

Okanagan College

Diploma Program in Human Service Work

Brief Program Overview

And

Student Policy Handbook

Revised August 2012

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PROGRAM SUMMARY

Graduates of the two year Diploma in Human Service Work will be prepared for employment in the social service, mental health and developmental disabilities fields. Students will develop a theoretical knowledge base, a foundation of professional ethics and values, critical thinking ability, essential support skills, and a process for integrating all of their learning into a functional practice framework. Students will apply this practice framework to develop empowering, purposeful relationships that promote increased levels of health and well being in individuals, families and groups.

Students will learn to advocate and to collaboratively develop social support networks for people from vulnerable populations. While acknowledging personal limitations, students will also learn to fulfill role responsibilities within the context of multidisciplinary teams.

The curriculum for the Diploma in Human Service Work reflects the expanding responsibilities and evolving practice standards for graduates from non-degree social service programs. It has been developed with extensive community consultation, and learning objectives are informed by provincially identified practice competencies.

The Diploma program is connected to a number of universities and university colleges throughout British Columbia. Details about transfer credits are available upon request (please contact HSW Department Chair).

Past graduates of the Human Service Work Certificate program and graduates with Certificates from other colleges will have opportunity to upgrade to a diploma credential. Seats will be awarded based on time and date of application. A limited number of seats will also be available for students who wish to enroll on a part time basis.

Employment opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- support workers in Child and Youth care services;
- community based support services to people with mental health challenges, brain injuries or developmental disabilities;
- support workers in group homes for children, youth, or adults with developmental disabilities, brain injury, behavior or mental health challenges;
- vocational services (sheltered employment, day programming or supported employment) to people with mental health challenges, brain injuries or developmental disabilities;
- support workers in residential treatment centers for adults with addictions;
- community social service agencies;
- support workers in women's emergency shelters;
- diversion programs and Halfway houses for adults paroled to the community; and
- leisure and recreational services to children, youth and adults

Practicum placement opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- residential and community based services for children and adolescents;
- residential centers for adults with addictions;
- social and recreational programs for children, adolescents and adults;
- community social service agencies;

- residential and community based programs for persons with a mental illness or a developmental disability;
- independent and shared living homes; and
- supported employment programs.

Students must complete an eight week practicum in each year of the diploma program. These practica occur in May and June and require students to attend their placements for approximately 30 hours per week.

Students must choose one placement in the **Social Service/Mental Health** field, and another in the **Community Living/Disability** field.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Graduates of the Human Service Work Program will have the knowledge, skills and attitudes to:

1. Relationships

Develop respectful, positive and ultimately helpful relationships with others. Encourage and assist others to expand their network of supportive relationships.

2. Communication

Communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing with individuals and groups. Interact successfully and strategically by applying communication skills best suited to specific contexts.

3. Professionalism

Conduct oneself in a reliable, ethical and professional manner by acknowledging personal limitations, fulfilling role responsibilities and embracing professional values.

4. Community

Increase inclusion and acceptance of all people in their community while embracing a commitment to principles of social justice. Support access and development of appropriate resources and social support networks.

5. Advocacy

Effectively advocate in a collaborative, empowering way while demonstrating knowledge of relevant systemic contexts. Empower others by promoting self advocacy and the acquisition of self advocacy skills.

6. Team Work

Contribute to positive team development and functioning by using knowledge of group process and engaging in self assessment, collaborative decision making, problem solving, and conflict resolution.

7. Problem Solving/Critical Thinking

Use critical thinking skills in relevant situations.

8. Self Awareness

Self reflect and solicit feedback to increase awareness of the impact that one's attitude, beliefs, and behaviour have on self and others.

9. Skilful Practice

Promote client's quality of life, health and well being through the application of such skills as assessment, planning, teaching, facilitating, providing emotional support, and action planning.

10. Life Long Learning

Continually strive to develop personally and professionally through a variety of learning experiences.

