and agency supervisors to the structure and mechanics of student placements; and
- (2) inform all parties of the expectations and responsibilities of the students, agencies, and the university.

## Chapter 1. Background and Objectives

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### Background

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The Applied Sociology Practicum (ASP) is required for all Sociology majors.<sup>1</sup> The program requires students to integrate knowledge from their academic experiences with practical information gained in the professional setting. Under the direction of the Practicum Coordinator, students will be guided through the placement process as well as the actual practicum experience via enrollment of practicum courses: SOC 492 and SOC 493.

The paradigmatic foundation of the practicum is grounded in Michael Burawoy's *public sociology*, a particular brand of sociology that brings on the one hand, the public, and on the other hand, the discipline, closer together. In short, the Applied Sociology Practicum program is an excellent opportunity to showcase the relevance and value of sociology in more pragmatic, real-world contexts.

In doing so, the Applied Sociology Practicum offers two tracks that a student could choose from: 1) field placement and 2) research project. Field placements refer to traditional internship-style placements with community-agencies. Research projects refer to robust research activities that students develop in collaboration with a faculty or community advisor. Both tracks offer students the ability to apply knowledge and skills from their coursework to meaningful, community-focused environments.

### Missions

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#### UW System

The mission of the University of Wisconsin System is to develop human resources, to discover and disseminate knowledge, to extend knowledge and its application beyond the boundaries of its campuses, and to serve and stimulate society by developing in students heightened intellectual, cultural, and humane sensitivities, scientific, professional and technological expertise, and a sense of purpose. Inherent in this broad mission are methods of instruction, research, extended training, and public service designed to educate people and improve the human condition. Basic to every purpose of the UW System is the search for truth.

#### University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

The University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point has the following select mission to:

- a. Provide a broad foundation of liberal studies and selected degree programs in the fine arts, humanities, natural sciences and social sciences, imparting the heritage of human civilization, critical intelligence, and the skills necessary for a lifetime of learning and upon

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<sup>1</sup> Students who are enrolled in the Social Work Practicum do not need to complete the Applied Sociology Practicum

- which education in the professional fields may be built.
- b. Provide undergraduate professional programs in communicative disorders, teacher education, home economics<sup>2</sup>, the visual and performing arts, paper science and natural resources with emphasis on the management of resources.
  - c. Provide graduate programs in teacher education, communicative disorders, natural resources, home economics, communication and other select areas clearly associated with this University's undergraduate emphases and strengths.
  - d. Provide programs in wellness and health promotion.
  - e. Provide quality undergraduate and graduate instruction through innovative methods using print and nonprint library resources, computing, communication technology and direct student assistance.
  - f. Expect scholarly activity, including research, scholarship, and creative endeavors, that support its programs at the associate and baccalaureate degree level, its selected graduate programs, and its select mission.
  - g. Cooperate with UW-Extension in the development and coordination of statewide outreach programming, integration of the extension function into the institution, and appropriate and adequate recognition of those involved in outreach activities.

### Department of Sociology and Social Work

The Department of Sociology and Social Work strives to:

- a. prepare student to use the sociological imagination in developing a critical understanding of the interaction among individuals, groups, and institutions within and between societies;
- b. prepare students for effective and responsible participation in society; and
- c. prepare students for professional fields related to sociology and social work and for graduate study in sociology and social work

### Sociology Program

Sociology is a highly versatile degree, and at UWSP, we focus on the skills and perspectives graduates need in order to improve organizations, communities, and society. Entry-level positions for sociology degree majors are common in the public sector and can involve case work, program planning, development and evaluation, agency-based or outreach services, survey research, and statistical analysis. Graduates pursue careers in the private sector as well as advanced degrees in graduate schools.

Students are encouraged to explore career options throughout their time at UWSP to understand the abundance of options available with a degree in sociology. The Applied Sociology Practicum is a type of experiential learning that provides students with both observational and hands-on knowledge to enhance their academic endeavors and increase their ability to perform professionally. The UWSP Sociology Program has partnerships with community organizations

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<sup>2</sup> The former home economics programs are now offered as child and family studies, dietetics, early childhood education, family and consumer education, human development, nutrition and interior architecture.

across the region and state. Students acquire transformative knowledge to succeed in their careers by completing the practicum.

### *Objectives*

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The Applied Sociology Practicum provides students with an opportunity to merge their classroom experiences with their emerging professional practice, developing their knowledge, skill, professionalism, professional identity, and values to the extent that they demonstrate achievement of the objectives listed below. In doing so, the program aims to prepare students for entry-level positions in the public/private sector and/or preparation for continued education.

The Applied Sociology Practicum has two objectives: to provide students

- 1) the opportunity for hands-on experience in a professional work environment related to their career interests, and
- 2) the opportunity to use sociological knowledge and tools to reflect on a real-world work experience.

## Chapter 2. Program Overview

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The Applied Sociology Practicum provides students with an opportunity to merge their classroom experiences with their emerging professional practice, developing their knowledge, skill, professionalism, professional identity, and values. In doing so, the program aims to prepare students for general entry into the workforce and/or continued education. The Practicum also strives to foster connections among students, faculty, and community professionals and to offer strong contributions to the community in the way of student service, expertise, and collaboration.

