

Practicum for Those in Combined Program with Social Work

For students in the Combined Program with Social Work **only**, these Practicum requirements have been adjusted to enable the Practicum required for the M.S.W. portion of the combined-degree to satisfy the requirements for a Practicum in the Planning Program. This will enable a student in the combined Social Work Program to substitute the Social Work Practicum (if it meets the following criteria) for the Field Problems I and II capstone course requirement. Note that this does not reduce the total 35 hours that must be completed in Planning– it merely allows the student to waive out of the required Field Problems sequence.

An acceptable Practicum for Combined Social Work candidates should meet the following requirements, in addition to the requirements established by the School of Social Work:

1. The Practicum may be taken before all first-year Planning core course requirements have been satisfied, but usually 9 semester hours of core course requirements would have been completed.
2. The Practicum should be in a field of Social Work that is closely related to planning. Community Development, Social Services or Housing agencies may all provide Practicum experiences that would involve planning activities. Each Practicum is obviously unique, and students should consult with their advisors in both Social Work and Planning to determine whether the projects identified by the agency would provide an appropriate range of experience.
3. The Practicum must entail at least 700 hours of employment.
4. The Practicum experience must consist of a specific, structured project that will result in a polished final report. Students cannot receive Practicum credit for an ordinary internship, where the student is primarily functioning as a staff member assigned a variety of duties from day-to-day or week-to-week. The Practicum must include a project similar in scope to a field problems project and this project must be the primary focus of the intern's job. Good examples of Practicum responsibilities that would be acceptable include analyzing the outcomes of a particular program, developing a new program (including applying for grants to support it), or developing a human services plan. Again, students should consult with their advisors in both Social Work and Planning to decide whether the Practicum experience would be appropriate.
5. The Practicum will be conducted under the supervision of a committee of three faculty members. The student must develop a work plan for the Practicum in consultation with his or her committee. The work plan constitutes a contract and should include a description of the project, the milestones to be attained, and the final report to be produced. The work plan should also identify the person or persons to whom the final project is to be presented, and should describe the nature of the teamwork involved. The plan is subject to the approval of the faculty as a whole, upon the recommendation of the committee. Retroactive approval will not be granted under any circumstances.
6. The project must include teamwork in the same way that a field problems project entails teamwork. In other words, there must be shared responsibility for conducting the required analyses and for the final product. Working independently under the supervision of an organization official does not constitute sufficient "teamwork."
7. The acceptability of the Social Work Practicum as a substitute for Field Problems is subject to the approval of the Planning faculty as a whole, upon the recommendation of the student's committee.
8. The student must make a formal presentation of the project's final report to faculty and students in the Planning Program. The final report produced during the Practicum should be submitted to the student's committee in Planning. The final report, the formal presentation, and the student's responses to questions asked by faculty at the formal presentation will constitute the final examination for students in the Combined Program with Social Work who select the practicum option.