

## An Experimental Field Rotation Model to Enhance Foundation Competency Achievement

University of Maine  
School of Social Work  
CSWE Annual Program Meeting  
October 24-26, 2014

### HOW DID WE GET HERE?



- 1978 The BSW program included a Volunteer Field Experience.
- 2005 Hartford Practicum Program In Aging Education (HPPAE) introduced the *Rotation Model* in the MSW field program.
- 2008 CSWE BSW Education Learning (BEL) grant expanded field rotations into the BSW program in the Junior Year Experience.

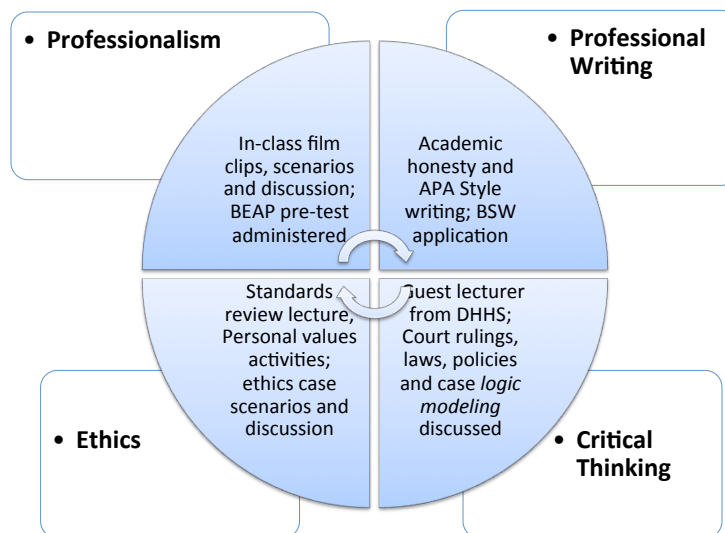
## Fall Semester

The Junior Field Experience is delivered over 2 semesters, starting in the fall continuing in the spring.  
Both fall and spring junior courses are required and are in addition to the Senior Field Practicum.

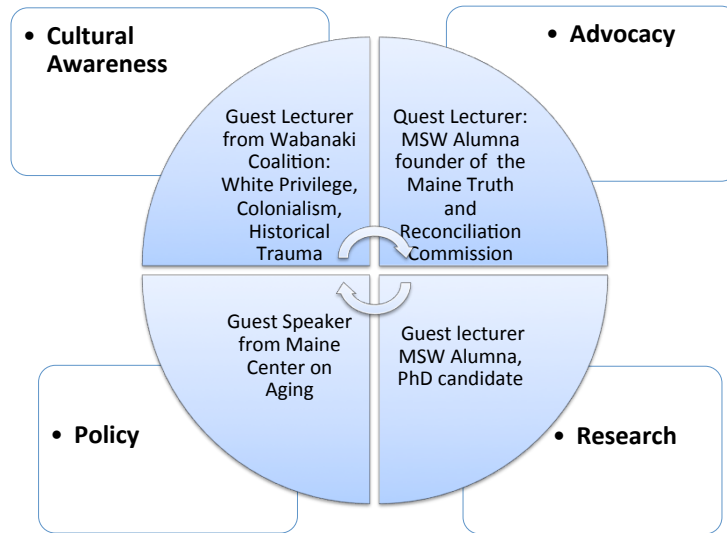
The fall semester is taught as a "skills lab". Offered in a module format, each week focuses on one of the EPAS Core Competencies

Professionals from community agencies deliver guest lectures in the classroom providing information about their agencies and connecting their practice to the Core Competencies.

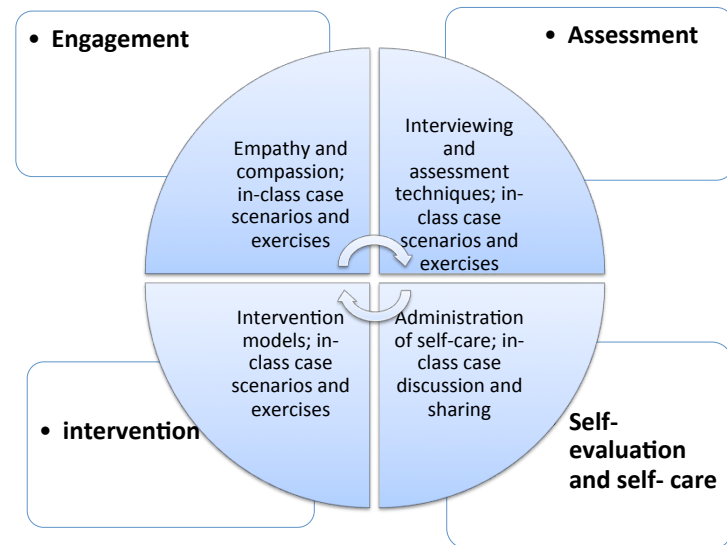
## Fall Semester Course Outline



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## What Spring Semester Looks like in Maine