### *Prerequisites and Preparation*

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The best time to do a practicum is during the final one or two semesters. Completing a practicum as their final undergraduate experience allows for a natural bridge into the professional world and/or graduate school. It also allows for a strong foundation of coursework completed before being out in the field. Students are eligible for application into field when they meet the following criteria:

1. Attainment of senior standing by the time internship is anticipated to start
2. Attainment of cumulative GPA of at least 2.50
3. Attainment of GPA in Sociology Major of at least 2.75
4. Accepted internship application

It is strongly recommended that, in addition to the formal course preparation required, a student acquire some direct experience in one or more settings through volunteer work and/or entry-level employment. Student should begin this preparation early in their academic career. A student may be asked to obtain volunteer experience and/or a letter of recommendation if there are concerns about internship readiness.

### *Practicum Credits and Enrollment*

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The Practicum involves placement of students in agencies under the direction of professionals who have agreed to act as Agency Supervisors or work on a research project with a Faculty Mentor. In each, the Agency Supervisor or Faculty Mentor, working together with the Faculty Field Coordinator, provides the student with an opportunity to further integrate the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for sociological practice and research. Beginning with an orientation to the agency and/or project, students gradually assume more independent responsibility.

Regardless of track, the Applied Sociology Practicum (SOC 492) must be taken for a minimum of 3 credits (150 hours), with each credit equating to 50 hours. Typically, students will enroll for 3 credits of SOC 492. Unless otherwise discussed with the Field Coordinator, this would be the selection expected. The number of credits may be increased, along with hours respectively, as long as the student, Agency Supervisor / Faculty Mentor, and Field Coordinator agree. The exact schedule of hours is arranged between the student and the Agency Supervisor / Faculty Mentor. The following table illustrates the typical number of hours a student dedicates to the practicum per week, depending on semester length and number of credits.

Credits	Semester Length			Total Hours
	14week	15week	16week	
3*	10.7	10	9.4	150
4	14.3	13.3	12.5	200
5	17.9	16.6	15.6	250
6	21.4	20	18.7	300

Students must also enroll in the Applied Sociology Practicum Seminar (SOC 493) each semester that they are in Practicum. This seminar involves weekly meetings and assignments designed to further integrate practice and theory to the applied setting, increase knowledge of and identification with the area profession, learn about community resources through interaction with other students, set goals, and process agency experiences with the Field Coordinator and other practicum students. During seminar, students are required to do a formal presentation on their agency/project, complete a learning contract (see Student Learning Contract Form), and submit summaries of their experiences.

### ASP Tracks

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The Applied Sociology Practicum includes two possible tracks a student might select. They are either: 1) a *field* placement with a partnered community organization or agency or 2) a *research* placement. General expectations for field hours, participation in both SOC 492 and SOC 493 and associated assignments remain the same regardless of track chosen. Consideration for which track is best should require consultation with the Field Coordinator as well as professional aspirations of the student. Below is more detail on each track.

#### Field Placement

The field placement track is what typically qualifies as a community-based internship. A student is paired with a community partner organization or agency that has agreed to host a student intern and with whom can provide on-site experience and activities that will build appropriate and relevant professional proficiency for the specific student. Typically, the Field Coordinator will select an appropriate placement based on the student's preferences and the available community partners at the time. Students with already established connections with potential community partners may be considered but must be discussed, vetted, and established with the Field Coordinator before approval is granted.

#### Research Placement

The research placement track is for students who are interested in actual, hands-on experience with social science and/or program evaluation research. Students are expected to either complete a fully formed research project (including design, collection, analysis and presentation of social science data), assist a faculty with an ongoing research project, or participate in a program/evaluation research project with a participating community organization. Regardless of the type of project, a student is assigned a faculty mentor to assist and guide the project (see



Research Option Guidelines for more detail). This track should build on introductory knowledge/skills in research methods through application.

### *Application*

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Students ideally apply at the end of their junior year, after successfully completing a solid foundation of coursework. During the semester prior to desired placement, the student:

1. Attends a mandatory informational meeting which outlines the policies and procedures for the Practicum, reviews options for placement (i.e., field or research), and addresses student questions and concerns.
2. Investigates options for field sites through materials provided at the field meeting, online, and by talking with the Field Coordinator.
3. Completes the field application form (see Application for Applied Sociology Practicum Program), which includes a cover letter, resume, and an indication of the top three choices for placement.
4. Submits the field application and their DPR via Qualtrics by the publicized due date for that given semester.

### *Selection and Assignment*

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After the deadline, each application is reviewed by the Field Coordinator to determine whether the student has met requirements. Applicants who do not meet requirements for the Practicum will be notified immediately by the Field Coordinator that they have not been accepted and may request a meeting to discuss their application. The Field Coordinator will further review applications that meet minimum requirements to determine whether the top choices identified by the student are appropriate, approved or potentially approvable placements or agencies. If they are not, the Field Coordinator will contact the student to discuss alternate options within their interest area. Whenever possible, placements will be arranged according to the student's area of interest. The Field Coordinator will then contact each student's top choice to determine agency/supervisor interest/ability to work with a student in the given semester. If interest is expressed, the Field Coordinator will ask the student to contact the Agency Supervisor/Faculty Mentor to arrange an interview. If the agency is not interested and/or able to work with a student in the given semester, the Field Coordinator will move to the student's next choice. Students are encouraged to treat the interview process as they would a professional job interview. They should present themselves professionally, and go prepared to discuss their interests, background, skills, and experiences as well as to ask good questions about the field opportunity.

