Training Field Instructors: An Education Module for Field Instructors and Educators

URL: www.profdevjournal.org   **Email: www.profdevjournal.org/contact**

Training Field Instructors: An Education Module for Field Instructors and Educators

Glenda F. Lester Short, PhD, LCSW, Wanda Wahanee Priddy, PhD, ASCW, Marja-Leena McChesney, PhD, Vicki Murdock, Ph., Jim Ward, MSW

Introduction and Rationale

Social work field education has long been valued as a teaching tool because it provides students with a "learning through practice" experience and engages professional social workers as teachers (Bogo & Vayda, 1987; Raschick, Maypole, & Day, 1998). Bachelor's and Master's level programs (BSW and MSW) establish effective guidelines and policies for field practicum experiences that fulfill the Council on Social Work Education's (CSWE) mission for field education. Since field education is an integral part of social work curriculum, it is vital that field instructors, students, and program faculty reinforce classroom learning by putting it into practice. CSWE promotes the field education experience through its Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS), requiring field instruction training, orientation, and dialoging with agencies and field instructors (EPAS, 2.1.5, CSWE, 2001).

An effective field practicum experience builds on classroom learning and prepares students as social workers who will function successfully and responsibly. Mair (1981) suggests that field instructors are teachers, much like classroom teachers, who are challenged to teach rather than to supervise. Field education calls for individualized instruction and mentoring tasks for which field instructors must be prepared. Keefe and Jenkins (2000) suggest that personalized instruction depends on teacher-student interaction, as well as methodology, indicating the need to learn about teacher-student dynamics in field instruction. In their definition of personalized instruction, these researchers suggest that it:

"(a) focuses specifically on the needs, talents, learning style, interests, and academic background of each learner, and (b) challenges each learner to grow and advance from where he or she is at a given point in time to a point beyond" (Keefe and Jenkins, 2000, p. 97)

Effective field instructors learn how to draw upon students' individual talents, learning styles, interests, and academic backgrounds to teach them effectively in a field setting.

To ensure quality field experiences for students, social work academic programs are mandated by CSWE to train field instructors for their unique role as teachers. However, from the author's collective experiences, field instructors do not always have sufficient models, resources, or evaluation practices to meet these needs. It is the opinion of the authors that to large extent field instructors across the county have relied on their intuitive abilities to function as a field instructor. It is noted that only a few schools have a well-defined and articulated training program for their field instructors. The vast majority of schools appear to be unable to develop and implement an on-going training program. It also appears that there is an overall minimalist approach to training and preparation of field instructors who take on the ever-increasing responsibility of preparing new professionals for practice.

With these assumptions, the authors began organizing an effort in 1993 to embark on a process of gaining a greater understanding of the struggles a field instructor experiences when working with social work students. Small groups of field instructors in groups of 10 to 15 were brought

Glenda F. Lester Short, PhD, LCSW is Assistant Professor, School of Social Work, Southwest Missouri State University

Wanda Wahanee Priddy, PhD, ASCW is Assistant Professor, School of Social Work, Oklahoma University

Marja-Leena McChesney, PhD is Associate Professor, School of Social Work, Walla Walla College

Vicki Murdock, PhD is Assistant Professor, School of Social Work, University of Wyoming

Jim Ward, MSW is Field Director, College of Social Work, University of South Carolina

Contact Information: Glenda F. Lester Short, PhD, LCSW, Assistant Professor, School of Social Work, Southwest Missouri State University, 901 South National Avenue, Springfield, MO 65804. Phone: 417-836-6067, Email: gfs464f@smsu.edu

to the college to discuss their roles as field instructors. The main question that was asked was how the college could assist in developing their knowledge and skills to increase their competence as mentors for students. Field instructors came from a three-state area to provide feedback on the question. There were 165 participants over a period of two months in 12 sessions. These sessions were essentially "brainstorming" and a free association of ideas. There was no pre-designed structure for discussion. All of the ideas recorded in notes from the twelve feedback sessions were organized and categorized within four domains. The four domains ultimately resulted in the focus for four seminars: 1) Teaching and Learning in Field; 2) Supervision in Field; 3) Problems and Legal Issues in Field; and 4) Integration of Theory and Practice.

The first seminar was developed and implemented over a two-year period and presented to 350 field instructors with an on-going evaluation process in place. During the third year, the feedback that field instructors had given in their evaluation of the first seminar was used to develop the second seminar. The final two seminars were developed from evaluative information provided by participants using modules one and two. Also, ongoing focus groups were instrumental in the development of module four.

This article describes the training module for field instructors on the topic of learning and teaching in field education and a practical approach to assessing learning and teaching styles. This article also discusses the evaluation process and the effectiveness of this particular training.

Purpose of the Training

The overall goal of the training is to provide field instructors with models, resources, and evaluation practices that give them the tools needed to teach effectively in the field setting. The training module we are describing presents historical and current literature that explains teaching and learning in field education as well as research regarding field education.

To summarize, this field module has an exten-sive history of development, implementation, evaluation, and revision. Currently, it is a part of the field education curriculum for training field instructors at an accredited college of social work. This training module, the first in a series of four seminars, has been used extensively to orient and train new as well as experienced social workers as field instructors. Through this intensive training, social workers acquire practical applications for learning theories and styles that they can use to teach or supervise students during field practicum.

