



MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

**A Guide to
MSW Practicum and Thesis Options
2008 - 2009**

**Social Work Program
College of Arts, Social and Health Sciences**

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Note: The contents of this document are subordinate to the Regulations of the Office of Graduate Studies, and the Regulations of the Office of Graduate Studies take precedence over this document. Please see the Graduate Studies Web-site, www.unbc.ca/graduatestudies.

**For more information about the Master of Social Work Program, please access our web-site www.unbc.ca/socialwork.
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MSW Program 2008-2009

MSW PROGRAM

The Master of Social Work program requires the successful completion of a minimum of 21 credit hours of course work for thesis students, and 27 credit hours of course work for practicum students.

The program comprises an integrated core of

- Five required courses, two elective courses and a thesis
OR
- Five required courses, four electives, and a practicum

REQUIRED COURSES:

Thesis students must take the following required courses:

SOCW 609-3 Advanced Quantitative Research
HHSC 703-3 Advanced Qualitative Research Approaches in Health and Human Sciences
SOCW 704-3 MSW Integrative Seminar
SOCW 700-12 MSW Thesis

Practicum students must take the following required courses:

SOCW 609-3 Advanced Quantitative Research
HHSC 703-3 Advanced Qualitative Research Approaches in Health and Human Sciences
SOCW 704-3 MSW Integrative Seminar
SOCW 732-6 MSW Practicum II

All students must take at least two of the following courses:

SOCW 601-3 Issues in Northern and Remote Social Work
SOCW 602-3 First Nations: Advanced Social Work Practice
SOCW 603-3 Women: Policy and Practice issues
SOCW 605-3 Community Work and the Politics of Change

ELECTIVE COURSES*:

- *Thesis students must take two (2) electives. Those two electives may be taken from the list below, and/or from other UNBC graduate programs, and/or from other accredited Canadian universities via approved transfer agreements.*
- *Practicum students must take a total of four (4) electives, two of which must come from the list below. The two electives which do not come from the list below may come from other UNBC graduate programs, and/or from other accredited Canadian universities via approved transfer agreements.*

SOCW 604-3** Directed Readings and Electives
 SOCW 610-3 Addictions and Mental Health
 SOCW 613-3 Clinical Social Work Practice
 SOCW 615-3 Multicultural Social Work Practice
 SOCW 620-3 Policy Making and Human Service
 SOCW 621-3 Comparative Welfare Analysis
 SOCW 651-3 Legal Issues for Women
 SOCW 698-3 Special Topics
 SOCW 701-3 Thesis Practicum

* **Not all of the above electives are offered in a given year.**

** **May be taken once only.**

MSW FOUNDATION YEAR PROGRAM

In 1998, UNBC offered the MSW Foundation Year Program for the first time. The Program is designed to meet the needs of students who have a related undergraduate degree and who have experience in social work or human service work employment. Students applying to this option normally require an undergraduate degree in a related area and two years of full-time human service work experience. Completion of this option requires a minimum of 24 months of full-time study. Students must meet the academic requirements for admission to Graduate Studies.

The MSW Foundation Year route consists of 66 credit hours of study. The first year of studies will consist primarily of courses that are listed as graduate courses but which are taken together with undergraduate social work students. The Program also requires students to take a practicum of 560 hours.

In Year One of the MSW Foundation Year Program, students are required to take the following courses

SOCW 630-3	Communication Skills
SOCW 631-3	Critical Social Work Practice
SOCW 632-9	MSW Practicum I
SOCW 633-3	Critical Social Policy
SOCW 634-3	Social Work Research/Policy/Practice
SOCW 635-3	Social Work Philosophy and Ethics
SOCW 637-3	Advanced Practice Methods
SOCW Elective-2	Any 600 level Social Work elective

UNBC Policy on Continuity of Registration

All students are required to either register in every semester (First, Second, Third) from the time of admission until the requirements of the degree have been met, or formally withdraw in accordance with Regulation 2.5, "Withdrawal from the University" (please see Regulation 2.5 in the current UNBC Graduate Calendar for more details). Students who have withdrawn from their Graduate program and

later wish to return to Graduate Studies must reapply, pay the reapplication fee, and provide a letter to the Graduate Studies Officer stating their rationale for wishing to return to Graduate Studies at the University of Northern British Columbia (please see Regulation 2.0, "Registration Procedures and Status", in the current UNBC Graduate Calendar for more details). The UNBC Graduate Calendar may be accessed online at www.unbc.ca/calendar/graduate.

