

## DESIGN OF FIELD PRACTICUM SEQUENCE

### A. FOUNDATION YEAR

#### 1. MSSW 684 and 674 & MSSW 685 and 675: Field Practica and Seminars

In the first or foundation year, students spend a total of fifteen hours per week in the field for fifteen weeks each semester, fall and spring, for a total of 450 hours. Within the overall framework of generalist practice, field practicum during the foundation year focuses on direct service with individuals, families, small groups, and communities. Direct service with individuals and families involves assessment and intervention planning, case management, and counseling. Students are expected to lead, or co-lead, one or more groups, in which, when possible, they will have had a direct role in planning and organizing. The direct service component requires students to: (a) obtain experience with individuals and families conducting psychosocial assessments (see outline in Appendix B) and counseling, (b) facilitate interagency collaboration and referral on behalf of clients, and (c) obtain experience in leading or co-leading a wide range of groups (counseling, self-help, education, and support).

Community work involves a range of activities, including, where possible, opportunities to apply group skills to plan and conduct community-oriented meetings, conduct assessments, and work to promote the empowerment of communities (see Foundation Year Field Experience Components for details). The foundation year practicum helps students integrate an understanding of individuals and families within the context of particular communities, as well as the force communities can exert in making changes on their own behalf. Students are required to design and implement a community project where they apply and expand their conceptual understanding of community practice. The community may be the community of clients, potential clients, providers, the geographic community, or other constituent community. The project should achieve one or more of the following results: (1) enhance the agency's understanding of the community it serves through a process that involves the community, (2) enables the community to obtain information or resources it wants or needs, or (3) supports the community's capacity to act effectively on its own behalf.

In addition to the hours and experiences at the field site, the field practicum in the first year includes four additional components, which collectively comprise the Field Seminars overall: 1. A one-hour field information discussion session; 2. the Faculty Advisor's Fall and Spring Site Visits; 3. Fall and Spring Advising Days; and 4. Field Seminars in fall and spring, conducted by faculty advisors, which may occur in person or online or some combination of the two, at the faculty advisor's discretion. The components provide opportunities where students engage with faculty and student colleagues in exploration of social work practice issues. Using the field experience as the basis for discussion, the components are devoted to faculty and peer support, idea sharing, and problem solving. An emphasis is placed on the value of process recordings as tools to help students learn elements of the helping process and to evaluate their own practice consistent with an "effective use of self."

On average, a minimum of 20% of field hours should be devoted to group work experiences involving colleagues and to the community component of the first placement. Up to 80% of field hours may be devoted to direct practice including client-oriented group work. It is expected that the actual amount of time per week used for each area will vary over the course of the placement and from agency to agency, depending on the readiness and exposure of the student to various experiences and the primary intervention strategies used by the agency.

In addition to the field seminars (674 and 675), students enrolled in MSSW 684 and 685 must take, concurrently, and sequentially, MSSW 631: Practice 1 – Practice with Individuals and Families, and MSSW 632: Practice 2 - Group Work. These foundation year, three-credit practice courses provide the theoretical knowledge and the skills to undergird the foundation year practicum experience with a framework appropriate to achieving the field education learning competencies. Students are also provided with opportunities to develop assessment and policy and program development skills in Human Behavior in the Social Environment 1 and 2, Social Welfare Policy and Services 1 and 2, and Social Work Research 1 and 2.

## **2. Council on Social Work Education and School of Social Work Foundation Year Competencies**

**Springfield College Mission: Spirit, Mind, Body**

**College Mission Emphasis: Helping Professions and Service to Humanity**

**School of Social Work Mission Emphases: Meeting universal human needs, mutually beneficial interaction between individuals and societal systems at all levels, economic and social justice, dignity and human rights.**

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) has established standards for social work education. This course reflects the foundation year curriculum content described in the CSWE's 2008 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS). CSWE competencies are noted on field syllabi as EPAS. For additional reference, please see the *Student Handbook*.

