I. Purpose and Description

Field education, which includes placement and instruction, is an essential and irreplaceable element of the curriculum in the Gerontology programs at San Diego State University. It is the practicum learning experience that allows students to integrate classroom theory, knowledge, and practice skills in developing professional competence and identity. This content includes the use of gerontology theory in actual practice situations, skill building, and demonstrating professional standards of ethics, values, and practice, under the professional supervision of qualified gerontologists in their role as field instructors.

**Gero 400A/B Course Pre-Requisites:**
Gero 350, Gero 360, and Gero 370.

2014 Edition - School approved and confirmed Gero Field Practicum Site and Supervisor by the beginning of the semester. Student will begin practicum experience at agency during the first week of classes (week of August 25th).

II. Objectives of the Field Experience

**Gerontology program objectives and outcomes integrated in field practicum experience:**

1. Describe the processes of physical (biological), psychological, and social aging and related theories of aging.
2. Know about the diverse needs of the older population in terms of age, gender, race and ethnicity, and/or diverse abilities.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the aging network consisting of programs and policies for the aging population.
4. Describe and understand own attitudes toward and beliefs about old age and older adults, and reflect and analyze stereotypes or attitudes towards old adults in the portrayal of aging by society.
5. Understand basic concepts of research methods necessary to describe and discuss efficacy and effectiveness of the services and program for older adults as guided and informed by empirical evidence.
6. Develop effective written, oral and interpersonal communication skills with individuals,
caregivers, families, and community thru professional field experiences.
7. Demonstrate case management skills such as interviewing, assessment, and reporting writing.
8. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding necessary to describe, assess, and critique various
   programs, intervention and services to meet the needs of the growing aging population.
9. Demonstrate knowledge and skills necessary to advocate for the needs of older adults and their
   families by engaging in policy formation, implementation, and analysis.
10. Understand the ethical complexities which surround issues with respect to aging.

**By the end of the field experience, students will be able to:**

1. Describe placement agency’s goals, philosophy, values, ethical codes, functions, roles, clientele,
   and services offered and how it addresses the needs of elders in that community.
2. Demonstrate case management skills such as interviewing, assessment, and reporting writing.
   Be able to co-facilitate various types of recreational, educational, socialization groups.
3. Be able to identify client and family’s needs; formulate a basic treatment plan and identify
   interventions that could be provided by case management and referrals. Example: identify need
   for a higher level of care; respite care for care giver, increased recreational or socialization
   opportunities for elder client.
4. Be aware of the diverse needs of the older population in terms of age, gender, race and
   ethnicity, and/or diverse abilities. Be able to identify and combat negative stereo-types through
   providing accurate information and education.
5. Identify age related changes in the body and mental functioning typical of the elderly as
   observed working with clients in the agency;
6. Describe the connection and relationship between research and practice and be able to describe
   assess and critique various programs, intervention and services designed for older adults.

**III. Program Goals**

*The field experience seeks to meet the goals of the gerontology program in the practicum setting:*

- Provide interdisciplinary education and training that meet the diverse needs of older people in
  California and in the U.S.
- Prepare students as generalist gerontologist for careers in a variety of gerontological settings
  such as senior centers, senior service organizations, area and state agencies on aging, supportive
  senior housing, public, non-profit and corporate settings, and health & long term care facilities.
- Provide students with knowledge of aging network and programs on the local, state, and federal
  level.
- Provide students with knowledge and skills to identify and understand stereotypes and attitude
  toward older adults, and emphasize their places and contributions in society.
- Prepare students with knowledge needed in describing, assessing and critiquing various
  programs, intervention and services designed for older adult.
- Prepare students to meet the needs of older adults with cultural competence regarding age,
  gender, race and ethnicity, and/or diverse abilities.
• Prepare students for evidence-based practice with older adults with appropriate research methods to develop, implement, and evaluate the aging programs and services.