PROGRAM OUTLINE

Year One

Semester I

PSYC 111	Introduction to Psychology: Basic Processes
HSW 123	Foundations of Human Service Work Practice OR
SOCW 200A	An Introduction to Social Work Practice
HSW 107	Introduction to Mental Health
HSW 111	Interpersonal Relationships
HSW 114	Families
HSW 124	Supporting Positive Change

Semester II

PSYC 121	Introduction to Psychology: Personal Functioning
HSW 102	Augmentative Communication
HSW 108	Health Care Skills
HSW 122	Emotional Support
HSW 106	Practicum Preparation
One of English 100, 150, 151, 152, 153 or 154	

Intersession

HSW 130	Practicum I: Eight-week block practicum. 30 hours a week in May and June.
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Year Two

Semester III

*PSYC 220 or SOCW 355	Lifespan Development or Human Development
** Six credits of an Arts or Science elective	
HSW 205	Groups

Semester IV

HSW 220	Principles of HSW Practice
HSW 210	Child and Youth Mental Health
HSW 211	Politics and Perspectives on Disability
HSW 206	Practicum Preparation II
PCOM 152	Writing for the Helping Professions
SOCW 200B	Introduction to Social Welfare in Canada

Intersession

HSW 230	Practicum II: Eight-week block practicum. 30 hours a week in May and June
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* PSYC 111 and 121 are prerequisite courses for PSYC 220

** Students must ensure that their Arts and Science electives are university transferable

Grading System

<u>Percent</u>	<u>Letter Grade</u>
90 - 100	A+
85 - 89	A
80 - 84	A-
76 - 79	B+
72 - 75	B
68 - 71	B-
64 - 67	C+
60 - 63	C
55 - 59	C-
50 - 54	D
0 - 49	Fail

- Less than 70% constitutes a FAIL grade for all Human Service Work Courses.
- Practicum components are graded on a "Pass/Fail" basis. To be successful in practicum, a student's performance must be fully satisfactory in all competency areas.
- HSW 106 and 206 are likewise graded on a Pass/Fail basis.
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Self Disclosure Policy

Self disclosure is a natural and personal process that can enhance and support students learning. Students are encouraged to determine their own degree of self disclosure by measuring their level of comfort and safety with this process and by reflecting upon their motivation to self disclose.

Professional Conduct for Human Service Workers

Faculty of the Diploma Program in Human Service Work are charged with ensuring that all of its graduates have the requisite knowledge, skills and values to meet professional practice standards defined by human service agencies.

Therefore, Human Service Work students are expected to behave in a professional manner in this program and must demonstrate responsibility and accountability for their actions. Faculty will help students interpret and apply specific school and/or practicum guidelines. Students must familiarize themselves with the guidelines.

Examples of ***unprofessional conduct*** include but are not limited to:

- Disruptive and inappropriate behaviour (i.e., side talking, eye rolling, use of cell phones and other electronic devices during class).
- Behaving in a manner which endangers students, faculty, staff, practicum agency staff, client and/or volunteers.
- Harassing or being abusive towards students, faculty, staff, practicum agency staff, clients, and/or volunteers.
- Breaches of confidentiality. Such breaches include sharing information about other students that was learned during class, and/or taping class discussion other than the instructor's lecture. Please note that students ***may*** tape lectures – and lectures only – for their personal use, if they obtain the instructor's consent.
- Consistent lateness and/or absence from class and/or practicum placement.
- Disrespectful behaviour in class or during practicum.

In addition, Human Service Work students who are convicted of, or admit to serious illegal activities that are inconsistent with the practice of human service work, or who are likely to harm clients (such as verbal, physical, sexual assault, fraud or trafficking in narcotics) will be subject to the Procedure for Unprofessional Conduct as described below.

Human Service Work students should also note that criminal charges, the commencement of civil proceedings or the commencement of student disciplinary proceedings does not preclude Okanagan College from initiating the Procedure for Unprofessional Conduct.

Procedure for Addressing Unprofessional Conduct

Satisfactory performance in both academic course work and practicum placements is a prerequisite to advancement but may not be the sole criterion in the consideration of suitability for advancement or graduation. The Human Service Work Department reserves the right to initiate termination proceedings if the student is considered to be unsuited to continue with study or practice of human service work. A student may be considered unsuited to continue with the study or practice of human service work if he or she engages in unprofessional conduct.

When a member of faculty, staff or practicum agency (the "Complainant") believes that unprofessional conduct may have occurred, the Complainant is expected to first discuss the alleged unprofessional behaviour with the student. If the matter is not resolved satisfactorily between the student and the Complainant, or if the alleged unprofessional conduct persists, the

Complainant will bring the matter to the attention of the Department Chair, who will discuss the matter with the student. If satisfactory resolution is not attained, the Chairperson may solicit the Dean's involvement. This in turn may lead to probation and possible termination proceedings.

Probation Policy

Okanagan College reserves the right to terminate the training of a vocational health program student.

