

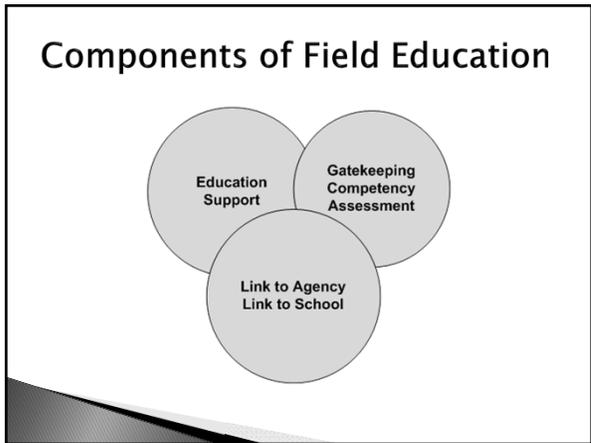
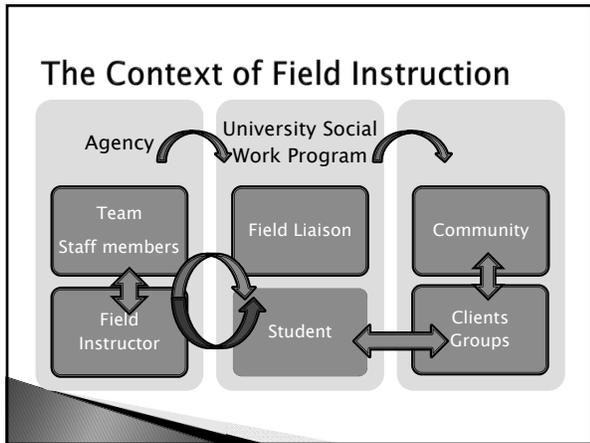
# Dynamic & Effective Practices in Field Education

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## Overview

- ▶ What we know “works” in field education
- ▶ The challenges

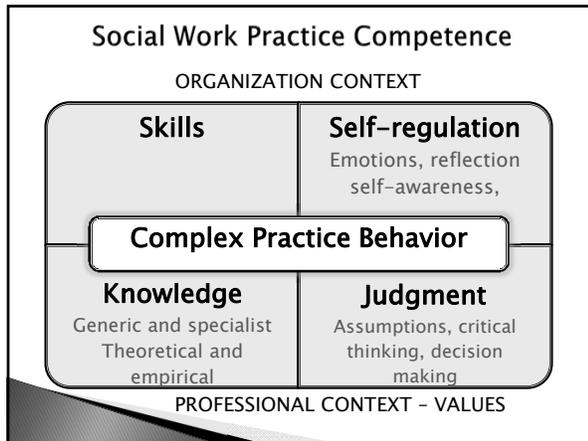


### Field Education: Signature Pedagogy of Social Work

- ▶ Student and alumni – most important component
  - Socialize to profession: thinking, performing, acting with integrity
  - Integrate theory and practice
  - Greater sense of the complexity and diversity in practice

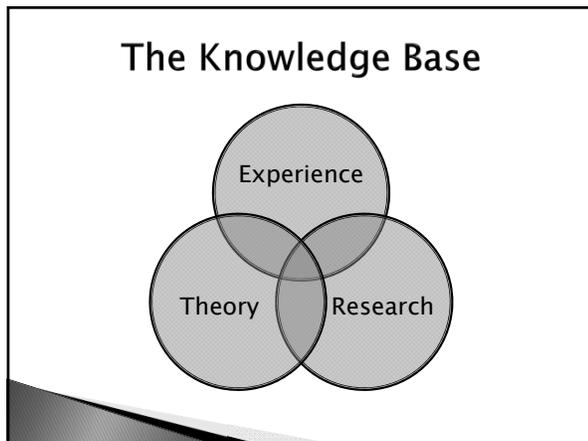
### Educating for Competence

- ▶ Content
  - the “3 main things” you would emphasize
- ▶ Process



**The Process of Field Education**

- ▶ How do students learn in field?
- ▶ What do field instructors do to promote that learning?
- ▶ What can students do to promote their own learning?



**From Your Own Experience**

- ▶ As a student
- ▶ Practice models
- ▶ As a supervisor of staff
- ▶ As a field instructor
- ▶ Through observing others
- ▶ What are some of your key educational beliefs and practices – your field education pedagogy or teaching model – practice wisdom

**Learning and Teaching Processes**

- ▶ Across studies: moderately high to high satisfaction when...
  - Positive socio-emotional context
  - Many opportunities to practice
  - Observe practitioners and de-brief
  - Reflective discussions to link all domains of competence
  - Students are observed and receive feedback

**Socio-emotional  
Context:  
Relationship**

## Why so important?

- ▶ Adult learning theory
  - Self-concept, feelings about self
- ▶ Self-efficacy
  - Anxiety when facing new and complex practice issues
  - Helpful guidance and positive feedback leads to feeling empowered
  - Higher confidence and satisfaction

