**APPLICATION TO BSW PRACTICUM**

**AND SENIOR YEAR CURRICULUM**

University of Vermont

Undergraduate Social Work Program

**Directions:** Please add your text to the gray boxes throughout.

**Name:**

**Address:**

**UVM Email:**

**Cell**:

**BSW Practicum Readiness Checkpoints**: All statements below should either be checked yes or no.

*If you check no*, use the space below under “Comments/Planning re: summer agreements and/or exceptions” to explain your/your academic advisor’s plan for you to meet this checkpoint.

Yes  No I have thoroughly reviewed my academic transcript and my Degree Audit, and *prior* to entering the SWSS 4730 Practicum Experience course in my Senior year, I have (or will have):

Yes  No Earned Senior Standing with **90 or more credits**.

Yes  No Achieved social work grades commensurate with the BSW Program policy of “**No more than two grades below a B in required SWSS courses, with neither below a C.”**

Yes  No Achieved social work grades commensurate with the BSW Program policy of**a 3.0 Social Work GPA**.

Yes  No Completed **all general education or Catamount Core requirements**.

Yes  No I have reviewed the sample ***Resume*** and created my own using the sample. And, I have included this resume as part of my completed application to BSW Practicum.

Yes  No I understand that for my **SWSS** **Senior year courses**, I need to *concurrently* enroll in SWSS 4680/4690 (Fall/Spring Social Work Practice I & II); SWSS 4710/ 4720 (Fall/Spring Practicum Experience Seminar I & II); *and* SWSS 4730/4740 (Fall/Spring Practicum Experience).

Yes  No I understand that my **academic advisor must review and sign off** on this form indicating their agreement with my statements.

Comments/Planning re: summer agreements and/or exceptions:

Student Signature

Academic Advisor’s Signature

Date

Date

**This page has been intentionally left blank.**

**Primary Objective of BSW Practicum Education**

The primary objective of the undergraduate placement education curriculum in an accredited undergraduate program is to provide a foundation in **generalist social work practice**. Specific course objectives will be met through your work with **individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities** from a person-in-situation perspective and developing broad service coordination skills. All students entering their practicum as a BSW are expected to move along a **continuum from beginning to increasingly complex social work practice skills**. The primary goal for the student, Practicum Instructor, and placement Liaison is to work together towards the successful completion of the BSW degree, giving the student the ability to apply for an Advanced Standing Master’s Degree in Social Work programs.

*You may find that your placement may not be in the area of social work practice that you hope to practice in after earning your degree. Keep in mind that the goal is to develop skills in generalist practice; specialties and concentrations are developed in the second year of MSW graduate programs.*

**Matching Process**

Once you return this application, the Practicum Education Coordinator will match you with a Practicum Instructor in an agency approved as a practicum site for BSW students. The matches will be shared and the rest of the process outlined in a specific SWSS 3630 class session. After that meeting, students are expected to contact their Practicum Instructor to set up a time to meet so that the match can be confirmed. **Students formally confirm their placements in writing by the end of Spring semester.** A sample letter of confirmation can be found on the Department of Social Work Practicum Education Resources [website](https://www.uvm.edu/cess/socialwork/resources-social-work-students-field-instructors-and-supervisors) under “Students/ Applications” or in the Practicum Education manual. **It is recommended that students write thank you notes to the Practicum Instructors or other agency personnel who took time to meet with them.**

**Hours**

Getting an undergraduate or graduate degree in social work requires extensive time in placement to earn credit. Social work faculty in BSW and MSW programs across the world understand the commitment this requires from our students. Therefore, we suggest students begin thinking and planning ahead of time about the demands of the addition of **15-16 hours/week** to students’ academic schedules required for successful completion of their Practicum Experience, which is 450 hours by the end of the school year.