Target Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the training program, professional social workers will be able to teach and supervise students in a field practicum. By developing their understanding of learning and teaching processes, participants will be able to:
- Employ adult learning, experiential learning, humanistic and constructivist theories.
- Distinguish between andragogy (student-centered) and pedagogy (teacher-centered) learning models.
- Use various styles of learning and teaching as they relate to field experiences,
- Adapt Bloom's Taxonomy and its application to field practicum experiences
- Apply teaching and learning clusters as appropriate to field instruction.

Structure of Overall Training

This module is given in three hour segments and begins with the introductions of all attendees. Following the introductions which take about 20 minutes, a PowerPoint presentation of 40 minutes is used to explain the concepts of learning, teaching, and teaching clusters highlighting the literature review of the module. A discussion and answer period is completed after the literature review and takes about thirty minutes. Participants are then given the learning styles instruments and the teaching style instruments. After completion of the instruments, a discussion is completed. During this discussion, the field instructors give examples of their practice and how their learning and teaching

styles impacts students they have taught in field. This exercise takes the rest of the session time.

This training module helps field instructors discover factors that influence student learning and become skilled at "best practice" teaching methods for teaching in the field. Shulman (1994) proposes three requirements for effective learning: to be invested in the learning, to be actively involved in the learning, and to have structured opportunities for applying the information learned. Further, Shulman (1994) asserts that there will be obstacles that create opportunities for learning that the instructor will need to pay attention to. Each of these aspects of the training is first examined from a review of relevant literature, which an effective trainer needs be aware of.

Literature Review

The theoretical base that supports the content for the training module is interdisciplinary; it integrates research in social work, education, and psychology. Schneck, Grossman, and Glassman (1990) assert that in field education the roles assumed by field instructors, students, agency staff, and faculty are informed by adult learning theory, humanistic education, and experiential learning. In particular, constructivist theory and how it informs adult learning theory is included as newer information that applies to field education. The first section focuses on theoretical concepts. Literature on learning and teaching theories, teaching and learning styles, and models for practice are reviewed as they apply to social work field instruction.

Theoretical Concepts. Field instruction is an interactive process in which the field instructor teaches the student by engaging in a series of practice issues and experiences (Bogo & Vayda, 1987). Field instructors are responsible for 1) developing learning experiences, 2) teaching or supervising, 3) setting and monitoring assignments, 4) evaluating student performance, and 5) evaluating the overall effectiveness of the field instruction, and the agency (Bogo & Vayda, 1987). Lowry (1983) asserts that because field education involves adult learners, adult learning theory is useful for creating

the learning-teaching relationship. Going a step further, Quam (1998) posits that adult learners' practical life experiences contribute to the direction and focus of their learning. She describes adult learning as a process of systematically accumulating a set of ideas and principles, stimulating the student to think about the "why" behind the practice.

Several researchers (Brookfield, 1986 1990; Bruner, 1960, 1961, 1986; Erickson, 1950, 1959,1964, 1968; Iscoe & Stevenson, 1960; White, 1959; Getzels & Jackson, 1962; Galbraith, 1990; Long, 1990) have found that, as an individual matures from adolescence to adulthood, development is accompanied by 1) a readiness to learn, 2) an ability to apply learning experiences, 3) an ability to organize learning around life problems, and 4) a desire to be self directed. Knowles (1972, 1978) addresses the learning and readiness concept by differentiating andragogy (adult learning) from pedagogy (the learning and teaching of adolescents). Knowles (1978) cites a body of supportive research (White, 1959; Bruner, 1961; Erickson, 1950, 1959, 1964; Getzel & Jackson, 1962; Bower & Hollister, 1967; Iscoe & Stevenson, 1960) revealing that, as individuals mature, they are more able to learn in a self-directed fashion. In short, andragogical or student centered principles are useful guidelines to learning in field education. For example, Bogo (1981), states that student and instructor will have a more successful learning-teaching relationship when andragogical principles are employed. Related to the concept of androgogy, adult learning theory emphasizes that learning is stimulated by a problem that is perceived as relevant and needs to be solved (Quam, 1998). As discussed by Bogo & Vayda (1987), social work field instruction involves a series of practice issues that need solving. Further, Bogo (1981) finds that an atmosphere of collegiality, informality, mutual respect, and collaboration is important to adult learners in their development of problem-solving abilities.

From a humanistic perspective, psychologists also have advanced adult learning theory signifi-

cantly. Carl Rogers (1951) describes the "fully functioning person" and Abraham Maslow offers the "self actualizing person" (Knowles, 1978). Roger's (1951) client-centered therapy parallels his concern for student-centered teaching which he describes as 1) supportive of learning as an internal process, 2) controlled by the learner, and 3) engaging the learner's whole being in interactions with his or her environment as perceived by the individual learner. In the humanistic tradition, learning is a natural and life-long process.

