

**SOCIAL WORK 4DD6 STUDENT PLACEMENT EVALUATION GUIDE  
FOR FIELD INSTRUCTORS OF INDIVIDUAL, FAMILY AND GROUP PRACTICE**

Welcome to the field placement evaluation! Evaluations are a crucial (but sometimes stressful) component of the field placement process. This guide offers:

- A table to track the evaluation process throughout the placement (pages 1 + 2)
- Processes for completing evaluation forms (page 2)
- The McMaster School of Social Work Statement of Philosophy and CASW Code of Ethics (page 3)
- Placement Objectives – what to expect from fourth year students (page 4)
- Description of the rating scales (page 5 + 6)
- Some methods for evaluating student performance (page 6)
- In-depth descriptions of the practice areas being evaluated (pages 7 – 9)

If any questions about evaluation (or anything else) come up, do not hesitate to get in touch with the Seminar Leader connected to your placement. If you are not sure who that is, ask the student or email Lorna ([oconnell@mcmaster.ca](mailto:oconnell@mcmaster.ca)).

**THE EVALUATION PROCESS - CONCURRENT**

<b>WHEN?</b>	<b>WHAT?</b>	<b>WHO?</b>
Early October	Print the evaluation forms and review each component Review student's Learning Objectives in relation to the evaluation Highlight the components that will be evaluated so that the student is aware of what they are being evaluated on and the FI knows what they will evaluate	Student & Field Instructor(s)
Late October	Submit highlighted evaluation form to Seminar Leader with any questions or clarification. Seminar Leader will return to the student in 1 – 2 weeks	Student & Seminar Leader
Mid-November	Meeting to prepare for and complete mid-term evaluation	Student & Field Instructor(s)
Late November or early December (Sem. Leader will contact to book)	Meeting to discuss evaluation Evaluation forms submitted At this point, Learning Objectives and components for evaluation may be revisited and revised	Student, Field Instructor(s) & Seminar Leader
Mid-March	Meeting to prepare for and complete final evaluation	Student & Field Instructor(s)
Late March or early April (Sem. Leader contact to book)	Meeting to discuss evaluation Evaluation forms submitted	Student, Field Instructor(s) & Seminar Leader

## THE EVALUATION PROCESS - BLOCK

WHEN?	WHAT?	WHO?
Early September	Print the evaluation forms and review each component Review student's Learning Objectives in relation to the evaluation Highlight the components that will be evaluated so that student is aware of what they are being evaluated on and the FI is aware of what they need to evaluate	Student and Field Instructor(s)
Mid-September	Submit highlighted evaluation form to Seminar Leader with any questions or clarification. Seminar Leader will return it in one week	Student and Seminar Leader
First week of October	Meeting to prepare for and complete mid-term evaluation	Student and Field Instructor(s)
Mid-October (Seminar Leader will be in touch to book)	Meeting to discuss mid-term evaluation Evaluation forms submitted At this point, Learning Objectives and components for evaluation may be revisited and revised	Student, Field Instructor(s) and Seminar Leader
Mid-November	Meeting to prepare for and complete final evaluation	Student and Field Instructor(s)
Late November (Seminar Leader will be in touch to book)	Meeting to discuss final evaluation Evaluation forms submitted	Student, Field Instructor and Seminar Leader

### There are a few ways to approach the completion of the field evaluation forms:

The student and Field Instructor(s) meet together to complete the forms

The Field Instructor(s) completes the form and the student offers feedback/changes/comments

The student completes the form and the Field Instructor(s) offers feedback/changes/comments

The student and Field Instructor(s) complete the form separately and bring their responses together for a conversation and to complete a joint evaluation form

Each Field Instructor will develop their personal style but our recommendation is that Option #4 tends to work best and enhances the student's learning and minimizes the power imbalance (and ensuing stress!) that can be a reality in evaluating student performance.

## **MCMASTER SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK – STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY**

The following philosophy underpins the social work education offered at McMaster University. Students are expected to develop their practice style in relation to this philosophy.