SWSS 4730/4740 (Practicum Experience) is a year-long academic course (September through May). Therefore, the student’s “time in the course” looks and feels different from a traditionally structured class taken on campus. When students start in the Fall semester, they remain in the same placement until the end of the academic year (the completion of the Spring semester). This means that there is no “course ending” in December or “course beginning” in January (though students are expected to complete all Fall semester assignments by the end of classes in December, and Spring semester assignments by the end of classes in May; see the course syllabus on the UVM Department of Social Work Practicum Education Resources [website](https://www.uvm.edu/cess/socialwork/resources-social-work-students-field-instructors-and-supervisors) under the “Syllabi” tab).

To manage the required hours and course length, students and Practicum Instructors are expected to work together to set both a weekly schedule and a broader one for the full academic year. The weekly schedule reflects which days of the week and what hours the student is expected to be in the placement, including supervisory meetings and regularly scheduled agency meetings students are expected to attend (e.g., staff or treatment team meetings, etc.). The full academic year schedule reflects which weeks the student will begin, end, and have planned time away from the work.

Because each agency has unique needs, provides unique services, and has unique hours of service delivery, these scheduling agreements will differ from student to student. Above all, the most important scheduling decisions consider the professional manner in which students begin, take time away from, and put closure to their placement experiences. In other words, the relationship and services to those who receive support from a student’s placement agency (“clients”) must always be a priority. Practically speaking, this means that a student should not assume that they have no placement responsibilities during school breaks (especially the longer winter break) unless this arrangement has been *explicitly* made during the negotiated scheduling process. The scheduling process is a required component of the co-creation, by students and Practicum Instructors, of the Learning Agreement (contract) assignment for the year, and its Spring revision, the Learning Agreement Addendum.

Additionally, students will participate in monthly meetings with their placement Liaisons (in this case, the liaisons “visit” students’ during their SWSS 4710/4720 Practicum Experience Seminar course once per month during the academic year). These dates are included in the syllabi for both SWSS 4710/4720 and SWSS 4730/4740. The seminars are 1½ hours each, are specific to students’ experience in practicum, and can be counted as a part of students’ total minimum required hours for each semester.

More specific guidance (from the “Student Hours” policy on the UVM Department of Social Work Practicum Education Resources [website](https://www.uvm.edu/cess/socialwork/resources-social-work-students-field-instructors-and-supervisors)):

1. Undergraduate students complete a minimum of 450 hours in their practicum between September and May each academic year.
2. Some placement sites may require more hours than our Practicum Education program’s minimum. In these cases, students must be made aware of and agree to this prior to accepting the placement.
3. Students schedule consistent blocks of time in their agency each week to complete their hours within 2-3 days.
4. Student hours reflect the schedules of staff and supervisors within the organization, or the “normal business hours” of the agency. *Evening and weekend hours are an exception*, not the rule, and must be approved by the Placement Liaison and Practicum Education Coordinator. The rationale for this expectation is that the student’s experience as “member of the agency community” is significant to social work practice skill development. Therefore, it follows that if the student is not consistently interacting with other agency personnel within the agency culture, they are missing integral learning opportunities.
5. Students either develop their own way to document their hours on a weekly basis or use an agency-directed process to do so. Regardless of the mechanism used, *it is students’ responsibility* to track the number of hours completed for the duration of their time in placement.
6. Students make up any regularly scheduled time that they miss. In other words, there is no built-in allowance for sick or vacation time—students must complete the required hours regardless of the reason for missing. In case of illness or unavoidable absence, the student informs the agency as soon as possible. If the student has an absence of three or more consecutive days from placement, the student and Practicum Instructor immediately notify their Liaison. Unless otherwise approved by the Practicum Education Coordinator, students must make up any missed time within the same semester. If a student misses considerable lengths of time, they can make arrangements to make up time before the beginning of the next semester, but only as a result of a meeting that leads to a written plan and approval by the Practicum Instructor, Liaison and student.
7. There may be occasions when it is necessary for students to perform overtime work. When these situations do arise, students will plan for and take compensatory time off in a balanced and professional manner.
8. Any on-call or crisis duty must be pre-approved by the Placement Liaison and the Practicum Education Coordinator. No student is to be on call during class time.
9. While occasionally there will be important learning opportunities related to placement that take place during a student’s regularly scheduled classes, students may not be required to miss class to attend placement-related meetings or events. Similarly, faculty of academic courses cannot “excuse” students from class for a practicum-related event or responsibility. If a student chooses to miss class for this reason, it is likely their attendance grade in that class will be negatively impacted.
10. Students must complete their hours no later than the Friday after the last day of classes in May and students are expected to be working in the agency at least until the last day of classes (also in May). If a student finds that they “have enough hours” and would like to end early, they must make a formal request which must then be approved by the Practicum Instructor and the placement Liaison. In other words, students may not “work ahead” of their approved schedule just so they can finish their placement weeks ahead of time.
11. That said, students should not be discouraged from working additional hours for the purposes of planning for unexpected absences. Students should be aware, however, that they may not need to use these hours for successful completion of their Practicum Experience/ Practicum. For example, some students choose to carry a balance of 15-20 hours with them throughout the year as a back-up, knowing (and accepting) the fact that they may not ever need to use these hours.
12. Students may not count commuting time to/from their placement sites towards their overall required hours.

