



**METROPOLITAN
STATE UNIVERSITYSM
OF DENVER**

Department of Human Services and Counseling

Student Field Manual

Updated August 2024

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 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 director (Angela Furney)** and the **seminar instructors (Dr. Tara Hammar and Patrick Griswold)**. The field director will meet with you for advising and placement support prior to the start of the field class. Your seminar instructor will teach the field classes and handle all aspects of your placement throughout the semester. The seminar instructor and field director 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 director 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.

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 supervisory 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 director.

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 director or your seminar instructor.

Know your Degree Requirements and Catalog Year:

Your **degree catalog year** outlines the classes you will be required to complete to graduate. Be sure to identify your catalog year and the corresponding internship 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.

Number of hours and credits:

Most field placements require students to complete a total of **200-400 hours** over a given semester. To accomplish this, students need to average 15-25 hours per week for 15 weeks (spring and fall semesters) or 20-40 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.

Field course numbers and required hours:

Review your Degree Progress Report to see how many credits you need to earn in internship courses:

- **8 credits** require the completion of **300 hours**.
- **10 credits** require the completion of **400 hours**.
 - Can be completed across two semesters for 200 hours each.
- **12 credits** require the completion of **450 hours**.
 - Can be completed across two semesters for 225 hours each.

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 director **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.

Seminar Requirements:

Your final grade(s) will be, in part, based on your professionalism both with the placement site and in the class. The *minimum requirements* to pass the course include completing all required hours, submitting all paperwork and assignments, attending the seminar class meetings, and participating in the site visit meeting(s) and evaluations.

Assignments and grades:

1) Participation in the seminar class	200 points
2) Professionalism (on-site, in-class, during site visit)	200 points
3) Learning Contract	100 points
4) Paper A/Paper B/Paper C	100 points
5) Mid-Term Review (evaluation + paper)	100 points
6) Site Work (hour log)	200 points
7) Final Evaluation Paper (evaluation + paper)	100 points

Before the Field Semester

HSP 2070—Pre-Field Placement Seminar:

This one-credit class 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.

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 of the semester you're planning to complete an internship (2-3 months is recommended). **You must have a placement by the beginning of the semester, or you will be required to drop the class.** The field director has final approval of your placement agency and will support you through the placement selection process.

Registering for a Field Placement:

You need to schedule a meeting with the **field director, Angela Furney**, before you will be eligible to register for an internship class. During this meeting, you will discuss your possible placement site(s), receive academic advising, and create a plan to graduate. **The field sections and appointments with the field director are a first-come, first-serve basis so start the process early.**

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 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 director during your advising appointment. The field director will work with you to determine a strategy to complete your degree.

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 a Field Experience:

It is permissible for you to use your job for internship hours, but your position **responsibilities and tasks must go beyond your current job duties, which typically requires additional hours added to your work week. These additional responsibilities and tasks will serve as the foundation for the development of your learning contract.** If you opt to use your employment (part-time or full-time) for a field placement, 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 or fellow students 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 director, seminar instructor, and agency supervisor(s).

Supervision Hours:

You must participate in the equivalent of **one hour per week** of individual or small group supervision. Colorado Addiction 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 (midterm and end of term).

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 drug and alcohol addiction and be supervised by an individual with a Licensed Addictions Counselor (LAC) credential 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 to get your supervisor's signature.*

Domestic Violence:

If you are seeking State approval to work with domestic violence offenders and want your field 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 director. 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). Most students are able to secure coverage for as little as \$35 per year. For details, see 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

Any student approved to do the placement abroad, must register with the MSU Denver Study Abroad Advisor and show the field director 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 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:

Undergraduate students are not trained to perform the same duties as graduate students in a field placement. As such, please be aware of the responsibilities 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 OR 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 director 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** placement are covered by the **MSU Denver** Professional Liability and Worker's Compensation Insurance plan.
- Students in a **paid** 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 director. 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 director, 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 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 will need to pay \$625 of that amount. Details are available 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 placements 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 deciding 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 for 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 contain 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 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 field experience?
- 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 director, 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 director 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 CAT 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, partners with students who experience any type of disability (mental health, chronic health, physical, sensory, and neurological) or temporary impairment (concussion, broken wrist, pregnancy, etc) to provide needed accommodations and support to ensure equal opportunity to demonstrate their academic abilities and receive equal access and inclusion to all the University's programs, activities, and services. Information is available on their website: <http://msudenver.edu/access/>.

The **College to Career Hub (C2Hub)**, 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. Students in Addictions Studies who have a minimum of four years of experience in the field and at least a CAT can request permission to do a portfolio for two field classes. If you think you have experience that might qualify you for the Portfolio option, speak to the field director. To access their website, go to: <https://www.msudenver.edu/registrar/prior-learning-assessment/>.

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** 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 director of all paperwork required by the Study Abroad Office. To access their website, go to: <http://www.msudenver.edu/internationalstudies>.