THESIS or PRACTICUM OPTIONS

The process of completing a thesis or practicum is described in additional detail beginning on page 25 of this document.

SOCW 700-12 MSW Thesis
SOCW 732-6 MSW Practicum II

Distinction between Thesis and Practicum

Thesis A study of high academic quality that demonstrates mastery of the field specified and an ability to undertake research.

Practicum Applied practice-based research which involves advanced intervention skills and reflective assessment of student's learning experience.

Thesis Route (SOCW 700-9)

The MSW with thesis is 33 credit hours in total, normally taking up to two years. The students need to complete a total of seven courses: five required courses and two electives (i.e. 7 courses x 3 credit hours = 21 credit hours), plus 12 credit hours for the thesis.

Practicum Route (SOCW 732-6)

The MSW with practicum is 33 credit hours and may normally be completed in about 16 months. Students need to take nine courses: five required courses and four electives (i.e. 9 courses x 3 credit-hours = 27 credit hours), plus 6 credit hours for the practicum.

UNBC Research Ethics Board

Remember that every research project involving human subjects is required to have the approval of the University of Northern British Columbia's Research Ethics Board (REB) before the research begins. Students who are in doubt as to whether their research projects should be reviewed by the REB should discuss the matter with their Academic Supervisor and the MSW Coordinator. Failure to obtain this approval will cause delay in completion of the program. This applies to both the Thesis and the Practicum options.

MSW PRACTICA

There are three practicum components in the MSW. (It should be noted that students may not receive payment for practicum placements.)

1. MSW Foundation Year – MSW Practicum I (SOCW 632-9)

In the case of the Two Year MSW Program, students are required to complete MSW Practicum I (SOCW 632-9). This practicum will be developed by the BSW Field Education Director but, wherever possible, students will be placed in a practicum setting that meets their interests and learning goals. Students are in the placement three days per week over two semesters. Instruction and supervision are agency based. (Please see the Practicum I Field Education Manual.)

2. MSW Practicum Option – MSW Practicum II (SOCW 732-6)

This is a supervised learning activity designed to allow students to develop and refine practice skills while evaluating practice process and outcomes. The practicum includes 560 hours in an agency or organizational setting.

3. MSW Program – Thesis Practicum (SOCW 701-3)

Practicum or Thesis students may take the Thesis Practicum (SOCW 701-3) as an elective. This practicum requires students to spend two days per week through one semester in an agency or organization. This practicum will be developed by the MSW Coordinator and the student's Academic Supervisor. Many of the practicum options will have an applied research or evaluation component. Instruction and supervision are agency based.

MSW FOUNDATION YEAR, MSW PRACTICUM I (SOCW 632-9)

The MSW Practicum I is a nine credit hour course that encompasses the Fall and Winter semesters. Students spend three days a week in an agency or organizational setting arranged by the Field Director. The MSW Practicum I hours will amount to 560 hours scheduled over the Fall and Winter semesters. In arranging the practicum placement, the Field Education Director will attempt to match the student with an area of social work practice that is of interest to the student. Wherever possible, students will be supervised by an agency supervisor who has a Master of Social Work degree and who has completed the UNBC orientation for Practicum Supervisors.

(For complete information on this practicum, please refer to the “MSW Practicum I Field Education Manual.”)

In addition, students are expected to take SOCW 637-3, Advanced Practice Methods, concurrently with SOCW 632-9. SOCW 637-3 will include theoretical content as well as the opportunity to discuss the practicum experience within a small seminar setting. This course provides additional opportunity to integrate theory and practice. Assignments in the course will draw upon the practicum experience within the agency or organizational setting.

MSW PRACTICUM OPTION

The MSW Practicum II (SOCW 732-6) is designed to achieve the following objectives

1. Students will engage in a supervised learning activity designed to meet goals of increasing social work knowledge and social work practice skills.
2. Students will integrate knowledge and skills with a demonstrated competence in research application.

The time required to complete a practicum option will vary depending upon a variety of factors. These include such things as individual organization, family and personal commitments, and time allocated to work on the practicum. Students from the One Year MSW who work at a practicum on a full-time basis should expect to spend at least 16 months from the time they commence course work to the time they are ready to defend their final practicum report.