**COVID-19**

While all remote assignments in placements do count towards students’ required minimum hours in placement, students should assume their internships will be in-person unless otherwise noted, and consequently will be required to adhere to their placement organization’s COVID safety precautions. **Students should make the Practicum Education Coordinator aware of any limitations to or concerns about providing in-person services due to COVID-19 at the time of their practicum application submission.**

**Transportation**

**Most placement sites require some form of transportation**—not only to and from the site, but they may also require the use of a car during the work day. Our “Placement Location and Distance from Campus” policy (on the UVM Department of Social Work Practicum Education Resources [website](https://www.uvm.edu/cess/socialwork/resources-social-work-students-field-instructors-and-supervisors)) states that we will not place you more than 1 (one) hour of driving distance away from campus unless you request that. **Students should** **let the Practicum Education Coordinator know of any preferences for, limitations to or concerns about transportation to/from their placement site at the time of their practicum application submission.** *Please note that without transportation, your options for placement will be extremely limited.*

[**Criminal Records**](https://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/media/Criminal_Records.pdf)

Students may be required by their placement agency to complete a criminal record or background check with both state and federal law enforcement. If requested to do so, students will need to complete this check to have their placement confirmed. Most agencies pay for this process. However, some do not, and if this is the case, the student will be expected to incur the expense.

It is quite possible that students who have a criminal record will not be accepted for an internship with some, if not most—or even any—of our approved placements. Students who do have a record should talk with the Practicum Education Coordinator *as soon as they begin their placement application process*. This allows the student to consider how they may enter ethically into the placement matching process regarding past convictions. **Please note that ALL students with a criminal record are required to discuss this with their matched placement personnel prior to accepting and formally confirming any placement offer.** Therefore, this must happen no later than the last day of Spring classes prior to Fall enrollment in SWSS 4730 Practicum Experience.

The Practicum Education Coordinator will make reasonable efforts to match the student successfully with a placement agency. However; the Department of Social Work cannot guarantee that students with a criminal record will be able to be matched with an agency and thus enroll in the required Practicum Experience course, which will prevent students from being able to complete their BSW degree.

**Resume**

*Please attach an up-to-date resume, including all social work-related employment, internship, or volunteer experiences*. This resume will be sent ahead of time to potential Practicum Instructors. More specific guidance about the matching process can be found above.