Appendix A: Ethical Standards for Human Services Professionals

National Organization for Human Services, Adopted 2024

Preamble

The field of human services is broadly defined, uniquely approaching the objective of meeting human needs through an interdisciplinary knowledge base, focusing on prevention as well as remediation of problems, and maintaining a commitment to improving the overall quality of life of service populations. The human services profession is one which promotes improved service delivery systems by addressing not only the quality of direct services, but also by seeking to improve accessibility, accountability, and coordination among professionals and agencies in service delivery.

Ethics Code Purpose

The purpose of this ethics code is to establish a set of principles and standards to guide decision-making and conduct for all human services professionals. It serves to safeguard the well-being of clients, uphold the integrity of the profession, and foster trust and respect in all professional relationships. This code is designed to promote excellence in service delivery, ensure ethical practice in diverse social contexts, and address ethical dilemmas with professionalism and moral clarity. By adhering to this code, members commit to the highest standards of ethical behavior of their field which transcend legal requirements, foster enduring trust and respect, and advance the principles of human dignity, social justice, and responsible stewardship of the care placed in them by clients and society towards making profound contributions to their well-being.

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, practitioners, employers, supervisors, and others in community agencies who identify with the human services field (henceforth all are referred to throughout this code as human service professionals). The ethical standards are organized according to defined professional domains.

This ethics code emphasizes our unwavering commitment to ethical decision-making, a cornerstone of the human services profession. This commitment obliges all human service professionals to engage in continuous reflection, prioritize the welfare and rights of service recipients, and navigate complex ethical landscapes with diligence and moral clarity. It mandates the seeking of counsel and adherence to established ethical guidelines when confronting dilemmas, and ensures decisions are made with integrity and transparency.

Responsibility to Clients

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

STANDARD 2 At the beginning of the helping relationship, human service professionals obtain informed consent for services from clients. Clients should be informed that they may withdraw consent at any time and can ask questions before agreeing to the services. Clients who are unable to give consent should have those who are legally responsible for them review an informed consent statement document and provide appropriate consent. In the case of mandated services, human service professionals explain to clients their right to consent, including limitations to confidentiality and privacy, and possible consequences from service refusal.

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 When a human service professional suspects a client's behavior may endanger themselves or others, they must take appropriate and professional actions to ensure safety, which may include consulting, seeking supervision, or, in accordance with state and federal laws, breaching confidentiality.

STANDARD 5 Human service professionals recognize the potential harm and impaired judgment resulting from dual

or multiple relationships with clients. If such relationships cannot be avoided, professionals must assess whether to limit or forego the professional relationship and make appropriate referrals as needed.

STANDARD 6 Human service professionals must not engage in sexual or romantic relationships with current clients. In the case of former clients, their friends, or family, professionals must thoroughly assess any potential harm or exploitative dynamics before considering such relationships.

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

STANDARD 8 Human service professionals are responsible for safeguarding the integrity, safety, and security of client records. Client information, whether in written or electronic form, can only be shared with other professionals with the client's prior written consent, unless required or allowed by law or during professional supervision.

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 are committed to delivering services equitably, ensuring inclusion and accessibility, and respecting diversity by valuing and affirming differences in age, ethnicity, culture, race, ability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, language preference, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, nationality, and other identities associated with historically marginalized groups.

STANDARD 11 Human service professionals are knowledgeable about their cultures and communities within which they practice. They are aware of diversity 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 have a duty to be informed about relevant local, state, and federal laws. They bear the responsibility to advocate for amendments or changes in regulations and statutes when they conflict with the ethical standards and/or the rights of clients.

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, comprehend their effects on clients, and recognize how the impact of such issues vary among individuals from diverse backgrounds.

STANDARD 15 Human service professionals must establish processes to identify client needs and assets, actively draw attention to them, and facilitate planning and advocacy at individual, community, and societal levels to address them.

STANDARD 16 Human service professionals advocate for social justice and seek to eliminate oppression. They raise awareness about systems of discrimination and inequity that affect historically minoritized and marginalized groups and advocate for systemic change to address these inequalities within their workplace, communities, and legislative systems.

STANDARD 17 Human service professionals accurately represent the effectiveness of their treatment programs, interventions, and techniques, substantiating claims with empirical data and/or sound theoretical inferences whenever feasible.

Responsibility to Colleagues

STANDARD 18 Human service professionals avoid duplicating another professional's helping relationship with a client. With written permission from their client, human service professionals 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.

STANDARD 19 When human service professionals have a conflict with a colleague, they first seek out the colleague 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 20 Human service professionals have a duty to respond appropriately to unethical behavior of colleagues. This generally means first discussing the issue directly with the colleague in question, unless there are extenuating circumstances, such as concerns about repercussions due to an existing power relationship. If a satisfactory resolution is not reached or extenuating circumstances exist, the professional should report the colleague's behavior to a supervisor. If the potential unethical behavior is seen as egregious, then the individual should report the behavior to the colleague's professional association, credentialing board, police, and/or other administrators or boards, as appropriate.