During field education and field practicum experiences, students master professional skills by practicing in a social work environment (Bogo, 1993; Bogo & Vayda, 1987). The concept of constructivism is particularly useful for understanding this aspect of field education (Walzawick, 1990; McPhee and Bronstein, 2002). Piaget (1952), for example, suggested that students construct their own knowledge and perform at their best when the conditions are created for optimal learning. Constructivist theory also suggests that students create their own realities and link them to past experiences (Walzawick, 1990), which is highly relevant for the focus of field instructors on how learners learn to better teach students in the field. Constructivist theory also is useful for applying knowledge about adult learners and how they learn. Constructivist theory can be used to explain how adult learners use previously acquired knowledge, beliefs, skills, and values to develop new abilities and to create a reality unique to their understanding. Adult learners build new knowledge by connecting and integrating it with past learning. By integrating learning theory with experience in practice settings, field instructors are more able to recognize and create environments in which learning is most likely to occur (Quam, 1998).

Experiential Learning and Kolb's Influence on Field Education. According to Raschick, et al (1998), Kolb's model fits well for use with field practicums because it optimizes the field instructor-student relationship in the learning process. Kolb (1984) posited that students have preferred ways to learn

and solve problems. His experiential learning theory and subsequent learning styles research emphasize a four-stage learning cycle: 1) concrete – learning through experience; 2) reflective observation – learning through examining; 3) abstract conceptualization – learning through explaining; and, 4) active experimentation – learning through applying. Kolb (1984) research suggests that students can experience the learning cycle sequentially, from the concrete to the abstract, however the learning experience can begin at any stage in the process. Social work educators often view field education as experiential learning that promotes critical thinking and problem solving (Bogo, 1981; Bogo & Vayda, 1987).

Bogo and Vayda (1987) adapted Kolb's research results while developing the Integration of Theory and Practice, or the I.T.P. Loop. Field instructors use the I.T.P. model to show the process of learning in a field setting. The process begins by retrieval of a particular practice experience, followed by reflection on the experience. In reflecting on the practice experience, the social worker can consider the effectiveness of the experience and contemplate the impact on the client, others within the system, and themselves. In this part of the process, the social worker also weighs social work values and ethics.

The next step is to link professional knowledge to the reflection process. Bogo and Vayda (1987) suggest that connecting with the knowledge base is more important than the knowledge selected. During the third step, the professional response phase, the social worker makes intervention choices, and then reflects upon them. The looping process continues until the social worker reviews several interventions. The most appropriate intervention is then chosen and the entire experience is reviewed. This integration of theory and practice is particularly effective in field instruction.

Kolb's theoretical ideas can be connected to Bloom's (1956) taxonomy of educational objectives in the cognitive domain, which includes six levels, Bloom organized these levels from simple recall

(lowest level of mental processes) to increasingly more complex and abstract thinking (higher-order mental processes.) In the Bloom Taxonomy, higher-order thinking builds on lower levels of mental processes and each area is important in the acquisition of knowledge and skills. The six levels of cognitive functions, arranged in a hierarchy, are 1) knowledge, 2) comprehension, 3) application, 4) analysis, 5) synthesis, and 6) evaluation (Bloom, 1956). All six areas of Bloom's Taxonomy are active in field education and can draw on classroom learning to substantiate learning in field practicums.

Field Instructors and Teaching Style. There is little argument that field instructors are teachers in the field practicum, since they teach practice skills to students. According to Sheafor and Jenkins (1982), the field instructor is an unpaid faculty member who commits considerable time to teaching students. Maier (1981) argues that, other than locality, there is little difference in field and classroom teaching and explains that the field becomes the classroom or life laboratory where the student learns and the field instructor teaches.

Despite general agreement that field instructors are teachers, teaching styles are rarely addressed in field education literature. Bogo and Vayda (1987) categorize field instructors' teaching styles in three distinct groups. They suggest that one group takes a directive approach in which they tell the students step by step what needs to be done. A second group approaches the teaching of students from a mutual goal-setting perspective in which the student and field instructor have ongoing negotiations regarding learning situations. Instructors in a third group tend to act as consultants for students; they guide the learning goals and plan learning experiences.

Various sources in the educational literature suggest that teaching style is linked to the manner in which instructors use teaching methods and strategies for student learning (Axelrod, 1980; Conti, 1990; Travis, 1995). Grasha (1990, 1994, 1996) defines high quality teaching as creating effective learning opportunities for students and contends that effective teachers use various creative

techniques and teaching methodologies that all contribute to student learning. The goal of teaching is to promote and enhance student learning (Ramsden, 1988).

Grasha (1996) has researched efforts to link learning styles with teaching and teaching styles. He defines teaching style as a complementary set of teaching behaviors. His research has resulted in a model featuring five distinct teaching styles – *Expert, Formal Authority, Personal Model, Facilitator, and Delegator* – that are described briefly below.

Expert. Educators described as Expert show that they have knowledge and skills needed by the students. These teachers maintain their status as experts by giving detailed explanations and challenging students to strengthen their abilities. These educators can intimidate less experienced students and must guard against flaunting their knowledge. In addition, Expert educators tend to be less likely to show the underlying thought processes that produce answers (Grasha, 1996).