For the specific purposes of an undergraduate placement, a sample resume is attached to the end of this packet. *Please use this as a template.*

**APPLICATION TO BSW PLACEMENT**

**AND SENIOR YEAR CURRICULUM**

University of Vermont

Undergraduate Social Work Program

**Directions:** Please add your text to the gray boxes below.

**Name:**

**Address:**

**City/State/Zip:**

**UVM Email:**

**Cell**:

***Please check this box to acknowledge you have read and fully understand the text of the application above in its entirety.* (Lingering questions can be directed to the Practicum Education Coordinator.**

**Inquiry**

**A. Your Current Experience:**

1. Briefly describe any **social work-related employment** (paid) experience. Identify setting and population served.

1. Briefly describe any **previous internship and/or volunteer experiences**. Identify number of hours completed, setting and population served.

1. Are there any **other experiences** that you have had that you believe will positively impact your placement work experience? If so, what are these and how will they make an impact?

**B. Self-Reflection and Reflexivity:**

Social work preparation and development depends on self-assessment as an essential tool for balanced and effective practice. To prepare students for their practicum, it is important to explore how the knowledge and skills you have learned and modeled in your courses and in volunteer (and/or other related experiences) are fundamental to your readiness to participate in placement. Therefore, **please take some time to carefully reflect on each statement and attach a typed response to each question.**

1. Knowing how important it is for social workers to find their voice and to use that voice in a balanced manner, **comment on your relationship with your voice**. Think about this in terms of how you imagine talking with your Practicum Instructor in supervision, talking with clients or colleagues, and participating in meetings (staff, clinical, community). What do you see as your strengths and where are your opportunities for growth?

1. Social work values and ethics guide our work as social workers every day. Share the **three ethical principles you feel will most guide your work**. Why these? How will they guide your work?

1. Moving from a ‘student’ culture to that of ‘practitioner’ may be an interesting shift for you. As you think about yourself as a beginning social worker in a community agency, **what is your** **assessment of your ability to *show up*** as someone from whom much can be expected?

**If there is an identity shift** you think needs to happen, what do you think this will specifically look like?

1. Agencies and organizations are busy and dynamic environments. While your placement will be in one where your education is the primary goal, when you think about **your ability to take initiative to help people or situations** (or even to ensure your own learning is rich and meaningful), what comes to mind?

What is your **relationship with taking risks**? Share some examples of this.

**C. Future Experience:**

1. What kind of work would you like to do this year in your practicum?

An inexhaustive list of various fields of social work practice can be found on the next page. Please **read the entirelist first, and then check the 3-5 that you think are the best fit for you.**

The intent of this list is to help the Practicum Coordinator generate ideas on your behalf.

**Please note:** you may selectthe options on this list that are crossed out, but a) these should be in addition to (not in lieu of) your 3-5 selections, and b) crossed-out selections are indicative that ***it is unlikely that these fields of practice will be available to students at the BSW level***. This may be due to a lack of availability of these kinds of placements within the larger community and/or a Specialized Practice requirement; see note about Primary Objective of BSW Practicum Education on page 3). Student selections of crossed-out fields do help the Practicum Coordinator get a better sense of where to focus outreach efforts on students’ behalf and could (but not definitely) result in new placement sites becoming available.

Adoption/ Foster Care

After School Programming (Elementary)

After School Programming (Middle)

After School Programming (High school)

~~Arts~~

Case Management

Childcare/Early Childhood

Education

~~Child Welfare/Abuse and Neglect~~

Community Center

~~Criminal Justice/Incarceration~~

~~Environmental~~

Family-specific

Gerontology (Aging/Older adults)

~~Hospice/Palliative care~~

~~Hospital social work~~

Housing/Homelessness

Immigrant/Refugee/Migrant

Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities

Intimate Partner/Domestic/ Sexual Violence

LGBTQHIA+

Macro—Community Organizing

Macro—Policy/Legislative Advocacy

Macro—Program Development

~~Macro—Political Organizing~~

~~Macro—Research~~

~~Medical social work (general)~~

~~Mental Health/Clinical~~

~~Racial Justice~~

Restorative Justice

~~School SW (Elementary)~~

~~School SW (Middle)~~

~~School SW (High school)~~

Substance Use/Harm Reduction/Recovery

Youth/adolescents

~~Veterans~~

~~Veterinary~~

Other (list)

Other (list)

Other (list)

Other (list)

1. Of the fields of practice you’ve indicated above as of interest to you, please **clarify which are of *greatest* priority to you and why**. Please keep your answer brief. (If you are interested in a specific agency/organization/program, or a practicum within an existing employment setting, please note this in the follow-up questions below.)