STANDARD 21 Clients have a right to information discussed between their helper and other professionals, except when state or federal law notes otherwise. All information discussed among professionals should be kept confidential from all others, except when withholding information would lead to harm to clients, others, or communities.

Responsibility to Employers

STANDARD 22 Human service professionals honor their commitments to employers to the fullest extent possible.

STANDARD 23 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 24 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 25 Human service professionals seek the training, experience, education, and supervision necessary to ensure their effectiveness in working with culturally diverse individuals, families, and communities.

STANDARD 26 Human service professionals provide services only within their expertise and scope of practice, recognizing the limits to their knowledge and skills.

STANDARD 27 Human service professionals must accurately represent their qualifications, encompassing, but not limited to, their skills, education, credentials, training, and areas of expertise, to the client, colleagues, and members of the public. When any intentional or accidental misrepresentation is discovered, they must take immediate action to rectify the situation.

STANDARD 28 Human service professionals must pursue relevant consultation and supervision to guide their decision-making in the face of legal, ethical, or other complex dilemmas.

STANDARD 29 Human service professionals promote cooperation across related disciplines, aiming to enhance professional development and maximize the benefits of inter-professional collaboration for clients at all levels.

STANDARD 30 Human service professionals are committed to the continued development of the field. They promote professional association memberships, support research initiatives, foster educational advancement, advocate for appropriate legislative actions, and engage in other professional development activities.

STANDARD 31 Human service professionals continually seek out new and effective approaches to enhance their professional abilities and use techniques that are 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 and gain client consent for their usage.

STANDARD 32 Human service professionals engage in research that upholds ethical standards, meets institutional standards, and maintains scientific integrity. Such research accounts for cross-cultural and diversity bias and is reported with transparency regarding its limitations.

STANDARD 33 Human service professionals exercise discretion in sharing personal information on social media, knowing that they reflect the profession of human services. They also reflect on how their public behavior might impact their personal reputation and the perception of their professional community.

Responsibility to Self

STANDARD 34 Human service professionals maintain awareness of their own cultural and diverse backgrounds, beliefs, values, and biases. They recognize the potential impact of these factors on their relationships with others and commit to delivering culturally competent services to all clients.

STANDARD 35 Human service professionals are committed to their personal growth and well-being to ensure they provide the highest quality service to clients. Should they become aware of any physical, emotional, or psychological impediments to their ability to serve clients effectively, they direct clients to appropriate alternative services and seek measures for personal remediation of such impediments via consultation, treatment, or education.

STANDARD 36 Human service professionals are dedicated to lifelong learning, consistently seeking to enhance their knowledge and skills to better serve their clients.

Responsibility to Students

STANDARD 37 Human service educators develop and implement teaching methodologies that are culturally sensitive, using pedagogical approaches that recognize student's diverse backgrounds and perspectives.

STANDARD 38 Human service educators commit to fostering equity and inclusion, actively employing measures to ensure educational accessibility for students of all abilities.

STANDARD 39 Human service educators uphold high standards of scholarship in their academic, pedagogical, and professional engagements. They remain abreast of developments in the field through active participation in professional associations, attendance at workshops and conferences, and engagement in both the review and conduct of research.

STANDARD 40 Human service educators recognize and acknowledge the contributions of students to their work including, but not limited to, 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, the supervisory experience, and that the educational outcomes align with the objectives of personal, professional, academic, career, and civic development of the student. When students experience potentially harmful situations during field placements, educators provide appropriate investigations and respond as necessary to safeguard the student.

STANDARD 42 Human service educators establish and uphold appropriate guidelines regarding student disclosure of sensitive or personal information. This involves providing students with advance notice of any activities requiring self-disclosure, offering students the option to opt-out of in-depth self-disclosure when reasonable, and ensuring that there are processes in place to discuss and debrief these activities.

STANDARD 43 Human service educators acknowledge the inherent power imbalance in their relationships with students and are committed to defining and upholding clear ethical and professional boundaries. This commitment includes avoiding any behavior that is demeaning, embarrassing, or exploitative. Human service educators are dedicated to treating all students with fairness and equity, actively working to eliminate discrimination in all forms, and ensuring a respectful and inclusive educational environment.

STANDARD 44 Human service educators ensure that students are familiar with, guided by, and held accountable to the ethical standards and policies established by their academic program or department, the specific guidelines outlined in the course syllabus by the instructor, the expectations of their advisors, 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, 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 classes. Written and oral skills must be clear, organized, grammatically correct, and set a professional tone. Academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Students 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 Department's 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 Dean of Students 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 Professional Review Team (PRT) and the Department Chair will be notified. The Chair of the PRT 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 PRT 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, 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 PRT Chair following the meeting about 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 College of Health and Human Sciences. 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 can 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 can 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 can 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 can 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.