Prerequisites: Taken concurrently with, or following completion of SW 840, 841, 842, 843, and 849*

Credit Hours: 14

I. COURSE RATIONALE
The mission of the School of Social Welfare is to educate students whose skills, compassion and commitment enhance individual and community well being. This mission is accomplished through providing students with the knowledge necessary to practice effectively and ethically with the full range of social systems, emphasizing social justice, a strengths approach, diversity, and a critical perspective. The School is committed to preparing graduates who are effective and culturally competent practitioners with individuals, groups, families, organizations and communities, and who accept responsibility to continue their professional education.

The Practicum is an integral component of the curriculum in social work education. During the Advanced level year of the M.S.W. program the curriculum in the Social Work Administration & Advocacy Practice Concentration focuses on helping the student develop the knowledge and skills to manage and develop human service agencies that improve the well being of the client(s) it serves. Social work administrators do this through such major activities as designing programs, managing resources, managing people, managing information, and influencing relations with relevant external environments. The Practicum engages the student in supervised social work practice to develop these skills and provides students with opportunities to apply classroom learning in the field setting. This includes classes in designing social work programs, financial management, advanced policy and programs, personal management and assessing and managing client outcomes. Students are expected to complete a minimum of 720 hours in the assigned Practicum setting, averaging 24 hours each week for 30 weeks (or two consecutive semesters).

The Social Work Administration & Advocacy Practice Concentration Practicum is closely related to all of the courses in the advanced level curriculum. The interaction between the acquisition of knowledge about program design, financial management, advanced policy, research, and best practices, personnel management and assessing and managing client outcomes is at the crux of the development of specialized knowledge and skills in social work administration and of a solid identity as a Social Work Administrator. This interaction promotes the student's ability to develop a critical perspective on all aspects of their learning.

* If Field Education is not taken concurrently with these courses, then a concurrent practicum exception form must be submitted to, and approved by the Associate Dean of Academic Programs prior to enrolling in these courses.
II. **EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES**

Students are expected to develop an individual learning contract, in conjunction with their field instructor and field liaison, that will specify the activities they will be involved in to accomplish the following learning objectives and how the attainment of the objectives will be measured. By the end of the two-semester SWAAP practicum students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate the ability to design or redesign a culturally appropriate, direct service program that maximizes client and community outcomes.
2. Demonstrate the ability to plan and manage the finances of social work programs throughout all stages of the budget cycle such that high quality, culturally appropriate services are delivered.
3. Demonstrate the ability to engage in effective, culturally appropriate interventions in their field of practice, as well as the federal, state and local policies that shape these services.
4. Demonstrate the ability to supervise staff of social work agencies;
5. Demonstrate the ability to build teams and organizational cultures that maximize staff morale; and create healthy, supportive, and creative workplaces that reflect and engage community diversity.
6. Demonstrate the ability to evaluate the impact of their management practices on client outcomes by learning to measure, collect and facilitate the use of culturally sensitive program information.
7. Demonstrate the ability to advance social and economic justice, as well as influence the effectiveness of services for culturally diverse populations at risk.
8. Engage in social work administrative practice in a manner consistent with social work’s values and ethics and the themes of the School.
9. Engage in advocacy with and on behalf of vulnerable persons in pursuit of policies and appropriations that increase social and economic justice.
10. Demonstrate the ability to implement the features of consumer-centered, culturally appropriate administrative practice
11. Demonstrate the ability to use supervision and consultation appropriately.