After the student interviews with the Agency Supervisor/Faculty Mentor, the student will report back to the Field Coordinator their thoughts on the placement. The Field Coordinator will also follow up with the Agency Supervisor/Faculty Mentor to determine their willingness to work with the student. Upon mutual agreement of the Agency Supervisor/Faculty Mentor, Field Coordinator, and student, the student will be given permission to register for SOC 492 and SOC 493. If it is determined that the agency is not a good fit for the student, other options will be discussed with the student. The Field Coordinator will meet with the student to discuss his/her career goals and skills in order to determine other opportunities that may be more suitable. Additionally, if deficient interviewing skills were the reason for not obtaining the placement, the Field Coordinator will

mentor the student and provide additional information on successful interviewing to improve the student's chances of success at subsequent interviews. If a student interviews with three agencies and is not successful with securing a placement, though, the Field Coordinator may choose not to offer any further interviews. The Department of Sociology and Social Work cannot guarantee student placement in an agency. The student has a responsibility to successfully interview for an internship. Students unable to secure a placement will need to withdraw from the Sociology Major, since completion of the practicum is a core requirement for the major.

### *Agency Requirements*

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Some agencies have additional requirements to be completed prior to the start of field. Examples may include evidence of a health screen, flu shot, COVID vaccine, drug tests, and/or TB test. Some agencies facilitate these things for students, and others expect students to assume responsibility for taking care of any additional agency requirements. The UWSP Sociology Program does not assume responsibility for the costs and process associated with additional agency requirements. However, the field coordinator can assist a student in completing any pre-placement requirements through consultation and resource connection. A delay or refusal to complete agency requirements may result in a delayed placement or limited internship opportunities.

### *Vaccination policy*

While UWSP does not require vaccinations, many of the community partners require that students who learn in their facilities are vaccinated against specific communicable diseases. Such policies are developed and administered by the community agencies, and those facilities may in some cases grant exemptions to their own vaccine requirements. However, UWSP does not review or grant exemptions/waivers/exceptions to policies developed by other entities. Students who choose to enroll in the UWSP sociology program must adhere to all vaccine requirements of the clinical, agency, or community partner facilities to which they are assigned. Further, UWSP is not obligated to reassign students to a different field experience or facility based on vaccination status, or for any other reason.

### *Employee and student roles with regards to vaccination exemptions*

If a student is participating in a field placement for an organization they are employed by and have received a medical or religious exemption for the COVID-19 vaccination (or any other vaccination) as an employee, they must go through that process again, but this time in the student role. An exemption as an employee does not carry over to the UWSP student role.

### *Evaluation Requirements for Field Experience*

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Evaluation is an important component of the field experience. It allows students to obtain feedback and insight as to their abilities, so that they may grow and develop as professionals. Evaluation also provides a mechanism for determining how effective the Sociology Program is in meeting its goals and objectives. In this regard, data are used to identify areas of the curriculum in need of development.

## Student

### *Field Evaluation (completed by Agency Supervisor)*

Students will be evaluated collaboratively by the Field Coordinator and the Agency Supervisor for the practicum component. Practicum evaluation will be conducted by use of the Field Instrument, which evaluates student ability according to the Student Learning Contract Form. Practicum evaluations take place informally at mid-semester with the Agency Supervisor. A formal evaluation takes place during the last week of placement. The formal, written evaluation will be placed in the student's "field work file," which is kept in the office of the Field Coordinator, and material therein will only be released upon the consent of the student. As part of the formal evaluation, the Agency Supervisor will recommend a grade, which will be further considered and potentially adapted by the Field Coordinator based on feedback provided by the Agency Supervisor, the formal evaluation form, and site visit discussions.

### *Field Evaluation (Self-Evaluation—Completed by Student)*

Students also self-evaluate using the same criteria included in the Field Evaluation completed by the Agency Supervisor.

### *Seminar*

All students, on both tracks, will be evaluated by the Field Coordinator for the seminar component. Seminar evaluation will be based on success with completion of the seminar requirements as indicated in the SOC 493 syllabus.

## Agency Supervisor

The Agency Supervisor is evaluated by both the student who has been in the field placement (see Student Evaluation of Field Agency Form) and by the Field Coordinator. These evaluations are considered as the Field Coordinator plans for future placements. Any problem areas identified in the evaluations will be discussed with the Agency Supervisor.

## Field Coordinator

The Field Coordinator is evaluated by students during the last week of seminar each semester, using the standard University course/instructor evaluation form. The evaluations are submitted to the Department of Sociology and Social Work who is responsible for communicating any concerns to the Field Coordinator. Feedback from students is invaluable to the process of continued growth and improvement of the program.

