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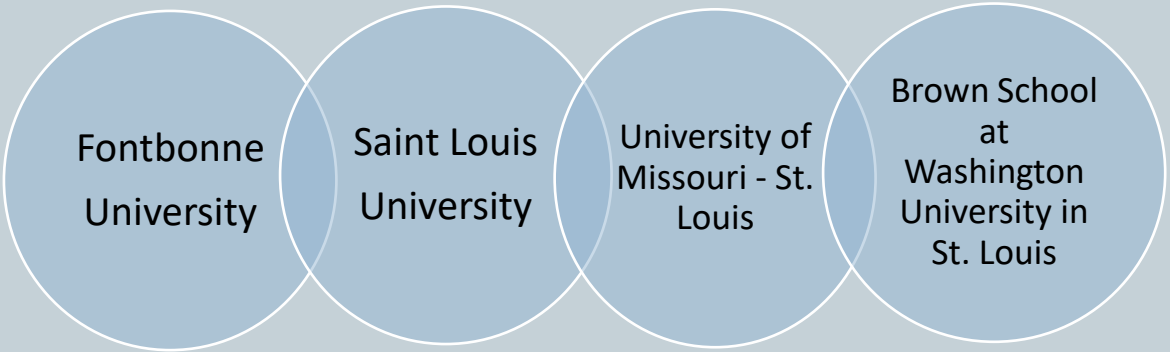

Field Instructor Certification
Session #5

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Field Instructor Certification Session #5

FIELD INSTRUCTOR AS TEACHER, MENTOR, AND SUPERVISOR

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Teacher, Supervisor, Mentor

- Think of a person who had influence on your professional career: a teacher, mentor or supervisor
- Take 5 minutes to write a quick thank you note to that person.

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The Student Learner:

Versus the Employee or Volunteer

Distinction: Educational Learning Contract

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Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards

- The Council on Social Work Education has adopted standards that require social work students to meet core competencies.
- The educational learning agreements from each university reflect the 9 competencies students need to demonstrate and achieve in the field.

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The Student Learner

The Student is at the Center of the Field Education Process:

- When does learning begin for the student?
- What motivates the student learner?

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The Student Learner

The Student is at the Center of the Field Education Process

- How can the “same learning opportunity and environment” become a unique learning experience for *each* student?

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The Student Learner

The Student is at the Center of the Field Education Process

All learning culminates in the student's:

- **increased competence and confidence**
- **understanding** what they only vaguely understood before
- **doing** what they could almost, but not quite, do before.

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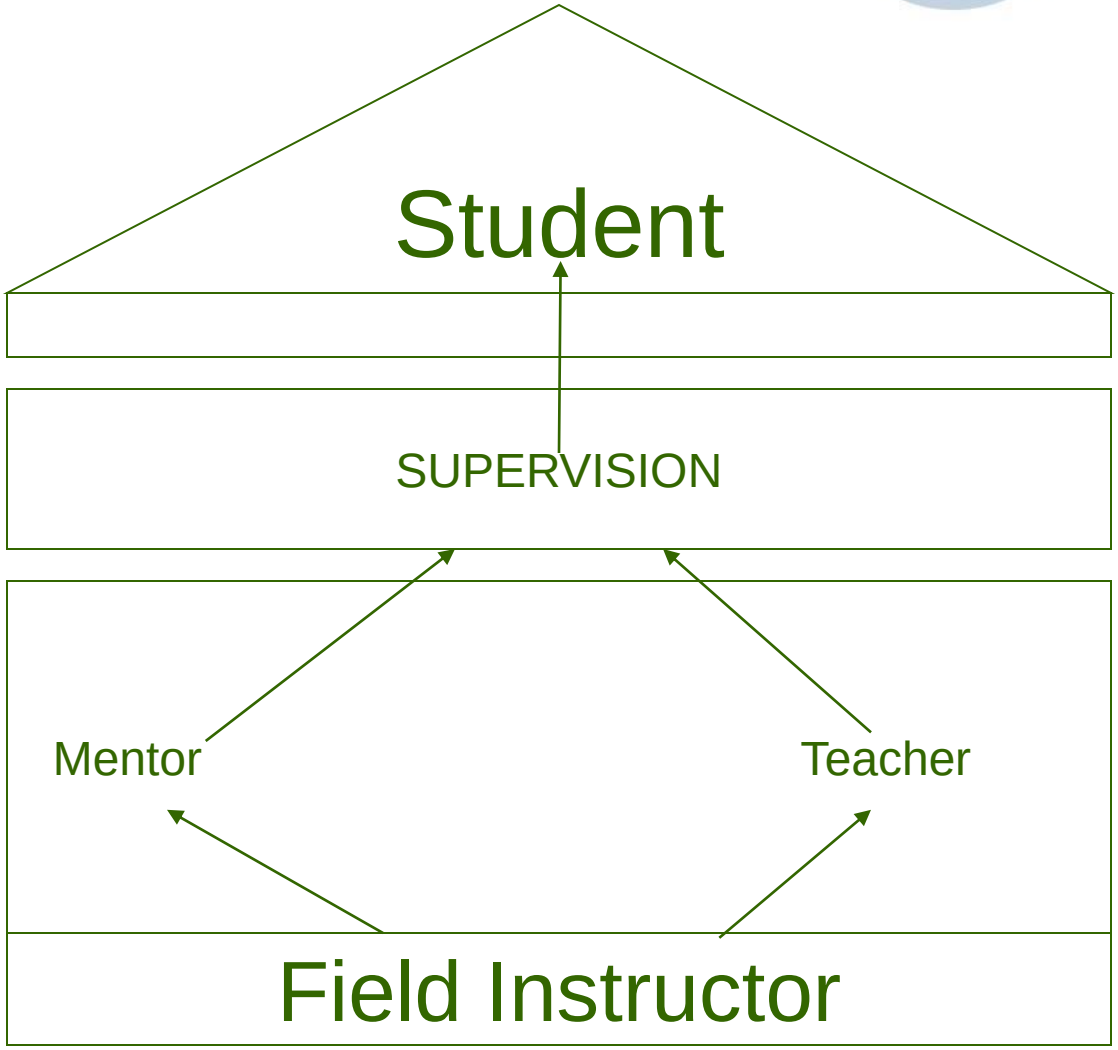
St. Louis University
University of Missouri-St. Louis
Washington University-Brown School