III. **CURRICULUM THEMES**

Relying on the social work frame of reference and consistent with the mission and themes of the School of Social Welfare, the Social Work Administration & Advocacy Practice Concentration builds on the foundation curricula to provide a practice-centered curriculum. The curriculum themes of the school are:

- **Strengths Perspective:** Students are expected to demonstrate their ability to design and manage client centered social service programs that emphasize building on client strengths and enhancing community, organizational and client well-being;
- **Diversity:** Students are expected to demonstrate their understanding of how race, ethnicity, class, economic status, age, gender, sexual orientation and other characteristics affect the
experience of clients and colleagues and to show respect, sensitivity and appreciation for these experiences;

- **Social and Economic Justice:** Students are expected to demonstrate their ability to analyze the impact of economic, societal and institutional oppression on individuals and how this oppression is perpetuated through agency and social policies;
  
  **Critical Perspective:** Students are expected to demonstrate their ability to critically reflect on their own practice, understand the similarities and differences between various helping professions, and to understand the impact of different approaches on clients' well-being

IV. **THE LIBERAL ARTS PERSPECTIVE**

The Social Work Administration & Advocacy Practice Concentration Practicum draws on relevant knowledge and skills that may enhance the ability of students to achieve the stated educational outcomes. Students are encouraged to use their knowledge from courses on history, literature, social sciences and fine arts along with the knowledge and skills gained from life experiences, their previous and concurrent social work courses to support their learning.

V. **PROFESSIONAL PURPOSES AND VALUES**

Students will be expected to demonstrate an increasingly sophisticated understanding of the NASW Code of Ethics and to analyze their work with individuals, families, groups, communities and organizations through this value system.

VI. **PREPARATION FOR PRACTICE WITH DIVERSE POPULATIONS**

All students will be expected to work with vulnerable populations within the limits imposed by the field practicum agency, and demonstrate the ability to engage in culturally competent administrative and advocacy practice.

VII. **TOPICS**

The Required Topics of the SWAAP field practicum are grouped into six broad areas:

**D. Professional Development** includes the continued development of professional identity as a social work administrator, an increasingly complex understanding of how the NASW Code of Ethics affects administrative social work practice, taking active responsibility for one's own learning and performing in a professional manner, and developing an approach to administrative practice that is client-centered.

1. The basic components of professional behavior.
2. Verbal and written communication skills.
3. Student responsibility for own learning.
4. The NASW Code of Ethics.
5. Reflective practice skills.
6. Use of supervision and consultation.
7. Collaborative practice.
E. Advanced Policy and Programs includes the ability to develop and apply knowledge about (1) federal and state policies, (2) regulations, (3) funding structures and streams, and (4) best practices in a given field of practice, and acquire the abilities needed to remain abreast of this information, in order to meet the needs of clients and communities, and to build upon strengths and enhance well being.

1. Use of library and electronic resources for research
2. Advanced policies and programs within the agency.
3. Federal and state policies that have influenced programs within the agency.
4. Current information related to federal and state policy
5. Evaluation of a federal or state policy of central importance to clients and/or communities by the agency.
6. Administrative practice skills used to influence policy and/or program development, implementation, or change on behalf of clients and/or communities served by the agency.

C. Social Program Design and Management includes the ability to apply knowledge and skills in designing (or redesigning) social programs that maximize client outcomes and manage social programs that place clients in the center of the design process.

1. Principles of client-centered performance management and other models of social work administration and advocacy practice.
2. At-risk, target, and client populations in the agency.
3. Acquisition of input from clients, key staff and other agency constituents.
5. Development of an analytic model of a social problem that addresses issues of oppression.
6. Development of program goals and objectives
7. Identification of agency problems/situations

D. Mastering the Use of Financial Resources includes the development of knowledge and skills needed to manage the finances of a social work program or agency through all stages of the budget cycle, and to direct scarce resources in order to advance the empowerment and well-being of clients and communities

1. Agency financial resources and agency budget.
2. Agency budget and accountability requirements for client-centered service objectives.
3. NASW Code of Ethics
4. Managing agency finances to promote social and economic justice, celebrates human diversity, using a critical perspective, and focusing on people and agency strengths.
5. Agency purchase of service contracting, including the bidding process, compliance and reporting, and implementation issues.

E. **Strengthening Staff Performance in a Diverse Workplace** includes the ability to apply knowledge and skills in (1) supervision and management of social workers and other human service staff (2) building teams and organizational cultures that maximize staff morale and job satisfaction, and (3) creating and maintaining workplaces that reflect, contribute to, and celebrate diversity in the larger community.