## Termination

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### Student Request for Termination

A student may decide to terminate his or her enrollment in the field experience due to issues of health, impairment, finances, or other life events. Students should notify the Field Coordinator and Agency Supervisor/Faculty Mentor as soon as possible so that a careful termination can be facilitated. Regular university policies pertaining to course drop/withdrawal dates, tuition refunds, and any such appeals will apply. Prior to reenrolling in field, the student must demonstrate, to the

satisfaction of the Field Coordinator, that the reasons for discontinuance have been adequately addressed and that the student is ready to carry out field responsibilities in a professional manner.

#### Faculty Field Coordinator or Agency Supervisor Request for Termination

The Field Coordinator and/or Agency Supervisor/Faculty Mentor may request termination of a field placement due to inferior student performance or student personal problems that interfere with performance expectations. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Non-achievement or less than satisfactory achievement of Student Learning goals
- Behaviors that violate the ASA Code of Ethics in the agency or seminar setting
- Personality characteristics that conflict with the professional values and professional role sets of the area profession
- Disruptive behaviors constituting a threat to the safety of the student or others
- A pattern of unwillingness to participate in the learning activities of the program
- Inability to communicate effectively, orally or in written form, such that performance is seriously affected

When concerns about impaired or inferior performance arise in the field agency, classroom, or otherwise, the concerns must be fully documented. Documentation should include statements addressing the student's skill assets and deficits, a description of the problem behaviors and/or attitudes, instructional or supervisory interventions, the student's response to those interventions, and the student's current level of functioning. This documentation and related recommendations should be submitted to the Field Coordinator. The Field Coordinator will call and conduct a meeting with the student, Agency Supervisor/Faculty Mentor, and Department Chairperson. The student may bring a representative of their choice as well. At this meeting:

- All parties will be allowed to present information and perspectives related to the student's performance and present recommendations for possible solutions.
- The Field Coordinator will make a ruling regarding termination or continuance in field.
- A ruling for continuance may require extending the placement, repeating the placement, or transferring to another agency for field training (Agency Supervisors/Faculty Mentor ultimately have the right to discontinue student placement within their particular agency.)
- A decision for termination will require the student to withdraw from field or receive an "F," depending on the point in the semester in which termination occurs.
- Documentation of the meeting and the outcome decision will be completed by the Field Coordinator and placed in the student's file. A copy will be provided to the student.

Students may appeal the outcome decision by submitting a formal statement to the Chairperson of the Department of Sociology and Social Work. This must be done within two weeks of being notified of the outcome decision. The chairperson will then form a committee to review the appeal and make further determinations. The student will be informed, in writing, of further determinations within two weeks of the initial appeal date and such determinations will be kept in the student's file. Additional policies pertaining to student rights and responsibilities can be found at the UWSP Division of Student Affairs website at:

<https://www.uwsp.edu/dos/pages/student-conduct.aspx>

## Chapter 3. Student Responsibilities

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### *Role and Responsibilities in the Field Experience*

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The demands of a field practicum are heavy because the education process not only involves academic competence but an additional investment of self in feeling and in practice. The student must consider seriously the contractual nature of the obligations which are part of this experience. The student has a responsibility to:

1. Demonstrate motivation to learn.
2. Demonstrate initiative and creativity.
3. Fulfill commitments made to the agency.
4. Become a responsible member of the helping staff.
5. Engage in mature and professional conduct.
6. Meet the standards for dependability expected of an agency employee.
7. Complete required hours and adhere strictly to the hours determined at the beginning of the semester as the hours when field work would take place.
8. Notify the Agency Supervisor in advance of any anticipated absence from field work.
9. Arrange to make up any field work time lost because of illness, family crisis, or closure of the agency.
10. Arrange transportation to the agency.
11. Attend to appearance and general demeanor as they relate to agency expectations.
12. Adhere to the ASA Code of Ethics and behave in accordance with professional values.
13. Adhere to applicable agency personnel and policy procedures and regulations. (The student has an obligation to make a reasonable effort to learn about these procedures and regulations at the beginning of the field placement in an agency.)
14. Learn the assigned and inherent roles of the Agency Supervisor and accept the authority implied in these roles.
15. Use the help of the Agency Supervisor in furthering professional development and competence.
16. Develop self-awareness, self-discipline, and skill in practice.
17. Prepare for meetings and client contacts.
18. Bring relevant questions to the Agency Supervisor.
19. Notify the Agency Supervisor and/or Field Coordinator of any questions and concerns.
20. Participate fully in seminar each semester of field.
21. Evaluate the agency, Agency Supervisor, and Field Coordinator as requested by the Field Coordinator.

### *Transportation*

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Students are expected to arrange for their own transportation to and from their field placement (when relevant). If transportation is anticipated to be a concern because of lack of resources and/or disability, the student should make this known to the Field Coordinator when applying for field. Field options close to campus and/or on the bus line are available, as are options that do not require driving as part of the field experience.

When interviewing for field placements, the student should ask about expectations for use of their personal vehicle while working for the agency. Students are not required to drive their own vehicles to accomplish their work duties for the agency. If the agency requests that the student do so, and the student is willing to do so, he or she can voluntarily agree to use his or her own car to perform work.

