

**Saint Louis University School of Social Work
Applied Behavior Analysis Field Education Policy
and Procedures Manual
2018-2019**



SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY
—
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

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**SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

Applied Behavior Analysis

**FIELD EDUCATION
POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL
2018-2019**

I. INTRODUCTION

To develop competent practice skills and behaviors, the practicum experiences promote the application of learning from all areas of the educational program through practice and the integration of theory, knowledge, and values into a professional frame of reference.

The student is the main focus of the practica. As adult learners, students are expected to bring information from classroom courses to their practice sites and BCBA® Supervisors to facilitate integration of classroom and field learning. To facilitate learning, the curriculum has specific items and goals to be addressed in the course of the practica.

II. SCHOOL MISSION, GOALS, AND ABA PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The School's mission and goals, and the objectives of the Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Programs frame the education experience in the programs. Ultimately, the ABA practicum objectives are derived from the mission, goals, and program objectives of the School. Below are the School mission and goals, and the objectives of the ABA Programs.

The School's mission: *Saint Louis University School of Social Work prepares students for professional social work and applied behavior analysis practice with a commitment to social justice and the empowerment of vulnerable and oppressed populations. The School strives for a dynamic community of learning with excellence in teaching, research, and service.*

The goals of the School of Social Work are:

- 1. To use knowledge, values, and skills in generalist social work practice.*
- 2. To use knowledge, values, and skills in advanced social work and applied behavior analysis practice.*
- 3. To contribute to the advancement of knowledge of the professions.*
- 4. To use skills, talents, and time in pursuit of social justice in the community.*

The goals of the ABA program are to prepare students to use empirical evidence, ethical values, and behavior analytic skills in interdisciplinary professional practice with a variety of populations and settings, and, when desired, to pursue doctoral-level education in behavior analysis.

III. APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS CURRICULUM

ABA Program Objectives

1. Demonstrate competent applied behavior analysis practice to clients.
2. Design and evaluate applied behavior analysis services provided to clients.
3. Functionally analyze the behavior of clients within their social context.
4. Construct applied behavior analysis services within the context of responsible professionalism within the behavior analytic responsible conduct code of ethics.
5. Provide leadership in addressing social constraints that inhibit the expression of human fulfillment and human rights, especially regarding diverse and vulnerable populations.

ABA Practicum Information

Students may not begin practicum until they have attended the first class meeting for ABA 5746 Principles and Concepts of Applied Behavior Analysis, signed a contract with their supervisee (Note: This contract is different than the Learning Agreement due after the semester begins), and completed the HIPAA training noted further below in this document.

The student's primary focus should be on learning new behavior analytic skills related to the BACB® Fourth Edition Task List. Activities must adhere to the dimensions of ABA identified by Baer, Wolf, and Risley (1968) in the article *Some Current Dimensions of Applied Behavior Analysis* published in the *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*. Applicants are encouraged to have experiences in multiple sites and with multiple supervisors, all of which must be pre-approved by the ABA faculty.

In order to apply to the BACB® to take the national examination, students must complete their graduate degree, including the six (MSWABA) or seven (MSABA or post-masters) currently approved courses as outlined in the Course Content Verification form and the university approved practicum requirements.

The Behavior Analyst Certification Board cautions students, post-education experience, to be mindful of their credentials.

Students who engage in all ABA programs (Master of Science in ABA, Master of Social Work with a concentration in ABA, or Post Master's Certificate in ABA) should realize that, although they have taken approved courses, they are not automatically 'certified' by the BACB®. Certification by the BACB® requires submitting proof to the BACB® that the student has taken approved courses, and/or has completed the practicum experience, all with passing grades. Submitting this paperwork is necessary to be considered eligible to take the national exam. Students who complete the courses and/or practicum may not hold that they are 'certified in behavior analysis' or even 'Board Certified Behavior Analyst Pending'.

The Learning Agreement for the Behavior Analysis Master of Science Degree and Post-Master's Certificate is based on the Fourth Edition Task List as published by the

BACB®. Students and their Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA®) practicum supervisors will address the competencies as listed in the Learning Agreement. Students will identify, with their BCBA® practicum supervisors, which and how the competencies will be addressed during each practicum. At the close of the three practica, all Fourth Edition Task List competencies should be addressed *and met to competency*. Students do not have to address all competencies in each practica, but a third of the task list should be met to competency each semester. Students are encouraged to keep a record of each practicum Learning Agreement so the student will be aware of her/his needs for ongoing practicum experiences. The Learning Agreement serves as the required contract stated by the BACB.

For students in the MSW/ABA concentration, practicum information is located in the MSW Field Education Policy and Procedure Manual available on the School of Social Work website. MSW/ABA students should reference this handbook for anything related to ABA with their practicum, while referencing anything related to the field of Social Work in their practicum with the MSW Field Education Policy and Procedure Manual.

IV. ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS IN FIELD EDUCATION

Role of the Student

The ABA Program uses a modified self-selection model for practicum selection. In consultation with the assigned Faculty Liaison, students are responsible for securing a practicum site. Students have a wide variety of choices in selecting their practica options from the school's approved practicum sites. Students initiate the practicum planning process by completing and submitting a Request for Practicum form to the Office of Field Education through the on-line practicum management system (Via the School of Social Work Google site).

Students will be notified of their assigned Faculty Liaison via an email. Students then contact their Faculty Liaison for a planning appointment. After consulting with the Faculty Liaison, students have the responsibility to follow up with desired agencies and organizations to pursue setting up formal interviews with the professionals who serve as contact persons for their agencies. The process is similar to a job search and employment interview. Students will need to have a professional resumé and cover letter ready for the process. Contacts can be made through emailing or telephoning the listed contact for the specific practica provided by the ABA Faculty Liaison.

Prior to contacting and interviewing, students need to be able to articulate their interests in the practicum site, their desired learning experiences, and career goals. Students should have researched the practicum site through reading their website or other on-line materials to gain knowledge of the agency's mission, programs, and what their services include. During the interview, the BCBA® Supervisors may ask about students' interests in completing a practicum at the agency, their learning style and needs for supervision, and previous volunteer or employment background that can provide some experience for the practicum. Students should also be prepared to ask questions that will provide information on learning experiences, preferred times for practica, and style of supervision. Students are then able to determine if the practicum is a "fit" for them if they

receive an offer. Students are free to have as many interviews or offers that they desire to locate a practicum. It is very important to be professional and respond to all offers. It may be that the student would like to have one practicum first and so they can negotiate with other offers to have a future practica.

The student's Faculty Liaison is available to provide additional resources or ideas in the process. Once a student has selected an offer, a Confirmation of Practicum form is submitted through the Google Form link sent to the student by their liaison. If student has not confirmed his/her practicum site with the Faculty Liaison, hours may not be counted.