**Students will . . .**

### **1. Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.**

#### **Practice behaviors associated with this competency:**

- Advocating for client access to the services of social work
- Practicing personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development
- Attending to professional roles and boundaries
- Demonstrating professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication
- Engaging in career-long learning; and
- Using supervision and consultation.  
(Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards [EPAS] 2.1.1)

### **2. Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice. Practice behaviors associated with this competency:**

- Adhering to the standards of one's license or credentials
- Recognizing and managing personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice

- Making ethical decisions by applying standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics (1999) and, as applicable, of the International Federation of Social Workers/ International Association of School of Social Work Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Principles (2004)
- Tolerating ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts
- Applying strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions. (EPAS 2.1.2)

### **3. Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.**

#### **Practice behaviors associated with this competency:**

- Distinguishing, appraising and integrating multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge and practice wisdom
- Analyzing models of assessment, prevention, intervention and evaluation
- Demonstrating effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities and colleagues. (EPAS 2.1.3)

### **4. Engage diversity and difference in practice. Practice behaviors associated with this competency:**

- Recognizing the extent to which a culture's structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege or power
- Gaining sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influences of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups
- Recognizing and communicating their understanding of the importance of differences in shaping life experiences
- Viewing themselves as a learner and recognizing clients as the experts (EPAS 2.1.4)

### **5. Promote human rights and social and economic justice. Practice behaviors associated with this competency:**

- Understanding the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination
- Advocating for human rights and social and economic justice
- Engaging in practices that advance social and economic justice. (EPAS 2.1.5)

### **6. Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research. Practice behaviors associated with this competency:**

- Using practice experience to inform scientific inquiry
- Using research evidence to inform practice (EPAS 2.1.6)

### **7. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment. Practice behaviors associated with this competency:**

- Using conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention and evaluation
- Critiquing and applying knowledge to understand person and environment. (EPAS 2.1.7)

### **8. Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services. Practice behaviors associated with this competency:**

- Analyzing, formulating and advocating for policies that advance social well-being
- Collaborating with colleagues and clients for effective policy action.  
(EPAS 2.1.8)

**9. Respond to contexts that shape practice. Practice behaviors associated with this competency:**

- Continually discovering, appraising and attending to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services
- Providing leadership in promoting sustainable changes in service delivery and practice to improve the quality of social services  
(EPAS 2.1.9)

**10. Engage, assess, intervene and evaluate individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Practice behaviors associated with this competency:**

- Engagement
  - Substantively and affectively preparing for engagement with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities
  - Using empathy and other interpersonal skills
  - Involving the client in goal-setting, focus of work and desired outcomes
- Assessment
  - Collecting, organizing, and interpreting client data
  - Assessing client strengths and limitations
  - Developing mutually agreed on intervention goals and objectives
  - Selecting appropriate intervention strategies
- Intervention
  - Initiating actions to achieve client and/or organizational goals and resolve problems
  - Implementing prevention interventions that enhance client capacities
  - Negotiating, mediating, and advocating for clients
  - Facilitating transitions and endings
- Evaluation
  - Critically analyzing, monitoring, and evaluating interventions.  
(EPAS 2.1.10)

## **MORE INFORMATION ON THE COMMUNITY WORK/PROJECT COMPONENT**

Questions may arise about what constitutes a satisfactory community work experience or project. The following section is meant to address these questions.

### **FOUNDATION FIELD EXPECTATIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION**

**Community Work/Project Objective:** The student articulates and addresses the contextual and interactive role of community for clients, colleagues, and/or the placement agency.

**Conditions for Learning/Means of Assessment:** Students will have the opportunity to engage in community work or a project that promotes increased understanding of an area of practice, clients' needs, and/or community needs. The community work experience or project may also link to the Group Work Objective 2 through engagement/participation in collegial/administrative group(s).

**Expectations for Completion:** The student articulates and addresses the contextual and interactive role of community for clients, colleagues, and the placement agency as evidenced by acting in a leadership role in a community project that:

1. promotes increased understanding of an area of practice, clients' needs, and/or community needs,
2. engages members of an identified community,
3. utilizes collegial/administrative group work skills to realize its goals (may be linked to group work objective).

## EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY PROJECTS

SW intern worked with agency staff, consumers, representatives of other agencies, and the media to develop and implement an "anti-stigma" campaign related to the difficulties experienced by community residents with psychiatric disorders. The goals were to organize a collaborative effort that would make the larger community aware of the stereotypes of those with mental illness, with attention to the rejection, isolation, and other harm they often cause.

SW intern took a leadership role in an advocacy campaign on early childhood education/intervention issues to educate the public and legislators. As part of a statewide organizing effort for "Early Childhood Legislation Day," the intern worked with parents served by the field agency to organize local planning and action prior to the day of the event as well as participation at the state capitol during the event. The intern provided information and training to the parent participants and developed logistical supports (materials, transportation, etc.).

SW intern worked with service providers in county to create a map of services available to women released from the local Correctional Center with a clear protocol for making the necessary linkages. Service gaps were also identified.

SW intern developed a directory of local services for Latino residents (in Spanish) with essential information needed to access the services.

SW intern worked with the administrators and students in a university community to assess the need for a stress management program, and then designed and implemented the program in collaboration with community members.

## **B. CONCENTRATION YEAR**

### **1. MSSW 686 and 676 & MSSW 687 and 677: Field Practica and Seminars**

In the second or concentration year, students are in field practicum 20 hours per week for the 15 weeks of each semester, fall and spring, for a total of 600 hours. Within the overall framework of advanced generalist practice, the field practicum during the concentration year focuses on direct service with individuals, families, and groups at a more advanced level. In the second year students also study administration. Practica provide opportunities for students to focus on

aspects of agency management, with an emphasis on how leadership and administration impact on direct service and communities. Students build upon the initial direct practice skills studied and developed during the foundation year and incorporate concepts of community work (e.g., assessments and effective meetings) as they focus on the skills of advanced practice, administration, and management.

Direct service in the concentration year builds on the first year foundation experience. Students are required to engage in: (a) direct service experiences with more diverse client populations requiring multilevel interventions including counseling and advocacy; (b) more challenging relationship building; (c) group developmental and leadership experiences; (d) a more sophisticated use of self in the helping process, with advanced skill in relating to clients who are different from the student in race, background, personality, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status; and (e) activities requiring movement from larger community systems interventions to agency level interventions to direct service interventions, as needed, with increased comfort levels and flexibility.

Administration within the advanced generalist perspective incorporates the knowledge acquired as a direct practitioner and community worker in order to manage agencies in a way that contributes to the well-being of both clients and communities. Students are expected to develop and lead an administrative project that will enable them: (1) to work with agency administrators, (2) to get an inside perspective at how an organization functions, and (3) to contribute to the development of new information, policies, resources, or programs within the organization. In carrying out this project, students should apply and expand their conceptual knowledge of administration and organizational development.

Students increase their hours in the field during the concentration year in order to have greater opportunity to integrate the skill sets they have learned during both years of course work and practicum. The field practicum in the second year also includes an additional four components, which collectively comprise the Field Seminars overall: 1. A one-hour field information discussion session; 2. the Faculty Advisor's Fall and Spring Site Visits; 3. Fall and Spring Advising Days; and 4. Field Seminars in fall and spring, conducted by faculty advisors, which may occur in person or online or some combination of the two, at the faculty advisors discretion. These components also provide an opportunity for students to engage with faculty and student colleagues to explore contemporary social work practice issues and, specifically, student experiences at the placement site. Faculty and peer support, idea sharing, and problem solving continue to be the emphases.

On average, a minimum of 20% of field hours should be devoted to group work experiences with colleagues and to the administrative component of the placement. Up to 80% of field hours may be devoted to direct service with clients, including client-oriented group work. It is expected that the actual amount of time per week used for each area will vary over the course of the placement and will be based on the student's abilities and service needs of the organization.

Students in the second year of field practicum must concurrently, and sequentially, enroll in: MSSW 633: Practice 3 - Advanced Generalist Practice; and MSSW 634: Practice 4 - Advanced Generalist Practice, Supervision and Administration.