Formal Authority. These educators have status in the students' view because of their role as faculty members and their knowledge base. These teachers give both positive and negative feedback to students. They are organized and clearly state learning goals, expectations, and the conduct expected of students. Because they are concerned with the correct, acceptable, and standard ways to act and react, they provide students with a high degree of structure in the classroom. A disadvantage of this style is that these teachers can be too rigid and less flexible in the ways they manage students and their concerns; this rigidity may negatively affect students' motivation and learning (Grasha, 1996).

Personal Model. Educators who employ the Personal teaching style often use themselves as role model for how to think and behave. They oversee, guide, and direct by example to teach students how to accomplish tasks. They encourage students to observe and then to model the teacher's actions. The primary emphasis is on direct observation and following, not leading. If students are unable to live up

to the expectations or standards of the Personal model, students may frequently feel inadequate in their learning pursuits (Grasha, 1996).

Facilitator. This teaching style accentuates the personal nature of teacher-student interactions. Teachers guide and direct students through questioning, exploring options, suggesting alternatives, and encouraging them to make informed choices. The overall goal is to develop students' capacities to think and act independently and to take responsibility for their learning and initiatives. Facilitators become consultants for students and provide as much support and encouragement as possible. A disadvantage of this teaching style is that it is time consuming; a more direct approach might achieve the same objectives. This teaching style also can generate an uncomfortable atmosphere if not used in a supportive and affirming manner (Grasha, 1996).

Delegator. The Delegator is primarily concerned with developing a student's capacity to function autonomously. Students in the Delegator's classroom will work on independent projects or with autonomous teams. The educator becomes a resource person. An advantage to this style is that students begin to see themselves as independent learners. A disadvantage is that students may not be ready for independent work and this may become anxiety producing (Grasha, 1996).

Grasha (1996) points out that the Expert and Formal Authority teaching styles match the pedagogy model of teaching and the Facilitator and Delegator styles fit the andragogy model of teaching. The Personal teaching style includes characteristics of both the pedagogy and andragogy models.

Grasha's Learning Styles. Most research on learning styles suggests that student learning is predicated on the teacher's ability to create an appropriate environment and engage students in appropriate learning activities. Learning styles are generally defined as the ways students prefer to approach the task of learning (Papalia, 1978; Smith & Renzulli, 1984; Kolb, 1984; Dunn, Dunn, & Price, 1985; Entwistle,

1988; Snowman, 1989; Grasha, 1990, 1996). Mann et.al. (1970) categorizes students into eight categories, according to response style. These categories are similar to those later identified in 1974 by Grasha and Riechmann who used these eight areas to develop a scale for measuring six learning styles: *Independent, Dependent, Collaborative, Competitive, Participant, and Avoidant* (Grasha, 1996). Because these six learning styles are used for the field education training module discussed in this article, each is defined below:

Independent. Grasha's (1996) research shows that independent learners like to think for themselves and are confident in their learning abilities. They prefer learning the content that they deem important independently, as opposed to learning in groups or in collaborative projects that require work with other students. These students develop skills as self-initiated and self-directed learners. They may have problems with consultation or may fail to consult with others or ask for help.

Dependent. According to Grasha (1996), students who have this type of learning style show little intellectual curiosity and will learn only what is required. They like the structure that teachers and their peers provide and look to the teacher to be the authority figure. These students manage their anxiety and obtain clear directions when they are with a teacher who provides the structure, support, and authority they desire. They may have great difficulty developing autonomy and self-direction as learners and generally do not learn to deal with uncertainty.

Collaborative. Students with this learning style enjoy sharing their ideas and talents and cooperating with teachers and other students. They readily acquire skills for working in groups and teams and work better in a group than alone. A disadvantage for collaborative students is that they may depend too much on others and may be less able to work well alone (Grasha, 1996).

Competitive. Students who possess this learning style like learning the material so that they can perform better than others. They compete with other

students for the rewards that are offered and like to be the center of attention and receive the recognition for their accomplishments in class. These are highly motivated students who set goals for learning. They may have difficulty relating to other students and learning collaborative skills (Grasha, 1996).

Participant. Grasha (1996) describes these students as good citizens in class. They enjoy going to class and participating in class activities. They are typically eager to do as much of the required and optional course requirements as they can and like getting the most out of each class meeting. Students with this learning style may place the needs of others ahead of their own needs.

Avoidant. This type of learning style, suggests Grasha (1996), is one in which the students are not enthusiastic about learning content and attending class. They generally do not participate with the other students and the teacher in the classroom. They seem uninterested and overwhelmed by what goes on in the classroom. An advantage for these students is their ability to avoid the tension and anxiety of making changes. They seem to have time to do more enjoyable but less productive tasks. A disadvantage is that if their performance drops, negative feedback acts as a reminder of their failings. This reminder of failure often keeps them from setting productive goals.

Grasha (1996) links these six learning styles with teaching styles. He suggests that teachers need to acknowledge differences in students, but also need to look at their teaching as having a particular style. He further assumes that learning styles help to give shape to the students' and teachers' interactions. Grasha (1996) asserts that both teacher and learner are involved in attempts to mold each other so that the relationship can be beneficial for both. Grasha's model has been used in field education research (Short, 2001).