*As social workers, we operate in a society characterized by power imbalances that affect us all. These power imbalances are based on age, class, ethnicity, gender identity, geographic location, health, ability, race, sexual identity and income. We see personal troubles as inextricably linked to oppressive structures. We believe that social workers must be actively involved in the understanding and transformation of injustices in social institutions and in the struggles of people to maximize control over their own lives.*

## **CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS CODE OF ETHICS**

Value 1: Respect for the Inherent Dignity and Worth of Persons

Value 2: Pursuit of Social Justice

Value 3: Service to Humanity

Value 4: Integrity in Professional Practice

Value 5: Confidentiality in Professional Practice

Value 6: Competence in Professional Practice

**A full description of the Code of Ethics can be found at: [http://www.casw-acts.ca/sites/default/files/attachements/casw\\_code\\_of\\_ethics.pdf](http://www.casw-acts.ca/sites/default/files/attachements/casw_code_of_ethics.pdf)**

## **PLACEMENT OBJECTIVES – WHAT TO EXPECT FROM FOURTH YEAR STUDENTS**

The fourth year placement is an opportunity to work toward beginning social work practice ability – by the end of the placement, the student, field instructor and seminar leader should feel confident in the student's ability to work as a beginning level social worker. The fourth year student will build on third year placement experience and add nuance to their practice in the following areas:

- Interpersonal relationships
- Analysis of power inherent in the helping relationship
- Problem identification and analysis
- Problem solving
- Self-reflection
- Evaluating practice
- Integration of theory and practice

The student is expected to participate independently with service users in (acknowledging that not all areas of practice happen in all settings):

- Defining and describing helping situations and relationships
- Assessments – asking purposeful questions, determining presenting problems, gathering and analyzing data, assessing strengths and analyzing social context
- Developing plans of action
- Implementing plans of action
- Evaluating interventions
- Identifying social structures that cause or contribute to personal difficulties and determining how personally and professionally they work to mitigate those structural barriers

Both the field and the classroom should foster student learning on the societal, professional and organizational context of social work practice. Additionally, fourth year social work students are asked to continue developing the mechanisms they will use to critically self-reflect on their position and practice in relation to their emerging identity as social workers.

## RATING SCALES

Numerical Rating	Description	Explanation
1	Serious Concerns About Practice Ability	The student demonstrates very little knowledge, skill development and personal/professional growth. Poor understanding of requirements.
2	Growth in Practice Ability	The student is beginning to approach an expected level of knowledge, skill development and personal/professional growth. Requirements are understood. Practice is developing.
3	Effective Practice Ability	The student demonstrates competency at an expected level in terms of knowledge, skills and personal/professional development. Can often perform independently.
4	Ready for Beginning Social Work Practice	The student demonstrates effective application of knowledge, skills and personal/professional development. High level of independence. Generates new approaches to practice. Developing an individual interpersonal style. can adapt practice to different situations/contexts. The student is ready to practice in social work at a beginning level.

### Passing and Failing:

Students must obtain a minimum of C+ in their seminar class AND a pass in placement in order to graduate (or continue their studies in social work). Due to the fact that the seminar and placement are linked the seminar leader is the person who determines whether or not a student will pass or fail their placement. This is done through consideration of the evaluation scores, extensive communication with the Field Instructor and student and observations of theory/practice integration in seminar.

In terms of what the rating scales mean in relation to passing or failing – this is a guide (but there may be unique situations that arise that do not follow these patterns). Contact the seminar leader attached to your placement with any questions or concerns as soon as possible:

### **Mid-Term**

Mostly 1s and some 2s at mid-term would be cause for a serious conversation about how to increase those scores in the latter half of the placement. A plan should be developed between the student, field instructor and seminar leader that helps the student get where they need to be.

Mostly 2s and some 3s at mid-term would be cause for a conversation about how to increase those scores in the latter half of the placement. We would expect the student to progress in the second half to reach a minimum of 2.5 and higher in all areas.

### **Final**

Any 1s at the final will be cause for failure of the placement

Mostly 2s and some 3s at the final could result in failure. We expect students to achieve a minimum of 3 in all areas to pass. Student should have many 4s in order to pass their placement.

### **METHODS OF EVALUATION**

There are a range of ways to evaluate student practice. The following are some methods to choose from:

**Students verbal assessments** – student describes what happened and reflects on their own performance and learning

**Students written work** – including process recordings, assessments, summary reports, case/project recording, research briefs

**Field Instructor observation** – including direct observation of work, co-leading (student and field instructor working together), one-way mirror observation, listening to or watching recordings

**Feedback from others** – including solicited and unsolicited feedback from service users, colleagues and community partners

## IN-DEPTH DESCRIPTIONS OF PRACTICE AREAS

These charts are meant to describe our expectations and what would constitute concerns with students. However, all of these should be considered within the context of the organization and in getting to know the student well. The reality is that there are many factors that could come across as a concerning performance issue but may actually be related to personality (really shy students), undisclosed need for accommodations or other broad structural factors. These issues would still need to be discussed and a plan put in place to support students. We know that students from equity seeking groups (racialized, Indigenous, queer and trans, in particular) experience oppression that might in turn result in responses from students that look like practice concerns. If you have any questions/concerns about this, please engage the student in a discussion and/or reach out to the seminar leader.

