

# Practicum Orientation School of Social Work

September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024

# Land Acknowledgement

I'd like to begin by acknowledging our present occupation of Algonquin Anishinaabe land.

Together we must honour that our being here is a legacy of colonialism, a legacy of racism and pain, of loss of land and loss of culture.

I challenge each of you to carry these truths with you in your daily lives, in your hearts and in your actions. I challenge each of you to be a part of the Indigenization of all spaces.

# Practicum Team

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# Where to Find Information

**The Practicum Hub:** <https://carleton.ca/socialwork/practicum-hub-2/>

- Term-specific information and forms
- Practicum education policies and protocols
- Practicum courses and components
- Sample learning contract

# Orientation Objectives

## Overview:

- The practicum team
- Practicum courses – components and prerequisites
- Winter 2025 placement options
- Practicum education realities
- Finalizing your placement
- Getting ready to apply and interview for a placement opportunity

# The Practicum Team

## **Practicum Coordinators**

- Develop policies and curriculum
- Community engagement and partnership development
- Training and consultation
- Facilitate placement process
- Students/placements at risk

## **Practicum Administrator**

- First point of contact for general practicum inquiries
- Facilitates placement process
- Manages student applications and paperwork (insurance forms, practicum agreement form)
- Provides permission to register in practicum courses

# The Practicum Team

## Faculty Liaison

- Practicum course instructor
- First point of contact during the practicum course
- Facilitates consultations
- Marks assignments
- Recommends grade

# Practicum Course Components

1. **Practicum placement** (352 hours)
2. **Six Practicum seminars** (minimum 12 hours, Friday mornings)
  - a) Standard seminars: 8:55 - 10:55am
  - b) Supplemental seminars: 10:55-11:25am (2x during the term)
3. **Faculty Liaison consultations**
4. **Written requirements**
  - a) Learning contract
  - b) Theory-to-practice assignment
  - c) Mid- and end-point evaluations
  - d) Record of hours

**\*Graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis**



# Prerequisites: Practicum I (SOWK 3601)

- Third-year standing upon admission (new incoming students only)
- Good academic standing in the BSW program
- A 6.00 CGPA in the Social Work major
- Successful completion of:
  - SOWK 2001: Structural Analysis and Social Work
  - SOWK 2005: Values and Ethics for Social Work
  - SOWK 2100: The Political Economy of the Social Welfare State
  - SOWK 2202: Intro to SW Practice with Individuals and Families
  - SOWK 2203: Intro to SW Practice with Groups and Communities

# Prerequisites: Practicum II (SOWK 4601 & 4602)

- Good academic standing in the BSW program
- A 6.00 CGPA in the Social Work major
- Successful completion of:
  - SOWK 2001: Structural Analysis and Social Work
  - SOWK 2005: Values and Ethics for Social Work
  - SOWK 2100: The Political Economy of the Social Welfare State
  - SOWK 2202: Intro to SW Practice with Individuals and Families
  - SOWK 2203: Intro to SW Practice with Groups and Communities
  - SOWK 3100: Social Policy and Administration
  - SOWK 3600 or 3601: Practicum I

# SOWK 3601

- 2.0 credits over the winter term
- 4 days per week, 28-30 practicum hours per week (not including meal breaks)
- January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025 to April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025

# SOWK 4601 - 4602

- 1.0 credit over the winter term (SOWK 4601)  
1.0 credit over the summer term (SOWK 4602)
- 2-3 days per week/14-16 practicum hours per week (not including meal breaks) over two terms
- January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025 to August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025
- Seminars in SOWK 4601 only

# Attendance and Absences Policies

- CASWE-ACTFS accreditation standards guide practicum education policies
- Practicum hours only accrue when you are in placement (not on statutory holidays or sick days)
- During reading weeks, students should remain in the placement and follow the agency calendar
- Absence due to illness exceeding two (2) days (see medical leave policy)