You may indicate here if there are other factors that feel equally or more relevant to you besides fields of practice—for example, Practicum Instructor supervision style, work culture/environment, placement location, schedule, etc.).

**Note:** If students have specific ideas for agencies/organizations/programs they are interested in being placed in, please include these ideas here (even if you don’t believe UVM’s Department of Social Work has an existing relationship with this site).

Alternately, if students are interested in completing their practicum within an existing employment setting, please check this box and the Practicum Education Coordinator will follow up with you with a separate application for this purpose.

1. What is your transportation situation?

If you have a car, would you being willing to drive for practicum if needed?  Yes  No

If yes, how far (e.g., miles/minutes/etc.)?

1. What special skills, talents, certifications/training, relevant life experience do you have that could aid in the placement matching process? Please list them briefly here.

1. Please list any specific concerns you might have (for example, criminal record, COVID risk, fields of practice or populations that might *not* be a good fit, etc.).

1. What other information would you want the Practicum Education Coordinator to consider when planning for your placement?

**Release of Information**

I agree that the information I provide in this application and my current resume is a true and accurate representation of myself and my experiences. This application and current resume may be shared as needed with UVM Social Work faculty and prospective Practicum Instructors to facilitate placement planning and matching.

Student Signature

Date

**Please include a copy of your CURRENT RESUME with this application. You may use the sample below as a template. If it is easier to include your resume as a separate document, please save the resume as a .docx or .pdf file saved as “Lastname, Firstinitial. Resume” and upload to Brightspace with your application.**

**Thank you,**

**Jean Sienkewicz**

**Practicum Education Coordinator**

[**jean.sienkewicz@uvm.edu**](mailto:jsienkew@uvm.edu)

**Student’s Name Slightly Larger and Bolded**

Address

City, State, Zip

Cell Phone

UVM E-mail Address

**Education**

**High School Name, City and State Graduation (MM/YEAR)**

Any honors, awesome GPA, etc. are optional here

**University of Vermont, Burlington, Vermont**

Bachelor of Social Work **Anticipated 05-YEAR**

Honors or Dean's list semesters are optional here;

If you are studying something special (like a minor or a certificate), you can also put that here.

**Other Colleges/Universities attended, City, State, Country MM/YEAR-MM/YEAR**

**(including abroad ones anticipated)**

If you have other degrees, enter them here. If you just attended, leave as is.

**Social Work Experience**

You will notice that I suggest that social work experience be listed first. Everything counts here. Most students underestimate their experience in social work and end up hiding it in their resumes. It is important for an internship that they see all social work-type experience you have—whether it has been for four hours or 104 hours, paid or unpaid, etc. So even if you babysat for three summers, or helped clean graffiti off walls downtown, or did a project for an agency, include it. If you were involved with human service, social justice, social change organizations or activities, put it down here. This is the part of your resume that is most interesting to prospective supervisors.

**Agency that Makes a Difference, City, State** **MM/YEAR-MM/YEAR**

Worked with people who have been marginalized by the system and helped them find their voice and power in advocating for themselves

**Another Agency that Makes a Difference, City, State MM/YEAR-MM/YEAR**

Helped build a home for a homeless family

**Other Work Experience**

List non-social work experience here.

**Tasty Restaurant, City, State MM/YEAR-MM/YEAR**

Prepared and served tasty food to hungry customers

**Extracurricular Activities and Affiliations**

President of the UVM Student Kayak and Canoe Club MM/YR-present

Member of the Volunteer Task Force MM/YEAR-MM/YEAR

Snowboarding

**References Available Upon Request**