Field Instructor, Mentor, Teacher, and Co-Learner

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Environments Conducive to Learning

BREAK-OUT ROOMS:

Take a few minutes to list environments that are conducive to learning.

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Environments Conducive to Learning

- Encourages collaborations and partnership
- Sensitive and responsive to cultural backgrounds
- Supportive of employees and volunteers
- Provides a bridge for past and present student learning experiences and knowledge
- Incorporates humor, openness, and encouragement
- Allows for mistakes

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Supervisor Anxiety: *A Common Occurrence*

- Supervisor anxiety is recognized as a common feature of the supervisory process.
- Supervisor anxiety and stress can impact effectiveness.
- Sources of anxiety:
  - multiple roles and educational tasks
  - transition from worker to supervisor
  - supervisor authority
  - context and self-awareness.

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Strategies for Decreasing Supervisor Anxiety

1. Process through ventilation and consultation with peers.
2. Attend workshops and seminars.
3. Clarify roles and structure for supervisory meetings.
4. Clearly articulate learning agreement activities.
5. Build organizational acceptance of the student.

Adapted from Caspi, J. & Reid, W. (2002). Educational supervision in social work. New York: Columbia University Press.

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Learning Styles

What is a learning style?

- "a student's consistent ways of responding and using stimuli in the context of learning" (Claxton and Ralston)

- " the way in which a student integrates new information" (Caspi and Reid, 2002)

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Learning Styles

Why is it important to identify and understand both field instructor and student learning styles?

- Assessing “fit.”
- May explain situations where the student is not “getting it.”
- Optimized learning (Kadushin).
- To identify which teaching methods will be most effective (Finch, Williams, Mondros and Franks, 2019).

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Learning Styles

Should agency field instructors always try to accommodate students' learning styles?

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Kolb's Learning Styles

The **Reflective Learner** = "OBSERVER"

- Learn new information by watching
- Reflect on the work being done before taking action
- Can usually sort out trivial from essential information
- Tend to be open minded, and reserve judgment
- Have the ability to look at many points of view
- Can organize this information to generate new ideas

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Kolb's Learning Styles

The **Operational Learner** = "DOER"

- Learn best through direct action
- Usually ready to take risks and jump in
- Discuss ideas and theories once they have experience

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Kolb's Learning Styles

The **Cognitive Learner** = "THINKER"

- Learn best through reading and informational sources
- Employ theoretical approaches to problem solving
- Prepared to act when they feel they have a grasp of the information required

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Kolb's Learning Styles

The **Affective Learner** = "FEELER"

- Learn best through the use of senses, especially emotions and feelings
- Strength in their ability to connect with people
- Prefer to learn in the "here and now"

Adapted from Finch, J., Williams, O., Mondros, J., & Franks, C. (2019) Learning to teach, teaching to learn: A guide for social work field education. 3d edition. Council on Social Work Education.

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Personality Types

- Personality type may also impact the supervisory relationship.
- Field instructors need to understand their own personality types as well as how to respond to different personality types.
- The Myers-Briggs inventory or other internet based assessments tools may be helpful.

~ Hunter, C. Moen, J. & Raskin, M. (2015). Social Work Field Directors. Chicago: Lyceum Books.

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VARK

A questionnaire that provides users with a profile of their learning preferences.

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Teaching Approaches

The most productive learning occurs when:

- the student and teacher are viewed as **co-learners** in the learning-teaching situation.

- when participants in the learning situation are prepared to switch the teacher-learner role, depending upon each one's unique knowledge or experience.

~Foeckler and Boyton, 1976, p. 40 as cited in Hendricks, Finch and Franks.

