GUIDELINES FOR ORGANIZATION, PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT (COP&D) FIELD ASSIGNMENTS

Field assignments should be developed by the field instructor in consultation with the Field Advisor and Field Education Department. Assignments should be consonant with the Educational Policy Accreditation Standards (CSWE) for field, the four components of COP & D practice and the 11 COP & D competencies below.

I.   COP&D Learning Goals for Field Assignments

Field assignments will vary according to the type of setting or auspice; however, assignments should:

- reflect the range of tasks and functions characteristic of the four components of COP & D: Organizational/Group Development; Planning/Program Development; Community Education/Leadership Development; Political/Policy Development (see below);

- be built on student learning needs, background and career interests;

- develop skills in interaction, analysis, constituency-building, and program development;

- be consonant with agency auspice and mission, client/constituency needs, and staff expertise and support;

- provide opportunities for different levels of responsibility and difficulty, and principles of sequence and progression in learning;

- integrate to the extent possible content of required COP & D courses (SSW 741, 742, 743) into student field recordings;

- where possible, utilize neighborhood-based settings, and some direct work with clients and constituencies for first year and/or inexperienced students (one-on-one meetings, group facilitation, etc.);

- where possible, utilize community collaborations, constituency empowerment, policy, and political advocacy for second year and/or experienced students;

- incorporate the values and ethics of social work, especially as relevant to COP & D dilemmas and controversies; and

- embrace the centrality of multi-culturalism, pluralism, and diversity, and the complexity of addressing issues of race, class, gender, sexual orientation and gender expression, ability, age, and other statuses. This can be done by using an anti-oppressive lens that includes dynamics of power and privilege in all assignments.

II. Components of COP&D

The objectives of COP &D field assignments are to develop competencies in the following components of COP & D practice:

A. **Organizational/Group Development** for democratic collective action on social and community problems affecting health, well-being and life-chances; organizing clients, consumers and citizens at the grassroots and agency level to affect change among their constituencies and communities to better meet human needs.

B. **Planning/Program Development** for involvement of professionals and service consumers/community constituencies in the coordination of existing services, as well as the development of new collaborative or agency programs and services to meet human needs.

C. **Community Education/Leadership Development** for the acquisition of human and legal rights, self-actualization, and self-determination, as well as social cohesion and the support for community/client participation.

D. **Political and Policy Development** to influence the social policy and legislation agenda and electoral politics at the city, state, and/or federal level, especially on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed communities and populations including issue and candidate campaigns. Second year students may select a track within COP & D called "policy practice," with the goal of having a policy-engaged field placement and assignment in their second year.

Assignments should be in one or more of the components on the following grid. The specifics below are only examples of the way the components can be translated into specific tasks. At the end of each semester, students will be asked to reflect on the way their assignments are incorporated within these components as their final recording/self-assessment.

SMMARY GRID OF COP&D COMPONENTS AND RELATED TASKS

Political and Policy Development Organization and Group Development	Planning and Program Development	Community Education Leadership Development
technical assistance resource assessment and development		
community assessment (assets & needs) research, fact finding policy and legislative analysis committee staffing/task force work constituency development and coalition-building legislative advocacy (lobbying, public testimony)		
self-help/mutual support groups organization-building consumer/community board development social action campaigns	inter-agency liaison/coordination proposal writing grant writing/fundraising program planning program monitoring program evaluation	information and referral services education and raining (staff, consumers, volunteers) workshop/conference development communications development (newsletters, media, speakers/ bureau) community outreach

III. Types of Settings

COP & D competencies can be gained in almost any setting. These include:

- Direct Service Social Agencies - providing treatment and rehabilitation;

- Host (to social work) Agencies and Institutions - providing health, education and labor- related services;

- Neighborhood-based Community Development Agencies and Settlement Houses--focusing on prevention, education, socialization, access to rights and resources;

- Planning Agencies and Organizations (local, state, regional) - providing service coordination, change, development; legislative initiatives;

- Social Action/Advocacy/Policy Organizations – seeking social/economic change, resource distribution, rights, consumer representation;

- Offices of Elected and Appointed Officials- at City, State and Federal level-may include some constituency services and direct organizing, with an emphasis on program and policy advocacy, required for the Policy Track students.

IV. Number and Length of Assignments:

Field instructors are encouraged to seek support from field advisors if structuring assignments within the agency context presents a challenge.

