

Student/Agency Manual for Fieldwork
in Therapeutic Recreation

School of Health Sciences
Eastern Michigan University
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197

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Introduction

Therapeutic Recreation Fieldwork experiences are offered for credit by Eastern Michigan University and are required of all students majoring in Therapeutic Recreation at the University. The Therapeutic Recreation program is housed within the College of Health & Human Services.

The term "fieldwork" refers to a supervised educational work experience within a health-care or human service agency. It is a requirement of the program that students majoring in therapeutic recreation have three (3) 60-hour fieldwork experiences prior to the internship. Each fieldwork needs to be completed in a different setting under the supervision of a CTRS. The Student, Agency and University should recognize the relative importance of the fieldwork experience in the student's overall education.

The fieldwork is a cooperative arrangement between the School of Health Sciences at Eastern Michigan University, and an approved agency where the student obtains pre-professional leadership, supervisory, and/or administrative experience of a practical nature under the supervision of qualified and experienced personnel from both the Agency and University.

The opportunity to engage in the practical application of theories and guidelines learned in the classroom is afforded each student through the fieldwork course. It is through the fieldwork that the student comes to realize his/her skills, professional stature and goals, and provides insight into future determination of the internship.

This manual has been developed to provide specific details regarding the fieldwork program in the School of Health Sciences at Eastern Michigan University. It serves three distinct purposes:

- 1) to provide the student agency and university supervisors with details regarding policies, procedures and responsibilities of the student and agency.
- 2) to promote communication and understanding between the triad of participants in the Internship program (student, agency, university).
- 3) to define the fieldwork through delineation of its goals, objectives, and procedures.

Procedures for the Fieldwork Program

- 1) Students signing up for a 1-credit fieldwork experience (THRC 250, 251, 252) must have completed, at minimal, the THRC 100 Foundations & Advancement of Therapeutic Recreation class. Only one fieldwork experience is permitted per semester.
- 2) Fieldwork settings must be selected from the approved field work site list provided by the Director of Therapeutic Recreation. Make sure that each field site selection is different from any previous fieldwork experiences.
- 3) The direct supervisor of the agency, needs to be a CTRS. Although most contacts outlined in the fieldwork site list are CTRS's, the student should verify since the information on the site list may not be current.
- 4) Students will make the initial contact to the agency to determine whether fieldwork openings presently exist. Once the supervisor is willing to accept the student, which may include an interview, the student should communicate the agreement to the Director of Therapeutic Recreation.
- 5) Scheduling of hours should be made in advance with the supervisor. Remember, your exact hour preferences may not always be accommodated. You need to work into the scheduling system already in place at the agency.
- 6) It is recommended that the 60 hours are spread out over the semester and include only times where actual programming and other client-centered activities are taking place.
- 7) Please refer to the TR Student Handbook for information on immunizations and other screening processes prior to beginning a fieldwork. Because each agency differs in their screening requirements it is imperative that you begin early in the semester to investigate specific requirements pertinent to the agency and prior to beginning the fieldwork.

Goals of the Fieldwork Program

Each student brings a different skill set into the fieldwork. Some students have had previous experience, and may also have more academic course in TR completed. For other students, this may be the first exposure to people with disabilities and the use of therapeutic recreation as a process for health restoration. The following list should serve as a guide as to potential goals that could be addressed in the fieldwork. It is up to you and your supervisor to discuss specific outcomes based on your comfort level, prior experience and education. The beginning student should have direct supervision at all times.

- 1) Understand the nature of the agency and the role of the CTRS at such an agency.
- 2) Conduct client assessments using a variety of methods (i.e. interview, observation, standardized instruments) as a basis for appropriate interventions.
- 3) Apply techniques of activity analysis, selection and adaptation.

Goals of the Fieldwork Program (continued)

- 4) Demonstrate activity leadership skills.
- 5) Develop an individualized treatment program using the TR Process.
- 6) Apply a variety of facilitation techniques which reflect best practices in conducting programs/interventions.
- 7) Demonstrate documentation of client behavior and effectiveness of interventions which includes discharge summaries.
- 8) Basic understanding of organizing and managing services within the TR department.
- 9) Demonstrate the ability to effectively communicate with clients.
- 10) Familiarity with advocacy and public relation efforts of TR within and outside the agency.