Over time, partnerships have been formed with older adult/elder serving agencies and programs throughout the San Diego area. Field agencies, in conjunction with the program curriculum, have provided our gerontology program students with quality field placements in a broad group of agencies, including public, nonprofit, multi-disciplinary, inpatient/outpatient settings including psychiatric settings, nursing homes, hospitals, family service agencies, hospices, community mental health, substance abuse, law enforcement, community care clinics, and senior care settings and services, etc. The result of this joint endeavor, between the department and field agency, provides learning opportunities for students to acquire the professional ethics, attitudes, knowledge, and skills which define the gerontology profession. In the end, it also provides the opportunity for students to examine their personal experience relative to involvement or interactions with elders, and assess their interest in and aptitude for professional tasks and responsibilities for practice with and for elders.

IV. Course Requirements and Assignments*

Students are under all requirements set forth in the field practicum curriculum, e.g. as noted in Undergraduate Gerontology Field Practicum policies and procedures (SSW Web pages – Field Education http://socialwork.sdsu.edu/field/program-descriptions/gerontology-undergraduate/) ; Field Practicum Seminars; forms and assignments as outlined and required; and the SDSU School of Social Work and Gerontology Program-Community Organization Service Learning Agreement.

• Please refer to syllabus and course materials on Blackboard for additional assignments and due dates, as well as class policies.

• Students are encouraged to bring in case situations from their Field Practicum to contribute to seminar discussions. They are expected to maintain client confidentiality at all times by changing names and disguising identifying information.

• It is the student’s responsibility to keep their site supervisors and agency’s apprised of gerontology practicum course information on a regular basis.

• Students are under the auspices of all School policies School curriculum, SDSU Catalog, and the School of Social Work Undergraduate Student handbook (if applicable).

*Please note that it is the student’s responsibility to review the practicum course on SDSU Blackboard for new and/or revised School policies throughout the Academic Year.

A. Practice Requirements and Course Assignments

As part of the course and total course grade, the following assignments are required:

1. Practicum Hours Requirements and Completion:

Conducted between: Monday, August 25, 2014 – Wednesday, December 10, 2014 for Fall Semester only

Students are required to complete 200 hours of agency internship over the 15 weeks of the fall semester. This translates to approximately 13.5 hours per week in the agency practicum. Practicum experience at agency begins the first week of classes of fall semester (week of August 25th). These hours
and course time includes the field seminar(s) held on campus, particular assignments or agency projects and deadlines. Also, this includes time in the agency, time in conferences, and recording supervision or other documentation.

*Note: In accordance with University policies, students cannot be holding internship hours when campus is closed during the fall semester, e.g. Labor Day – Monday, September 1st; Veteran’s Day – Tuesday, November 11th; and Thanksgiving Holiday – Thursday-Friday, November 27th-28th.*

2. Student Practicum Information Form (hard copy only) – Due September 3, 2014
   and Agency Orientation Checklist (hard copy only) – Due October 2, 2014

*Submit all assignments by hard copy via SW Main Office – HH 119 for M. Siegel’s mailbox.*

Students are required to complete the Student Practicum Information Sheet and the Orientation Checklist Form (completed with the Gerontology Site Supervisor). Please refer to “Student Information Sheet” and the “Orientation Checklist form” located either at the end of this syllabus and/or on Course Blackboard.

*A grade of Credit/No Credit is achieved for these two components of the course.*

3. Student and Agency Gerontology Site Supervisor

Student conferences with the agency supervisor are crucial. *It is recommended that regular contact (an hour per week) between students and supervisor is held.* This planned interaction provides a mechanism for students to receive feedback about their performance, expectations, to discuss the various aspects of their experience, and to plan the next steps. Students are expected to come to each supervisory session prepared with questions, issues, assignments, etc. related to his/her practicum learning experiences.


*Submit all assignments by hard copy via SW Main Office – HH 119 for M. Siegel’s mailbox.*

During an evaluation conference /supervisory session, students are to be evaluated at mid-semester (after 100 hours of practicum experience completed) and at the end of the semester (after 200 hours of practicum experience completed). The Evaluation Form addresses the activities completed by the student, progress related to the learning agreement, student attitudes, strengths, skills, ability to apply theory to practice, and work needed to progress or complete by the end of the learning agreement and the semester.

Please refer “Agency Supervisor Evaluation Form” located either at the end of this syllabus and/or in Course Blackboard.

