

Introduction  
to  
Fields of Practice

October 2008

## **FIELDS OF PRACTICE SPECIALIZATION (Optional)**

The School of Social Work offers Second Year, Advanced Standing, Accelerated, and Time Frame II students the opportunity to choose a specialization in a field of practice (FOP). The School has approved the following six field of practice specializations: Adults, Older Adults and Families; Children, Youth and Families; Health and Mental Health; Work, Employment and Rehabilitation; Community Development; Prevention and Social Justice; and New Populations and Emerging Issues in Social Work Practice.

Based upon the knowledge and skills acquired in first year courses, a FOP specialization provides students the opportunity to enhance their knowledge of distinctive institutional settings, particular client populations or social problems. The goals of a field of practice specialization are to:

- § Provide students with opportunities to develop in-depth knowledge and skill in an area of social work beyond the method.
- § Prepare students for a competitive job market given the organization of service delivery systems.
- § Bring together faculty, students and field agencies with similar interests to share and develop knowledge around contemporary issues and trends in social work.
- § Provide an additional vehicle for generating innovation and new course material in the curriculum.
- § Maintain the focus of the School, the faculty and curriculum on the changing needs of the urban community.

Planning for a FOP specialization usually occurs in the second semester of the first year, or Time Frame I. Advanced standing students plan for a field of practice specialization in the summer before they enter the full-time program. Students are strongly encouraged to discuss interest in a field of practice with their faculty advisor and the chair of a field of practice specialization area in which they have an interest.

The requirements for completing a field of practice specialization are: (a) an appropriate field practicum, (b) enrollment in two courses from a designated list of approved courses, and (c) Research I and II **or** the Professional Seminar with a research or a seminar focus on the relevant field of practice. Students who successfully complete the requirements of a field of practice specialization will have this recognized in their final evaluation summary, may add this achievement to their resume, and will receive a certificate, suitable for framing, upon graduation . A description of each approved field **of** practice follows.

## ADULTS, OLDER ADULTS AND FAMILIES

The Adults, Older Adults, and Families field of practice addresses adulthood across the life span. Content areas include parenting, intimacy, family relationships, inter-generational systems, employment, death and dying, etc. and variations and problems associated with these content areas. Learning about how our diverse client populations deal with life challenges, successes, and obstacles are central concepts. Various curriculum areas and the field practicum combine to help students develop deeper knowledge, appreciation, and clinical skills of assessment and intervention with this population.

Field placements will provide strong practice opportunities across the various methods of casework, group work, community organization and administration. Placements vary from those which provide a range of services to a variety of client needs to placements that are more specialized in their focus of population/problems. Likewise, students may choose from a range of courses that offer both breadth of learning and depth around specific problems and interventions.

Courses that meet the requirements for this specialization are:

\$	SSW 702.13	Women and Social Welfare Policy
\$	SSW 702.16	Social Work with the Homeless: Implications for Policy and Practice
\$	SSW 702.17	Social Welfare Policy in the Field of Aging
\$	SSW 713	HB&SE III (Adults and Older Adults)
\$	SSW 715	Seminar in Psychodynamics
\$	SSW 724	Social Casework IV: Family Treatment; Brief Therapy and Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy
\$	SSW 734	Group Work IV: Social Group Work and Family Work: Similarities and Differences in Theory and Practice
\$	SSW 770	Alcohol and Drug Abuse: Social Work Practice
\$	SSW 775.01	Ways of Knowing: Aging
\$	SSW 775.12	Ways of Knowing: Drugs and Alcohol
\$	SSW 791.57	Social Work with Victims of Violence Against Women
\$	SSW 791.76	Social Services to the Gay & Lesbian Community
\$	SSW 791.89	Perspectives on the Aging Process: Implication for Social Work Practice
\$	SSW 794	Social Work Practice: Family Treatment
\$	SSW 796.60	Clinical Issues in Social Work Practice with the Aged
\$	SSW 796.55	Multicultural Social Work Practice

Students completing this Specialization will receive recognition at graduation certifying completion of our requirements for this specialization, and may note this on their resume.

