CONFLICT RESOLUTION

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ASSESSMENT AND REFLECTION

(Responsibility logs, assignments, and journals are due. Please bring these items to the seminar.)

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Field education is an integral part of the social work curriculum for the BASW and MSW Programs. In 2008, and reaffirmed in 2015, the Council on Social Work Education designated Field Education as the Signature Pedagogy where the classroom and the field integrate. The Office of Field Education within the University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work offers students a wide variety of field placement options.

John Dalessandro is the director of field education. He has been a medical social worker and EAP counselor at St. Clair Hospital in Mt. Lebanon for twelve years. Prior to coming to the University’s main campus, he was the MSW Program Coordinator at the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown. Dalessandro has lectured on the ethical management of end-of-life care and his research interests include elderly women of color and their access to terminal care.
10 Steps to Managing Conflict in the Workplace

What types of conflict may occur in the workplace???

1) Prepare in advance/Proactively

2) Address the situation as soon as possible

3) Discuss in a neutral zone but emphasize authority

4) Identify the problem correctly- zoom out to get the proper perspective

5) Be aware of non-verbal language and communication- avoid non-verbal hostility

6) Be honest but use assertive communication with empathy

7) Listen actively and with compassion (try to see from other’s perspective) and keep an open mind

8) Work together to find a solution- get on the same side if possible

9) Agree to a plan of action- be open and flexible

10) Express confidence in a positive outcome- be positive not negative and commit to a solution

“Focus on the best and forget the rest!”
GIVING FEEDBACK THAT CHANGES BEHAVIOR

1. It is best to give feedback in private; this demonstrates respect for the person to whom the feedback is intended.

2. Make certain the receiver is paying attention and is emotionally ready to listen. If the person is distracted or otherwise non attentive, the communication will not be heard.

3. Giving feedback when a person is in a charged emotional state does not work very well. Wait until the person is able to listen.

4. Do not give feedback when you are angry. The person will hear your anger and not the verbal message.

5. Focus your feedback on the particular behavior that you want to see changed, not on the whole person. Use examples to illustrate. Be specific and concise.

6. Find out how the other person is receiving your feedback by asking them to paraphrase what they heard from you. Ask questions to clarify that they understood. Correct any inaccuracies.

7. Feedback will have the most impact when it is recent to the behavior that was not acceptable. Don’t warehouse offenses!

8. Demonstrate understanding, not anger for the person’s situation. Trust and support go a long way.

9. Do not try to attribute intent to the person’s behavior. It is the behavior that you want to see changed.

10. Let the person know that you value them and are hopeful about their ability to change a specific behavior. Engage them in the process of generating a plan to change the specific behavior.
Solution Focused -Problem-Solving in Field Education

Model Guidelines

Philosophy: The School of Social Work at the University of Pittsburgh aspires to provide quality field placements. These field placements are expected to meet basic standards that include but are not limited to 1) acceptance of the University Training Agreement (or similar agreement), 2) provision of a qualified field instructor, and 3) identification and use of structured learning opportunities that are consistent with the student's educational program and the standards of the Council on Social Work Education to include competencies and practice behaviors. To this end, a commitment is made to students, field instruction agencies and field instructors to engage in a problem-solving process when the need for such a process is identified by any one of the these individuals or by the faculty liaison, Program Director, or Director of Field Education.

Purpose: The purpose of these guidelines is to identify common problems that occur in field placement that may require problem-solving as well as the steps by which field placement "problems" are addressed in field education.

Guidelines:

1. Definition of common problems that may occur in field placement: Any effort or lack of effort on the part of the student, field instructor, or School that serves as an impediment to learning or to the active completion of the required learning goals of the student. Some examples of this include:

• failure to receive the University Training Agreement, letter of appointment, the Field Learning Plan, the end of the term evaluation,

• failure to receive a completed application for field instructor,

• failure of the Faculty Liaison, Field Office, Field Instructor to respond to phone calls within a reasonable time; no faculty contact and/or visitation during each term of field placement,

• absence of a completed field learning plan and end of term evaluation; inadequate or missing learning tasks to address objectives, competencies and practice behaviors; a significant amount of unsatisfactory ratings on the final evaluation,

• difficulty of the student in talking to and/or working with the field instructor,

• difficulty of the student in "engaging" in the work and with the staff of the field placement,

• difficulty of the student in having an open attitude towards learning; lack of demonstrable evidence that the student is learning or adequately moving toward task completion,
• tardiness, unexcused or frequent absences of the student, inability to work within agency policies and procedures,

  - Student wishing to terminate a field placement for no educational reason

• personal problems of student or field instructor that negatively impact on the field instruction effort,

• agency or organizational changes or stresses that negatively effect the field instructor's ability to met the expectations of the field instruction effort.

2. Problem-solving steps should follow the commonly accepted model(s) that students are taught as a basic intervention method.

a. Problem identification by student or field instructor

b. Discussion of the problem, issue, or concern by those immediately involved.

  1) The issue is resolved, or
  2) A plan to address the problem is agreed upon and implemented, or
  3) There appears to be no workable solution.

c. If no workable solution is found, the faculty liaison is involved. The faculty liaison may "coach" the student, or the field instructor, or both and suggest that they meet again.

d. If there is still no workable solution, the faculty liaison schedules a meeting with the student and field instructor. The Program Director is notified.

e. The faculty liaison facilitates the meeting with the field instructor and the student. This is usually held at the field site.

f. The faculty liaison notifies the Program Chair and the Director of Field Education if a solution cannot be facilitated; this notification should be in writing. These individuals then engage in problem-solving with the faculty liaison.

g. If no solution is agreed upon, a decision to terminate the field placement may be recommended. **Termination of a field placement cannot occur unless the problem-solving process has been fully utilized.** Any recommended termination must follow the School's Guidelines for Withdrawal and Termination of Field Placement.

h. Agreed upon plans to address the problem(s), issues(s), or concern(s), should be evaluated for effectiveness at the appropriate level of decision-making. If such plans fall short of resolving problems issues, or concerns, when implemented, the above problem-solving steps are reactivated.

August 2017