Grasha's Learning and Teaching Clusters. Grasha's learning and teaching styles are connected to his Learning/Teaching Clusters which depict matches for optimal learning opportunities between instruc-

tor and student. He has developed an integrated model of learning and teaching styles described in the following four clusters:

Cluster 1. Grasha (1996) indicates that the Expert/Formal Authority blend in this cluster is dominant. He recommends that these styles work best with students who are less capable with the content and who possess the learning styles of Dependent, Participant, and Competitive. He notes that classroom instruction is more effective when teachers are willing to control classroom tasks. Teachers and students in this cluster do not necessarily need to build a relationship nor does it seem necessary for students to build relationships with each other. This cluster depicts a more teacher-centered classroom (Grasha, 1996).

Cluster 2. The Personal, Expert, and Formal Authority teaching styles are prominent in this cluster and students must demonstrate that they comprehend the content. This teaching style suggests a wide use of coaching and problem solving techniques that quickly reveal a student's grasp of content. Students who possess Participant, Dependent, and Collaborative learning styles, or the ones who are flexible enough to develop them, do well in this cluster relationship. Building both student-to-student and student-to-teacher relationships is prominent in this cluster because these teachers aspire to influence how students use the knowledge and skills learned (Grasha, 1996).

Cluster 3. This blend, according to Grasha (1996), clusters Facilitator, Personal, and Expert teaching styles that are a good match for students who are classified as Collaborative, Participant, and Independent learners. This combination necessitates that students have or acquire content knowledge and are willing to take initiative and accept responsibility for accomplishing learning tasks. Teachers exercise some control over the processes used to facilitate learning; however, they are less concerned with controlling the specific details of the content students need to know. The learning goals for this cluster include developing and practicing skills such as working with others and

acquiring a broad range of content-related skills such as critical and creative thinking. Learning cannot be anticipated and the development and maintenance of a professional, friendly, and warm relationship with students is helpful (Grasha, 1996).

Cluster 4. This cluster shows that the Delegator, Facilitator, and Expert models of teaching work best with Independent, Collaborative, and Participant learning styles. These students must have appropriate levels of content knowledge, be willing to take initiative, and accept more responsibility for their own learning. Student-centered teaching methods or independent study processes cause teachers in this cluster to relinquish direct control over how the learners engage in various learning tasks and the outcome of those tasks. Teachers must be willing to empower students, develop a rapport with them, and serve as consultants or resources to the students. Students assume responsibility for good working relationships with other students as they work on tasks together (Grasha, 1996).

Current Research on Teaching and Learning Styles in Field Education. Field education research on these learning and teaching styles and teaching clusters was completed in 2001 in a southern university setting with one 155 MSW students and 125 field instructors. Grasha's Learning Style Inventory (1996) was used to determine the learning styles of participating students and field instructors. Grasha's Teaching Style Inventory (1996) was used to determine the teaching styles of field instructors (Lester Short, 2001). Findings showed that the students' preferred learning styles were Collaborative (44.3 percent) and Participant (26 percent). Similarly, field instructors were Collaborative (41.5 percent) and Participant (30.5 percent). The study instrument's Cronbach (1951) reliability for student participant scores was lower (.67) than that of the field instructor's reliability score (.86).

Teaching Styles for field instructors revealed that Facilitator (58.4 percent) and Delegator (25.6 percent) were the preferred styles for field teaching. The reliability of the instrument was computed on the subscales and the overall scale. The teaching

style instrument's Cronbach (1951) alpha coefficients subscales ranged from .66 to .84 with the overall being .85 (Lester Short, 2001).

Student Satisfaction and Learning Styles in Field Education. Other studies also explore satisfaction and learning styles. Kadushin (1992) asserts that being praised is a psychic reward; it reinforces the behavior that prompted the praise. Further, people learn best when learning is attended by positive satisfaction. Raskin (1982) believes that student satisfaction with field work is likely to influence learning. Fortune and Abramson (1993) agrees that satisfaction with the learning environment can motivate students and increase their commitment to the learning process. A study by Van Soest and Kruzich (1994) indicated that students tend to respond positively when field instructors are aware of the students' learning styles. The Kolb Learning Styles framework was used in this study and results suggest that the greater the difference between the instructors' and the students' concrete experience scores, the lower the students assess the instructors' ability to form a relationship with students. Another study that involved the use of learning styles was conducted using the Kolb Learning Style Inventory with MSW students in a field practicum (Raschick et al., 1998). This study concluded that students and field instructors developed a successful relationship when learning styles were used to design assignments.

Summary of Literature Review

In reviewing the literature within social work and other disciplines, it is increasingly clear that field practicum education plays a vital role as a social work student develops into a professional social worker. It also is evident that this important area of social work education has attracted surprisingly little attention from researchers. Some conclusions can be reached from the literature review. First, the learning and teaching, components of social work field instruction are much like those of regular classroom instruction; there are identifiable similarities between educational supervision and the teaching aspect of field education. Thus, like

their regular faculty counterparts, field instructors must be aware of their own learning and teaching styles, the learning styles of their diverse students, and the impact of matched and mismatched styles on student success.

While such awareness is important in any instructional situation, it can be argued that it is even more vital in the field of social work, where students are being trained to assess the needs of others. Classroom teachers are responsible for helping students build a solid theoretical base that will ultimately support their practice; field instructors, though, have perhaps the greater responsibility in that they must supervise the students' initial experiences while interacting directly with clients. Social work research has failed to provide adequate information about how field instructors should assess their own and their students' teaching and learning needs. The field education training module discussed here addresses how field instructors can best help students achieve success.