Students are required to submit their supervision contract as soon as it's signed, then submit their Learning Agreements to the BlackBoard™ within three weeks of the beginning of each semester. In addition, the student will submit an activity time log form to BlackBoard to record their practicum and supervision hours. This will be uploaded into BlackBoard at the completion of the practicum hours. Students will work with their BCBA® Supervisors to complete their final evaluation as well.

Students are also expected to contact their Faculty Liaison as soon as any concern should arise in the practicum.

Students are expected to follow the policies and procedures of the following:

- Office of Field Education
- Practicum Agency
- *NASW Code of Ethics* (students will sign a pledge of ethical conduct in their generalist foundation and advanced practice integrative seminars)
- Behavior Analysis Certification Board (BACB)® *Professional and Ethical Compliance Code*.

Role of the Faculty Liaison

The Faculty Liaison serves as the “professor” for the practica courses. The Faculty Liaison is ultimately responsible for the practica grading. The Faculty Liaison provides the on-going linkage between the student, agency, and school. The Faculty Liaison has the following key roles:

- **Planning**—In planning, Faculty Liaisons meet and assist students in preparing and planning for practica through reviewing the practicum process, reviewing resumes interviewing skills, and providing referrals on possible practica sites that meet the students interests and learning needs. The Faculty Liaison will also work with the Director of Field Education in approving any new practicum sites, BCBA® Supervisors, or place-of-employment practica. Faculty Liaisons along with the Director of Field Education have the discretion to determine the readiness of a student for Practicum.
- **Monitoring**—In monitoring, the Faculty Liaison assists, reviews, and approves the learning agreements. In addition, the Liaison is available to the student or BCBA® Supervisor at anytime should concerns arise.

- **Evaluating**—In evaluating, the Faculty Liaison will set up a mid-semester visit with the student, task instructor and BCBA® Supervisor to review the student’s practicum experience and progress in meeting the learning agreement requirements/practice behaviors. The Liaison visits primarily to support and advocate for a quality learning experience. In addition, the Liaison will be involved in any special concern or performance issue that arises and has the final responsibility of assigning a grade after reviewing the BCBA® Supervisor’s ratings on the final evaluation and recommendation.

The Faculty Liaison provides the linkage between the student, agency and the ABA Program. The Liaison serves as a member of the appropriate curriculum committee and provides the connection between the School, curriculum committee, student and agency. The Faculty Liaison plays an important role in the integration of classroom and field through the site visit and facilitation of the Integrative Seminar.

The Faculty Liaison serves as a key resource to concerns arising in the practicum. In this role, the Faculty Liaison supports the learning experience by advocating for the student, BCBA® Supervisor, and agency toward a successful resolution. The Faculty Liaison is available to respond to questions or concerns the student or BCBA® Supervisor may have and to interact with the BCBA® Supervisor and the agency to foster an appropriate learning experience for the student.

The Faculty Liaison, Director of Field Education, and Director of the ABA Program are available to assist potential, new, and existing practicum sites in the development of practicum tasks and activities. This consultation enables practicum sites to create innovative, individualized practicum learning opportunities for students.

Role of the Practicum Agencies

Agencies and organizations that are approved as practicum sites for the School of Social Work have agreed to the following:

- 1) Partner with the ABA Program to provide quality practica experiences for SLU students
- 2) Adhere to recognized standards of practice and be in good standing within the professional community
- 3) Provide approved and appropriately degreed and credentialed staff eligible to provide supervision
- 4) Regularly update a collaborative on-line database for their agency and BCBA® Supervisors and provide the school with a signed affiliation agreement
- 5) Recognized by the community as having a defined social goal and a systematic mode of operation directed toward that goal;
- 6) Participate in community planning;
- 7) Provide a range of learning experiences for students;
- 8) Demonstrate a commitment to ABA education that provides a climate for student learning.

Role of BCBA® Supervisor

The following criteria, established by the School of Social Work, are used by the ABA

Program in selecting Applied Behavior Analysts to serve as BCBA® supervisor at affiliated agencies:

- a) Board Certified Behavior Analyst in good standing, or
- b) Approved University Experience: A faculty member who has been approved by the BACB® as a Supervisor in the university's approved course sequence.

BCBA® Supervisors do not have to go through the Certified Field Instructor training required for Field Instructors.

Additional criteria for field instruction includes:

- 1) Serve as a teacher, mentor, and supervisor for students;
- 2) Meet with the student for a minimum of 7.5% of weekly practicum experience (with occasional documented modifications, so long as they still meet the monthly BACB supervision requirement);
- 3) Demonstrate ethical practice and be in good standing with the professional community;
- 4) Provide a quality learning experience appropriate to the student's level in practica;
- 5) Assist in development and approval of the student's learning agreement;
- 6) Perform timely final evaluation and grade recommendation at the end of the student's practicum after sent the link by the Field Liaison;
- 7) Contact the Faculty Liaison at any time for concerns or resources;
- 8) Nominate students for "Outstanding Practicum Student" when indicated;
- 9) In the rare situation where the BCBA® Supervisor is "affiliated" with the agency, the agency is required to provide permission and support for an outside BCBA® to provide field instruction.

The supervisor may not be the student's relative, subordinate or employee during the experience period.

BCBA® Supervisor who meet the guidelines (above) are appointed as an Adjunct Assistant Clinical Professor for Field Instruction. The status of the BCBA® Supervisor within the University is that of a volunteer. As a Volunteer Adjunct Faculty with the School of Social Work, the BCBA® Supervisor may: BCBA® Supervisors. Instructors must contact the Office of Field Education for access.

- ✓ Apply for tuition remission to complete a graduate course. An application may be requested by calling the Office of Field Education. The deadline for applying for tuition remission is July 1 for a Fall course, November 1 for a Spring course and April 1 for a summer course. As needed, a sub-committee will be established to review applications and select field/task instructors using the following criteria: (a) date of application and (b) previous receipt of tuition remission.
- ✓ Receive a certificate that attests to the field instruction provided to the student at the end of the semester.
- ✓ Serve on various standing and ad-hoc committees and task forces within the School of Social Work, including thesis committees (with Director's approval).

The BCBA® Supervisor's role is to serve as a mentor to the student during her/his tenure at the practicum site. To fulfill the requirements for the practicum, BCBA® Supervisor is required to assist the student in selecting roles, tasks, and activities that can be performed at the practicum site. These requirements are explicated in the Learning Agreement developed in the first three weeks of the semester. The BCBA® Supervisor is required to meet with the student for a minimum of four times per month (which must occur once weekly unless special circumstances arise and have been approved by the ABA Field Liaison and School of Social Work Director of Field Education), integrate classroom and field learning, evaluate the student's progress, and complete the BACB® Fieldwork and Practicum Experience Verification Form (as well as document using BACB approved forms for monthly supervision). BCBA® Supervisor should feel free to contact the Office of Field Education to discuss questions regarding student standing in the program, appropriateness for the setting, learning goals, needs, or any other issues that may impact practicum.