## 2. Council on Social Work Education and School of Social Work Concentration Year Competencies

### Springfield College Mission: Spirit, Mind, Body

**College Mission Emphasis: Helping Professions and Service to Humanity**

**School of Social Work Mission Emphases: Meeting universal human needs, mutually beneficial interaction between individuals and societal systems at all levels, economic and social justice, dignity and human rights.**

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) has established standards for social work education. This course reflects the concentration year curriculum content described in the CSWE's 2008 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS). The Springfield College School of Social Work has developed concentration year practice behaviors associated with each competency that reflect the Advanced Generalist orientation of the school's curriculum. CSWE competencies are noted on field syllabi as EPAS. For additional reference, please see the *Student Handbook*.

### Students will ...

1. **Identify with the social work profession and behave professionally. Practice behaviors associated with this competency:**
  - Adhering to professional roles and boundaries
  - Articulating the mission of social work to multiple constituencies
  - Modeling professional demeanor in behavior and communications
  - Employing (modeling) conscious use of self, self-reflection, self-monitoring, and self-correction in practice  
(Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards [EPAS] 2.1.1)
  
2. **Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice. Practice behaviors associated with this competency:**
  - Conducting oneself ethically and engaging in ethical decision-making using different approaches and strategies, e.g. moral reasoning, cultural perspective, professionalism in research and practice.
  - Articulating and advocating social work values and ethics among interdisciplinary situations and settings.
  - Applying appropriate social work values to resolve ethical issues.  
(EPAS 2.1.2)
  
3. **Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments. Practice behaviors associated with this competency:**
  - Critically evaluating various strategies for assessment and intervention.
  - Differentially selecting and implementing strategies for assessment and intervention.
  - Analyzing and communicating professional judgments, reasoning, and process in practice.
  - Producing practice-ready presentations and documents that could include case presentations, journal articles, grant applications, legislative brief/summary(ies).
  - Effectively communicating challenges to existing paradigms.  
(EPAS 2.1.3)

- 4. Engage diversity and difference in practice. Practice behaviors associated with this competency:**
  - Transforming one's behavior in response to a recognition of one's biases based in difference and culture.
  - Recognizing and describing the impact of culture and diversity on one's personal and professional behavior.
  - Modifying and adapting mainstream interventions to meet needs of diverse populations and that challenge oppression.
  - Applying an understanding of privilege and power within an anti-oppressive practice.
  - Actively promotes opportunities for diverse perspectives and participation of diverse constituents. (EPAS 2.1.4)
  
- 5. Promote human rights and social justice. Practice behaviors associated with this competency:**
  - Embracing the obligation to advance human rights and fostering social and economic justice.
  - Incorporating an understanding of regional and global interconnections of oppression and applying this understanding to social work practice.
  - Engaging in practices that advance social and economic justice.
  - Engaging in community collaborations that foster social and economic justice and social change.
  - Taking action to redress mechanism of oppression and discrimination. (EPAS 2.1.5)
  
- 6. Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research. Practice behaviors associated with this competency:**
  - Using evidence-based research findings to improve practice.
  - Evaluating social policies and programs.
  - Integrating qualitative and quantitative research in all aspects of advanced generalist practice.
  - Working collaboratively across disciplines to assess intervention effectiveness, ways to engage in practice evaluation, and opportunities to build cross-discipline research approaches. (EPAS 2.1.6)
  
- 7. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment. Practice behaviors associated with this competency:**
  - Demonstrating knowledge of a wide range of human behavior theories and conceptual frameworks into practice at all levels.
  - Translating empirically-supported human behavior theories and conceptual frameworks into practice at all levels.
  - Critically evaluating human behavior theories and conceptual frameworks when applied to cultural groups and varied population subgroups.
  - Examining the impact of environments on social work practice. (EPAS 2.1.7)
  
- 8. Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services. Practice behaviors associated with this competency:**
  - Articulating the impact of policies on service delivery.
  - Developing and promoting agency policies and professional behavior that affect change.
  - Identifying gaps in policies at varied levels, e.g., agency policies, public policies, regulations. (EPAS 2.1.8)