# Placement Options

- Students are asked to select their preferred option on the **Practicum Application due September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024** through *mySuccess*
- **Matched by School**
  - Matched based on a student's agencies/areas of interest, learning needs, and the availability and criteria of placement settings
  - Check your Carleton email regularly!
  - 3 days to confirm interest through *mySuccess* before options will be extended to other students
  - Provide tailored cover letter and resume for the specific position by the stated deadline

*Matches occur with settings in Ottawa and immediate surrounding regions only*

# Matching Policies

- **Students are not to reach out to agencies to inquire about practicum placements unless permission has been received in advance from the Practicum Coordinator**
  - Specific request of placement settings
  - To ensure a fair and equitable process for all students
  - Can jeopardize placement opportunities for that student and others
- **Students are permitted to apply to one setting at a time only. Once you apply to a setting, you will not be offered alternative options**
  - Please fully review the placement information & website
  - In electing to apply, you are demonstrating your full commitment to proceeding with the setting
- **Students are not permitted to withdraw from a confirmed placement for another opportunity at a later time**

# Matching Policies

- **Declining a match**

- Given the significant constraints on placement availability due to agency capacity, there is no guarantee that an alternative option that meets your listed areas/agencies of interest, and for which you meet the criteria set by the agency for placement positions, may become available to you.
- You would be extended an alternative opportunity should one become available once all students have received an initial match
- If a placement does not become available, the Practicum Coordinator will contact you to discuss your options (e.g., deferral of your practicum)



# Matching Policies

- **Turn Backs**

- Can occur for a number of reasons:
  - Agencies generally accept applications from multiple institutions for limited positions
  - Organizational realities can change unexpectedly (e.g., funding, staffing, operations)
  - Not selected after interview
- You would be extended an alternative opportunity wherever this is possible
- If a placement does not become available, or you decline available options, the Practicum Coordinator will contact you to discuss your options (e.g., deferral of your practicum)

# What Kinds of Matches are Available?

## Limitations:

- **MSW level:** Ottawa hospitals and school boards (federal government, military, and clinical settings are often **MSW-level only**)
- **Continuing impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on practicum education**
  - Many agencies have reduced the number of student positions
  - Uncertainties/settings cannot guarantee availability/turn-backs may occur

*Flexibility and openness to a range of settings is needed*

# Realities

- **Placements cannot be guaranteed – collaborative process**
- **No practicum setting is required to offer placements to our students**
  - Offered on a voluntary basis
  - May consider applicants from multiple institutions & programs
  - Availability can change
  - Set the selection criteria for their setting (e.g., minimum level of placement, knowledge, skills & experience, language or vehicle requirements)
- **Why do agencies partner with the School?**
  - To support your education & the SW profession
  - Students contribute new ideas, knowledge, skills & energy to the organization
  - May be part of recruitment strategy

*If a placement cannot be established for any reason, we will work with you to identify your options for deferral & staying on track with your degree progression, wherever possible, through alternative course sequencing.*

# Realities

- The responsibility for obtaining a field placement is a shared one between student and Field Coordinator
- Flexibility & openness to a range of options
- Research the setting, consult with Career Services, tailor your cover letter, proof-read, and send with your resume in Microsoft Word format (.docx). Carleton email address only
- We apply to one setting at a time. It may take more than one application.
- Prompt responses to emails, regularly check the *mySuccess* portal & keep Practicum Coordinator informed
- We will work with you until such time as your plan is clear

# BSW Areas

Individuals, families, groups / community / research and policy

- Children & youth
- Young parents
- Drop-in & day programs
- Shelters
- Employment
- Housing & homelessness
- Anti-poverty
- Addictions & mental health
- Disability services
- Child welfare
- VAW
- Criminal justice
- Seniors
- Immigrant, newcomer &
- Refugee
- Multicultural & ethnospecific
- Education & on-campus
- Food insecurity
- LGBTQ+
- Community health & resource centres
- Research & community development