For ABA students, in those situations where the BCBA® Supervisor is not an agency employee, but rather a volunteer (“off-site BCBA® Supervisor”), the following requirements must be met by the BCBA® Supervisor:

If the Office of Field Education deems that a practicum site can provide a valuable learning experience, but there is no on-site, qualified BCBA® Supervisor, approval may be granted for an off-site BCBA® Supervisor. Requirements for the off-site BCBA® Supervisor are:

- 1) approval by the ABA Program as a BCBA® Supervisor; affiliation with the organization (e.g., board member, volunteer, former employee or agency consultant), OR approved faculty of the School of Social Work;
- 2) interest in and potential for helping the student integrate theory through developing practice skills;
- 3) ability to have responsibility for teaching and to allow the student to carry responsibility for learning;
- 4) knowledge of community resources;
- 5) ability to work cooperatively with the School;
- 6) a commitment to professional education and to the provision of learning experiences to meet the student’s educational needs;
- 7) support and permission of agency for student practica;
- 8) interest and ability to meet with a student for a minimum of one hour per week for each ten hours of work;
- 9) in good standing with the professional community, and
- 10) a willingness to assist the student to complete a form entitled “Off-Site Supervision Learning Agreement Addendum.” The form must be completed by the student, in consultation with the off-site BCBA® Supervisor, and submitted to the Faculty Liaison.

Role of the Director of Field Education

The Director of Field Education is responsible for the development, management, and evaluation of the practicum operations of the School of Social Work. The Director fulfills these roles through the following responsibilities:

- 1) Structure the practicum program in concert with the School's mission and Curriculum;
Arrange for notification to students and BCBA® Supervisor of the time frames and deadlines for requesting and confirming practicum placements and for submitting a learning agreement with the BCBA® Supervisor;
- 2) Assign Faculty Liaisons to students for the planning, monitoring, and evaluation phases of practicum;
- 3) Support and monitor the activities of the Faculty Liaisons;
- 4) Participate with the St. Louis Field Education Collaborative for the orientation and educational programming, along with administration of the database;
- 5) Relate to community agencies affiliated with the School of Social Work as practicum sites;
- 6) Promote the development of and approval of new practicum sites;
- 7) Monitor the quality of learning experiences offered by practicum sites;
- 8) Oversee the development of policies and practices for practicum operation;
- 9) Serve as a member of relevant school committees such as program assessment;
- 10) Serve as voting member of the BSSW and MSW Program Committees;
- 11) Approve practicum placements at the student's place of employment;
- 12) Review and supervise revision of practicum forms including learning agreements and evaluation instruments;
- 13) Assure that the practicum program meets BACB® guidelines;
- 14) When appropriate, pursue financial resources to support students in practica;
- 15) Network with local and national field education programs within schools of social work and other applied behavior analysis programs;
- 16) Oversee the functioning of TaskStream, on-line practicum management system;
- 17) Perform other duties as required to assure the smooth operation of the practicum.

Role of the Faculty Advisors

The student's Faculty Advisor provides a supportive role to the field education component of the student's curriculum. The student's ABA Faculty Advisor assists the ABA student in registering for the appropriate practica using the section number of the assigned Faculty Liaison and the appropriate Integrative Seminar, when needed. Advisors can encourage students to be in close communication with their Faculty Liaison about their practicum planning and other practicum-related needs. Advisors may wish to encourage students to begin the planning process early in the semester preceding the semester in which they plan to complete a practicum. Advisors are also welcome to work with the Faculty Liaisons to develop new practicum sites and/or learning opportunities at existing sites. Advisors can also encourage students to pay close attention to the dates of Integrative Seminars in which they are enrolled, as the seminar class meetings are scheduled monthly periodically throughout each semester.

V. GENERAL PRACTICUM CURRICULUM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Eligibility for Practicum

ABA students must meet the course prerequisites (as described below) and not be on admission, academic expectations, or professional competence probation in order to

enroll in practica courses. Students who believe they will be getting off probation at the end of a semester can request and plan a practicum, but will not be able to complete it unless they are officially removed from probationary status. Planning—In planning, Faculty Liaisons meet and assist students in preparing and planning for practica through reviewing the practicum process, reviewing resumes interviewing skills, and providing referrals on possible practica sites that meet the students interests and learning needs. The Faculty Liaison will also work with the Director of Field Education in approving any new practicum sites, BCBA® Supervisor, or place-of-employment practica. Faculty Liaisons along with the Director of Field Education have the discretion to determine the readiness of a student for Practicum.

Hours Required for Practicum

The BACB® university-approved practicum experience indicates that students must complete with a passing grade, 1000 hours of practicum relevant to behavior analysis within the graduate university practicum program. The distribution of practicum hours must be at least 10 hours per week, but not more than 30 hours per week for a minimum of 3 weeks per month. Students working towards an MSABA degree must complete at least 5 hrs/week conducting research with Dr. Alyssa Wilson or Professor Heather Lewis while enrolled in practicum. Students must be supervised at least weekly for 10% (7.5% minimum) of the total hours they spend in University practicum. Total supervision must be at least 100 hours (*75 minimum*) in order to meet BACB® requirements. A supervisory period is one week. The BACB® Fieldwork and Practicum Experience Supervision Form will be completed at the end of each month and all documents submitted via BlackBoard by the meeting time for each monthly integrative seminar.

Academic Credits

Two credit hours are granted for the successful completion of ABA 826 Practicum I. Three credit hours are granted for the successful completion of ABA 827 Practicum II and ABA 828 Practicum III. Students will be enrolled in an ABA practicum Integrative Seminar each semester. Each practicum will require students be on site 333 (except Practicum I, 334) hours per semester.

Practicum Enrollment Options

The BACB® encourages students to have experience in two practicum sites. Students are encouraged to have experience in a block two-semester practicum in one site for their first two ABA practica and a one semester practicum at another site for their final practicum.

In order to be admitted to field education courses, ABA students must meet the course pre/co-requisites (SWRK-ABA 5746 Principles and Concepts in Behavior Analysis and SWRK-ABA 5774 Measurement and Experimental Design).