**9. Respond to and shape an ever-changing professional context. Practice behaviors associated with this competency:**

- Building necessary coalitions in response to contextual changes.
- Taking leadership in social, organizational, and community change activities that create humane and just societies.
- Building sustainable strategies for communities and social programs.  
(EPAS 2.19)

**10. Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Practice behaviors associated with this competency:**

- Demonstrating practice autonomy in activities that may include the following behaviors
  - Using empathy and other interpersonal skills
  - Implementing a mutually agreed upon focus of work and desired outcome
  - Collecting, organizing, and interpreting client data
  - Developing mutually agreed upon intervention goals and objectives
  - Selecting appropriate intervention strategies
  - Implementing prevention interventions that enhance client capacities
  - Assisting clients to resolve problems
  - Negotiating, mediating, and advocating for client systems
- Assessing, intervening, and evaluating complex problems with systems of all sizes and types.
- Demonstrating one's ability to move a client system through the practice intervention process.
- Identifying the range of legalities and/or legal risks that may exist for a client or client system that may be considering accessing social services.
- Synthesizing and applying a broad range of interdisciplinary knowledge and skills consistent with current evidence informed practice.  
(EPAS 2.1.10)

## **MORE INFORMATION ON THE ADMINISTRATIVE/ORGANIZATIONAL EXPERIENCE/ PROJECT COMPONENT**

Questions may arise about what constitutes a satisfactory administrative/organizational experience or project. The following section is meant to address these questions.

### CONCENTRATION FIELD EXPECTATIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION

**Community Work/Project Objective:** The student demonstrates an understanding of and ability to function at an advanced generalist level in agency, organizational and larger service systems by addressing an organizational administrative need that will enhance the functioning of the host agency and services to clients.

**Conditions for Learning/Means of Assessment:** Student will have the opportunity to address an organizational administrative need that enhances the functioning of the host agency and services to clients.

In recognition of the nature of agency services and the individual learning needs of the student, this project can be conducted and accomplished over the course of two semesters. (See End of Semester Evaluations, found in the Student's Field Practicum Workbook, for detailed outcome expectations.)

**Expectations for Completion:** The student demonstrates effective understanding of and ability to function at an advanced generalist level in agency, organizational, and larger service systems through addressing an organizational administrative need that will enhance the functioning of the host agency and services to clients, as evidenced by:

1. An understanding of the organization of the host agency.
2. An understanding of the position of the host agency in the larger social service system.
3. Negotiating the subsystems of the host agency and the larger social service system to bring about effective programs and services.
4. Participating in administrative and team groups as an effective contributor and group member, also using the contributions of others.
5. Recording administrative meetings and developing reports that reflect accurate group process and progress toward goals.
6. Applying theories of administration and supervision to selected agency functions (possibilities include program planning and education, staff development, client outcomes, and public outreach, among others relevant to the agency).
7. Promoting effective and humane operations in social work organizations and larger delivery systems for both clients and colleagues through effective use of self.
8. Completion of process recordings presented to supervisor weekly using individual, family, group or administrative meeting formats found in Field Manual Appendices.
9. Production of and presentation to faculty advisor a minimum of two process recordings per semester that illustrate development of advanced generalist practice skills, as defined above.

## EXAMPLES OF ADMINISTRATIVE/ORGANIZATIONAL PROJECTS

SW intern supervised six undergraduate students from an area college who were working on an art project at a correctional facility. The students came weekly and worked with a group of 10-15 inmates. The intern's responsibility was to supervise the students educationally, with regard to their leadership skills and interaction with the group, and administratively, with regard to compliance with the many institutional regulations and guidelines.

SW intern led a process to develop a new agency policy for the solicitation of funds from the community and their distribution among agency programs. The project involved convening a committee of senior agency administrators and program managers to work together to develop the new policy. The intern was responsible for organizing meetings, creating agendas, and facilitating the group's process.