# The following two options require you to locate your own placement opportunity

Place of Employment and Distance Placements

# Placement Options

- **Place of Employment (Former or Current)**
  - Must demonstrate you will be engaged in new work activities that allow you to develop new learning at a BSW level
  - Must meet practicum hour requirements
  - Can be paid OR unpaid
  - Appropriate placement supervision must be established
  - Setting must meet responsibilities of practicum sites
  - Workplace Placement Proposal due through *mySuccess*: **October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

# Placement Options

- **Distance Placement (only SOWK 4601-4602 students eligible)**
  - Residing in another city, province, country
  - Proposed opportunity must allow for relevant practicum learning activities at a BSW level
  - Must meet practicum hour requirements
  - Appropriate placement supervision must be established
  - Setting must meet responsibilities of practicum sites
  - Distance Placement Proposal due through *mySuccess*: **October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024**



# Next Steps

- **Attend the Agency Fair on September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024 (10:00am to 12:00pm)**
  - Richcraft Hall
  - Mandatory, attendance will be taken
- **Submit your Practicum Application by September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024**
  - Your application will be reviewed, and you will be contacted by a Practicum Coordinator regarding your options or next steps through *mySuccess* at the end of October/early November
  - Monitor your *mySuccess* page for receipt of a placement match
  - Please check your Carleton email regularly and respond promptly

# Finalizing Your Placement

- **Practicum Forms**
  - Practicum Agreement Form through *mySuccess*
  - Insurance forms through Adobe Sign
  - To be completed within 2 weeks of confirming a placement
  - Final deadline: November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024
  - If not completed in a timely manner, practicum at risk of being put on hold or deferred to a subsequent term
- **Inquire about and meet any preplacement requirements of the practicum setting.** Costs incurred by student
  - Criminal record check (standard requirement of all placements)
  - Vaccinations
- **Arrange your start date and schedule for placement directly with your Field Supervisor in the agency**
- **Register for your practicum course once permission is granted**

*Once you have accepted a placement, you are not permitted to change your placement setting*

# Resume/Cover Letter & Career Services support

- “Preparing for Field Placement” package – resume and cover letter examples and common interview questions
- Career Services at Carleton: [career@carleton.ca](mailto:career@carleton.ca)
- Social work relevant
- Microsoft Word format (.docx)
- Carleton email address only – make sure you are checking it daily

# Resume/Cover Letter & Career Services support (continued)

Students who:

- Present themselves professionally
- Are prepared – have researched setting & area of practice (demonstrated by application/interview)
- Are able to speak about their relevant skills & experience
- Demonstrates initiative – follows up / organized / able to answer questions about the placement requirements
- Are enthusiastic and have a positive attitude
- Are open to learning
- Student's learning interests in line with what the setting can offer
- Self-directed – takes initiative for own learning

# U-Pass Opt-Out

- Participating in an experiential learning term
- Students must be registered in the experiential learning course as a full-time student for the full term.
- For more information: <https://carleton.ca/upass/opt-in-and-opt-out/>

# Shirley Judge Bursary

- Endowed in 2007 by family and friends, in honour of Shirley Judge
- \$3100 for 2024-2025
- Recipients will have demonstrated financial need, must be Canadian citizens or permanent residents of Canada (landed immigrants or protected persons), and must meet OSAP's Ontario residency requirements
- **The award will be granted to the most outstanding student(s) whose work or future work will contribute to Shirley's legacy**
- **Further information will be posted to the website ([carleton.ca/socialwork](http://carleton.ca/socialwork)) and communicated via email**

# Upcoming Activities/Events for BSW Winter students

- **Mandatory Agency Fair**

- Friday, September 13, 2024 10:00am to 12:00pm.
- Richcraft Hall Atrium & Conference Rooms (2220, 2224, 2228)

- **BSW Practicum Application** through *mySuccess*

- Monday, September 16, 2024

- **Mandatory Cover letter and Resume Workshop**

for BSW students in winter term practicum

- Friday, October 18, 2024 9:00am to 11:00am
- Room TBD

**Questions?**