University insurance does not cover any accidents or liability claims against students who transport clients in their own cars. As such, students are advised not to transport clients in their private cars. Students' private automobile insurance is necessary for such coverage. Student deciding to use their own cars to transport clients should make sure that they have adequate coverage and should discuss with their agency whether the agency insurance covers the use of their personal vehicle.

### *Remuneration and Insurance*

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UWSP students enrolled in this program are considered state agents and therefore entitled to coverage under the State of WI Self-Funded Liability program. The State will indemnify students in covered programs against liability for damages arising out of their activities while acting within the scope of their respective agency, pursuant to WI §895.46(1) and §893.82, Statutes. The coverage is in effect throughout each applicable academic semester and applies only to activities within the scope of the authorized program. Coverage is not in effect during the period between semesters unless otherwise authorized by UWSP.

## Chapter 4. Agency and Practicum Coordinator Responsibilities

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Collaboration among the field agencies and their staff, the Department of Sociology and Social Work, and the University is essential to the facilitation of a successful Applied Sociology Practicum. This section presents information about the roles and responsibilities among the parties involved in the Field Education Program including the Faculty Field Coordinator and the Agency Supervisor. It also describes the standards and process for approving Field Agencies and the nature of the partnership among the University, Department, and Agency.

### *Roles and Responsibilities*

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#### Faculty Field Coordinator

The Field Coordinator has a responsibility to:

1. Evaluate and approve Field Agencies.
2. Facilitate placement of students within appropriate Field Agencies.
3. Provide relevant information to Agency Supervisors, administrators, and staff about the Sociology Program and the expectations of the Applied Sociology Practicum.
4. Consult with Field Agencies to develop their potential in working with students.
5. Maintain open dialog with Field Agency administrators and staff.
6. Conduct at least one site visit during each student field experience.
7. Oversee and monitor placements to ensure students are getting an educational experience, are appropriately contributing to the agency, and have opportunities to work towards their learning goals.
8. Assist students in stronger identification with their area profession.
9. Assist students in setting appropriate learning goals.
10. Foster a safe atmosphere during seminar to discuss challenges, concerns, client issues, and experiences.
11. Assist with solving problems that come up in placement.
12. Evaluate student performance in field and seminar.

#### Agency Supervisor

The Field Supervisor has a responsibility to:

1. Interview students to determine their suitability for a placement.
2. Maintain open communication with the Field Coordinator starting with application and continuing throughout the placement.
3. Comply with completion of Field Agency Data Form and other requests for information needed by Field Coordinator to determine learning opportunities, supervision, and other considerations in placing the student. The Field Agency Data Form will be renewed every three years.
4. Assist the student in creating a schedule and program of work.
5. Assist the student with setting appropriate learning goals.
6. Create a positive, professional atmosphere for learning and practice
7. Negotiate and outline the expectations of the placement with the student in order to maximize communication and learning.
8. Orient the student to the agency setting in terms of the personnel, functions, policies, and

- goals; clientele served; and relationship to the community and other agencies.
9. Provide opportunities for observation and shadowing of staff.
  10. Provide opportunities for integration of academic course learning into the agency setting.
  11. Instruct/educate the student on tasks, roles, responsibilities.
  12. Identify ways for the student to contribute to the functioning of the agency.
  13. Supervise the student in their field activities.
  14. Provide regular discussion/supervision time to the student in order to process experiences, placement activities, and other matters.
  15. Assist with solving problems that come up in placement.
  16. Provide feedback and evaluation informally and formally as requested by the Field Coordinator.

#### *Partnership Agreement between the University, Department, and Approved Field Agencies*

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When a prospective Field Agency is identified and evaluated by the Field Coordinator, they document the findings and report them to the Sociology Program Committee. Any time a student has been accepted for placement in an approved Field Agency, the Field Coordinator sends a letter to the agency supervisor confirming their commitment to work with a student and providing further instruction on next steps. In this letter, Agency Supervisors are encouraged to contact the Field Coordinator at any time with questions and concerns. The Field Coordinator connects with each Field Supervisor hosting a student multiple times per semester through e-mail, telephone, and face-to-face visits in order to monitor the placement and evaluate student progress.



## Chapter 5. Applied Sociology Practicum Program Policies

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### *Confidentiality*

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#### Student

Information related to the student's learning needs, interests, and accomplishments is shared among the student, Field Coordinator, Faculty Advisor, and Agency Supervisor. If the student desires specific information to be kept confidential from one or more of the parties, they should request this accommodation. Although confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, the Field Coordinator recognizes the value of confidentiality and such requests will be given careful consideration. Any information regarding the student's performance in field is to be kept confidential between the educational partners mentioned above and is not to be released outside of those parameters without the express, written permission of the student.

Students are asked to write summaries reflecting on their field experiences as part of the seminar component. In order to allow the student full expression of feelings, thoughts, and concerns, these summaries are only reviewed by the Field Coordinator. The Field Coordinator will only break such confidentiality in cases in which the student shares evidence that they are at risk of harming themselves, another identifiable person, and/or the agency, or academic misconduct is taking place. During seminar sessions, students may share feelings and thoughts they are having about their field experiences and career paths. Seminar students are expected to keep such statements made within seminar confidential.