*A grade of Credit/No Credit is achieved for these two evaluations of the course.*

5. Integrative Seminars (1-2) and Seminar Participation – September 3, 2014 and possibly additional seminar to be determined if required.

The purpose of the seminar session(s) is to have a forum to share achievements in field placement, as well as peer and instructor support in addressing professional and personal challenges. Students are expected to actively participate in interactive seminar. Possible issues for discussion include: adjusting to the agency; anxiety; "culture shock;" negotiating the student’s; orientation to the agency; values and
ethics; issues of confidentiality; multicultural issues; development of professional self; communication skills; assessment and analysis of client situations; and termination. A grade of Credit/No Credit is achieved for this component of the course.

**Attendance is mandatory.** The expected benefits of the group process include professional and personal support, shared learning experiences, developmental growth as a group, and group task accomplishment. Absence affects the group’s cohesion and process. Students are accountable to each other and to the instructor for the success of the seminar, and they are accountable to the seminar instructor to achieve a grade.


The purpose of this assignment is to reflect on learning accomplishments in the first semester.

At the end of the Fall semester, all students will complete this assignment which provides the opportunity to assess the progress made during the first semester in field and to plan for the second semester. Please see “Guidelines for Self-Assessment and Evaluation Review” at the end of this syllabus. A grade of Credit/No Credit is achieved for this component of the course.

**V. Grades**

Grades will be administered in accordance with the policies set forth in the SDSU Catalog, and will follow the School of Social Work and Gerontology Program Grading Policy. All gerontology practicum courses in the curriculum are on a “Credit / No Credit – Cr/NC” grading system.

**Total Course Grade:**
For both Gero 400A and Gero 400B, students must achieve a grade of Credit for each assignment in order to achieve a grade of Credit for the entire course. A grade of No Credit for any assignment will result in a student achieving a grade of either No Credit or Incomplete for the course.

The determination of the grade for the Gerontology 400 Practicum course(s) rests with the course instructor. The student must pass the practicum agency internship and the practicum seminar components in each practicum course to receive a grade of “Credit or Incomplete”.

A student who is at risk of achieving a grade of No Credit for either course should immediately schedule a meeting with the course instructor to discuss an intervention and a possible remedial education plan. The student may also be referred to the Director of Field Education and the Undergraduate Student Advisor, as appropriate.

Student must be able to perform satisfactorily and professionally in these areas to receive a grade of “Credit”. This also includes adherence to the NASW Code of Ethics, approved as the SDSU School of Social Work Academic Standards.

**Incomplete Grade:**
On rare occasions (e.g., severe illness, family emergency), an “incomplete” grade may be granted, provided the student meets the criteria established by University and School of Social Work & Gerontology Program policies. These criteria include: (a) the instructor must agree that extenuating circumstances prevented the student from completing the work; (b) the student does not have to make
up more than 30% of the required course work; and (c) the student and the instructor will sign the “University Incomplete Authorization Form” specifying the actions needed for the student to complete the course and a time line for completion. For Field practicum courses students must complete the “incomplete course requirements” before beginning the next semester to continue the field practicum course sequence.

In accordance with School Policy, if a student discontinues his or her field practicum prior to the end of the Gero 400 Practicum Course (in Fall, Spring, or Summer semesters) and the student has not met the “Incomplete Grade” criteria, the student will be required to begin the entire period of the gerontology practicum course again. In other words, former hours for the course will not apply.

Students must maintain a 2.0 GPA prior to the initial enrollment in the field practicum, and throughout the entire field practicum period. Failure to obtain these professional standings will result in the student becoming ineligible for the field practicum course and the student will be requested to withdraw from the field practicum course.

VI. Class Policies

Policies Related to Practicum Experience and Assignments:

_EUniversity Policy Regarding Adjustments to the Course Format:_

Any student requiring special consideration for class format and schedule due to religious observance, military obligations or due to disability (as certified by the SDSU Disabled Students Services) must provide instructor with written notice of those needs by the second week of class.

