Module 1: The Mission of Field Education
Training Objectives

1. To understand the need for field instructor training.
2. To understand the mission and purpose of field education.
3. To understand the importance of the field instructor in the professional development of students.
4. To help create a vision.
Why is a Field Instructor Training Program Necessary?

- The Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) of CSWE refers to Field Education as “an integral component of field education” and mandates that social work programs provide a minimum of 900 hours of field education to masters students (CSWE, 2002).
- EPAS guidelines further mandate that social work programs provide both an orientation and field instructor training to agency based field instructors (CSWE, 2002).
- Research studies indicate that specialized training is vital for social workers acting as field instructors (Ellison, 1994, Knight, 2001, Rogers & McDonald, 1995). Being proficient in social work does not indicate the person knows how to teach the skill.
The Mission of Field Education at APU

- According to the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), “Field Education is the capstone of the social work education experience and is considered our “signature pedagogy”.

- Students develop skills through experiential learning in a supervised field setting.

- Focus turns from acquisition to application of knowledge (classroom to field).

- Students learn to successfully integrate theory into practice.

- Upon completion of field training, students should be ready to be hired as social work practitioners within an agency setting.
The Goal of Field: Integrating Classroom Knowledge in a Field Setting

- Practice Theories
- Law and Ethics
- Macro Interventions
- Interventions & Treatment Planning
- Crisis Intervention
- Assessment & Interviewing

Integration

Acquisition of knowledge (Classroom)

Application of knowledge (Field Setting)
To facilitate positive and challenging experiential learning in a supervised field setting.
To partner with skilled, experienced, and motivated social work practitioners who love to teach.
To train students in evidence-based practice methods consistent with current trends.
To train competent advanced social work practitioners.
To contribute to the workforce in the field of social work.
To promote the ethical integration of faith and social work practice.
Field instructors are considered social work educators.

Research indicates that the supervisory style and characteristics of the field instructor have a significant impact on student’s overall evaluation of the placement experience (Fortune, McCarthy & Abramson, 2001 and Knight, 1996, 2001).

Furthermore research indicates that the quality of the field instructor is the most significant factor affecting the student’s satisfaction with the field placement (Fortune, & Abramson, 1993).
Take a Moment to Reflect On Your Own Field Experience as a Student?

- What impact did your field instructor have on you?
Becoming a Field Instructor Offers An Opportunity:

- To significantly influence the education and training of a future social worker.
  - This influence extends well beyond the student—it will influence all the student’s future interactions with clients. Over a lifetime, that influence can spread to hundreds of people.

- To influence the future of the social work profession.
  - In supervising your student, you have an opportunity to play an important role in shaping the future of social work practice.
The field instructor has the challenge of helping students to apply social work knowledge, skills and values. This involves creating learning opportunities that stimulate students to integrate theory into practice.

Remember, a challenge for field instructors is to teach students how to *practice* social work, not just how to do a particular job at your agency.

The ongoing challenge is to help students learn how to adequately engage a client, how to build rapport, how to set goals, how to develop tasks to reach those goals, and learn all elements of ethical social work practice.
By the conclusion of field placement, your student should be able to translate and transfer these skills to any practice setting!
One of your first tasks as a field instructor should be to create a vision of the qualities and characteristics you would like your field student to have by the end of placement.

The immediate vision involves helping your student apply all of his or her knowledge to a practice setting.

The larger vision is your role in the life and professional development of the student.
Vision Exercise

- Write down some of the characteristics and qualities you would like your student to possess by the end of placement?
- Identify some teaching and mentoring strategies to make this vision a reality.
This concludes the slides for this training module. In order to receive APU Field Instructor training hours credit, please close the power point and access the Module 1 Post Test on the apu.edu/msw-training/home page. The post test will also ask for your contact information. In order to receive a training certificate for eight hours, all the Fall training modules must be completed.

Please note CEUs are only offered for attending one of our live trainings.
References