### Faculty:

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## CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Children, Youth and Families is the field of practice for students interested in the developmental and special needs of children, youth and families: crises and disruptions in family life; family conflicts and violence, child guidance, child placement services, and family life education. It is understood that children, youth, and families are the typical clients of most fields of practice, but this field/specialization is defined (as others) by its particular service structure, its social and legislative sanctions, the population it serves, its specific policy debates and its practices.

Range of Clientele: Anyone who is a family member. The presenting problems in the Children, Youth and Families Field of Practice have a child or children within-a-family focus. Field practicum settings have a primary orientation towards providing services to children and adolescents in biological families, foster or adoptive families, group home settings, homeless or displaced families, immigrant or refugee families, lesbian or gay families, and families with serious health and mental health problems including child sexual abuse or substance abuse in families.

Typical Settings: Children, Youth and Families Field of Practice includes services addressed directly to children, youth and their families in a variety of settings such as: family service agencies, child welfare services, child guidance clinics, school based programs, family therapy programs, health/mental health (medical/psychiatric) centers, group care and residential treatment centers, multiple or neighborhood service centers, day care programs, and family court.

**Course Offerings include:** The following provides a selection of course offerings within this area of specialization:

\$	SSW 702.13	Women and Social Welfare Policy
\$	SSW 702.15	Policy and Practice in Child Welfare
\$	SSW 702.16	Social Work with the Homeless
\$	SSW 713	HB & SE III (Children & Adolescence)
\$	SSW 715	Seminar in Psychodynamics
\$	SSW 724	Casework IV - Family Treatment: Cognitive-Behavioral Advance Clinical Practice with Children, Trauma
\$	SSW 734	Group Work IV
\$	SSW 770	Alcohol and Drug Abuse: Social Work Practice
\$	SSW 775.02	Ways of Knowing: Child Welfare
\$	SSW 775.04	Ways of Knowing: Domestic Violence
\$	SSW 775.09	Ways of Knowing: Immigrant Experience
\$	SSW 775.12	Ways of Knowing: Drugs and Alcohol
\$	SSW 775.13	Ways of Knowing: Schools
\$	SSW 791.57	Social Work With Victims of Violence
\$	SSW 791.71	Services to Immigrants and Refugees
\$	SSW 791.76	Social Services to the Gay & Lesbian Community
\$	SSW 792	Social Work Practice with Children and Adolescents
\$	SSW 794	Social Work Practice with Families
\$	SSW 796.53	Clinical Issues in Child Welfare
\$	SSW 796.61	Social Work Practice in School Settings

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## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, PREVENTION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Specialization in the Community Development and Social Justice field of practice involves populations, problems and settings at the cutting edge of practice in declining urban communities. It is a base for students and faculty interested in services to victims of violence, individuals involved in the criminal justice system, substance abusers and involuntary clients. In addition, this area of specialization is for students interested in the development of neighborhoods, the criminal justice system, community organizations and schools to insure that community members can access resources.

Populations in this field of practice include people who are incarcerated or in community corrections; abused and neglected children; battered women and abused elderly; and chemically dependent people, among others. Field work placements include methadone and substance abuse treatment programs; alternative to incarceration programs; residential correctional facilities; probation; family court; advocacy and intervention programs for victims of crime, and also school and community programs that strive to develop programs responsive to community needs. Students should develop specific specializations within these broad areas. Examples might include Domestic Violence in the Gay Community, Social Work Services for the Abused Elderly, Community Building among Chemically Dependent Women, & Prisoner Reentry in High Risk Communities.