_Cell Phone, Laptop, Social Media Free Zone:_
There will be no use of laptops, cell phones, tablets, or electronics during seminar time as these may create distractions to the student’s learning experiences and process. Use of cell phones, and/or social media on laptops, tablets, etc. during class time is not permitted as these may create distractions to the student’s learning experiences and process. Thus reading emails, texting, tweeting, etc. are not permitted in class.

_Religious Observances:_
Please notify the instructor within the first two weeks of the semester if your religious observances conflict with class or due dates so appropriate arrangements can be made.

_Academic Accommodations / Disabilities:_
Students who have disabilities that can potentially impact their academic performance may request academic accommodations by contacting the SDSU Student Disability Services (SDS) and receiving an evaluation. If SDS determines that a student has a disability and is eligible for academic accommodations, it is the student’s responsibility to inform the instructor. He/she should meet with the instructor and provide the necessary paperwork, as soon as possible, from SDS for academic accommodations.

_Policies Related to the NASW Code of Ethics – Class Norms & Standards:_
The NASW Code of Ethics (1996, Revised 2008) have been adopted as academic standards in the SDSU School of Social Work. The Code represents professional standards for the BASW program. Students are expected to maintain a high standard of professionalism, and adhere to all its principles of professional conduct. Please refer and review the NASW Code of Ethics, located at
http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/default.asp for its ethical principles and standards on confidentiality, professional boundaries, respect for colleagues and supervisors, honesty, integrity, etc.

VII. Optional References and Web Sites

The National Gerontology Core Competencies provide a resource and reference material for students and site supervisors. They provide ideas for learning activities and guidelines for self-assessment and site supervisor evaluation of graduate student’s mastery of gerontology competencies. The National Gerontology Core Competencies provide a cross disciplinary and inter-disciplinary focus. A few apply specifically to nursing but the majority is relevant for gerontology practitioners and administrators in a variety of settings and roles.

*The National Gerontology Core Competencies are drawn from the following sources:*

**Gerontology:**


**Nursing:**


**Social Work:**

Appendix 1: ORIENTATION CHECKLIST – Gerontology Practicum

Agency Overview

- Review agency vision and mission/purpose statement
- Tour of agency
- Introductions to colleagues, support staff, and administration
- Review organizational structure
- Review the role of the agency in relation to the community and its resources
- Review security and/or safety procedures and protocol

Agency Policies and Protocols

- Review office procedures, supplies, and provisions
- Review telephone and communication/computer utilization
- Review intake/admissions/eligibility policy and procedures
- Review internal communication
- Review parking details
- Review mileage policy
- Review agency, department, and/or unit meeting schedule
- Review client record/charting, policies and procedures
- Review forms for documentation/accountability
- Review regulations regarding confidentiality, release of information, etc.
- Review client fees/payment schedule
- Review client emergency protocol
- Review child or elder abuse reporting protocol
- Review work schedule, including lunch and breaks
- Review information/referral policy
- Review agency policy regarding harassment
- Review agency policy regarding discrimination
- Review agency policy regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Review agency policy regarding OSHA
- Review agency policy regarding HIPAA

Site Supervisor-Field Instructor/Student Responsibilities

- Review expectations for supervision and schedule
- Review educationally based recording schedule
- Review use of preceptor (if applicable)
- Review plan for diversity/multi-cultural experiences
- Review plan for monitoring of student hours (by both field instructor and student)
- Review agency training or staff development opportunities
- Review student’s personal safety issues and concerns and strategies to deal with them

Site Supervisor / Field Instructor (Print Name) ___________________________ Date _____________

Gero 400 Student (Print Name) ___________________________ Date _____________

Site Supervisor / Field Instructor (Signature) ___________________________ Date _____________

Gero 400 Student (Signature) ___________________________ Date _____________
Appendix 2: **STUDENT EVALUATION #1 (BY SUPERVISOR)** – After 100 hours of practicum experience completed. Refer to course syllabus for required due date.)

Submit completed evaluations (hard copy only) to instructor via School of Social Work Main Office – HH 119.

Field supervisors are asked to provide feedback in areas that will help the student understand her/his strengths and shortcomings in interpersonal areas, administrative activity, and the ability to fit into the agency/organization work environment.