- Students should have two to three substantial, specific, and varied assignments (i.e., with beginnings, middles and ends) over the course of each year.

- At least one substantial assignment should be developed for the entire academic year, or for a semester at a minimum, for continuity and growth in learning.

- Assignments that end during the year (for example, conference planning completed with the event, or a tenants' group that failed to get off the ground), should be replaced with another.

V. Level of Responsibility:

A. **Assignments should reflect a range of responsibility levels**, with the goal of increasing responsibility over time. Second year students, and second semester Advanced Standing and OYR students are expected to have assignments that allow them to demonstrate and attain a higher level of responsibility. These include:

1. **Observation** – example: attendance at agency board meetings;

2. **Agency representation** – example: representing the agency at a community board, task force or coalition meeting (s);

3. **Assistant/team participation** – example: assuming specific tasks with others in a group or project;

4. **Co-leading** – example: assuming substantial responsibility for major areas of work with one other staff person;

5. **Primary responsibility** – example: being in charge of initiating a major project or area of work.

B. **The above levels of student responsibility should be developed by the field instructor in consultation with student and field advisor.** Where appropriate, a Task Coordinator who oversees day-to-day activities of student should be consulted on levels of responsibility. While a student should be able to assume responsibilities as appropriate on one's own, the expectation is that major assignments will be done in collaboration with others (e.g. a task force, advisory group, ad-hoc committee, etc.).

C. **Students should not be expected to initiate or to carry major assignments in which there will not be sufficient staff attention or in which agency is not invested.** The agency is expected to provide appropriate support and level of resources. There should be a reasonable expectation that the assignments will have an impact on agency, community, and/or client life as well as further student learning and leadership. It is important that an assignment should not be developed for the mere purpose of providing a hands-on experience for a student. In addition, a student is *not* a substitute for a paid staff person. Internships are designed to facilitate guided learning; students need time for self-reflection by his/herself and with the field instructor.

D. **Students may need guidance in understanding the role of administrative tasks in carrying out a CO assignment; e.g., working on mailing lists, data bases, flyers, outreach.** Distinctions need to be made between when the student is "pitching in" to help the agency achieve a goal, and when the administrative or clerical task is contributing to student learning and agency need. For example, an assignment to develop a "Resource Guide" needs to be conceptualized as utilizing a range of CO competencies, and not just a series of clerical tasks. Such tasks, while perhaps clerical, are thus serving longer-term strategic purposes. Similarly, "outreach" is a complex professional and political function. For example: "developing a flyer" as part of a strategic outreach campaign, requires communication skills, cultural competency skills, and the need to understand the target population. It includes an understanding of what motivates the clients or constituency targeted; it requires knowing the message that needs to be conveyed; the role of media; identifying where, when, how and by whom the message needs to be conveyed; connecting aesthetic (creative) and organizing components to accomplish the task, etc.

VI. Sequence and Progression of Learning:

Orientation to the field setting and assignments usually takes longer in COP & D than in other social work methods. It may take longer for first year than for second year students to understand the nature and purpose of assignments. CO assignments usually take longer to accomplish. They are often more complex in that they involve other staff, community members, and outside constituencies; moreover, the process of achieving the goal is (usually) as important as the product/task/outcome.

A.   Number of assignments, level of responsibility, and difficulty should increase over the course of each year, and between first and second year. Students should have at least one assignment in which they have primary responsibility over the course of a year, beginning earlier in the year for second year and/or experienced students. For **Advanced Standing** students this balance of first- and second-year level assignments is critical.

B.   Assignments and settings should be developed so that beginning/inexperienced students are provided solid grounding in community-based issues and needs and modes of intervention. Direct contact with clients/consumers, analysis of community needs, and work with small groups or committees should be central to the **first-year student experience**.

C.   Progression of assignments strategic development, political sophistication, facility in multiple professional roles, work with interdisciplinary collaborations and inter-organizational coalitions should be included in the second year. **Second year students** are also expected to show greater initiative, self-direction, strategic thinking and planning, as well as creativity. **OYR and Advanced Standing** students should advance from first to second year expectations by second semester. **Advanced standing** students need carefully crafted assignments that allow components of first- and second-year COP & D competencies. The rule of thumb is that by the end of the first semester, AS students should be evaluated as if they just completed their assignments at a satisfactory first year level.