Site Approval - The model of practicum selection is a structured self-selection model. The Director of Field Education, in consultation with the Faculty Liaison, provides the final approval of the student-site match. The Director of Field Education and/or the Faculty Liaisons may have had experiences with a particular site that lead to a professional opinion that the match is not optimal for a particular student. In consultation with the Director of Field Education, the Faculty Liaisons have the professional

responsibility to advise about the potential match between student interests and background and the learning experiences of a particular site, and advise the Director of Field Education about a potential match. The Director of Field Education provides final approval of student-site matches.

Site Visits - The overall goal of the mid-semester site visit is to enhance and support a strong learning experience. The Faculty Liaison will meet with the BCBA® Supervisor and student. Prior to the visit, the learning agreement should be reviewed and the student and BCBA® Supervisor should be prepared to discuss the learning agreement in detail.

Practicum Orientation

Students will receive an in-depth orientation to practicum. An extended orientation also occurs throughout the Integrative Seminar.

Practicum Planning

Each practicum must be requested, via the Google Request for Practicum Form, and confirmed, via the Confirmation of Practicum Form, in the **preceding** full semester prior to beginning a practicum by deadlines established by the Office of Field Education. Students will be required to update their resumé's, develop a cover letter, and review interviewing skills in pursuing a practicum. Faculty Liaisons along with the Director of Field Education have the discretion to determine the readiness of a student for Practicum.

Evening and/or Weekend Practica

Students who need evening and weekend practica hours due to employment or other responsibilities benefit from starting the practicum planning process as early as possible in the semester preceding the intended practicum. Many sites offer evening and weekend hours in addition to day hours for practicum learning opportunities. However, fewer agencies offer solely evening and /or weekend hours supervised by an eligible BCBA® Supervisor than those that offer day hours or a combination of day and evening/weekend hours. Students are encouraged to explore the extent to which their schedule can be flexible and to share their schedule constraints with their Faculty Liaison in the planning process.

BCBA® supervision must be available during this time, although the BCBA® supervisor does not need to be at the site every hour that the student completes hours. However, some staff must be available for student consultation when the student is completing hours.

Integrative Practice Seminars

The purpose of the Integrative Practice Seminar is to provide an opportunity for students to integrate theoretical constructs, empirical evidence, and information gained in the classroom with the application of social work and behavior analytic practice. In addition, the seminars are designed to:

- 1) provide additional integration of coursework and daily practice;
- 2) enhance student's knowledge and skill base through peer sharing; and

- 3) provide a supportive opportunity for students to de-brief on practice challenges.

ABA students will complete an Integrative Seminar each semester in which they are enrolled in practicum. This three part Integrative Seminar will meet for a total of 15 hours a semester with Seminar schedules to be determined by the Faculty Liaison. The first concentration Integrative Seminar will be awarded one credit with a letter grade assigned, while the remaining two seminars will be zero-credit and graded on a pass/fail basis.

Learning Agreement Deadline and Request for Extension of Due Date for Learning Agreement

Learning Agreements are an important document that assists to guide student learning at the site. Agreements are due on a specific date during the third week of the semester, regardless of the starting date of the practicum. If students are unable to turn in a completed, signed copy of the learning agreement by the due, a Learning Agreement Extension Form should be completed by the student and submitted to the assigned Faculty Liaison by the due date. Hours may not be counted past the due date unless a Learning Agreement or an Extension form has been completed. The forms are located in the Office of Field Education and on the Field Education google website.

Problems in Practicum/Termination of Practicum

Students and/or BCBA® Supervisor are to contact their Faculty Liaison should a problem or serious concern arise in the course of the practicum. Depending on the situation, the Faculty Liaison may arrange a special meeting and/or develop an additional agreement if necessary. Such a situation may occur as a result of insufficient resources and/or experiences to provide for an adequate learning experience; agency restructuring; inadequate skills, knowledge, or ability of the student; or personality or ideological conflicts between student and BCBA® Supervisor and/or the agency. Students are not to leave their practica until they have discussed the situation with their Faculty Liaison. If there is a problem in which it appears that a termination of the practicum is the best or only course of action, then a Termination of Practicum form will be completed and signed by all. This could result in an Incomplete or a No Pass grade. The Faculty Liaison will take the leadership role and also be the person to assign the grade. Whether practicum hours earned will transfer to a new site is at the judgment of the Faculty Liaison and agreement of new practicum site. The form is then routed to the Director of Field Education for review as well. An average score of less than 3.00 for those tasks that have been completed on a student's final practicum evaluation results in a "No Pass".

Extended Leave from a Practicum

Students experiencing significant health or personal challenges and feel they cannot complete their practicum as planned, should consult with their Faculty Liaison to handle the situation in a professional manner. Students may not "take a break" from their practicum without Faculty Liaison approval. Students experiencing personal issues that prevent them from completing their courses as well as practicum should also contact the Director of the ABA Program. An official "extended leave" form must be completed. Faculty Liaisons along with the Director of Field Education have the discretion to determine the readiness of a student for Practicum.

Grading

Grades for the practica courses include Pass and No Pass. Practica grades do not figure into the cumulative GPA. However, a No Pass would count as an F per the grading policies in the ABA Program. The BCBA® Supervisor completes the final evaluation to include the ratings of practice behaviors and professional behaviors. The BCBA® Supervisor recommends a grade of Pass or No Pass. The Faculty Liaison has the final authority for the grade and is responsible to enter it in the Banner system once the final evaluation and time log are reviewed on taskstream. An average score of less than 3.00 on a student's final practicum evaluation results in a "No Pass". Note that to meet Registrar requirements, a grade of "Satisfactory" will be recorded in Banner for "Pass" and "Unsatisfactory" will be recorded in Banner for "No Pass."

If a student is unable to complete practicum hours during the regular semester hours due to extenuating circumstances, the Faculty Liaison has the discretion to approve an extended period of time for the student to complete practicum. This request must be approved by the site/Field Instructor and discussed with the Faculty Liaison prior to the end of the semester. If the Faculty Liaison approves extended time, a grade of "In Progress" (IP) will be submitted when grades are due. The "IP" grade will be changed to "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory" upon completion of the practicum per the process stated above.

Practicum Start Date

Students should arrange a practicum start date with the site. Students may begin the practicum as early as two weeks prior to the start of a semester only after they have completed at least one of the core BACB approved courses and have this approved with their supervisor(s) and the practicum site.

Appropriate Activities

While in practicum, students should be engaged in activities commensurate to their level of training and should avoid activities expressly prohibited by their programs. Questions regarding appropriate practicum activities can be directed to the Faculty Liaison.

Appropriate experience activities include:

- Conducting assessment activities related to the need for behavioral interventions;
- Designing, implementing, and monitoring behavior analysis programs for clients;
- Overseeing the implementation of behavior analysis programs by others;
- Other activities normally performed by a behavior analyst that are directly related to behavior analysis such as attending planning meetings regarding the behavior analysis program, researching the literature related to the program, talking to individuals about the program; plus any additional activities related to oversight of behavioral programming such as behavior analyst supervision issues, or evaluation of behavior analysts' performance. The supervisor will determine if activities qualify.

