The Learning Agreement

University of Montana School of Social Work
Field Education Program

Overview

• What is the Learning Agreement?
• Developing the Learning Agreement
• Learning Agreement Examples
• Key Considerations
• Additional Resources
What is the Learning Agreement?

• Roadmap to Learning
  • A tool designed to help guide the students' learning as they work towards developing mastery of the competencies and practice behaviors identified by the Council on Social Work Education
• Working document throughout practicum
  • Student drives the development of learning goals and activities with the support of AFI and Field Liaison
• Informs Ongoing Supervision & Evaluation
  • Allows measurement of competency development, skill attainment, and student readiness for practice in 9 core competencies
• Developed in and accessed via SONIA
  • Student, AFI, and Field Liaison all access, review, and approve the LA via their individual Sonia accounts

What is the Learning Agreement?

• Action Plan for clearly laid out student learning activities at the agency
• Identifies what the student will be doing and how they will demonstrate what they are learning
• Offers full picture of what the placement will look like
Developing the Learning Agreement

Student: Strengths, Interests, Learning Goals
Agency: Expectations, Opportunities, Agency/Client Needs
Requirements of Practicum Role

- Student drives the development of the Learning Agreement within the first 4 weeks of the placement
- Collaboration & Input from AFI and Field Liaison (all parties approve in Sonia)
- Work in Progress! Review & Update on a regular basis!

Learning Agreement – Example

COMPETENCY 1: DEMONSTRATE ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

Practice Behavior 1.1:
Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context.

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES / TASKS TO EVALUATE MASTERY
- Discuss NASW Code of Ethics with supervisor
- Discuss agency policies and how they fit with the NASW Code of Ethics
- Apply ethical decision-making model to work through a situation that presents an ethical dilemma; discuss in supervision
- Discuss with other agency professionals how they deal with ethical dilemmas
- Review and discuss additional ethical or governing policies which may impact service delivery at the agency (i.e. agency policies, HIPPA/FERPA guidelines, SSI/SSDI, TANF, SNAP etc.)
Key Considerations

• Learning Agreement = Evaluation Tool
  • Serves as the basis for assessing practicum performance and progress throughout the year and for the student’s final practicum grade (credit/no credit) at the end of the overall practicum experience
  • Development towards the individual competencies is assessed both during a mid-term and a final evaluation using a 1-5 competency based rating scale

• How will you know when the goal/activity is met?
• How will you know a student’s competency level?
• What do you see, hear, witness?

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The Learning Agreement UMMSW Practicum
**Additional Resources & Considerations**

- Sample Learning Agreements
- Learning Agreement Guide
- How can we turn the Learning Agreement into a meaningful tool?
  - Review & Discussion during regular site visits
  - Bring it to life in Supervision!
  - Print a hard copy
  - Ongoing review and discussion
  - Growth? Progress? Changes needed?

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Thank you!

More information about the learning agreement and its development can be found on our website

_B. Franklin,*_

_Tell me and I forget._

_Teach me and I remember._

_Involve me and I learn._