## Emotions, neuroscience, and the brain

- ▶ Learning is optimized through:
  - Relaxed attention – lessens stress & anxiety
  - Emotions drive attention and memory
  - Positive emotions aid thinking and remembering

## Learner States

### Learner

- Anxiety – flight, fight, freeze, fragment
  - Experiences with diversity and difference
  - Stage of student development
    - Limited bank of practice experiences
    - Limited reservoir of skills
  - ▶ Need support
- The relationship as context and mediator of organization stressors and client complexity

## AND....

- ▶ Optimum anxiety fuels learning
- ▶ Balance high support, high expectations and risk/challenge

## Relationship

Field instructor – student dyad was perceived of as high quality when:

- Available, interested, and supportive
- Meetings – regular, frequent, duration
- Balance between structure and autonomy
- Emotional support and balanced feedback

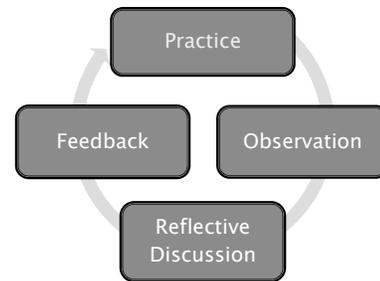
## Relationship

Power dynamics – contracting and ongoing clarification

- purpose and role
- elicit student's perceptions about relationship and educational activities
- discuss mutual obligations and expectations about:
  - the authority of the field instructor, evaluation, giving and receiving feedback, resolving conflict/disagreement.

## Key Learning-Teaching Processes

## Learning-Teaching/Supervisory Processes



## Opportunities to Practice

### Experiential learning

- Concrete experience
- Reflective observation
- Abstract conceptualization
- Active experimentation

## Neuro-science

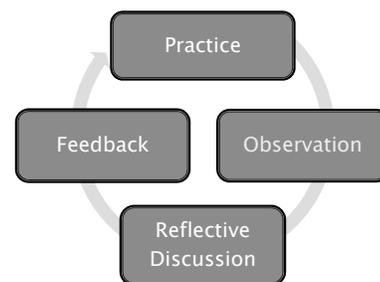
- ▶ Action strengthens new and existing neural connections
- ▶ New knowledge needs to:
  - Make sense
  - Be relevant
  - Build on existing knowledge
- ▶ Learner needs to 'construct' new knowledge for self
- ▶ Need MANY opportunities to practice and learn

## Opportunities to Practice

- ▶ More practice associated with
  - higher self-evaluation of skills they practiced
  - higher overall evaluation of their field performance
  - students' greater satisfaction with placement
  - higher ratings of their performance by their field instructors\*
- ▶ 10,000 hours of practice\*\* to assimilate what needs to be known, to gain mastery

(\*Fortune, Lee, & Cavazos, 2007; \*\*Levitin, 2006).

## Learning-Teaching/Supervisory Processes



## OBSERVATION

- ▶ Apprenticeship – learning through observing and doing
- ▶ Social learning theory – modeling
- ▶ Communities of practice – learn ‘know-how’ through observing

## Observation

- ▶ Observe others
- ▶ Co-working
- ▶ Being observed
  - Behind one way mirror
  - Video or audio segments and review
- ▶ Student anxiety
  - Private and public practice
  - Role induction

## Observation

- ▶ How can you have a reflective dialogue about something you have not seen?
- ▶ How can you give feedback on skills if you have not seen the skills in action?

## What is discussed in an interview with clients?

- ▶ *Do practitioners speak with clients about topics that were **not related** to the issues under attention?*
- ▶ *Do practitioners make self-disclosures unrelated to the issues under attention?*

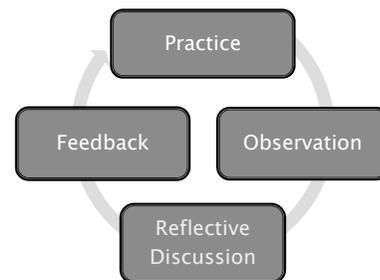
## CHAT

(Martino 2009)

## What was discussed

- ▶ Common experiences including personal information
- ▶ Opinions not related to client’s therapy issues
- ▶ Current events or news
- ▶ **Study found practitioners initiate discussions with their clients that are not relevant to treatment.**

## Learning-Teaching/Supervisory Processes



## Why Reflective Discussions

### Experiential learning

- Concrete experience
- **Reflective observation**
- **Abstract conceptualization**
- Active experimentation

## Why Reflective Discussion

- ▶ Schon – Reflective practicum – engage with experienced practitioners in real-world activities to learn to think, reflect, and know-in-action
- ▶ About surfacing (your) implicit knowledge
- ▶ Learning to ‘think like a social worker’
  
- ▶ Cultural context – attitudes toward learning based on worldview and experiences; examine assumptions.