Semester: .................................................. Year: ..................................................

Student: ........................................................ Hours completed: ................................

Agency Name & Program: ........................................................

Agency Address: ........................................................

Site Supervisor: .................................................. Site Supervisor Title: ................................

Site Supervisor Email Address: .................................. Site Supervisor Phone: .............

*Place the corresponding number beside each statement.*

1. Intern is able to describe placement agency’s mission, goals, philosophy, values, ethical codes, functions, roles, clientele, and services offered and how it addresses the needs of elders in this community.

2. Intern demonstrates case management skills such as interviewing, assessment, and charting or report writing. Intern is able to facilitate various types of groups.

3. Intern is able to identify client and family’s needs; formulate a basic treatment plan and identify interventions that could be provided by case management and referrals. Example: identify need for a higher level of care; respite care for care-giver, increased recreational or socialization opportunities for elder client.

4. Intern demonstrates awareness of the diverse needs of the older population in terms of age, gender, race and ethnicity, and/or diverse abilities. Intern is able to identify and combat negative stereo-types through providing accurate information and education.

5. Intern is able to identify age related changes in the body and mental functioning typical of the elderly as observed working with clients in the agency;
6. Intern is able to describe the connection and relationship between research and practice and is able to describe, assess and critique various programs, interventions and services designed for older adults.

7. Intern is developing their professional identity as a gerontology professional and interacts with clients and staff with respect, courtesy, empathy, responsibility and respects clients autonomy, self-determination and cultural norms.

Any other comments:

**Signatures (required):**

__________________________________________  
Site Supervisor / Field Instructor (Signature)  

__________________________________________  
Gero 400 Student (Signature)  

__________________________________________  
Gero 400 Course Instructor Initials and Date:  

Date  

Date  

Date  

Date
Appendix 3:  STUDENT EVALUATION #2 (BY SUPERVISOR) – After 200 hours of practicum experience completed. (End of semester Evaluation.) Refer to course syllabus for required due date.)

Submit completed evaluations (hard copy only) to instructor via School of Social Work Main Office – HH 119.

Field supervisors are asked to provide feedback in areas that will help the student understand her/his strengths and shortcomings in interpersonal areas, administrative activity, and the ability to fit into the agency/organization work environment.

Semester: ____________________________ Year: ____________________________

Student: ____________________________ Hours completed: ______________

Agency Name & Program: ____________________________________________

Agency Address: ____________________________________________________

Site Supervisor: ____________________________ Site Supervisor Title: __________

Site Supervisor Email Address: ____________________________ Site Supervisor Phone: __________

Place the corresponding number beside each statement.

(1) Outstanding
(2) Satisfactory
(3) Needs Improvement
(4) Not Applicable or No Opportunity to Demonstrate

1. Intern is able to describe placement agency’s mission, goals, philosophy, values, ethical codes, functions, roles, clientele, and services offered and how it addresses the needs of elders in this community.

2. Intern demonstrates case management skills such as interviewing, assessment, and charting or report writing. Intern is able to facilitate various types of groups.

3. Intern is able to identify client and family’s needs; formulate a basic treatment plan and identify interventions that could be provided by case management and referrals. Example: identify need for a higher level of care; respite care for care-giver, increased recreational or socialization opportunities for elder client.

4. Intern demonstrates awareness of the diverse needs of the older population in terms of age, gender, race and ethnicity, and/or diverse abilities. Intern is able to identify and combat negative stereo-types through providing accurate information and education.
5. Intern is able to identify age related changes in the body and mental functioning typical of the elderly as observed working with clients in the agency;

6. Intern is able to describe the connection and relationship between research and practice and is able to describe, assess and critique various programs, interventions and services designed for older adults.

7. Intern is developing their professional identity as a gerontology professional and interacts with clients and staff with respect, courtesy, empathy, responsibility and respects clients autonomy, self-determination and cultural norms.