In the event that a student is placed on probation by the Dean for unprofessional conduct (see above) after having met with the student to establish the terms and conditions of the probation:

- The Dean shall inform the student in writing of the terms and conditions of probation. A copy of the letter will be sent to the Department Chair.
- The Dean shall inform the Registrar, if applicable, and notify Human Resources Skills Development Canada (and any other agency involved in the student's training) of his/her probationary status.
- The Department Chair and Instructors shall monitor the student's performance and report to the Dean, in writing, no later than three (3) days before the end of the probationary period, on the student's progress with respect to the terms and conditions set down in the letter of probation.
- The dean, based on Instructor reports, may either terminate the student's training or revoke the probationary status.
- The Dean's decision shall be communicated in writing to the student, the Registrar, and, if applicable, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada.
- The termination shall be annotated on the student's permanent record.

Program Withdrawal or Termination

Withdrawal or Failure

A student who withdraws or fails and who intends to apply for re-entry into the same program:

- Must discuss the matter with the department chairperson
- Must normally return no later than one year from the time of withdrawal
- Must apply for re-entry via Okanagan College, Admissions Office

Re-Entry Following Withdrawal

Okanagan College reserves the right to grant readmission to the program in accordance with its general admission policies. Students applying for re-entry will not be given preference over other applicants.

The decision to allow readmission to the program will be made on an individual basis. The following factors will be considered in the decision:

- The student has demonstrated satisfactory performance in all program courses at the time of withdrawal;
- The student has not previously withdrawn or failed;
- The student has resolved the difficulty which led to the withdrawal (e.g. financial difficulties; obligations conflicting with studies, emotional or behavioural issues, etc.)
- In order to facilitate department planning during the student's period of absence from the program, the student has kept the Department Chairperson informed of his/her current plans for readmission and has received written approval for readmission from the Department Chairperson.

Re-Entry Following Failure

Okanagan College reserves the right to grant re-entry in accordance with its general admission policies. Students applying for re-entry will not be given preference over other applicants.

The decision to allow re-entry into the program will be made on an individual basis. The following factors will be considered:

- The student has resolved any difficulties which contributed to the failure.
- The student has maintained regular contact with Department Chairperson or delegate.

A student who is re-entering after receiving a failing grade in a practicum course may also be required to repeat a lower level practicum course and satisfy the concurrent registration requirements for that course.

Upon re-entry, if the student subsequently fails any program course, he/she will be required to withdraw from the program for a minimum of two calendar years. If a student returns after this two year waiting period, he/she will be required to enter the program at the beginning and to successfully repeat all program courses, including those courses for which advance standing, transfer credit, or PLA credit were previously granted.

Examinations and Assignments

Absence From Examinations

All students must write examinations when required at the scheduled date and time. Absence from an examination must be discussed with the instructor 24 hours **in advance of the exam sitting** when possible. Absence due to illness must be supported by a medical certificate. Other supporting documents will be required for absences due to reasons other than illness. **A grade of zero will be assigned when a student is absent without substantiated reason.**

Examinations - Late Arrival

Students who are greater than 15 minutes late for examinations and who have a legitimate explanation will be permitted to write the examination with a grade penalty of 10%. **At the discretion of the instructor**, students arriving less than 15 minutes late **with legitimate explanation** may be permitted to write the examination.

Failure on Exam, Assignment or Lab Exam

Commencing January, 2009, students will not be offered opportunity to rewrite or redo exams or assignments.

Assignment Extensions

Assignments are to be submitted to the designated instructor at the time, date and place specified by the instructor. Applications for extension are discouraged, but will be considered if made to the designated instructor a **minimum of two working days** in advance of the due date.

Extraordinary requests for extensions that are made less than two working days in advance of the due date will be considered at the Department level. If an extension has not been approved, ten percent (10%) will be deducted from the assignment grade for each 24 hours (or portion thereof) that it is late, including Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays.

Plagiarism, Cheating During Examinations

It is expected that all assignments will be carried out with integrity and honesty. All assignments are expected to be the student's original work and to be properly documented. Consistent with Okanagan College policies, failure to meet this expectation will result in **a grade of "0" for the assignment and/or for the course**, and may result in referral to the Review Board.

Note: Okanagan College policies are published in the College Calendar.

Attendance

Reporting Absence

Contact the appropriate instructor at Okanagan College by 0830 hours. Messages may be left on the instructor's voicemail.