Student Requirements

- 1) Students need to develop, in concert with their supervisor, a list of 3 outcomes (minimally) that can be achieved over the course of 60 hours. This list should be forwarded to the TR Program Director for approval before beginning the fieldwork.
- 2) Regular reports need to be submitted to the TR Program Director after every 10 hours of involvement. The report should address any activity that brings you closer to meeting your goals. Reflections on how you process your experiences is critical as well. For example, what was a reaction of a client based on your interaction? What did you feel went well, and not so well. How would you approach something differently the next time?
- 3) At the conclusion of the fieldwork, a write-up of the entire experience is required. What was your progress toward the goals you set at the beginning? What did you learn? What experiences exceeded expectations? What frustrations did you encounter? The final paper should be at least 2 pages typed.
- 4) Attached to the final paper you should attach the evaluation form which is completed by your supervisor. (p. 9)

Agency Supervisor Responsibilities

- 1) Become familiar with the objectives and procedures established by the University for the fieldwork experience. Assist the student in developing goals which can feasibly be completed within the 60 hour time frame. Goals should be consistent with the student's background (education & experience) and comfort level. (See the sample of goals on p.1).
- 2) Orient the Student to the policies and objectives of the Agency and Department and establish a schedule of work activities. It is suggested that this be done at the beginning to enable the Student to gain a better understanding of his/her involvement in the total operation of the Agency during the fieldwork period. Assign initial tasks within the Student's abilities and gradually upgrade the assignments and responsibilities.
- 3) Provide the student with meaningful experiences that will help the student progress toward his/her goals. Menial work such as organizing a closet should not be part of the fieldwork experience.
- 4) Students should be supervised by a designated supervisor with N.C.T.R.C. certification. The supervisor should be readily accessible to the student.
- 5) Completion of an evaluation of the Student's performance during the fieldwork period. (See p. 9). All individuals involved in the Student's supervision should be consulted for the evaluation. Following completion of the evaluation, the Agency Supervisor should discuss the evaluation with the Student. The student will attach the signed evaluation to his/her final report.

University/Agency Agreement Form

Agency _____

Address _____

Supervisor _____

This agency will accept the following student for a 60-hour fieldwork in therapeutic recreation for the period and under the specifications listed below:

Name of Student _____

Starting Date _____

Hours: - - - - -

Goals of Field work

Upon completion of the 60 hours, I plan to complete the following outcomes:

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

3) _____

(Attach another sheet of paper for additional goals)

Student Signature

Date

Supervisor Signature

- - - - -
Title

▼ _____
Date

**FIELD WORK
EVALUATION FORM
THRC 250, 251, 252
(Circle one)**

Name of Agency: _____

Address: _____

Supervisor: _____

Phone: _____

This is to verify that _____ has participated in a
(Name of Student)

60/120/180 hour practical experience with _____ clients.
(Circle One) (Type of disability)

Dates of experience: _____

Involvement included: - - - - -

Comments on Student's Performance: _____

(Signature of Student)

(Signature of Supervisor)

(Date)

If you have any questions, please call: Dr. Thomas, Instructor, (734) 487-6839
or e-mail at: dthomas@emich.edu



EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Dear Colleague,

Thank you for agreeing to supervise a therapeutic recreation student from Eastern Michigan University for his/her 60 hour field work requirement (i.e. THRC 250, 251 or 252). Three (3) Field Work classes are required for all students in the program and need to be completed before an internship is started. Each student enters into his/her field work class with a different level of academic and practical experience. To best accommodate the specific needs of the student, I would like to ask you, the practitioner supervisor, to develop in collaboration with the student at least 3 outcomes that can be realistically achieved over the 60 hour field work experience. A form, which is included in the Field Work Manual p. 8, should be completed and signed by both you and the student, and returned to me by the student. A sample of goals/outcomes are listed on pages 5 & 6.

In general (but not always), students who are taking their first Field Work class (THRC 250) are just beginning the program and would have less familiarity with the TR process. Such a student might benefit from assisting with activities with direct supervision, observing interactions, learning about the medical records and agency charting system and other preliminary skills. On the other hand, students who are in their last Field Work (THRC 252), would probably benefit from a more challenging experience and would likely have some background in interviewing patients, leading small group activities, documenting progress in draft form, and other higher level skills. The best approach is to sit down the 1st day with the student and discuss his/her background, comfort level and interests before setting outcomes.

Lastly, at the conclusion of the student's field work, I would like you to complete a short evaluation form of the student's performance. The form is available on p. 9 of the Field Work Manual. The student will attach the evaluation form to his/her summary paper and submit to me.

Again, thank you for your dedication and time to help train a future therapeutic recreation professional. Your commitment to the profession is much appreciated. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns at any time.

David Thomas

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