Courses that meet the requirements to specialize in this field of practice include, **but are not limited to:**

- SSW 702.20 Clients Rights, The Legal System and Social Policy
- SSW 702.16 Social Work with the Homeless
- SSW 702.17 Social Policy in the Field of Aging
- SSW 770 Alcohol and Drug Abuse: Social Work Practice
- SSW 775.06 Ways of Knowing: Criminal Justice
- SSW 775.07 Ways of Knowing: Authority Settings
- SSW 775.12 Ways of Knowing: Drugs and Alcohol
- SSW 791.57 Social Work with Victims of Violence Against Women
- SSW 727 Social Work in Authoritarian Settings: Work with Involuntary and Mandated Clients
- SSW 724 Cognitive and Behavioral Therapy

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## HEALTH/MENTAL HEALTH

In this field of practice, health and illness are considered as points along a continuum. Health is not merely the absence of disease. It is the ability to function in complete harmony with one's environment; the capability of meeting the ordinary physical, social and emotional stresses of life. The goals of this specialization are to prepare social workers who can responsibly meet the changing needs of people faced with health concerns, and who can effectively advocate for quality health/mental health policies and practices in New York City. Students in this specialization generally have the opportunity to: participate on a multidisciplinary health care team; work with the range of client needs (illness to wellness) and the continuum of care (prevention to long-term care) to meet those needs; learn about public and private health/mental health laws, programs, resources, benefits and services; use skills necessary to provide quality health care services in existing or alternative health care systems; and participate in consumer and professional advocacy networks and organizations established to protect patients' rights.

Field placement settings in this specialization include: large hospitals, ambulatory care or primary care facilities, hospital out-patient and in-patient clinics or community-based health centers, day treatment programs, substance abuse treatment facilities, specialized nursing care facilities for the chronically ill, aged or those in need of intensive rehabilitation and/or hospice care. Some settings focus on health education or patient advocacy.

Some examples of Health/Mental Health Specializations include work with MICA/CAMI clients: cancer patients and their families, end of life decisions in palliative care settings; groups with persons diagnosed with HIV/AIDS; discussion groups for parents around family health needs; community health education programs; persons with mental illness advocating for their mental health needs; training programs for workers providing intensive case management; or work with older adults and their families in extended care facilities.

### Courses:

\$	<b>SSW 702.14</b>	<b>Social Policy: Health &amp; Mental Health Systems</b>
\$	<b>SSW 702.17</b>	<b>Social Welfare Policy in the Field of Aging</b>
\$	<b>SSW 715</b>	<b>Seminar in Psychodynamics</b>
\$	<b>SSW 724</b>	<b>Brief Therapies or Cognitive-Behavioral Therapies or Family Therapy or Advanced Clinical Practice with Children or Advanced Practice with Survivors of Trauma</b>
\$	<b>SSW 775.03</b>	<b>Ways of Knowing: Health</b>
\$	<b>SSW 775.12</b>	<b>Ways of Knowing: Drugs and Alcohol</b>
\$	<b>SSW 797.1</b>	<b>Clinical Social Work Practice in Health Settings</b>
\$	<b>SSW 796.60</b>	<b>Clinical Issues in Social Work Practice with the Aged</b>
\$	<b>SSW 770</b>	<b>Alcoholism and Drug Abuse</b>
\$	<b>SSW 791.75</b>	<b>Social Work Practice with People with AIDS</b>

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## WORK, EMPLOYMENT AND REHABILITATION

The Work, Employment and Rehabilitation Field of Practice Specialization underscores the importance of work, income and employment in our society, and in the lives of the clients we serve. Increasingly in this country you are what you do and therefore work issues are always central to our clients. Indeed, the theme of work covers the entire life span and offers opportunities for social work intervention with adults, older adults, adolescents and their families.

Field placements will provide strong clinical practice opportunities and are primarily for casework and group work majors, although CO and administration majors frequently can be accommodated. They are principally set in labor and management based Member Assistance Programs and in management sponsored Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) under the auspices of hospitals, universities, trade unions, City agencies and external corporate providers. In addition, there are placement opportunities in manpower and employment agencies, welfare-to-work programs and vocational rehabilitation settings. Many of these field placements provide stipends. These placements offer a particularly good opportunity for students wishing to consider EAPs (and workplace settings) for employment upon graduation. However, a work-based specialization prepares students as well with the skills they need for career success in all social work settings.

Students completing the Work, Employment and Rehabilitation Specialization will receive recognition at graduation certifying their completion of our requirements for this specialization, and may note this on their résumé.

