

# Developing the Learning Contract



**CSU, CHICO**  
**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

# Purpose of the Contract



- **Establishes objectives for the student**
  - Feasible
  - Attainable
- **Serves as a tool to identify**
  - What the student will learn
  - What activities will be a part of the placement experience

# Purpose.....



- Collaborative effort between the student, field instructor and faculty liaison
- To be considered a working document and guide for supervision throughout the year
- Made up of three components –
  - Learning goals: where they are going
  - Learning tasks: how they will get there
  - Timeframe for accomplishing the tasks – set a date by which you want the student to complete the task

# How to Begin



- **Planning should begin during first two weeks of placement**
- **Things to consider :**
  - students' goals**
  - student's experience level (employment, volunteering)**
  - student's learning style**
  - student's strengths, limitations**
  - motivation and interests**

# Learning Contract Process



- Student drafts the initial contract, consideration should be given to trying to tie class assignments in to learning tasks as appropriate (for example research a specific service delivery model , legislation that has impacted service delivery, etc.)
- Agency field instructor (AFI) reviews the draft, makes changes, additions
- Student presents final contract to AFI, provides copy to Field Liaison Due week: 5 (BSW)/7 (MSW)

# Preparing the Learning Contract



- Each student is expected to formulate specific goals in ten competency areas: (within each area consider learning tasks that address three areas)
  - Agency Services
  - Personal Development
  - Professional Development
- Within each competency area the student is expected to list specific goals and ways to achieve them, and, then describe how learning in each area will be evaluated

# Agency Learning Goals



- This area pertains to the nature of the fieldwork agency in which the student is based
- Consideration should be given to tasks that help the student learn the following:
  - Services and programs the agency provides
  - Agency history, philosophy, structure and funding
  - Nature of the client population
  - Agency policies and procedures
  - Application of the generalist method to specific cases/assignments (micro, mezzo, macro)
  - Agency decision-making processes

# Personal Learning Goals



- **Pertains to the student's uniqueness as an individual and changes he/she would like to make to help them in the role of a practicing social worker**
- **Considerations should given to tasks that will help students identify the following:**
  - The differences between personal and professional boundaries
  - Personal blocks to effective social work practice
  - Self-awareness in relation to human diversity (cultural and lifestyle differences, disadvantaged groups, women's issues, etc.)
  - Personal values that help or may hinder effective practice



# Professional Learning Goals



- **Pertain to theory, methods, and skills common to the work of a professional social worker that may be learned in the current placement but applicable in other social work agencies as well**
- **Considerations should be given to the following:**
  - Development of skills and knowledge bases necessary to perform the role of a social worker in your agency
  - Accountability to client systems (maintaining confidentiality, keeping appointments, following through on plans, etc.)
  - Learning to work as part of a Team with agency staff
  - Identification of client concerns/problems

# Professional Learning Goals (cont' d)



- Communication and interviewing skills
- Problem-solving process
- Diversity
- Community resources and making referrals
- Social work practice methods (establishing relationships, collecting data, making assessments, intervention, evaluation and termination)
- Integrating and applying academic knowledge and theory to actual social work situations

# Client Systems – Micro, Mezzo and Macro



- It is acknowledged that each agency varies in its ability to provide the student with equal experiences with all client systems.
- Example of each:
  - Micro
    - ✦ Case Management
    - ✦ Individual Counseling
    - ✦ Advocacy/brokering

# Client Systems – Micro, Mezzo and Macro



- **Example of each**

- **Mezzo**

- ✦ Attend team or multidisciplinary meetings
- ✦ Attend support, educational or recreational/socialization group
- ✦ Make home visit and participate in family interviews

- **Macro**

- ✦ Identify specific techniques of agency's administrative decision making
- ✦ Write a letter to the editor regarding an issue
- ✦ Attend a board meeting

# Learning Goals



- Please note – it may be appropriate for certain strategies and evidence of accomplishments to fit in more than one goal
- The final form signed by the student, field instructor, and faculty liaison is retained by the faculty liaison.
- Copies should be kept by the student and field instructor/supervisor

# Learning Goals



- The Learning Contract form is found on the

**CSU, Chico Website:**

**[http://www.csuchico.edu/swrk/programs/field/field\\_forms.shtml](http://www.csuchico.edu/swrk/programs/field/field_forms.shtml)**

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