A. Learning Objectives of the Practicum (SOCW 732-6)

1. The focus is on the acquisition and demonstration of advanced practice knowledge, values, and skills in an agency or community setting.
2. Students will also have the opportunity to reflect on and test social work theories/intervention methods in their practicum.
3. The practicum experience will reflect the student's learning agenda: something that relates to their individual learning needs, interests and experiences.
4. Following consultation with their faculty supervisors, students will actively seek their practice learning opportunity by contacting agencies.
5. It is an independent inquiry.
6. There is a need to go through Research Ethics Board if there is a research component

B. Duration

The MSW Practicum II must comprise the equivalent of 560 hours (16 weeks) in an agency or organizational setting. This requirement may be completed on a full-time or part-time basis. Practicum supervisors must provide a statement attesting to the completion of the required number of hours.

C. Practicum Assessment

1. Practice Competence (evaluated by the Practicum Supervisor) - 50%
2. Practicum Report (supervised by Academic Supervisor) - 50%

D. Practicum Report

1. 50 to 80 pages in length
2. Outline to include
 - a) Literature review
 - b) Summary of field activities
 - c) Research method and results (if applicable)
 - d) Linkages between policy/planning/practice
 - e) Integration of theory and practice

E. Oral Defence and Supervisory Committee

1. The Practicum starts after all the course work requirements are completed.
2. The Supervisory Committee consists of three members
 - a) Academic Supervisor (Social Work faculty)
 - b) Practicum Supervisor (from agency, open to non-social work professionals—there is a process needed to examine their qualifications)
 - c) Member of the Social Work faculty
3. According to the Graduate Studies Regulations, the final Oral Examination Committee shall consist of the Supervisory Committee and a Chair approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies. The Oral Defence is normally chaired by the Dean of Graduate Studies or a designate. The Academic Supervisor cannot be the Chair of the Oral Committee.

Practicum Oral Examinations

1. Students may proceed to an oral examination when the Supervisory Committee is satisfied that the practicum study report represents an examinable document for the MSW degree requirements. The Chair of the Supervisory Committee confirms this by signing the ***Request for Oral Examination form***. This form must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies at least six weeks before the anticipated date of oral examination.

2. Before proceeding to the oral examination, all courses taken for credit in the Social Work Program must be completed with a cumulative grade point average of not less than 3.0 (B). Any language requirement must be met before the student proceeds to the oral examination.
3. The oral examination shall be open to the public and the process followed is identical to that of the thesis.
4. According to the UNBC Graduate Calendar, the final Oral Examining Committee shall consist of the Supervisory Committee and a Chair approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies (Article 4.5.2, "Examining Committees"). The Main Supervisor of the student cannot serve as the Chair of the Oral Examination.
5. After the examination, the Examining Committee shall make recommendations according to Regulation 4.5.4, "Results of Oral Examinations", in the UNBC Graduate Calendar.
6. If the practicum report is acceptable, the Dean of Graduate Studies is informed of the decision (using the Approval Form, which is supplied by the Office of Graduate Studies). Two copies of the report should be sent to the Dean's office for binding.

F. Oral Examination Assessment

At the end of the oral examination, the Examining Committee decides the outcome and signs the Approval Pages as directed by the Chair. If students pass, their work for the Social Work Program is complete. If they fail, the Examining Committee makes a written recommendation to the Dean of Graduate Studies, based on their assessment of the seriousness of the deficits in their performance. The examination will be conducted in accordance with the general regulations set out in the UNBC Graduate Calendar. Students are advised to consult this document for more technical information about the rules and regulations involved.

MSW PRACTICUM II (SOCW 732-6)

A. Developing a Practicum

Unlike a BSW practicum and the MSW Practicum I that are normally developed by faculty at UNBC, the MSW Practicum II development will be initiated by the student. The student is responsible for finding a suitable agency and a supervisor who meets the standards as outlined under "practicum supervision". Students are strongly encouraged to develop a practicum that is outside of their current or previous place of employment.

Once an agency and Practicum Supervisor have been secured, the names and descriptions (i.e. curriculum vitae or résumé, organization description, etc.) must be

submitted to the student's Academic Supervisor for approval. The Academic Supervisor will consult with the MSW Coordinator regarding the suitability and quality of the placement. Pending approval, the student can develop the practicum proposal.