#### Agency

Students gain much exposure to the inner-workings of the agencies they are placed within and develop relationships with the professionals they work alongside. Though an important part of student learning is to talk about agency experiences, both positive and negative, students are reminded to do so with caution and tact and with the best interest of the agency in mind. Agency Supervisors may request that students refrain from sharing certain agency information in seminar, and students are expected to comply. Students may share such information with the Field Coordinator for the purpose of gaining support and guidance. In such cases, the Field Coordinator holds the information confidential unless the Field Coordinator perceives that the student, staff, and/or clients are being harmed and disclosure is necessary for ethical reasons.

### *Concurrent Paid Employment and Field Education in Same Agency*

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Students are strongly encouraged to explore field placements that differ from their employment locations. Beyond the issue of boundaries, it is in the student's best interest to pursue new experiences and opportunities to broaden their knowledge and skill. Nevertheless, there may be instances in which such an arrangement is desired. For concurrent placement to be approved:

1. The field agency must meet the same approval criteria established for all other agencies
2. The Field Coordinator must be involved at all stages in making arrangements for concurrent field education in the agency of employment
3. A written agreement must be developed to include the following elements:

- a. Assignments for field must be educationally focused toward the learning contract of the student and the curricular objectives of the Field Education Program
- b. Assignments associated with field must differ from those associated with the paid work assignments
- c. Supervision must be provided by a staff who is not concurrently providing supervision for the paid work
- d. The agency must provide adequate release time so that the student can accomplish coursework and field instruction.

### *Paid Placements*

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Field Agencies are not responsible for payment of a wage, stipend or other financial remuneration to the student. Also, students assume full responsibility for their health insurance.

### *Non-discrimination*

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The Department of Sociology and Social Work does not discriminate against any student, professional community agency, or other entity on the basis of age, race, color, national origin or ancestry, religion, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity, arrest of conviction record, marital or pregnancy status, disability, political affiliation, or veteran's status. All participants in the Field Education Program are expected to conduct themselves in a non-discriminatory manner. Failure to do so may result in removal from the Applied Sociology Practicum Program. More information on UWSP policies and processes regarding diversity, equity, and affirmative action may be directed to the office of Equity and Affirmative Action: <http://www.uwsp.edu/equity/>.

### *Sexual Harassment*

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The Department of Sociology and Social Work does not tolerate any student, faculty member, or Agency Supervisor engaging in sexual harassment behaviors. All participants in the Field Education Program are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is fully consistent with the ASA Code of Ethics. Failure to comply with the ASA Code of Ethics may result in removal from the Applied Sociology Practicum Program. If a student or Agency Supervisor feels that he or she has experienced sexual harassment related to the Practicum, they should discuss the issue with the Field Coordinator and/or the Chairperson of the Department of Sociology and Social Work. Support and information will be provided with regard to informal and/or formal methods to see redress. Additional information and support regarding sexual harassment may be found at the UWSP Equity and Affirmative Action Office: <http://www.uwsp.edu/equity/>.

### *Safety and Security of Students*

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While it is impossible to remove all potential risk from a workplace environment, it is possible and desirable for students in their field experience to exercise caution and take preventative measures to ensure their safety. Agency Supervisors are encouraged to cover safety and security as part of a student's orientation to the agency. Students are encouraged to consult with their Agency Supervisor and the Field Coordinator with questions or concerns they might have. Should a student

encounter a threat to their safety or actual abuse or harm in their placement, they should immediately notify their Agency Supervisor and the Field Coordinator, who will ensure that the necessary services, relief, and follow-up supports are provided.

## *Social Media*

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In the age of technology and information, social media (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter/X, YouTube, Blogs, SMS/texting, etc.) can be particularly helpful in building connections with colleagues and maintaining relationships with friends and family; however, as a result, the boundary between personal and professional matters has become increasingly blurry. While social media tools obviously present many useful and exciting opportunities, the features that enable these benefits also present potentially serious challenges in a professional setting. Privacy, confidentiality, and the establishment of professional boundaries in particular, can be hindered when the necessary precautions to protect the student/employee and clients have not been taken.

If the fieldwork site/agency already has a policy on social media use, this policy should be shared with students as part of their orientation to the fieldwork site. Even without its own formal social media policy, the fieldwork site should have clear guidelines and expectations for students regarding social media use at home and at the fieldwork site.

Because of the diverse needs and settings of fieldwork sites and the perpetually changing nature of the online social media world, the UWSP sociology program does not have a formal social media policy. In lieu of an overarching social media policy, these guidelines have been developed to aid fieldwork agencies and students in determining appropriate online conduct within the context of their field work sites.

Here are a few important issues to explore and discuss:

### **1. What type of information is okay to share on a personal social media site?**

- a. It seems that it should be inappropriate for students to refer to any fieldwork site/agency, client, or client situation, etc. on their personal social media pages (e.g. Facebook, My Space, Twitter, Blog), no matter how many security settings have been invoked.
- b. Should students/employees share their personal contact information including email, cell number, address, etc. with a current or former client or client group?
- c. While professional practitioners have an ethical obligation to protect the privacy of their clients, no such restrictions prevent a client from searching online for information about a student or employee. Any photos, videos, written comments, and other postings can serve to undermine personal safety and/or professional competence.
- d. Students (and employees) should be expected to exercise great care in how they represent their profession as a whole in any online activities. It is very easy for an outsider to misinterpret statements or images out-of context.