### The electives that qualify for the Specialization are:

\$	SSW 702.10	The Organization and Delivery of Social Services to Workers and their Families
\$	SSW 702.13	Women and Social Welfare Policy
\$	SSW 702.19	Immigration and Refugees
\$	SSW 702.21	Social Welfare and Disabilities
\$	SSW 713	HBSE III (Adults and Older Adults)
\$	SSW 724	Casework IV: Brief Therapies; Trauma; or Cognitive-Behavioral
\$	SSW 727	Social Work with Clients in Authoritarian Settings
\$	SSW 770	Alcohol and Drug Abuse: Social Work Practice
\$	SSW 775.07	Ways of Knowing: Authority Settings
\$	SSW 775.09	Ways of Knowing: Immigrant Experience
\$	SSW 775.12	Ways of Knowing: Drugs and Alcohol
\$	SSW 791.71	Social Work Practice with Immigrants and Refugees
\$	SSW 791.83	Social Work Practice and the Disabled
\$	SSW 796.52	Social Work Practice with Workers and their Families

### Faculty:

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## NEW POPULATIONS AND EMERGING ISSUES

The New Populations and Emerging Issues Field of Practice Specialization serves as a base for faculty and students whose interests fall outside of the other established specializations. New Populations might include emerging identity groups or rediscovered identity groups such as the biracial or bicultural identity categories. This Field of Practice also has a focus on people who are in search of community and identity after having been displaced by genocidal attacks and mass trauma such as Hurricane Katrina.

Emerging issues of concern to the Field of Practice include the use of new technologies in social work, and, incorporating spirituality, story-telling, music, dance and myth as therapeutic tools in social work processes. Research/practice issues involving Cultural Competence are also of concern to this Field of Practice, particularly emerging work on practice addressing internalized oppression.

Students and faculty in this specialization constitute a design workshop where social workers are on the front-line working with targeted populations to discover appropriate interventions.

### Courses

\$	SSW 702.20	Client Rights: The Legal System and Social Policy
\$	SSW 702.16	Social Work and Homelessness
\$	SSW 702.22	International Social Welfare Policy and Services
\$	SSW 775.04	Ways of Knowing: Domestic Violence
\$	SSW 775.09	Ways of Knowing: Immigrant Experience
\$	SSW 791.57	Social Work with Victims of Violence Against Women
\$	SSW 791.71	Immigrant and Refugee Issues
\$	SSW 791.75	Social Work & AIDS
\$	SSW 791.76	Social Services to the LGBT Community
\$	SSW 791.83	Social Work Practice and Disabilities
\$	SSW 791.88	Spirituality and Healing
\$	SSW 796.55	Multicultural Social Work Practice

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## FIELD OF PRACTICE SPECIALIZATION

All full time MSW students may specialize in a Field of Practice (FOP) in their second field year or in Time Frame II. Please indicate your interest in a Field of Practice by completing the information below. ***Discuss your field of practice interest and educational plan with your faculty advisor and the appropriate FOP chair.*** Be sure that your faculty advisor and the Field of Practice chair sign this form. Please place the completed form in **Lauren Maizer's mailbox on the fifth floor.**

(please circle one)

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\* OYR Program

ID# \_\_\_\_\_

\* 2-Year Program

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\* Part-Time Program

\_\_\_\_\_

\* Advanced Standing Program

Telephone #: [    ] \_\_\_\_\_

\* Bank St. Dual-Degree Program

\* Accelerated Program

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Expected Date of Graduation: \_\_\_\_\_

**Field of Practice choice (check one)**

**Field of Practice Chairs**

**Telephone & e-mail address**

Adults, Older Adults and Families

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New Populations & Emerging Issues

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**EDUCATIONAL PLAN (INDICATE YOUR AREAS OF INTEREST)**

1.      Problem Focus
2.      Population Group
3.      Field Setting
4.      Course Possibilities (see "Introduction to Fields of Practice" in this regard)

**SIGNATURES**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Student**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Faculty Advisor**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Field of Practice Chair**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**