## WORKING IN AN ORGANIZATION

We'd be concerned if a student...	We'd expect a student to...
Has difficulty adjusting to agency procedures Is disinterested in or is unable to understand organizational issues Knows few/some resources and only the most obvious Does not form relationships with co-workers (reticent or abrasive) Was always late and unable to submit expected work on time	Understand agency procedures and policies to the extent that they can offer suggestions for improvement Demonstrate interest in and understanding of organization's strengths and limits and how these affect service users Demonstrate good knowledge of community resources, ability to research/discern strengths of those resources Have co-workers know and feel respected by them Be punctual and complete tasks on time

## INCORPORATING SOCIAL WORK VALUES AND ETHICS

We'd be concerned if a student...	We'd expect a student to...
Has limited knowledge of social work values and ethics, and seldom uses these to inform practice Does not recognize the limitations and possibilities of helping relationships Struggles to appreciate and work through ethical dilemmas using the CASW Code of Ethics and agency policies	Apply social work values, ethics and principles with service users Understand and practice within the bounds and possibilities of the helping relationship Identify when an ethical dilemma arises and use the CASW Code of Ethics, agency policies and supervision to work through it

## DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH SERVICE USERS

We'd be concerned if a student...	We'd expect a student to...
Has difficulty ending relationships with service users	End their relationships with service users in a way that service users feel respected and supported

## INTERVIEWING AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS

We'd be concerned if a student...	We'd expect a student to...
<p>Has difficulty reaching out to service users and forming and maintaining working relationships with service users</p> <p>Is unable to ask questions that help them understand a service user's situation</p> <p>Has difficulty eliciting and responding to a service user's stated needs and relating these to service user's feelings</p> <p>Difficulty responding to and eliciting service user's feelings</p>	<p>Be helpful and welcoming and to have service users respond well to them</p> <p>Engage in positive working relationships with services users</p> <p>Be able to maintain focus and ask purposeful, helpful questions</p> <p>Respond to service user's needs and relate them to service user's feelings</p> <p>Be able to pursue effective communication, both verbal and non-verbal, and attend to service user's feelings</p>

## ASSESSMENTS

We'd be concerned if a student...	We'd expect a student to...
<p>Is unable to gather appropriate information from a service user to make an assessment</p> <p>Is unable to use other sources of information to fill in an assessment</p> <p>Is unable to identify patterns in what a service user tells them</p> <p>Is unable to identify an adequate assessment statement</p> <p>Does not consider social context, social justice and oppression in their assessments</p> <p>Has produced written material often marked by factual and/or grammatical errors so that intent is unclear</p>	<p>Be able to gather appropriate information from a service user to make an assessment</p> <p>Be able to identify appropriate other sources of information and gather that information for the purposes of an assessment</p> <p>Be able to identify patterns in what the service user tells them</p> <p>Be able to formulate an assessment statement</p> <p>Include an analysis of social context, social justice and oppression their assessments</p> <p>Have written work that is clear and concise</p>



**PLANNING**

<b>We'd be concerned if a student...</b>	<b>We'd expect a student to...</b>
<p>Is unable to set goals with service users and together plan strategies to attain goals</p> <p>Is unable to develop a plan of action with a service user that is based on the assessment statement</p> <p>Neglects to use appropriate agency and/or community resources in developing a plan of action</p> <p>Is unable to implement a plan of action with an individual, group, community group and/or a family</p>	<p>Be able to set goals with service users and together plan strategies to attain goals</p> <p>Be able to develop a plan of action based on the assessment statement</p> <p>Use appropriate agency and community resources in plan</p> <p>Be able to implement a plan of action with an individual, group, community group and/or a family</p>

**SELF-AWARENESS AND OWNERSHIP OF LEARNING**

<b>We'd be concerned if a student...</b>	<b>We'd expect a student to...</b>
<p>Seldom recognizes own strengths and weaknesses and shows little motivation for change</p> <p>Seldom recognizes the impact of own social location</p> <p>Appears to struggle to juggle responsibilities and has no plan/implementation around self-care</p> <p>Rarely seeks help; does not prepare for field instruction meetings; is overly defensive when challenged</p> <p>Rarely does things on own initiative</p> <p>Does not make appropriate use of power inherent in the helping relationship</p>	<p>Take initiative in examining own performance; be aware of own strengths and weaknesses: when necessary, initiate change</p> <p>Be aware of the impact of their own social location</p> <p>Understand the stressful nature of the work and put plans in place to cope with that stress</p> <p>Take an active role in own learning; take responsibility for raising concerns with field instructor(s); be able to use information from field instructor(s) to improve performance</p> <p>Actively seek information and knowledge; have initiative and appropriate independence in carrying out tasks and raising issues</p> <p>Make appropriate use of the power inherent in the helping relationship</p>