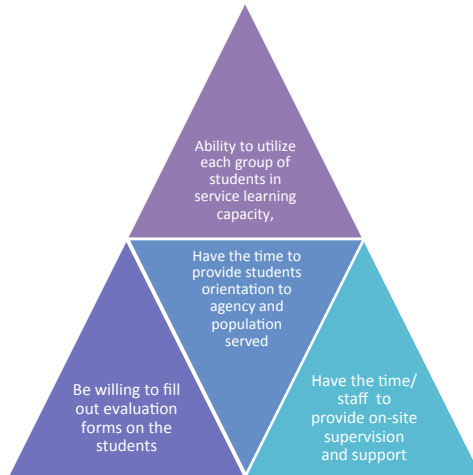


## Spring Semester Rotations

Spring semester agencies selected for



## Spring Semester Rotation Criteria



## Participating Rotation Agencies



### MICRO

- Maine Veteran's Skilled Living Home
- Shaw House Homeless Teen Shelter
- Game Loft after school program
- BroadReach Casemanagment
- Penobscot Community Health Center



### MEZO

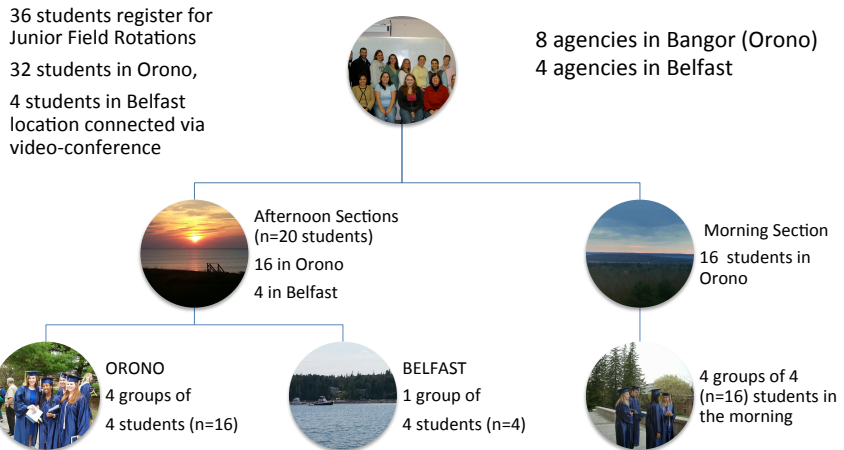
- State Office of Child and Family Services
- St. Michael's Center for Children
- Caring Connections Breast Cancer Support
- Eastern Maine Aids Network



### MACRO

- Spruce Run Domestic Violence Agency
- Penobscot Nation Department of Human Services
- University of Maine Center on Aging
- Spectrum Generations Area on Aging

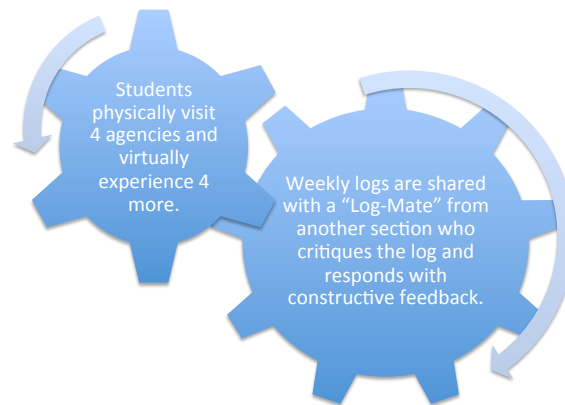
## Devil is in the Details



## Visual Picture of the Rotation Model

		ROTATION 1	ROTATION 2	ROTATION 3	ROTATION 4
<b>AGENCIES</b>		<b>DATES</b>	<b>DATES</b>	<b>DATES</b>	<b>DATES</b>
		Jan 23, 30	Feb 13, 20	March 27,	April 17,24,
		Feb 6	Feb 27	April 3, 10	May 1.
<b>Center On Aging</b>	Aging/Macro	1	2	3	4
<b>Penobscot Nation Department of Health and Human Services</b>	Native/Children	2	3	4	1
<b>Penobscot Community Health Center</b>	Health/Mental Health /Mezzo	3	4	1	2
<b>Shaw House</b>	Homeless Teens/ Micro	4	1	2	3

## Double the pleasure



## Double the Fun

- For each of the 4 – three week rotations students must read assigned scholarly articles related to the population of the agencies which they are visiting.
  - 4 written reflection papers comparing the agency they visited to the information in the article assigned .
  - Papers, logs and log responses are graded on timeliness of submission and integration of theory to observation or practice.
- Midterm based on areas of practice divided by competency area
- Written reflection summarizing their learning.