VII. Weekly Field Instruction Sessions

It is essential that the student and field instructor meet each week; the general timeframe is from 1-1 ½ hours of uninterrupted time. This allows for supervision related both to the assignment and to the student's learning needs and challenges and discussion of logs and other recording materials. To obtain the most out of this experience, student should submit a log or other piece of written recording to the field instructor in advance of the session (See Weekly Recordings document). In preparation for field instruction, student should prepare **an agenda** to be provided

to the field instructor in advance as well. The field instructor must provide some written comments on the recording document itself and return to the student with sufficient time to review and prepare to discuss in supervision. There may be some variations if agreed upon by both and approved by the Field Advisor (e.g. time and place of supervision; hard or electronic copy; method of providing feedback, etc.)

VIII. Task Coordinator

A COP & D student may be assigned a task coordinator, usually someone at the site where the student's major assignments are located. This person may or may not be a social worker. The task coordinator is the person who provides day-to-day guidance on one or more projects. However, the assignments and direction for the work should be coordinated with the field instructor to assure compatibility of goals and tasks. It is recommended that the field instructor and the identified task coordinator meet periodically together with the student and be included in the field advisor's annual visit to the agency. The task person does not have the responsibility or formal authority to complete the end of semester and year-end student evaluation; however, they may provide input to the field instructor's assessment, if desired.

IX.   Annual Field Visit

It is required that there be at least one face-to-face meeting at the agency with the field advisor, field instructor, and student. The task supervisor should be included if applicable. This event is part of the student's learning and requires preparation in advance. Students should work with their field instructor and field advisor to develop the structure and content of the meeting, including expectations as to process and outcome. **Field advisors may conduct additional virtual or in-person visits or three- way meetings as needed.**

COP&D FIELD RECORDINGS

Field recordings are an essential learning tool. They are required to successfully complete

the field practicum. It is a requisite for demonstrating critical thinking, facilitating and scaffolding conversations of identity and, developing COP&D knowledge and skills. Besides functioning as a tool for student learning, field recordings document student development and assist field instructors in monitoring and evaluating students' progress. Recordings are also critical tools for authentic relationship-building between field instructors and interns. If used to the fullest potential, recordings can mitigate the influence of power and allow for more honest conversations.

Field recordings must be used as part of supervision with the field instructor. These, together with a weekly agenda generated by the student, are the framework for weekly supervision. Field instructors are required to provide written comments on their student(s) logs as well as discuss them in weekly supervision. Therefore, it is imperative that the student submit a log in advance of meeting each week to their field instructor. In addition, it is equally important that field instructors provide timely and substantive feedback to allow the student to review and prepare for supervision. Periodically, the student's faculty advisor will review selected recordings to assess the advisee's progress in the field.

Field recordings have a variety of formats. Verbatim and Narrative Process Recordings for COP&D students can be found in the field manual. The weekly log format outlined below is an alternate form. We encourage students to try all three formats during their field assignment.

WEEKLY LOG TEMPLATE:

These logs should serve - at minimum - as a running account and analysis of the student's primary COP&D field assignment as it evolves over the course of a semester or of the year. Below is an outline of the topics that should be included in a weekly log.

Student's name:

Date of Submission:

Briefly describe your primary COP&D field assignment:

Identify the specific encounter, event, task, etc. that is the focus of this log:

Please note: The words "task," "activity," "encounter," "event" have been used interchangeably here. Different log entries may focus on a different segment of the task or assignment.

1. Describe your role (e.g. observer, participant, facilitator, etc.)

2. **Choose a segment of the above task that was the most significant, challenging, and/or memorable to analyze below.** Explain its identified strategic purpose and what did or did not happen to enhance that purpose.

Reflect on and respond to the following:

3. Applying tactical self-awareness: (a) What were your feelings as the task unfolded? (b) What were you thinking at the time related to the activity/ task and what occurred. In retrospect, if and how did your feelings influence your behavior? Have your feelings and thoughts changed or reinforced looking back now? If so, why?

4. What assumptions did you hold about your audience? Were they interrupted or confirmed?

5. Were there multiple or hidden agendas at play during the event/ activity? What did you

observe beneath the surface, if anything?

6. Reflect on how positionality and your intersecting identities (and those of others) may have influenced the task(s)/ activity's process and outcome?

7. What skills and competencies apply to this task/activity? What skills/competencies do you need to continue to develop?

8. What questions or discussion points have emerged from this activity or related ones to raise with your field instructor?

9. Did any information from readings or classroom experiences inform your approach to the task? Your use-of-self? If so, briefly describe how.