Examples of activities that are not appropriate as experience activities include: attending meetings with little or no behavior analytic content, providing interventions that are not based in behavior analysis, doing non-behavior analytic administrative activities, or any other activities that are not directly related to behavior analysis.

Appropriate Clients: Clients may be any persons for whom behavior analysis services are appropriate. However, the applicant may not be related to the client or the client's primary caretaker. Applicants must work with multiple clients during the experience period.

The physical restraint of clients is expressly prohibited in practicum. If students are in settings at which staff restrain clients, students must be paired with a staff member with the ability to restrain.

The distribution of medication of any kind is prohibited in practicum. If students are in a setting at which ABA staff routinely distribute medication and they are asked to distribute, the Faculty Liaison should be contacted.

Activities Undertaken with Caution

Students who are required to transport clients for practicum activities should clarify liability issues with their personal auto insurer and their practicum site. Students are required to have at least the current amount of automobile insurance required by state law. If an accident occurs in a student vehicle, the student's insurance would be the primary insurance, and the student would be responsible for the deductible. The University provides secondary insurance.

Agency Reimbursement for Student Services

Students shall follow agency policy regarding the collection of fees and accepting gifts. While in practicum, students may not personally keep any fees charged for their services. All revenue must be turned over to the practicum agency. Students cannot take Missouri Medicaid or private insurance clients, but can work with clients who pay on a sliding fee scale or for whom the practice receives a non-Medicaid grant for services.

Agency Policies

Students are required to comply with the rules and policies of the practicum site, insofar as they pertain to the student's activities while at the practicum site.

Off-Site Practicum Activities

Students may have up to 60 hours of off-site hours related to work for their practicum. Appropriate off-site activities include library or internet searches, writing or designing work, or data collection/analyses. These hours must be recorded as off-site on the time log and approved by the BCBA® Supervisor .

In addition, students may count attending related practicum meetings, conferences, lobby days, special lectures or trainings as practicum hours as long as the BCBA® Supervisor BCBA® Supervisor approves. Students are encouraged to attend coalition or community-based events for a stronger learning experience.

Criminal Records

Students should inform the Director of Field Education of any information regarding felony convictions and/or other information that may impact the student's ability to secure and complete a practicum. The School of Social Work does not require or conduct

criminal background checks on students. If the program is aware of criminal convictions or other pertinent information, the student will be asked to sign a release of information authorizing the program to verify the criminal history, discuss this information with approved practicum sites and provide verification of the record to the agency at which the student is confirmed to complete her/his practicum experience.

Conviction of a criminal offense does not necessitate barring an individual from becoming a social worker or from making a major contribution to society. Applicants for admission to the School of Social Work will be evaluated on the basis of their overall qualifications. Students should be advised, however, that a criminal conviction could prevent him/her from completing practicum in some agency settings.

Background Checks

Practicum sites may require criminal background checks on students before they are allowed to begin their practicum. In particular, The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations requires any student completing a practicum or internship at a healthcare facility (to possibly include mental health agencies, long term care facilities, and other non-hospital settings) to have a criminal background check prior to acceptance and starting their hours. Depending on the type, number, and other factors, completion of a criminal background check can require as long as six weeks. For many agencies, **students will not be allowed to start until they have this on file at the agency.** If not done in advance of the intended start date, a significant delay could occur.

The criminal background check may be conducted through the Human Resource Department of the practicum site, as the department may have these procedures in place for prospective employees and volunteers. The cost of background checks conducted through agencies for students may be paid by the agency or the student may be responsible for the cost. If the agency is unable or unwilling to conduct the check, the student will be responsible for securing and paying for the criminal background check.

Students can obtain a background check through University resources. The University has a centralized service for conducting background checks for students from all schools and colleges. Students can access the criminal background check application process directly at <https://www.slu.edu/registrar/services/background-checks.php>. There are three types of background checks with varying prices:

- 1) Missouri and FBI (includes all other 49 states);
- 2) Health Care and Education Registry Search; and
- 3) a combination of the above.

For more information, contact Felicia Echols, Coordinator of Verification, can be reached at (314) 977-6636 or fechols@slu.edu. **Do not have results sent to the School of Social Work. Have them sent directly to the Agency.**

Drug Test

Some practicum sites require drug testing. For a fee, drug testing can be obtained at the Student Health Services, Marchetti Towers (East). For more information, call (314) 977-2323.

Verification of Health Records

Students are responsible for any verification of health records, proof of immunizations or a Tuberculosis test that is required by a practicum site. Because students are required to submit this document to SLU Student Health Services, they can obtain a copy from them as well as obtain any new testing required.

Lobbying Activities

Students who engage in formal lobbying activities as a part of the practicum experience should discuss with the BCBA® Supervisor and her/his Faculty Liaison the issue of registering as a lobbyist with the appropriate governmental entity. If the student and BCBA® Supervisor determine that registration is appropriate, the student must register as a lobbyist with the practicum agency (not Saint Louis University). It is the responsibility of the student and the agency to comply with all laws and regulations relevant to lobbying.

Sharing Sensitive Information

The Office of Field Education and the Faculty liaisons will not share any sensitive information without the student signing a release of information. The Faculty Liaison may share relevant or helpful information to a BCBA® Supervisor or practicum agency such as student name and that they will be contacting for an interview, level and/or concentration, and semester desired. Generally Faculty Liaisons encourage and assist students in being able to share any sensitive information themselves directly to BCBA® Supervisors. Faculty at the school are bound by FERPA (Federal Educational confidentiality guidelines) so cannot respond to all questions posed by outside field persons (including family members). Faculty can share information with a student's adviser.

Safety and Security of Student in Practicum

Safety of students in field is a priority for the Office of Field Education. While the University does not wish students to be protected from the realities of professional practice, immersing students in the realities of practice can also expose them to safety and security risks. The University and practicum agencies must partner to reduce risks to students in practicum. Many practicum students have safety and security concerns as they enter the field practicum. If not addressed, concerns about personal safety can significantly impact learning opportunities in the practicum. BCBA® Supervisors and practicum sites, when applicable, should:

- 1) Discuss safety and security matters with students at the placement interview or at the outset of the practicum. Information about the prevalence of or potential for violence while conducting practicum activities should be relayed to the student.
- 2) Explain and enforce agency safety protocols with students, including building and office security, emergency procedures, management of violent clients and home visit safety procedures (NOTE: students are expected to follow agency rules regarding the necessity of home visits and home visit protocol).
- 3) Provide a tour of the surrounding neighborhood or areas in which the student may work and address concerns students may have regarding work in the community.
- 4) Allow students to observe staff engaged in the work for which the student is preparing.
- 5) Allow students to be observed while engaged in learning activities.