### **2. When, if ever, is it permissible to conduct an online search for information about a client?**

In a macro setting, this may be common practice when doing evaluation or other work, but in a clinical setting, such searches may lead to boundary violations and other interference with

both client trust and the therapeutic process.

### **3. What is the policy on "friending" current or past clients?**

Are there contexts in which this might be acceptable?

### **4. How can social media be used to further the goals of the fieldwork site?**

How does a student or employee present information on a social media page in a professionally-appropriate manner?

### **5. What types of information should not be sent via email?**

Because the privacy of email can never be completely ascertained, students and employees should take precautions to ensure they are not sending sensitive information in an email.

It is in the profession's best interest to remind students that social media sites are public domains and any and all information can be accessed by anyone. Once information is in cyber space, it never goes away.

## *Student Rights and Responsibilities/Grievance Procedures*

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To address potential violations of students' personal or academic rights, the following protocol has been established.

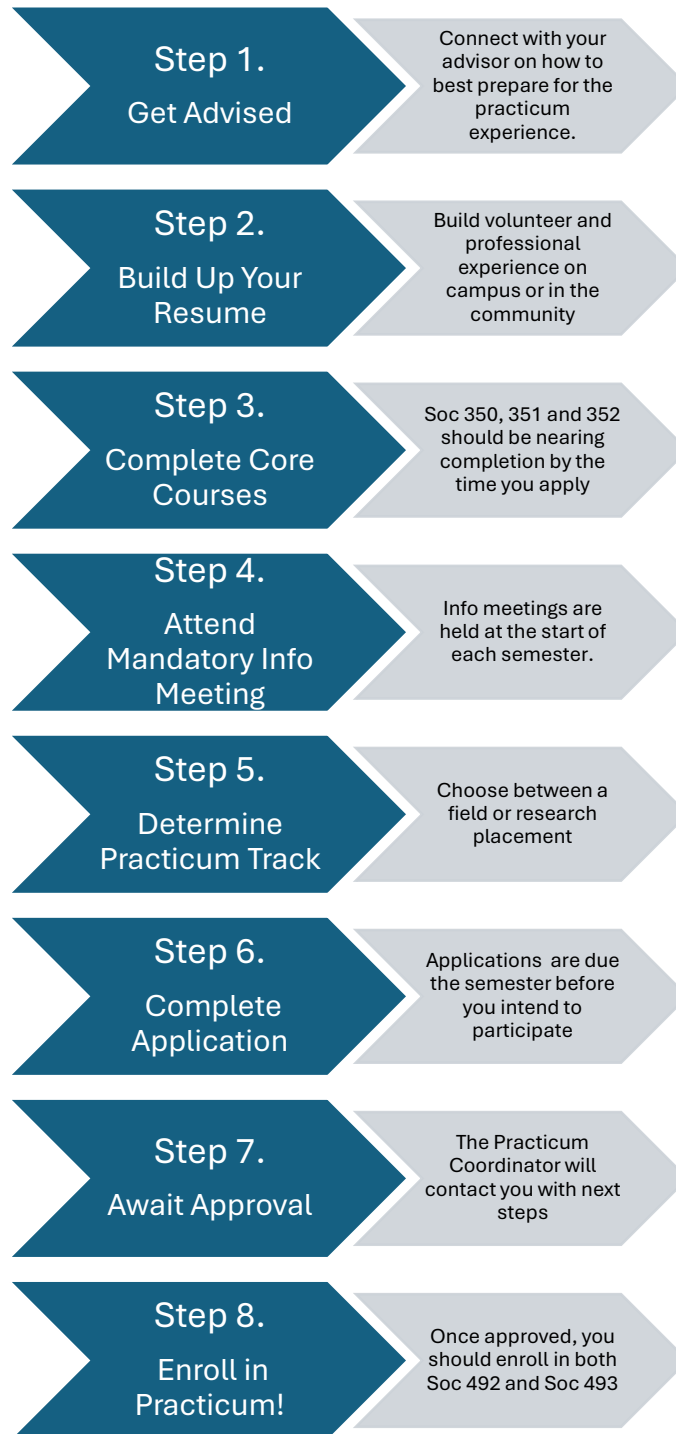
1. The student should first attempt to address their concern with the person thought to have made the violation (e.g. faculty, other student, field supervisor, field coordinator, or advisor). As will be the case in their professional lives, students are encouraged to respond to such concerns in a professional manner, with discretion, integrity, respect, and effective communication.
2. After talking to the individual involved, if the problem continues
  - a. If the concern is with a faculty member or another student, the student should then discuss the matter with their advisor.
  - b. If the concern is with their field supervisor, because it is related to the student's field experience, it should then be shared with the field coordinator.
3. If the problem continues, then the student should notify the chairperson of the Department of Sociology and Social Work, in writing, about the concern.
4. If the problem remains unresolved, the student may contact the office of the UWSP Dean of Students, which among other responsibilities, responds to concerns regarding student rights. Information on this office and student rights and responsibilities can be found at: <http://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Pages/default.aspx>.