1. Strengths perspective and client-centered administrative practice
2. Supervision and management of social workers, other human service staff members, and volunteers.
3. Team building and organizational cultures that maximize staff/volunteer morale, and job satisfaction.
4. Creation and maintenance of workplaces that reflect, contribute to, and celebrate diversity in the larger community.
5. Recruitment, interviewing and hiring staff
6. Creation and implementation of agency workforce, with special attention to diversity based on age, sex, race, ethnicity, language, religion, sexual orientation, disability, and cultural background.
7. Creation of a reward-based environment and evaluation system that maximized job satisfaction of agency staff and volunteers.

F. **Assessing and Managing Outcomes** includes the development of professional identity, incorporation of the NASW Code of Ethics into practice, the ability to reflect on and critically analyze one's own practice, taking active responsibility for one's own learning and performing in a professional manner.

1. Measurement of management performance areas.
2. Development of measures of status change, behavior change, client satisfaction, productivity, efficiency, resource acquisition, and staff morale within the agency.
3. Management performance report packages within the agency.
4. Assessment, monitoring and improvement of program performance and client outcomes based on program data and information.
5. Purposeful attention to the utilization of information in an organization.
6. Agency data-based reports
7. Agency performance and outcome measure with special attention to diversity based on age, sex, race, ethnicity, language, religion, sexual orientation, disability, and cultural background.
VIII. READINGS

Required:
All students are expected to read the Field Education Handbook.

Recommended:
Readings may be assigned on an individual basis by the field instructor or the field liaison according to the needs of the student and the mission of the agency.

IX. RECOMMENDED ASSIGNMENTS

Students are expected to develop an individual learning contract, in conjunction with their field instructor and field liaison, that will specify the activities they will be involved in to accomplish the defined practicum learning objectives. The learning objectives need to be measurable. At the core of practice is knowledge about concepts related to client-centered administrative practice, and the ability to practice in a manner consistent with social work's values and ethics and the themes of the school.

Specific learning assignments for each student that operationalize the learning objectives for the Social Work Administration & Advocacy Practice Concentration Practicum will be developed within the Practicum setting through mutual agreement of the student, field instructor and field liaison. This agreement will be documented in the Field Learning Contract. The guidelines for developing the learning contract are detailed in the Field Education Handbook. The field instructor and liaison will evaluate students on their overall performance on the learning objectives for Social Work Administration & Advocacy Practice Concentration Advanced Practicum at the end of the 720 hours, utilizing the evaluation instrument in the Field Education Handbook. Intermittent evaluations will also take place throughout the course of the Practicum to evaluate student progress in meeting the learning objectives, as specified by the Field Education Office.

X. GRADING

Students receive credit for the Practicum only after they have completed the total number of clock hours in SW 804. Grades are recommended by the field instructor and assigned by the field liaison. Grading is on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) basis at the end of the Practicum, with grading at the end of the first semester being Pass (P) or Unsatisfactory (U). An Incomplete (I) may be given when a student has made satisfactory progress, but has insufficient clock hours for completion of the Practicum due to illness or other factors beyond the student’s control for which an exception has been granted by both the field instructor and liaison.

The vast majority of students will receive a P grade first semester and a S grade second semester. However,

- If a student receives an Unsatisfactory grade at the end of first semester the Director of the MSW Program and the Director of Field Education will meet with the student to discuss the student’s future in the program.

- If a student receives a P grade at the end of first semester and an Unsatisfactory grade at the end of second semester, the student will not receive any credit for the Field Practicum in which she/he has been enrolled. If a student receives an unsatisfactory grade then the Director of Field Education, the MSW Program Director, the student and other appropriate individuals will discuss the student’s future in the program.
If a student receives an Incomplete (I), a written plan for completion of the Practicum must be developed by the student in conjunction with the field instructor and approved by the field instructor and field liaison.