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Teaching Approaches

- "The central task of teaching is defined as the selection and structuring of experiences that demand and induce creative problem solving"

~Gitterman and Miller, 1977, p. 104
as cited in Hendricks, Finch and Franks.

- "It is not so much the teacher's intelligence that is essential to learning, but that teachers are most effective when they understand the different learning needs and release the learner's intelligence"

~Hendricks, Finch and Franks, 2005, p.85

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Teaching Approaches

- Auditory/visual technologies
- Web sites and distance learning
- Interactional participatory face to face activities
- Shadowing and role modeling
- Role playing
- Use of analogies and metaphors
- Labeling and naming skills
- Partializing or breaking down concepts or tasks
- Offering feedback throughout all teaching efforts

Adapted from Hendricks, C., Finch, J.B., & Franks, Cheryl. (2005) Learning to teach, teaching to learn: A guide for social work field education. Council on Social Work Education.

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Teaching Approaches

What are some teaching approaches you have used or experienced?

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Student Ranked Behaviors for Effective Field Instruction

Field instructors:

- Model the social worker's professional role
- Incorporate professional values and ethics
- Challenge attitudes that are unethical or anti-ethical to social work values
- Consult with students regarding progress or lack of progress
- Point to specific strengths or needs in practice skills and knowledge
- Introduce students to client populations and communities served

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Student Ranked Behaviors for Effective Field Instruction

- Teach about diversity and model cultural awareness
- Communicate with the social work programs regularly
- Help develop self-awareness and sensitivity with encouragement and empathy
- Evaluate progress formally and informally throughout the placement
- Define and clarify students' role in the agency
- Facilitate students' status as members of the agency with professional staff
- Help students learn more than one method of practice

Adapted from Hendricks, C., Finch, J, & Franks, C. (2005) Learning to Teach, teaching to learn: A guide for social work field education. Council on Social Work Education.

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The Supervisory Relationship

- Students who have good relationships with their supervisors are more likely to perceive their supervision experience in a positive manner (Caspi and Reid, 2002).

- “More is ‘caught’ by staff than taught by the supervisor” (Shulman, 1993, p. 7) There are parallel dynamics in the supervisory relationship and other helping relationships.

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The Supervisory Relationship: Two Aspects

There are two aspects or categories of supervisory relationships.

- **Instrumental behaviors = task development**
- **Expressive behaviors = emotional support**

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The Supervisory Relationship

- Both functions are important to a good supervisory relationship.
- The interpersonal aspect of the relationship tend to receive less emphasis.
- Provision of emotional support both increases learning and overall satisfaction with the practicum.
- Successful completion of assigned tasks is linked to the state of the interpersonal relationship with the supervisor.

Caspi, J. & Reid, W. (2002). Educational supervision in social work: A task-centered model for field instruction and staff development. New York: Columbia University Press.

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The Supervisory Relationship: A Teaching Tool

- The relationship can be a teaching tool that helps supervisees develop “relationship competence” (Bogo, 1993).

- The supervisors behavior with other staff, clients and peers also teaches the student about professional behaviors (Caspi and Reid, 2002).

- The supervisor needs to help create an environment that fosters self-examination.

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The Supervisory Relationship: Boundaries

When the line between supervision and therapy is crossed, it can have negative outcomes for the supervisee, such as:

- a lack of trust
- feeling violated and powerless
- sacrificed learning opportunities

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The Supervisory Relationship: Supervision vs. Therapy

Reasons why supervision may turn to therapy.

1. Supervision and therapy processes are similar.
2. Many supervisors move into their roles from clinical positions.
3. Supervisees may prefer to focus on personal issues rather than on their work.
4. Students may be dealing with difficult personal issues while completing the practicum.

Caspi, J. & Reid, W. (2002) Educational supervision in social work: A task-centered model for field instruction and task development. New York: Columbia University Press.

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The Supervisory Relationship: Maintaining Clear Boundaries

Strategies for Maintaining a Clear Boundary

- Talk about the boundary and check in when entering a personal domain
- Explain supervision
- Discuss subjective reactions only as they relate to professional work
- Keep it case specific
- Avoid immediate transfer of cases due to intense personal reactions

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The Supervisory Relationship: Maintaining Clear Boundaries

Strategies for Maintaining a Clear Boundary (cont'd)

- Focus on the supervisee's behaviors
- Avoid making it personal
- Check you own boundaries regarding self-disclosure.

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The Supervisory Relationship: Boundary Violations

- Sexual misbehavior
- Dual relationships
- Violations of confidentiality

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The Evaluation Process

Six elements of the evaluation process

1. Discuss the evaluation instrument early in the relationship.
2. Include evaluation items from in ongoing supervision discussions.
3. Provide formative feedback throughout the semester.
4. Identify both of strengths and weaknesses.
5. Schedule a joint meeting to identify areas of agreement and disagreement and to negotiate modifications, if appropriate.
6. Supervisor takes responsibility for final evaluation decisions.

Shulman, L. (1993) Interactional supervision. Washington, D.C.: NASW Press.

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Teaching Challenges

Dealing with Conflict (vignette)

~ ~ ~

Wrap up

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