Additionally, the Division of Academic Affairs at UW-Stevens Point outlines a number of policies related to the rights and responsibilities of students and the broader university community. At their website (<http://www.uwsp.edu/acadaff/Pages/gradeReview.aspx>) are links to resources/procedures related to grade review, student academic standards and disciplinary procedures, the UWSP Community Bill of Rights and Responsibilities, and the UWSP Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Students are advised to visit the Division of Academic Affairs website for access to these policies and procedures, as well as important contact information for assistance in resolving concerns.

## Appendix A: Quick Reference Guide

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### Steps for Applied Sociology Practicum



## Appendix B: Research Option Guidelines

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The Department of Sociology and Social Work will offer the potential opportunity for a Research Option under the Applied Sociology Practicum Program.

- **The goal of the research internship is to provide students with a “hands-on” research experience that includes exposure to methodological, substantive, or policy-related issues.**
- All research internships must include a research supervisor(s), designated to facilitate the project and mentor the student. Research supervisors are selected in collaboration with the student and the Field Coordinator.

This document summarizes the guidelines of a Research Internship for students and research supervisor.

### Student Requirements and Responsibilities:

- Attainment of senior standing by the time an internship is anticipated to start.
- Attainment of cumulative GPA of at least 2.50.
- Attainment of GPA in Sociology Major of at least 2.75.
- Students must have completed a research method course (e.g., SOC352, PSYCH200)
- Accepted Sociology Internship application

### Research Mentor(s) Responsibilities

The research internship should have both research and academic components. These should be facilitated, overseen, and evaluated by a designated research mentor or supervisors (e.g., faculty, community organizer/leader or professional). If multiple supervisors are designated, the distribution of these roles are left to their discretion.

#### *Academic Component*

- The research supervisor has the flexibility to determine the best mechanisms for helping students accomplish the academic objectives of the internship. It is recommended that all students be required to keep a log or diary of activities performed as part of the internship. The academic component can be satisfied in two ways: (1) A final paper or a series of short papers on substantive issues that are related to the parent research project; (2) A final methodological paper or a series of papers on the parent research project.
- To facilitate the completion of the academic component, the research supervisor must help the student develop a reading list for background material.

#### *Research Experience*

- Research supervisors are asked to provide student-interns with experience that contributes to a broad understanding of the research process. This is accomplished with exposure to a wide range of tasks that are performed in research. It is important that the internship not consist solely of clerical or other activities that do not provide students with a “global” view of research. Student participation may include but is not limited to: interacting with research participants, data entry, data coding, literature retrieval, literature review, and report writing.
- Supervisors should provide the student with an orientation to the research project and staff and include the student in project meetings.

- Supervisors should work with the student to develop a work schedule.
- Supervisors should meet regularly with the student (e.g., weekly) to provide feedback and to discuss progress, problems, questions.
- Supervisors should be available to help students identify and clarify their career interests.

#### Evaluation of Student Performance

- Research supervisors have the responsibility of evaluating the performance of the student intern. As with any course, this may be performed in conjunction with a graduate assistant.
- Supervisors are encouraged to provide an informal mid-term assessment.
- Supervisors should evaluate students on the basis of both their professional (work) performance and their academic performance on assigned project(s).

#### Sample Semester Schedule

*Research Supervisors may use this sample semester schedule to organize and structure the research experience and evaluation.*

<b>Week</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
Week 2	Training and topic development	Complete CITI training Develop research question	
Week 4	General overview of project	Submit IRB protocol	
Week 6	Literature review and theory	Create annotated bibliography	
Week 8	Development of instrument	Execute data collection	Mid-term evaluation
Week 10	Data analysis	Conduct training of analysis tool (e.g., SPSS) and begin data analysis	
Week 12	Academic paper or report writing	Review academic and/or professional writing and begin paper	
Week 14	Data visualization	Review data visualization and begin development of presentation	
Week 16	Research Presentation!		Final Evaluation

## Appendix C: Contact Information and Additional Resources

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### Contact Information

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**Field Coordinator**

David Barry, Ph.D.  
(715) 346-4197, [dbarry@uwsp.edu](mailto:dbarry@uwsp.edu)

**Dept. Sociology and Social Work Chair**

Amy Zlimen Ticho, MSSW, APSW, Ph.D.  
(715) 346-3603, [Amy.Zlimen@uwsp.edu](mailto:Amy.Zlimen@uwsp.edu)

**UWSP Counseling Center**

Third Floor, Delzell Hall  
910 Fremont Street  
Stevens Point, WI 54481  
(715) 346-3553; <http://www.uwsp.edu/counseling/>

**UWSP Disability and Assistive Technology Center (DATC)**

Room 609 Albertson Hall  
900 Reserve Street  
Stevens Point, WI 54481  
(715) 346-3365  
TTY/TTD (715) 346-3362; <http://www.uwsp.edu/datc>

**American Sociological Association**

[Link to Professional Code of Ethics](#)

### Additional Resources

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Additional resources referenced throughout this document:

[Link to Student Learning Contract](#)

[Link to Evaluation Forms](#)

[Link to \(Sample\) Application](#)

[Link to Research Option Guidelines](#)