At a family service agency, a SW intern led a process working with agency leaders to submit grant proposals to secure funds for creating three murals to "dress-up" new office/program space in an old warehouse. Two thousand dollars were received through three small grants to provide for supplies and the guidance of a local artist who worked with families and staff to construct the murals.

In an outpatient counseling center, two SW interns reviewed agency intake procedures and solicited staff input regarding problems and suggestions. They then designed new intake procedures which were adopted by the agency. This change helped to shorten the waiting time for newly referred clients.

At a child and family agency, an intern worked with agency and school personnel to develop a grant proposal for an after-school group services program. The intern organized the process, took responsibility for the research and writing, and interfaced with the necessary community agencies.

## **C. INTEGRATION OF FIELD PRACTICUM WITH THE ACADEMIC CURRICULUM**

Field practicum experiences are integrated into the foundation and concentration year curriculum in a variety of ways. In the principal written assignment for MSSW 631: Social Work Practice 1, students draw directly on materials from an individual or family intervention from their practicum. MSSW 631 also requires a comprehensive psychosocial assessment for an individual client. MSSW 632: Social Work Practice 2, requires oral and written assignments that draw on group work in the field practicum, and may include analysis of the student's Community Project. In both foundation level practice courses, students maintain reflective journals related to learning in the classroom, readings, and from the field practicum. In the concentration year practice courses, MSSW 633: Social Work Practice 3 and MSSW 634: Social Work Practice 4, written and oral assignments require students to integrate learning from courses and from field practice experiences. For example, in MSSW 633 students identify a client from their field agencies and present a model interdisciplinary case conference that demonstrates a multi-systemic approach to assessment and intervention. In each of the four courses in the Practice sequence, role-plays and videotaped interviews may provide opportunities for integration of field and classroom learning.

The second assignment in MSSW 601: Human Behavior in the Social Environment 1 requires students to study a cultural or ethnic group. Many students choose to draw upon practicum cases to complete this assignment. MSSW 602: Human Behavior in the Social Environment 2 includes an assignment requiring students to explore connections between organizational structure and agencies' responses to social needs; examples are drawn from students' field experiences. The Policy Sequence (MSSW 611, 612, 613) requires students to analyze policy using both rational and persuasion models, with an emphasis on complex social and political processes, culminating in a social action project that emerges directly or indirectly from the field experiences. Finally, in MSSW 622 (Research 2: Social Work Research and Evaluation), MSSW 624 (Research 2 Alternate: Program Evaluation), and MSSW 623 (Research 3: Qualitative Research), students conduct real-life inquiries using situations or cases that may be derived from field experiences.

**D. ACADEMIC COURSE INTEGRATION WITH THE FIELD PRACTICUM**

The integration of course work from all sequences into the field practicum is achieved through course assignments. MSSW 641 (Practice 1) provides the framework for students' ability to conduct psychosocial assessments and understand the elements of the helping process. MSSW 642 (Practice 2) provides the theoretical rationale for developing, implementing, and leading a wide range of groups. This course includes an assignment that requires attention to agency purpose and goals and/or community needs assessments in initiating groups.

The Human Behavior in the Social Environment (HBSE) sequence provides a range of bio-psychosocial theories of development applicable to the many settings in which students are learning and practicing. Practice 3 applies theories of intervention to a variety of vulnerable populations, many of which are represented among the clients being served within practica. In addition, HBSE 2 and Practice 4 provide the theoretical and practice skills necessary for understanding, administering and changing human service organizations.

The Policy Sequence challenges students to reflect upon all their agency based experiences within the context of larger legislative mandates, and to intervene, when appropriate, in effecting change through policy analysis, development, and implementation.

Finally, the Research courses provide the foundation for students to critically examine and evaluate their work with clients, communities, and programs. Research 2, with its focus on single subject design, enables students to evaluate practice in a systematic way in keeping with the current managed care focus on demonstrating outcomes. The alternative course to Research 2, Program Evaluation, is directly applicable to real-world agency functioning, outcomes, and client functioning and uses community agencies as the basis for course projects.