Employment Based Practicum (EBP)
MSW Clinical Concentration
Guidelines and Instructions

What is an Employment Based Practicum (EBP)?
Most students are placed in a regular practicum setting by the Field Education Office. However, a small number of students consider applying for an Employment Base Practicum (EBP). An EBP allows a student to use his or her current place of employment, but not the actual employment position, as the site for the field practicum.

The student’s practicum learning assignments must be different from her/his work responsibilities. This is often accomplished by assigning the student to a different unit, a different population of clients, opportunities to work with different staff, different agency documentation, or different community supports from the student’s regular employment responsibilities. The employing agency must be able to support a reduction in the student’s regular work activities so that the time required for field practicum can be added to the student’s weekly schedule.

Students may apply for an EBP if ALL of the following criteria are met:

1. The student is currently employed and has been employed a minimum of 6 months within a social service agency that meets the requirements necessary for field practicum as determined by the School of Social Welfare;
2. The agency is able to provide educational opportunities that are clearly different from the student's employment responsibilities;
3. The agency is supportive of the student's educational objectives which include:
   - time needed to attend academic classes. Full time students will be taking 3 academic courses in addition to their practicum;
   - reduction in regular work responsibilities to support the reassignment of the student to different learning opportunities within the agency;
   - reduction of employment hours and assignment of 24 practicum hours per week and;
   - completion of required coursework.
4. The agency is able to provide a qualified field instructor (MSW + 2 years post MSW experience) to supervise the student. The field instructor cannot be the student's employment supervisor. This means the field instructor cannot have managerial or supervisory responsibility for the student’s employment. The field instructor agrees to provide regular supervisory conferences, meeting face to face with the student on a weekly basis for at least 1- 1 ½ hours throughout the practicum.

The same educational requirements and standards apply to an EBP as apply to regular practicum placements. The employing agency must agree to consistently support the educational program and standards. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), the accrediting body for social work schools across the country, requires that each Field Education Program:

2.1.8 Develops policies regarding field placements in an organization in which the student is also employed. To ensure the role of student as learner, student assignments and field education supervision are not the same as those of the student’s employment.
What an Employment Based Practicum is not:

- An avenue for a student to get educational credit for the employment functions and responsibilities;
- A way for employers to get more hours of work out of an employee they value through adding the practicum on to a full time job; or
- A "special" practicum. All expectations for field practicum specified by the School of Social Welfare are still requirements of Employment Based Practicum.

Student’s Responsibility to Facilitate the EBP Application Process

Before completing the EBP application, the student should carefully discuss with his/her employment supervisor and/or agency administrator if the above criteria can be fulfilled within the student's employing agency. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure the integrity of this process. Open and clear communication between all parties is imperative. If the agency or the student is unable to maintain the standards required for a sound educational experience, the result may be a terminated EBP and the student will be required to complete a regular practicum arranged by the Field Education office.

The Pieces: Submitting EBP Application Requirements

It is the responsibility of the student to complete the application for an Employment Based Practicum and to communicate with the Field Education Office about this process. All applications must be postmarked or received in the Field Education office no later than 5:00 PM on the due date or they will not be considered. Should an exceptional situation occur that is outside of your control and will delay your application, be sure to contact Jennie Marsh, Director of Field Education before the application due date to discuss the situation.

Allowing a minimum of three weeks to complete the EBP application is strongly recommended. This helps to ensure time for agency personnel to provide letters of support as required in the application. However, circumstances vary widely from one agency to another and more time might be needed by staff members in your agency. Beginning the application well in advance of the due date increases the likelihood of a complete and thoroughly prepared application.

The EBP application involves completion of TWO sets of materials; this includes: A. the practicum planning materials required of all students and B. the completion of this Employment Based Practicum Application in its entirety by the identified due date.

A. Practicum Planning Materials are completed through an online Qualtrics Survey. The individualized link to the survey is sent to your KU email address. If you have not already received and submitted the survey, please contact the Field Education Office at 785-864-2268 or fieldeducation@ku.edu

B. Employment Based Practicum Application: The student needs to submit the application to the Field Education Office by mail or by email by April 15, 2016.

Pieces of the Application

There are five essential pieces to the EBP application. If this is a 2nd EBP application, additional items are needed and are described below. All information requested is used in the review and approval process. The explanation and instructions that follow are detailed and will greatly assist you in submitting a complete and thorough application. Please remember the intent of this application is to describe the genuine learning opportunities that exist in the agency that the student is employed with and the ability of the employing agency to support the student in their employment and educational responsibilities. Furthermore, this application will initiate thorough thought and communication with all parties to validate that everyone involved is committed to the success of the student.

I. Statement of Understanding and Letters of Support (Inserted by student) – reviewed and signed by all parties.

A. Statement of Understanding – completed and signed by all.
B. A letter of support, on agency letterhead, is required from the employment supervisor and agency administrator (in some agencies this will be the same person). Both may co-sign the same letter instead of submitting two separate letters. This letter should fully describe the learning opportunities available for field practicum. Additionally, the plan for providing release time from employment responsibilities also needs to be clearly described. The letter should fully convey the extent of the agency’s support for an employee entering into the role of MSW Clinical student.