- 6) Link students with agency-provided security resources (i.e., safety training, cellular telephones, beepers).

The following types of activities warrant special concern and, therefore, should be discussed with the Faculty Liaison and the student prior to the assignment:

- 1) Transportation of clients in the student's private vehicle
- 2) Transportation of a client with a recent history of violent behavior
- 3) Treatment of a client with a history of violence toward the staff
- 4) Work in the agency at times when or in areas where other staff is not present.

Any incident or injury involving the student should be reported immediately to the Faculty Liaison.

Paid Practicum

While agencies are not required to financially compensate students for practicum, the Office of Field Education encourages organizations and agencies to provide funds when possible. It is important for the Faculty Liaison to know of these arrangements as the educational experience is still primary before an employment status.

Possible funding sources for practicum include:

- 1) Agency general revenue or grant funds—Some agencies have included stipend funds for practica in grant proposal budgets. Other agencies have allocated stipend funds for students in their annual budgets or used personnel funds if the student fills in for a staff member on leave. If an agency relies on student labor to fulfill specific duties and would like to have students each semester, offering a stipend can be a very effective incentive in recruitment efforts.
- 2) Government funding—Within government agencies, a variety of governmental funding options may be made available for training stipends. Some governmental agencies provide stipends, while other state and local agencies may elect to use discretionary funds.
- 3) University-secured funding—The University or School of Social Work at times obtains funding through grants that can provide a student stipend in practica. As these opportunities are available, they are posted in the E-newsletter.
- 4) Practicum at Place-of-Employment—If a potential practicum exists at a student's place of employment and would entail new and appropriate learning for the student, practicum credit may be earned at the agency with specific arrangements. An additional possibility for a paid practicum exists if the student works at a practicum site. Some students are able to successfully negotiate the completion of practicum activities while on work time within a social service agency. Place-of-Employment practica need to be individually negotiated with the Office of Field Education.

Place-of-Employment Practica

Students employed in a setting in which ABA services are offered have the option to complete practica at their place of employment. The student, BCBA® Supervisor, and employer must come to an agreement as to the learning experiences available for the practicum. In order to broaden the learning experience, a practicum completed at a student's place of employment requires:

- a. the practicum roles be appropriate to student's level of intended certification as a BCBA®, and
- b. a BCBA® Supervisor that meets all of the usual requirements for an ABA BCBA® Supervisor.

Agency, staff, student and the Faculty Liaison **must meet** to plan, negotiate, and develop a proposal on the "Place-of-Employment" form. Student will negotiate an outcome from the experience (e.g., behavior plan to level of coursework) with the BCBA® Supervisor and Faculty Liaison.

The practicum arrangement must be approved by both the Faculty Liaison and the Director of Field Education.

Liability Coverage

The practicum agency may have established policies regarding liability coverage for student travel and practice. As these policies vary within the community, students are strongly encouraged to address and clarify these issues prior to the acceptance of a practicum. Saint Louis University provides up to \$1,000,000 in professional malpractice insurance coverage for each occurrence. Students may also elect to purchase individual malpractice coverage at their own expense. Students may contact any Faculty Liaison for more information about individual coverage options. The University can provide verification to the agency of such coverage. The University does not provide automobile liability coverage.

Students who will be using their personal vehicle for agency business should negotiate automobile coverage with the agency at the time of the interview.

Reimbursement to Agency

Students are responsible for reimbursing the practicum agency should any loss, damage or breakage of equipment be caused by the student's misuse of equipment.

Distance/International Practicum

Students are encouraged to consider practicum experiences that are out of the greater St. Louis area, away from their home community, and/or outside the United States. Students interested in an international practicum are strongly encouraged to begin to work on this possibility **two semesters in advance** of the planned semester, as international practicum arrangements involve more time to plan than domestic practica. The assigned Faculty Liaison will work with interested students to generate possible sites of interest. Students are strongly encouraged to consider many factors in their decision to complete practica abroad, such as language skills, knowledge of culture, health and safety issues, and professional goals. Faculty Liaisons will also work closely with students to prepare for a semester abroad, and may make recommendations about courses, readings, and other independent work prior to the international practica.

Students interested in completing a practicum away from the St. Louis area or away from their home community must ensure the following:

- 1) The proposed practicum site and BCBA® Supervisor meet the usual requirements as a practicum site and BCBA® Supervisor in their home community (specified earlier);
- 2) All other usual requirements for a practicum are fulfilled;
- 3) Arrangements have been made with the Faculty Liaison and the International Student Center (when appropriate) to complete all of the required documents for the student, practicum site and the BCBA® Supervisor;
- 4) Upon completion of the international practicum, when possible, the student will arrange a de-briefing meeting with the student and Faculty Liaison.

If the practicum arrangements will involve utilizing an off-site BCBA® Supervisor, the student must complete the “Off-Site Supervision Learning Agreement Addendum” form available from the assigned Faculty Liaison. The Faculty Liaison must approve all arrangements prior to the commencement of earned practicum hours.

Contractual and Ethical Considerations

The BCBA® Supervisor and student should consider the contract at the onset of the experience the contract and the Learning Agreement a supplemental component of the contract. The contract and Learning Agreement should state the responsibilities of both parties, delineate the consequences should the parties not adhere to their responsibilities (including proper termination of the relationship), and includes an attestation that both parties will adhere to the BACB® Professional and Ethical Compliance Code.

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)

All students are **required** to complete a HIPAA training prior to beginning their first practicum. This requirement can be fulfilled in three ways:

- 1) submission through TaskStream written documentation, signed, on letterhead, that a HIPAA training has previously been completed;
- 2) completion of a university sponsored HIPAA training; or
- 3) completion of a University-sponsored on-line HIPAA training.

Students are not allowed to begin practicum until this requirement is complete. For information, students may contact the Office of Field Education for more information at (314) 977-2724.

Harassment Policy

Students are not to experience any harassment in the course of practicum. However, if it should occur, the student should contact the BCBA® Supervisor and Faculty Liaison immediately. Faculty Liaisons will follow the University’s Harassment policy (<http://www.slu.edu/human-resources-home/harassment-policy?site=mobile>) in handling any reported harassment issues that occur in practicum. In addition, the student should contact the BCBA® Supervisor and Faculty Liaison immediately in the event of harassment so agency policy can be followed as well.

Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 extends and implements civil rights protections for disabled individuals on the basis of race, color, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, veteran status or disability. Students requiring an accommodation related to a disability should contact the University Office of Disability

Services to document the disability. The student is encouraged to inform the agency of the accommodations needed in the interviewing phase of practicum selection. In addition, the Faculty Liaison, as professor of record, will receive a copy of the accommodations. Students cannot request accommodations in the practicum agency without having registered with the SLU office of Disability Services.

Academic Credit for Life or Previous Work Experience

Academic credit for life experience and previous work experience cannot be granted in whole or in part in lieu of the field practicum courses.

Mandated Reporting

In cases of suspected neglect or abuse, students should discuss these situations with their BCBA® Supervisors to gain full appreciation and knowledge of the reporting process. It is also recommended that students familiarize themselves with individual State Laws (where they are completing practicum and/or where they intend to practice after graduation) that determine who is a mandated reporter:

http://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/statutes/manda.cfm and <https://www.bacb.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/170706-compliance-code-english.pdf>.

If a student suspects any form of child or elder abuse or neglect, they should inform their BCBA® Supervisor immediately. The school prefers that the BCBA® Supervisor or in conjunction with the student make the mandated reporter call. This will be important as the student may have left the practicum before the investigation is completed.

Conflict of Interest

Students may not complete practicum in settings in which they have a family member who is a staff member (including owner of the agency), board member, current volunteer, or any other significant dual relationship. For further discussion, see Faculty Liaison.

VI. ABA FIELD EDUCATION RESOURCE MATERIALS

A) Field Education Bulletin Board - The following information and materials are available from the Field Education Bulletin Board located on the second floor hallway of the School of Social Work:

1. Practicum Opportunities—announcements of new and current practicum opportunities
2. Practicum Due Dates
3. General Practicum Announcements

B) Field Education Website - The following information is available on-line through the School of Work web site and other sites as noted:

1. Office of Field Education Contact information
2. Practicum requirements, policies and related information
3. Link to the Field Education Collaborative Searchable Practicum Website
4. Resources and tips on successful practicum selection and management

C) Information Through Email and Field Education E-Newsletter

Students will have a great deal of communication with their Faculty Liaison and practicum BCBA® Supervisors through their SLU Email accounts. In addition, the monthly E-Newsletters include critical and timely information on paid practica, practicum sites seeking students, reminders on School of Social Work Google page, and other helpful information on practicum.

VII. OFFICE OF FIELD EDUCATION RESOURCES AND FUNCTIONS

A) Field Education Curriculum Committee

The Field Education Curriculum Committee is comprised of full-time and adjunct Field Education Liaisons. The committee oversees and approves policy related to Field Education, consults with the appropriate curriculum committees, notifies and if appropriate, seeks approval from, the School Assembly of policy changes relevant to the curriculum.

B) Practicum Competencies and Practice Behaviors

The responsibility for authoring and approval of modifications to field education learning objectives is shared between committees charged with overseeing curriculum and the Office of Field Education. Input for and approval of modifications must be gained from both prior to the implementation of the objectives. For the Office of Field Education, input and approval must be obtained by the Field Liaison Committee.

BCBA® Supervisor evaluations from the previous year are reviewed by the Director of Field Education, and themes across semesters about the field education program are noted and discussed at a Field Education Curriculum Committee. The discussion is noted in the minutes of the meeting.

VIII. CHECKLIST FOR BEGINNING YOUR FIRST PRACTICUM

- HIPAA Certification must be completed prior to beginning your first practicum.
 - Email Karen Bolinger (karen.bolinger@slu.edu) to take the training and exam by providing your full name and Banner ID number.
 - If you have previously taken the HIPAA Certification, please email karen.bolinger@slu.edu with proof of completion or provide the date you completed it at SLU.
- Sign the ABA Practicum Supervision Contract
- Create a Gateway account at BACB.com (Free) and review all practicum and supervision requirements
- Confirm your practicum via link prior to beginning practicum
- Complete Contract, Learning Agreement and submit to Blackboard
- Document Log of Hours
- Meet with Liaison and supervisor for initial site visit
- Sign monthly supervision form

Mid-Semester

- Schedule appointment for mid-semester site visit

- Make an appointment with your Faculty Liaison to plan your next semester practicum.
 - Bring the list with you as well as ideas about the population you want to work with, the type of setting you want to work in, and any questions you may have about the process.
- Meet with your assigned Faculty Liaison to discuss practicum options that fit your career and goals interests, and accommodates, as possible, your employment/family responsibilities.
 - Your Faculty Liaison will help you develop a list of potential practicum sites.
- Contact agencies for interviews and report progress via email to your Faculty Liaison.
- Complete interviews.
- Once a practicum has been offered and accepted, your Faculty Liaison will provide you with a link to a conformation form for you to complete and submit.
- During course registration, meet with your Academic Advisor to review your academic plan that includes your practicum. Register in Banner for the appropriate practicum and, if needed, integrative seminar. NOTE: Please make sure you register for practicum with the correct section. The section numbers correspond with your Faculty Liaison. Section numbers with names are below.
 - Make sure you are registered for the correct number of hours for the next semester. (**Semester 1:** Practicum 2 hrs; IS 1hr; **Semester 2:** Practicum 3 hrs/IS 0 hr; **Semester 3:** Practicum 3 hrs/IS 0 hr)
- Begin your practicum the following semester on the date arranged with your practicum site.
- Complete your ABA Learning Agreement with your supervisor and submit it within 2 weeks of the semester starting
- Read and re-read Practicum Handbook to ensure you understand requirements and access any resources.

For questions about practicum hours and other information, see the *Student Handbook*.

NOTE: YOU MAY NOT COUNT PRACTICUM HOURS UNTIL HIPAA VERIFICATION, REQUEST AND CONFIRMATION FORMS ARE SUBMITTED AND THE SUPERVISION CONTRACT HAS BEEN SIGNED.

IX. TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PRACTICUM (developed by Pamela J. Huggins)

“For the things we have to learn before we can do them, we learn by doing them.”
~Aristotle

1. Approach your practicum as a job.

This means that being on time, having regular attendance, following agency policies and the dress code, and performing your best will provide you with a strong reference for your next practicum or first social work and/or behavior analysis position.

2. Communication is vital.

It is important to communicate your thoughts, wishes, and concerns openly and

frequently with your BCBA® Supervisor and other staff. Establishing a strong communication plan that also may include email or voice mail will lessen frustrations or misinterpretations. Your faculty liaison at the school is available to talk to you about any concerns or questions that you may have during your practicum.

3. Focus.

As a student you may be very busy, however it is important that when you arrive for your practicum that you are mentally and physically ready to do your best work. If you are routinely distracted, sleepy, or have an active cell phone, your BCBA® Supervisor may interpret that you are not interested in your practicum work or not developing as a professional.