An Unsatisfactory grade in Field Education may be assigned if a student engages in behavior described under “Grounds for Dismissal” in the Field Education Handbook. In these instances dismissal will be immediate. However, if the student’s behavior does not meet the criteria for immediate dismissal, the following procedures must occur before an Unsatisfactory grade will be assigned in Field Education:

1. **The field instructor** must inform the student of the specific aspects of his/her performance which are not meeting the expectations of satisfactory performance and immediately notify the field liaison of her/his concerns;

2. **The student, field instructor and field liaison must meet** to develop a behaviorally specific, time-limited contract to help the student meet expectations in the areas of concern (complete Practicum Concern Form). This contract must be behaviorally specific so that the student, field instructor and liaison can all measure if the student has met the expectations to receive a passing grade. The contract must specify the performance areas that are needing improvement; the functional responsibilities of the student for demonstrating progress; the functional responsibilities of the field instructor of supporting the student; the specific means by which progress will be evaluated; the dates where progress will be evaluated and the determination of the final grade. **The Field Liaison** will inform the Director of Field Education if a student is in danger of receiving an unsatisfactory evaluation.

3. **The Field Liaison** is expected to be actively involved in any situation where the student is in danger of receiving an unsatisfactory grade and will offer consultation during this period to the student and the field instructor. The field liaison may require specific documentation from the student and/or the field instructor. **The field liaison is responsible for recommending the final grade.**

**Attendance Policy:**
The SWAAP Practicum requires that students complete 720 hours over the course of two-semesters.

1. **Sick/Family Leave:** Students in the SWAAP Concentration are allowed 24 hours of sick/family leave each semester. Students must make up time for absences when it exceeds the allowable number of hours. It is expected that students will behave in a professionally responsible manner, will provide advance notice of an anticipated absence, and make appropriate arrangements for their absence. If the practicum is completed as a block, the student is allowed a total of 48 hours of sick/family leave.

2. **University Holidays:** If a student is scheduled to be in Practicum on a day that the University has cancelled classes students are not required to attend practicum, and these hours count towards the student's total clock hours. However, as with sick/family leave, it is expected that students will behave in a professionally responsible manner and make appropriate arrangements for their absence.
XI. **SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS**
Students are asked on the practicum planning materials to specify if they have any special learning needs that require accommodation. The Field Education Office works closely with the student and the Services for Students with Disabilities Office to provide reasonable accommodation so the student will have a fair opportunity to perform in practicum.

XII. **RECORDING AND SHARING RECORDINGS OF LECTURES**
Course materials prepared by the instructor are the property of the instructor. Video and audio recording of any type without the consent of the instructor is prohibited. On request, the instructor will usually grant permission for students to audio tape information, on the condition that these audio tapes are only used by the individual making the recording. Unless explicit permission is obtained from the instructor, recordings may not be modified and must not be transferred or transmitted to any other person, whether or not that individual is enrolled in practicum.

XIII. **HIPAA REGULATIONS**
The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) requires that any personal information that may identify a person must be removed to protect confidentiality. Confidentiality applies to both classroom discussions and to written work. Please follow these simple, yet essential guidelines:

- Always disguise the name and other personal identifying information when you speak and write about a person, following the guidelines established by HIPAA.
- If writing in great detail about a client, ask permission from the client.
- Share nothing about specific clients, agencies or other students outside of the classroom.

Any information shared with the field instructor or field liaison will be confidential, within the limits defined by the Code of Ethics and state guidelines. All written materials submitted to the field liaison/Field Education Office must follow HIPAA Regulations.

XIV. **INSTRUCTOR AVAILABILITY**
Field Instructors have agreed to provide a minimum of 1 hour of supervision each week. The exact timing of this meeting and general availability of the field instructor are determined on an individual basis.

XV. **INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY**
Students are expected to attend practicum during inclement weather if the agency is open. If the student is unable to attend then the student is expected to behave in a professionally responsible manner and make appropriate arrangements with their field instructor. These hours will NOT count towards the student’s total clock hours.

If the agency closes due to inclement weather when a student is scheduled to be in attendance, students are not required to attend practicum, and these hours count towards the student's total clock hours.