C. A letter of support is required from the proposed field instructor. This letter should address the field instructor’s ability to devote time to teach and to protect a focus on professional learning with the student. Regular weekly supervision sessions are required (1 to 1½ hours).

II. **EBP Application**: this information is important if the Field Education office needs to contact the applicant or the agency for clarification, or to evaluate if the agency and field instructor meet the educational standards established by the School of Social Welfare at the University of Kansas.

III. **Current Job Description**: Attachment to be submitted by student. Attach a copy of the student’s current job description. This document is very important in understanding the separation between the proposed practicum learning activities and the current job responsibilities.

IV. **Proposal**: During the Clinical concentration of the MSW program at the University of Kansas the curriculum focuses on student attainment in of professional competencies for clinical practice with individuals, families, and small groups. Students should have access to a variety of direct practice assignments supporting the development of skills for clinical engagement, bio-psycho-social assessments using the DSM and other diagnostic tools, and applying clinical frameworks consistent with assessment findings.

Practicum Responsibilities: The student should describe and summarize appropriate learning opportunities required by the school to meet the educational goals of the Clinical practicum. It is the student’s responsibility to carefully review the online Clinical Learning Contract template to become familiar with learning assignments expected for field practicum. Share this information with appropriate agency representatives (Agency Administrator and/or Employment Supervisor, and Field Instructor) and identify the learning opportunities that are available, or that can be developed in the proposed EBP agency setting. The applicant should include a description of the learning activities that will be available to fulfill practicum requirements. It should be obvious to the application reviewer what specific assignments the student will be completing for field practicum.

V. **Calendar**: As part of the EBP application a clear plan for the student’s regular practicum schedule needs to be developed and submitted. This calendar should give a snapshot of what a typical week might look like for the student once practicum begins. It can be revised as needed, but it should be a solid attempt to craft a workable schedule which meets the requirements of all parties. We have found that developing a draft calendar like this with the student’s supervisor and field instructor helps everyone to understand the work load the student will be managing and helps to provide a framework for completing the hours required for practicum as well as
employment. This plan (or a slightly revised one) can then be used in the learning contract written near the beginning of the fall semester.

Include the following hours: employment, practicum (including assignments), classes, commuting time, study, and self-care.

SAMPLE

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8-11 Self-Care</td>
<td>7:30-12:30 Job Court; Paperwork</td>
<td>5:45-8 Drive to Lawrence</td>
<td>7:30-12:30 Job</td>
<td>7:30-5 Practicum</td>
<td>7:30-5:30 Job Home Visits; Paperwork</td>
<td>7:30-12 Job Home Visits; Paperwork</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8-6 Classes on Lawrence Campus</td>
<td></td>
<td>7:30-5:30 Practicum</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:30-1 Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>11-7 Study/Prep for classes</td>
<td>1-5: Practicum 1-3 (intake assessments)</td>
<td>8-6 Classes on Lawrence Campus</td>
<td>1-5: Practicum 1-3 (intake assessments)</td>
<td>1-5: Practicum 1-3 (intake assessments)</td>
<td>7:30-5:30 Job Home Visits; Paperwork</td>
<td>12pm – On Self-Care; Study Time</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3-5 (parenting group)</td>
<td></td>
<td>3-5 (parenting group)</td>
<td>3-5 (children’s visitation monitoring)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6-9 Study/Prep for classes</td>
<td>6:30-8:30 Drive Home</td>
<td>6-9 Study/Prep for classes</td>
<td>6-9 Study/Prep for classes</td>
<td>6pm Self-Care; Study Time</td>
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VI. Field Instructor Responsibilities Agreement Form: Read and Signed by Field Instructor; Inserted by student

The proposed Field Instructor must have earned their MSW degree from an accredited School of Social Welfare and have at least two years of successful post-MSW experience. The proposed Field Instructor must also be someone other than the applicant's work supervisor. The Field Instructor Responsibilities Agreement must be reviewed and signed by Field Instructor and included as a part of this application.

VII. Proposed Field Instructor Resume: Inserted by student

The Field Education office is required by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) to maintain a current resume on all Field Instructors in our program. This documents for CSWE that our Field Instructors meet the minimum qualifications set forth in the accreditation standards. In some instances the proposed field instructor may indicate they already have a resume on file with the Field Education office, however a Field Instructor Resume MUST be included in this application.

VIII. Field Agency Data Form (ADF): All agencies that serve as practicum sites are required to complete this form and submit it to the Field Education office prior to students being placed in the agency. This assures that the agency meets the educational standards established by the School of Social Welfare and CSWE, and is our official means of identifying the “placement pool”. An agency administrator is responsible for completing these forms, but the student is responsible for determining whether this annual form is on file with the Field Education office. If this form is not on file, the application will not be considered complete and will not be considered. It is the student’s responsibility to verify that a current ADF is on file with Alberta Wright at fieldeducation@ku.edu or call 785-864-2268.