Course Outlines will state the amount of marks deducted for attendance; where they do not, the Okanagan College policy on attendance shall govern.

Students who anticipate a long absence need to discuss this with their instructor and/or the Department Chair.

Four or more absences from any single course during a semester will result in a failing grade for that course.

Please note: Potential employers seeking reference documentation expect absence in the program to be noted. Therefore, a pattern of absence or lengthy absence may jeopardize employment opportunities upon graduation.

Illness or Incapacity

Illness or incapacity refers to missing all or part of any scheduled classroom, laboratory, shop, clinical or practicum placement due to illness or injury. It also includes inability to perform required training activities where such inability is apparently attributable to illness, injury, disability or mental disorder.

If, in the opinion of the instructor, a student is incapable of successfully completing a program by virtue of a disability or health related problem, the instructor shall report to the Dean. The Dean shall meet and inform the student that a professional assessment of the disability or health related problem is a required condition of continued enrolment in the program. The Dean shall confirm the student's conditional status in a letter to the student.

While the Dean may assist the student in identifying an appropriate resource for professional assessment, the student must make the arrangements for that assessment and ensure that a report is sent directly from the professional conducting the assessment to the Dean's office. The Dean shall request, in writing, that the student arrange to authorize release of a copy of the professional assessment to be sent to the Dean's office.

Based on the results of the professional assessment report, the Dean may decide to either continue or terminate the student's training. A decision to terminate shall be communicated by the Dean, in writing, to the student and the Registrar.

Criminal Record

Should a student incur a Criminal Record while participating in the Human Service Work Program, the student **must** submit the conviction to the Criminal Records Review Committee. The conviction may result in the student's termination from the Human Service Work Program.

Dress Code

Health and social service instructional departments rely on the judgement of students to maintain a reasonable standard of dress and appearance.

Workers' Compensation

Students are covered by Workers' Compensation when in clinical or community agencies. If injured either at the college or in an agency they must notify the faculty and Okanagan College safety officer within 24 hours of injury.

Guidelines for Communication

Student Concerns

Should individual students or small groups of students develop concerns about a course component, faculty member or fellow student, the following process must be followed:

- 1) Discuss the problem(s) directly with the person concerned;
- 2) If the concern is not resolved, consult with the relevant classroom instructor, and inform the concerned person of the intent to do so;
- 3) If the concern is about a faculty member, consult with the Department Chairperson and inform the concerned faculty member of the intent to do so;
- 4) If the concern is related to the Department Chair, consult with the Dean, Faculty of Science, Technology and Health, and inform the Department Chairperson of intent to do so.

Practicum Policies

Practicum is an 8 week, 30 hours per week block placement, totalling 240 hours. Students are in practicum mid-April through to mid-June.

Readiness for Practicum Experience

Faculty reserve the right to deny student placement if their preparatory work is deemed unsatisfactory. As partial requirement for practicum placement in HSW 130 (1st year practicum), students must first successfully complete semesters I and II of the Human Service Work Program, or obtain permission from the Department. Second year students must successfully complete semesters III and IV prior to practicum placement (HSW 230), or obtain permission from the Department.

Location of Practicum Placement

Practicum experiences are an integral part of the Diploma Program in Human Service Work. Practicum sites include a wide range of agencies, facilities, and locations.

While an effort will be made to accommodate student preferences for types and location of practicum experiences, Okanagan College reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of any practicum placement. All agencies serving as practicum sites must first be approved by Okanagan College which reserves the right to change a student's practicum placement. The student has the right to be informed, in writing, of the reason for doing so.

Students often wonder in which community they may undertake their practicum. Please note that:

- **If a student is enrolled in the Kelowna program, then the practicum community encompasses Lake Country to Osoyoos.**
- **If a student is enrolled in the Vernon program, then the practicum community encompasses Lake Country to Enderby.**
- **If a student is enrolled in the Salmon Arm program, then the practicum community encompasses Enderby to Revelstoke.**

Student Transportation

Students must arrange for their own transportation to and from practicum sites. Travel expenses are the student's responsibility.

Attendance and Evaluation

Attendance at practicum activities is required. Students are expected to notify the placement agency and field instructor whenever practicum arrangements cannot be met.

Students may be asked to work afternoons and evenings and therefore must plan to make the necessary time adjustments with daycare, part-time employment, etc.