## Organization Life and Learning Culture

- ▶ Life in service organizations produces a ‘crowded’ life – continually occupied and engaged, no time to stand back and think.
- ▶ Expertise is enhanced when there is reflection:
  - time for attention to mulling over experience, with others – supervision and peer discussion – and learn from it.
- ▶ Distracted involvement does not allow for the integration of experience.

(Munroe, 2011).

## Reflective Discussion

Use the Competence Model to examine the various components

## Social Work Practice Competence

ORGANIZATION CONTEXT



PROFESSIONAL CONTEXT – VALUES

## Cognitions and Emotions

In an iterative and inter-related manner

- ▶ Link reflections to a knowledge base through articulation-explanation and conceptualization (ITP)
  - Link to course concepts
  - Evidence-based approaches
  - Promote generalization and transfer to other practice situations

## Cognitions and Emotions

- ▶ Review and discuss
  - Use of self
    - our inner life impacts our practice
    - promote mindfulness, attunement, affect regulation, and response
    - promote self-awareness and insight
    - boundaries respected.

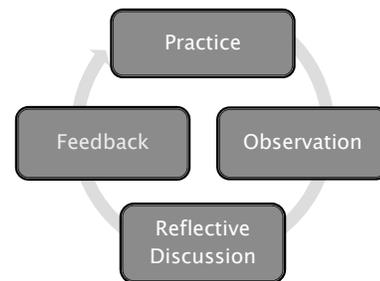
## Cognitions and Emotions

- ▶ Review and discuss
  - values, ethics, informing...
  - assumptions, critical thinking, reasoning, judgments, decision making
  - subjective reactions
- ▶ Toward making sense of the situation from a personal/professional perspective
  - >>> response

## Planning and Intervention

- ▶ Actions and interactions are carried out
  - through complex practice behaviors
  - offered through the effective use of skills
  - in the context of a professional relationship
  - in the context of an agency program.

## Learning-Teaching/Supervisory Processes



## Feedback

- ▶ Social learning theory and research on learning
- ▶ During an observation: prompting, suggestions, coaching
- ▶ After an observation:
  - Immediacy, close in time
  - Collaborative – student or worker self-assessment
  - Based on practice data observed
  - Balance positive and negative
- ▶ Objectionable styles: Demeaning or harsh

(Abbott & Lyter, 1998; Fortune & Abramson, 1993; Freeman, 1985)

## Feedback

### Balance between next steps with client and student learning

- Review client goals and progress
- Discuss student's learning goals
  - specific knowledge, skills, attitudes regarding practice
- Link to student's **overall learning, performance, and competence**
  - build toward mid-term/formative evaluation

## Feedback

- Next steps:
  - Conceptualization of situation
  - Collaborative brainstorming alternatives
  - Coaching, skill training, role play, modeling
- Builds toward summative evaluation

## Evaluation of Student Learning

- ▶ Practice data – observed, frequently, multiple raters
- ▶ Tools
  - Specify student performance behaviors
  - Application of theory to practice – also cognitive and emotional processing leading to choice of interventions
  - At what level of competence

## Evaluation of Student Learning

- ▶ Who evaluates
  - Context of intense relationship and response
  - Values collide – support, empower, strengths/judgment, critical
- ▶ The need for multiple approaches to assessment of competence – e.g. OSCE

## Summary: Key Ingredients

- ▶ Student – field instructor relationship
- ▶ Opportunities to practice
- ▶ Observation of practice
- ▶ Reflective discussion and review
- ▶ Feedback

## Challenges and Creative Responses

## Challenges

- ▶ TIME – to observe students, to reflect, and to 'teach'
- ▶ To articulate implicit and tacit knowledge
- ▶ To stay current with new models and research findings
- ▶ Organizational context
  - Value of education, central education coordination, for social work or inter-professional
  - Role and purpose of social work
- ▶ Assessment–evaluation of student's practice

## What Field Instructors Need

- ▶ Organizational Involvement
  - Learning culture
  - Team involvement
  - Welcome students into the agency
    - Pride in what we can teach
    - Value students' 'fresh' views, stimulate learning through asking questions
- ▶ Professional Development
  - Content and practice expertise
  - As a field instructor

## The Field Instructor and The Organizations

- ▶ For the school:
  - Identify what students come with, gaps, and needs
  - Assist in curriculum development and assessment
- ▶ For the agency:
  - Potential to link with university partners for:
    - Knowledge building for practice
    - Knowledge transfer and dissemination
    - Advocacy, program and policy change.

## Website

### Competency for Professional Practice

<http://www.socialwork.utoronto.ca/research/initiatives/competency.htm>

Knowledge building – studies, articles, presentations

Knowledge dissemination – fact sheets, assessment and evaluation tools.

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