### OUTCOMES: From the final written reflection

What did you like most about participating in a Field Rotation Model?

What did you like least about participating in a Field Rotation Model?

What were the best things you learned in you Spring Field Rotations that have helped you prepare for your Senior Field?

### What They Said: Best Part

#### Variety

- “I liked getting to see different facilities”

#### “Hands-on”

- “I was able to really experience the work social workers are doing.”

#### Validation

- “It instilled in me a passion for social work.”



## Best Part

### Variety

- “I liked learning how different agencies work”
- “I liked learning about different policies”

### “Hands-on”

- “I was able to get an experience of what it’s like to be a real social worker.”
- “I was able to apply the NASW Code of Ethics to the field.”

### Validation

- “I learned how to self-reflect while working with clients.”
- “I enjoyed dressing professionally”

## Critiques

### Unstructured Time

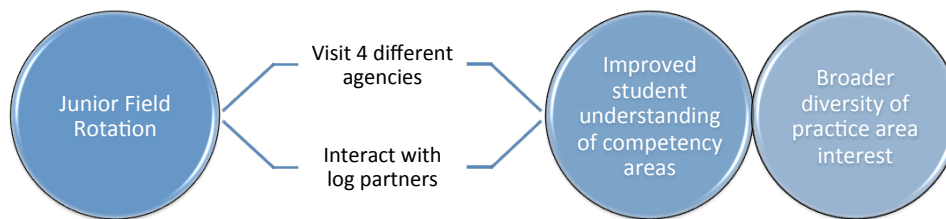
- More than half of the students cited lack of preparation or too much unstructured time in the agency.
- Many felt they were sitting around observing too much.

### Student Exchanges

- Many students were concerned that their “Log-Mates” were not responsible in getting the logs to them on time.
- There was a desire for more feedback from the instructor.

## BSW Survey of Seniors (n = 29)

*As a result of my Junior Field Rotation experience...*



## Results

Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I have an increased understanding of the core competencies.	0	0	0	62.1% (18)	37.9% (11)
2. I can identify which competencies are a strength for me.	0	0.034% (1)	10.3% (3)	58.6% (17)	27.6% (8)
3. I can identify which competencies are a challenge for me.	0	0.034% (1)	10.3% (3)	55.2% (16)	31.0% (9)
4. I can integrate the core competencies into my field logs as part of self-reflection.	0	0	17.2% (5)	44.8% (13)	37.9% (11)
5. I am more open to working with diverse populations.	0	0	0.034% (1)	44.8% (13)	51.7% (15)
6. I now know what population I am most interested in working with.	0	0	27.6% (8)	37.9% (11)	34.5% (10)
7. I changed my mind about the population I want to work with.	13.8% (4)	27.6% (8)	27.6% (8)	27.6% (8)	0.034% (1)

### What type of social work are you most interested in doing when you graduate?

"I always wanted to do macro-policy work, but now I have increased my interest to gerontology."

"I would like to work with children and juveniles in the juvenile justice system."

"I am still trying to decide. The field rotations opened my mind to many populations I never thought I would work with."

### How did your Junior Field Rotation experience impact your decision?

"It allowed me to view other areas that were also interesting, but helped me validate my initial population choice."

"I was able to see many types of social work and different types of clients. This helped me decide who I didn't want to work with."

"By opening my eyes to populations I had never thought of... like the homeless."

"It changed my mind from working with kids and animals to gerontology."

## Implications



The Junior Field Rotation experience had a positive impact on:

- Improved student understanding of competency areas
- Broader diversity of practice area interest



Results are mixed re: whether or not the field rotation changed their mind about the population they want to work with

## Best Take-Away

More prepared for senior internship and career

The importance of being open-minded and flexible

Enhanced understanding of professionalism

Better understanding of integrating course curriculum with practice

Increased skills/Provides a range of job possibility /Increased client contact for students