Faculty have the responsibility to give verbal and written feedback to students regarding their laboratory/clinical/practicum performance. Students require feedback to reinforce that they can apply theory, and perform competently and ethically. Just as important, students need feedback to realize and understand which skills, values and behaviours must be changed or adapted so that they can meet the standards expected of a graduate. Feedback should be specific and focused on the main learning goals so that students realize how well they are progressing and that they are motivated and encouraged to meet the program goals.

Practicum will be evaluated by the student's field supervisor and instructor. They will be graded on a Pass/Fail basis. Students must demonstrate success in all competencies listed in their practicum evaluation guide. Mid-term evaluations will help to acknowledge strengths and weaknesses. If a student is failing, written feedback will identify those improvements required in order to pass. A student who is unable to successfully pass all competencies by the final evaluation will receive a fail grade. (Students who pass their mid-term evaluations and subsequently fail their final evaluations will likewise be issued a failing grade. Failure of any practicum will preclude the student's entrance into subsequent practicum experiences.

Students may be required to withdraw from the practicum with a failing grade if their performance in the practicum is considered unsatisfactory by the department faculty and field supervisor.

For information on Okanagan College policies pertaining to Grade Appeals, General Appeals and Complaints, Sexual Harassment, Program Disruption, etc. please see the Okanagan College Calendar.

Counseling Recommendation

As students proceed through our program, each student is invited to engage in a self-reflection process. We find that not only do students grow intellectually and professionally, but perhaps even more profoundly, they grow on a personal level. As students are challenged both personally and professionally, we strongly encourage counseling as a source of support during this time of growth.

Student Declaration

The Human Service Work Diploma Program, Okanagan College, is committed to providing me with an education characterized by quality instruction within a congenial and safe learning environment. Their objective is to support me through to graduation so that I may become a valuable and contributing member of the Human Service Field.

In return, the Human Service Work Diploma Program expects a commitment from me. More specifically, the Program expects me to commit to the following:

1. Relationships

I will engage in positive and respectful behaviours in my relationships with everyone I encounter within this program. If and when interpersonal conflict arises in my relationships with HSW faculty or classmates, I will first attempt resolution directly with that person rather than discussing it with others. If I am unable to resolve it, then I will solicit support from my instructor. If my conflict is with my instructor, I will first attempt resolution with that instructor. If the conflict remains unresolved, I will then seek assistance from the Program Chair. If my conflict is with the Program Chair, I will first attempt resolution with the Chair. If the conflict remains unresolved, then I will seek assistance from the Associate Dean or Dean.

2. Communication

I will communicate respectfully and responsibly, verbally, nonverbally and in writing, by applying skills prescribed by the Human Service Work Diploma Program. Some of these skills include, but are not limited to, perception checking, active listening, “I” statements, conflict resolution, empathic responses, valuing differences, asking questions, and exercising non-judgement.

3. Professionalism

I will act ethically and with integrity in the classroom and in my practicum. Acting with integrity means doing the right thing even if it’s difficult. Doing the right thing means telling the truth, being on time, following class/practicum norms and rules, being punctual, resolving my own issues and challenges without blaming others, attending classes/practicum, submitting assignments/tasks on time, turning off communication devices while in class/practicum, not cheating on assignments and exams, and preparing for class/practicum.

I will maintain healthy boundaries. Maintaining healthy boundaries means thinking carefully about what I will self disclose; it means valuing the opinions, thoughts, feelings of others (by listening, by not interrupting *or* working to convince others of the rightness of my opinion/thought/feeling).

I will ensure that my personal sharing in class or in assignments is relevant and beneficial to classroom learning. Although I am expected to participate in class discussions, I understand that I am not required to share something from my past that I do not want to

discuss.

4. Confidentiality

I will maintain confidentially: I will not discuss personal information with others that is shared by students and instructors in the classroom, nor will I disclose information shared by clients in my practicum.

5. Team Work

I will contribute to positive team development by reflecting on my behaviour and the way that it affects others; by participating in classroom discussions and activities; and by working together when problem solving, making decisions, or resolving conflict.

6. Self Awareness

I will self reflect on my behaviour and on my relationship with others in this program. I will solicit feedback to increase my awareness of the impact that my attitude, beliefs and behaviour have on myself and others. When others, unsolicited, offer me feedback, I will respond to it by listening without expressing defensiveness.

My Commitment

I have read, and I understand the contents of this policy manual which includes the student declaration. I agree to comply with the above expectations. Although some of the content above may currently be unfamiliar to me, when I learn them, I will commit to practicing them.

Student Name

Student ID Number

HSW Department Chair

Date