Training Module Use
Levels of Training

The field instruction seminar is appropriate for field instructors with varied levels of teaching experience in the field. Although field instructors may know about learning and teaching styles, they may not be aware of the theory behind learning and teaching. Field instructors may not be aware of the learning and teaching connection and their style of teaching or learning. This seminar is suitable for novice and more experienced field instructors.

Instructions for Implementation of Training Module

Instructors who use this training manual will have advance preparation to complete. Instructors may develop their own PowerPoint. Following are suggestions to help leaders organize and implement a three-hour training seminar for field instructors:
- Determine the date, time, and location for the seminar.
- Invite field instructors to attend with a goal of fifteen to twenty participants.
- Prepare handouts for participants.

- Secure needed equipment.
- Read the PowerPoint to become familiar with the materials.
- Establish a friendly atmosphere conducive to discussion by encouraging participants to talk about field experiences or training expectations.
- Prepare evaluation materials for this training.
- Have participants complete a teaching and learning style measurement instrument. Seminar leaders will use the results as a discussion topic after the styles have been determined.

It is best if a seminar type setting is used for this field instructor training including comfortable chairs and a U-shaped or full square table set up. An LDL projector and screen is required if the instructor uses the PowerPoint. If the instructor opts to use the overhead projector, projector transparencies and a projector and screen will be needed. Leaders will provide handouts for participants and select learning styles and teaching styles instruments to use during the training.

Discussion Questions/Activities for this Training Module

Seminar instructors will want to address questions and issues that arise from group discussions. However, examples of questions a seminar leader may use to jumpstart discussions include the following:
1. What do you know about learning and teaching models in field education?
2. Relay some field experiences that gave you difficulty in educating field students? How did you resolve these difficulties? Were you satisfied with how you handled the learning situation?
3. As a field instructor, how important do you think it is to understand how learning and teaching occur in field experiences?
4. What impact do you think your teaching style has on student learning in field?
5. How would you handle a student with a learning style that might conflict with your teaching style?

Training Module Activity

Field instructors will fill out the Grasha (1996) Teaching Style Inventory and the Learning Style Inventory that is provided to them. Allow approximately 20 minutes to do these tasks. Once the field instructors have completed the task and tallied their scores, begin a discussion about their style, how they teach, and how they learn. Ask if the Learning and Teaching Clusters of Grasha (1996) make sense to them and if they match their learning and teaching style. Ask the field instructors to separate into groups of three or four to discuss their views on learning and teaching and their various styles. Ask them to discuss the types of learning assignments that seem most appropriate for students to learn in their field practicum. Have field instructors compare and contrast their learning styles and teaching styles with others in their group and discuss what types of issues they have encountered regarding learning and teaching. When this task is completed, ask the field instructors to choose one person to report to the larger group their findings. Conduct a large group discussion using these findings and discuss issues regarding student learning that are impacted because of the field instructor's teaching style.

Evaluating Field Instructor Training

Kirkpatrick's (1996) four-level model of evaluation is an effective evaluation tool for evaluating the field education training module incorporating the formative (i.e., taking place during instruction development) and the summative (i.e., occurring once the training has been implemented) processes. It is vital that the field education model be evaluated to determine the effectiveness of the training and the impact on learning and skill development that has occurred.

Level one of Kirkpatrick's model concerns the reactions of the learners toward the learning experience. Questionnaires are used to obtain evaluation information. Level two assesses the learning of the learners by addressing such items as principles, fact, and techniques that are taught. Kirkpatrick has suggested that objective means be used to assess

this area. He offers pre- and post- test design. The third level evaluates behavior. Can the information used in the training be transferred for use on the job? He suggests that the instructor of the training module complete a follow-up evaluation to see if the information given in the training is being used by the learners. Contacting the learner and the learner's supervisors, peers, and subordinates is a challenge to overcome in this evaluative level. The fourth level consists of results. To effectively evaluate this training module, student completion of field training and field instructor provision of quality instruction to student is evaluated. It also is relevant to look at the costs and quality of the training for the university and how training field instructors will improve student preparation in the field and advance the relationships of agencies and field instructors to the university.

Training Manual Research Data

Kirkpatrick's (1996) four-level evaluation model has been used over a decade to evaluate the field education training module. Evaluation of reaction criteria also was applied. This criterion measured the trainee's impressions or feelings about the program. Information for this criterion was gathered through discussion and end of training survey. Of the 350 field instructor's surveyed, 92.5 percent expressed favorable comments about the training and information provided.

The learning criteria assessment included cognitive, skills-based outcomes and affective outcomes. This information was gathered through self-reports and self-targeted observations of behaviors through end of training survey instruments. Evaluation results were varied. 85 percent of the participants expressed that the new information learned through training caused them to think about previous field practicum students and instances where learning styles were a prominent issue. Comments such as "If I had had this information, the problem would likely not have been an issue", and "I wonder if I had used some of these concepts about learning and teaching if I would have had a problem with student X." Field instructors who par-

ticipated in this training module were self-reflective. Eighty-two and one-half percent (82.5 percent) of the field instructors believed that they could enhance their skill level by using the information provided by the training module. Seventy-eight and one-half percent (78.5 percent) of the field instructors noted that they were motivated to change their attitudes toward students they previously saw as difficult to teach when they realized that the students were simply displaying a different learning style as the teacher used.