4. Embrace the learning opportunities and take risks.

Be open to new learning opportunities even if they present some challenges. Throughout your practicum, seek and plan to have experiences (even if observational) in all aspects of the agency's scope of services. Consider changing your schedule to attend a learning opportunity that you might have otherwise missed.

5. Your BCBA® Supervisor is a volunteer!

Social workers and BCBA® Supervisors voluntarily choose to serve as BCBA® Supervisors often out of a desire to “give back” to the profession. Additionally, they are hoping to increase the amount of services that agencies can provide to clients with a student's presence. They are not paid and there are few perks! Developing a strong working relationship will enhance your learning and supervision, and also increase the likelihood of a strong reference for future jobs.

6. Learning agreements are a good tool.

The learning agreement is a tool to assist students in integrating what they have learned in the classroom as well as what they need to know to be an effective social worker and/or behavior analyst with daily practicum experiences. It is important to customize your learning agreement with your specific interests.

7. Feedback helps you develop as a social worker and/or behavior analyst.

Students are encouraged to make a list of topics to actively discuss during supervision time. In addition, practica offer the unique opportunity to gain feedback in a supportive way. View your evaluations as another form of feedback on your developmental journey of strengths and areas of focus for becoming a social worker and/or behavior analyst.

X. SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION SUGGESTIONS

The following guidelines are designed to assist students and BCBA® Supervisors in maximizing the practicum experience. The manner in which these functions are carried out will vary from setting to setting. As many students will not work for the agency in which they complete a practicum, students are most in need of transferable behavior analysis and social work skills they can use in a variety of service systems.

1) **Orientation and Introductions**

A formal or informal orientation should include an introduction to:

- a. setting – physical facilities, parking, schedule, personnel, dress code, etc.
- b. policies and procedures – documentation, service delivery, reimbursement, communications, etc.
- c. agency and community resources
- d. introductions to staff, volunteers, professionals and support staff

While orientation usually occurs most intensively during the first one or two weeks of placement, some types of orientation can be spread over the semester, such as sessions on the nature of specific presenting problems, background on pertinent client issues and other programs with which the student is not intimately involved.

- 2) **Regularly scheduled, private supervisory conferences for one hour per week**
Individual supervision sessions should be carried out as regularly scheduled sessions. Some flexibility to change the time is, at times, necessary; however, it is helpful to have a prearranged time to which the student and BCBA® Supervisor can be held accountable.
- 3) **Supervision available as needed** – Frequent, impromptu supervision during the initial phases of the field placement is especially critical to the success of the field placement for many students. If the BCBA® Supervisor is not personally available, another staff member can be designated to respond to questions that must be answered immediately.
- 4) **Clear supervision and work expectations** – Students, BCBA® Supervisors and agencies benefit from clear supervision and work expectations. While some BCBA® Supervisors expect students to prepare for and bring an agenda to the supervision session, others prefer to structure the time for the student. The expectations for the quality of work vary widely among BCBA® Supervisors as well. Students benefit from very clear expectations that are communicated at the beginning of their practicum and reiterated if and when expectations change.
- 5) **Immersion into work as early as possible in the placement** - The student should move from reading about the agency and observing others to actually practicing behavior analysis and/or social work as quickly as possible. For example, starting with assigning a piece of a larger assignment to the student that can be completed along with another staff member is a helpful beginning experience.
- 6) **Exposure to relevant and varied learning experiences** - The competencies and practice behaviors for a student’s practicum, explicated in the Learning Agreement, depend upon the degree sought, concentration and level of practicum. However, all students benefit from both breadth and depth of learning experiences. The Faculty Liaison may also be a helpful resource as to possible practicum learning activities. Students should be engaged in work activities consonant with professional social work and should not be involved in work unrelated to practicum competencies and practice behaviors. For example, students should not be primarily observing, filing, or engaged in other clerical

duties that do not require a professional degree and are unrelated to their learning objectives.

- 7) **Documentation** - The student should be responsible for some recording in official agency records and utilize computers, when possible. The content, style and frequency will vary with each setting. Students benefit from this exposure, as documentation is required in virtually all areas of social work and behavior analysis practice.
- 8) **Feedback** - Evaluative feedback to the student should be balanced and address positive points and areas in which further growth is needed. Students benefit from immediate, balanced feedback as well as ongoing verbal and written feedback throughout the practicum. BCBA® Supervisors are encouraged to use a variety of evaluative strategies, which may include (but are not limited to): direct observation, audio/video recording, process recording, third party reports, and written materials.
- 9) **Coordination and evaluation** - The student, BCBA® Supervisor and task instructor (if applicable) should be involved in the learning agreement, site visit, and evaluation processes. The student, BCBA® Supervisor, and task instructor (if applicable) should maintain a copy of the Learning Agreement and Evaluation for their records. The student should also receive a copy of any other written performance evaluations that may be completed by the agency. Evaluative feedback should be discussed with the student to enable clarification and mutual agreement.
- 10) **Relevant reading** - Time can be allotted during field placement for reading materials that relate to work in the agency (i.e., activity on an individual case, group/community issues, legislative issues affecting clients, research articles relevant to clinical cases, etc.). The BCBA® Supervisor may need to direct the student to very specific sources of material, such as journal articles or literature belonging to other staff.
- 11) **Community events** - Students are encouraged by faculty to explore the possibility of attending workshops and special events in the community (e.g., Missouri Association for Behavior Analysis, Gateway Association for Behavior Analysis) that are related to field placement as part of their practicum. This must be negotiated between the student and the agency and can be included as practicum hours.
- 12) **Addressing the problematic behavior or performance issues of the student** – Behavior and/or performance problems that interfere with practicum activities do occasionally occur with students. If problems do occur, field instructors are strongly encouraged to take the following steps:
 - a. Gather and document pertinent information to present to the student concerning the problematic behavior or performance issue that interferes with achieving the learning objectives.
 - b. Present the information to the student as soon as possible.

- c. If possible, provide the student with specific suggested actions or steps that can lead to increased professional performance.
- d. Allow the student adequate time to attempt to rectify the situation.
- e. Provide honest, balanced feedback to the student on the progress of changes.
- f. If the problem persists, document the continuation of the problem. Indicate, in writing, to the student that the continuation of the behavior or performance issue is problematic and the consequences that will result if changes do not occur. Contact the Faculty Liaison and send a copy of the documentation.

Students and BCBA® Supervisors are encouraged to talk with the Faculty Liaison throughout the practicum. As a general rule, the Faculty Liaison will not initiate a discussion with the BCBA® Supervisor about a problem a student is facing until the student has first discussed the issue with the BCBA® Supervisor and feels the problem is still unresolved.