Any other comments:

**Signatures (required):**

______________________________________________  __________________________
Site Supervisor / Field Instructor (Signature)  Date

______________________________________________  __________________________
Gero 400 Student (Signature)  Date

Gero 400 Course Instructor Initials and Date:  __________________________
Appendix 4:
2014 Fall Semester

San Diego State University School of Social Work and Gerontology Program

Gero 400 Student Self-Assessment and Evaluation Review Paper
(Refer to course syllabus for required due date.)

Philosophy
All students are considered adult learners who share responsibility for their learning, progress, and self-assessment. The student’s own self-appraisal is consistent with the School’s philosophy encouraging self-determination, self-awareness, and motivation toward the highest possible level of development.

The Self-Assessment and Evaluation assignment is required to include the following:

Writing format: Narrative
1. Type between 3-5 pages, double-spaced, one-inch margins, 12-point font (i.e. Times New Roman, Arial).
   When using references; they must be cited in APA format – both in text and on a reference list, and the reference list and references in text must agree exactly.

2. Write in complete sentences, and avoid jargon. The paper should be clear, well organized, and free of grammar or typographical errors.

3. Use a cover page (to ensure confidentiality) to write your name, Practicum Course number and name, e.g. Gero 400A or Gero 400B – Practicum in Gerontology, semester/year, course instructor (faculty), agency practicum name, program/unit (if applicable), and site supervisor’s name, title. Signature lines for Student and Site Supervisor (optional) with dates are required on title page.

Reminder – this is a professional paper.

Content and Reflections:

1. Learning Activities
   Briefly describe the types of learning activities and opportunities assigned to you this semester. Include all levels of practice activities and describe the type of client(s) involved. Here are some examples:
   - Examples of micro activities include crisis intervention, in-depth, comprehensive psychosocial assessment of a client, or an investigative evaluation such as an Adult (APS) abuse report, etc.
   - Examples of mezzo activities include conducting a support group, seeing a family for grief counseling, offering a psycho-educational or art therapy class for residents in the hospital, etc.
   - Examples of macro activities include conducting a support group, seeing a family for grief counseling, offering a psycho-educational or art therapy class for residents in the hospital, etc.

Discussion of the agency/institution within which the internship took place including:
Who are the clients of the agency?
Provide some of the demographics about the client population (e.g. if disable elderly how many disabled older adults are there in San Diego)
Lines of reporting (who is responsible to whom and for what)
Description of work/services carried out/provided by agency/institution

Describe additional learning activities, such as seminars, conferences, or interdisciplinary team meetings. Indicate briefly the purpose and nature of these meetings. Describe activities that are of special relevance to the Gero program.

II. Self-Assessment and Evaluation

- How would I assess or “rate” myself now, compared to the beginning of the semester?
- What progress did I make? Did I accomplish what I hoped to accomplish?
- In what areas did I NOT make progress, and why not? What impeded my learning?
- What specific diverse client populations, ethnic groups, diagnoses, assessments, treatment plans, high risk factors, am I experiencing difficulty with?
- What skills would I like to learn or develop further?
- What activities will help me learn or develop these skills?
- Describe any special project that was completed during this semester.
- If you had a prior Gero 400A or B course - review your Self-Evaluation from last semester, compare our self-evaluations, and write a reflection on what is different from last practicum course, what have you learned, and how you view yourself now.

III. Self-Evaluation based on your overall development and identity as a professional gerontology worker.

Consider your overall growth as a professional. What have you learned that takes you beyond your role as an individual, student, or employee, toward the role of independent professional?

Give examples of incidents or experiences that promoted the development of your professional identity. For example:

- What ethical or legal issues did you become aware of or face in a new way?
- How does the practicum experience relate to your classroom learning? Were you able to apply any specific classroom learning to your work in the agency?
- What specific courses proved most helpful to your field placement?
- Were there any instances when your personal values or cultural beliefs were challenged, or clashed with clients/residents, colleagues or supervisors in the Field Practicum?
- Did you have any specific problems or challenges at your agency?
- Describe the extent and quality of the supervision you received?
- Extent to which the internship is thought to be helpful for future work with respect to (a) knowledge acquired, (b) contacts established, (c) work experience gained.

Additional Comments (Optional)

- Suggestions regarding the internship planning process, agency setting, and/or site supervisor. These comments are for the course instructor’s review.