Behavioral criteria was captured only when field instructors returned to the second training and self-reported changes in their behaviors, stated the helpfulness of the first module training, and sighted examples of their behavioral changes. This information was not totally captured. Results criteria were assessed by the training director who reviewed the training module's impact on the system. The number of students in field education increased as well as the number of field instructors. It was not determined if the training impacted the overall functioning of students and field instructors resulting in less problems and increased learning. The results evaluation pointed out the need for gathering more comprehensive evaluation and follow-up survey information.

Reflecting over the past decade, the question rose as to what was learned through developing, implementing, and evaluating the field seminar series. An on-going need was seen to provide training for field instructors on a continuing basis. There appeared to be continual turnover of field instructors from year to year even though the seminar original college had many long term field instructors. The loss of field instructors at the author's particular college, ranged from 30-40 percent turnover.

A second learning area was that of the need for and use of wisdom and discernment when giving the training. Training instructor's intentions for training often had to be tempered with being sensitive to the needs of the field instructor at any particular training. Field instructors comfortably would begin to tell of their personal examples of

teaching issues which often needed to be processed to completion.

Several linked areas of learning occurred. The instructors of the seminar were found to need to be open to suggestions on an on-going basis from the practitioners. Constant movement of ideas and thoughts occurred with the teaching of each seminar while still maintaining the overall themes. The need of the field instructors for training was initially under estimated. The seminar helped to ground field instructors to focus and reorganize their own thinking and identification as a teacher. Consistent feedback has shown that field instructor were able to grow in their role and competence. Additionally, developing intellectually stimulating and user friend handouts helped to give the field instructor materials to take with them to use for future. Finally, the collaborative relationship that was established with the College of Social Work and the field instructor sustained the effort over the past several years in the development of a field instructor competency instrument.

Summary

A literature review within social work and other disciplines strongly indicates that field practicum education plays a vital role in preparing social work students to become professional social workers. Also, some conclusions can be reached by a review of the training manual literature research. First, learning and teaching in field education is important and field instructors are teachers. It is vital that field instructors be taught the various theories of teaching and learning if they are to be effective field instructors. The Council on Social Work Education promotes support of field instructors through training on various topics and dialog. This field education manual provides the first basic training for field instructor education. It has a thorough literature review, presents practical methods of how to understand student and instructor connections for learning and teaching, and provides an evaluation component for trainers to capture the effectiveness of the training.

References:

Axelrod, J. (Ed.). (1980). *From counterculture to counterrevolution: A teaching career.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Bloom, B. (1956). *Taxonomy of educational objectives: Handbook 1, cognitive domain.* New York: McKay.

Bogo, M. (1981). An educationally focused faculty/field liaison program of first-time field instructors. *Journal of Social Work*, 17(3), 59-65.

Bogo, M. (1993). The student/field instructor relationship: The critical factor in field education. *The Clinical Supervisor*, 11(2), 23-36.

Bogo, M. & Vayda, E. (1987). *The practice of field instruction in social work: Theory and process.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Bower, E.M., & Hollister, W.G. (Eds.). (1967). *Behavioral science frontiers in education.* New York: Wiley.

Brookfield, S.D. (1986). *Understanding and facilitating adult learning.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Brookfield, S. D. (1990). Discussion. In M. Galbraith (Ed.), *Adult learning methods* (pp. 92-98). Melbourne, FL: Kreiger.

Bruner, J. S. (1960). *The process of education.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bruner, J.S. (1961). The act of discovery. *Harvard Educational Review*, 31, 116-123.

Bruner, J. S. (1986). *Actual minds, possible worlds.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bruner, J. S. (1966). *The culture of education* (3rd ed.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Conti, G. (1990). Identifying your teaching style. In M. W. Galbraith (Ed.), *Adult learning methods: A guide for effective instruction* (pp. 234-45). Malabar, FL: Krieger.

Council on Social Work Education (2001). *Educational policy and accreditation standards.* Alexandria, VA: Author. Available online at www.cswe.org

Cronbach, L.J. (1951). Coefficient alpha and the internal structure of tests. *Psychometrika*, 16(3), 297-334.

Dunn, R., Dunn, K., & Price, G. (July, 1985). Identifying individual learning styles and the instructional methods and/or resources which they respond. Paper presented at Annual Meeting of American Educational Research Association. New York.

Entwistle, W. (1988). *Styles of learning and teaching.* New York: Wiley.

Erickson, E.H. (1950). *Childhood and society.* New York: W.W. Norton.

Erickson, E.H. (1959). *Identity and the life cycle.* New York: International Universities Press.

Erickson, E.H. (1964). *Insight and responsibility.* New York. W.W. Norton.

Erickson, E.H. (1968). *Identity, youth, and crisis.* New York: W.W. Norton.

Fortune, A., & Abramson, J. (1993). Predictors of satisfaction with field practicum among social work students. *The Clinical Supervisor,* 11(1), 95-111.Fortune, A.E., Feathers, C., Rook, S.R., Scrimenti, R.M., Smollen, P. Stemerman, B., & Tachu, E.L. (1985). Student satisfaction with field placement. Journal of Social Work Education, 21(3), 92-104.

Galbraith, M.W. (1990). Attributes and skills of an adult educator. In M.W. Galbraith (Ed.), *Adult learning methods: A guide for effective instruction* (pp 3-22). Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing.

Getzels, J.W., & Jackson, P.W. (1962). *Creativity and intelligence.* New York: Wiley.Grasha, A. F. (1990). The naturalistic approach to learning styles. College Teaching, 3, 106-109.

Grasha, A. F. (1994). A matter of style: The teacher as expert, formal authority, personal model, facilitator, and delegator. *College Teaching,* 42(4), 142-149.

Grasha, A. F. (1996). *Teaching with style.* Pittsburgh, PA: Alliance Publishers.

Grasha, A.F., & Riechmann, S. (1974). A rational approach to developing and assessing the construct validity of a student learning styles scales instrument. *Journal of Psychology,* 876, 213-223.

Iscoe I., & Stevenson, W.W. (1960). *Personality development in children.* Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Kadushin, A. (1992). *Supervision in social work* (3rd ed). New York: Columbia University Press.

Keefe, J., & Jenkins, J. (2000). *Personalized instruction: Changing classroom practice.* Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Kirkpatrick, D. (1996). Great ideas revisited. *Training and Development,* 50(1), pp. 54-59.

Knowles, M.S. (1972). Innovations in teaching styles and approaches based upon adult learning. *Journal of Education for Social Work,* 8(2), 32-39.

Knowles, M.S. (1978). *The adult learner* (4th ed). Cambridge, MA: Jossey-Bass.

Knowles, M.S. (1986). *Using learning contracts.* London: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Kolb, D. (1984). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development.* Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall.

Lester Short, G.F. (2001). *Learning, teaching, and supervisory styles in field Education: The working alliance investigated.* Ann Arbor, MI.: UMI Dissertations.

Long, H.B. (1990). Understanding adult learners. In M.W. Galbraith (Ed.), *Adult learning methods: A guide for effective instruction,* (pp 23-37). Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing.

Lowry, L. (1983). Social work supervision: From models toward theory. *Journal of Education for Social Work.* 19(2) 55-61.

Mann, R., Arnold, S.M., Binder, J., Cytrunbaum, S., Newman, B.M., Rignwald, J., & Rosenwein, R. (1970). *The college classroom: Conflict, change, and learning.* New York: John Wiley.

McPhee, D. & Bronstein, L. (2002). Constructing meaning: Strengthening the policy-practice link. *Social Work Education,* 21(6), pp 651-662.

Papalia, A. (1978). Inventory on teaching styles: A self profile for self-analysis. *Language Association Bulletin*, 29, 9-17.

Piaget, J. (1952). *The origins of intelligence in children*. New York: Internationals Universities Press.

Quam, K. (1998). *Fundamentals of teaching and learning*. New York: Nova Science Publishers.

Ramsden, P. (1988). Context and strategy: Situational influences on learning. In R.R. Schmeck (Ed.), *Learning strategies and learning styles* (pp. 159-184). New York: Plenum Press.

Rashkin, M. (1982). Factors associated with student satisfaction in undergraduate social work field placements. Arete, 7(1), 44-54.

Raschick, M., Maypole, D., & Day, P. (1998). Improving field education through Kolb learning theory. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 34(4), 31-43.

Rogers, C. (1951). *Client-centered therapy*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Rogers, C. (1957). The necessary and sufficient conditions of therapeutic personality change. *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, 21, 95-103.

Rogers, G. and Schneck, D. (February, 1992). The field education enterprise: Field instructor training and faculty liaison development. Presentation at the Council on Social Work Education Annual Meeting, Faculty Development Institute, Kansas City, MO.

Schneck, D., Grossman, B., & Glassman, U. (1990). *Field education in social work*. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall Hunt Publishing Co.

Showers, N. (1990). Hospital graduate social work field progress: A study in New York City. *Health and Social Work*, 15, 55-63.

Shulman, L. (1994). *Teaching the helping skills: A field instructor's guide*. Alexandria, VA: CSWE.

Smith L., & Renzulli, J.S. (Winter, 1984). Learning style preferences: A practical approach for classroom teachers, *Theory into Practice*, p. 49.

Snowman, J. (1989). Learning tactics and strategies. In (2nd ed.), *Cognitive instructional psychology: Components of classroom learning* (pp. 25-37). New York: Academic Press.

Travis, J.E. (1995). *Models for improving college teaching*. Washington, DC: The George Washington University, Graduate School of Education and Human Development.

Van Soest, D., & Kruzich, J. (1994). The influence of learning styles on student and field instructor perceptions of field placement success. *Journal of Teaching in Social Work*, 9, 49-69.

Walzawick, P. (1990). *Munchhausen's pigtail or psychotherapy and "reality"*. New York: W.W. Norton.

White, R. W. (1959). Motivation reconsidered: The concept of competence. *Psychological Review*, 66, 297-323.