1. Practicum Proposal

The practicum proposal must include an introduction to the specific area of practice, a literature review, and a description of the proposed practicum experience, including duration, administrative arrangements, learning goals, and criteria for evaluation. The proposal must proceed through the UNBC Research Ethics Board after being reviewed by the student's Committee (Academic Supervisor, another member from the UNBC Social Work Program, and the Practicum Supervisor). Normally the practicum experience will not be remunerated as this creates a potential conflict of interest.

2. Agency or Organization Approval

An executive officer or manager from the agency or organization must provide written approval and authorization for the practicum. This approval will highlight any conditions or requirements of the agency or organization.

3. Contract

A standard contract, called an Educational Institution Affiliation Agreement, will be signed by the University and the agency or organization before the student commences the practicum. It is the responsibility of the student's Academic Supervisor to ensure that the contract is signed. The contract form is used by Social Work, Nursing, Education and Psychology. It has been developed by the University to cover issues of liability and responsibility.

4. Orientation to the MSW Practicum

The student's Academic Supervisor will provide the Practicum Supervisor with an orientation to the MSW practicum. The Practicum Supervisor should also be asked to attend the UNBC field supervisor training and orientation session.

B. Constructing a Practicum Committee

The Practicum Committee consists of three members

1. Practicum Supervisor (who is normally agency-based and external to the University)
2. Academic Supervisor
3. Faculty member of the Social Work Program

The Academic Supervisor will assume the role of Committee Chair. In constructing a Committee, there are usually a number of factors that students will wish to consider. First, it is vital that the Practicum Supervisor have demonstrated knowledge, skill, and experience in the practice area that is being used for the practicum experience. This is of obvious importance in facilitating and promoting a productive learning experience.

In selecting the Academic Supervisor who will chair the Committee, students normally consider two criteria, though there may also be other factors for consideration. Often the Committee Chair may be selected on the basis of practice experience in the student's area of interest. Second, the Chairperson may be selected based upon particular knowledge related to research methods that can be applied within the practicum setting. The Committee Chair will always be a full-time faculty member of the Social Work Program. Students may use the faculty member originally assigned to them as advisor when they were first admitted. However, students should also feel free to select any faculty member who will best meet their needs. Students should be aware that faculty may choose not to accept this role.

The final member of the Committee is a Social Work Faculty Member. In choosing this person, students may also wish to look at the faculty person's areas of practice, interest and experience, as well as their particular research knowledge.

Practicum Supervision

Normally supervision will be provided by a social worker with a MSW Degree from an accredited university program. The Practicum Supervisor must have at least two years of social work practice experience. The Practicum Supervisor should carry liability insurance or demonstrate that their agency or organization is able to provide coverage in the case of any litigation. In some instances, students may be supervised by a person with a post-graduate degree in a related discipline, such as Psychology, or Nursing. In these cases it is expected that the Practicum Supervisor will have a clear understanding of social work and its professional application. The student's Academic Supervisor is also expected to play a more direct role when a non-social worker is providing the practicum supervision. This will ensure that social work ethics, standards and expectations are met.

Normally, the Practicum Supervisor will be part of the agency or organization. If they are providing supervision from outside the organization or agency, signed approval must be provided by the organization or agency. Lines of authority and responsibility must be clearly stated.

C. Roles and Responsibilities

Practicum Supervisor

The Practicum Supervisor should submit a curriculum vitae or résumé to the student's Academic Supervisor. The Practicum Supervisor is responsible for developing the practicum learning opportunity together with the student. The Practicum Supervisor will participate in a review of the student's draft proposal before it proceeds to the UNBC Research Ethics Board or is formally approved by the student's Supervisory Committee. The Practicum Supervisor will provide an orientation to the agency or organization, and they will develop a learning contract together with the student. The learning contract will list a series of learning goals, and specify knowledge and skills that the student hopes to acquire during the practicum experience. The Practicum Supervisor will normally manage the student's work assignments. The Practicum Supervisor must ensure that work assignments and the volume of work support an educational experience. The Practicum Supervisor will provide regular, scheduled supervision sessions. At the mid-point of the practicum, the Supervisor will provide a written summary of the student's progress in

regard to the practicum and the learning goals. This summary will be delivered to the student's UNBC Academic Supervisor, at which time the student's progress will be formally reviewed by the student, the Academic Supervisor, and the Practicum Supervisor.

At the conclusion of the practicum, the Practicum Supervisor will produce a final summary report evaluating the student's performance in the practicum and their progress toward achieving the learning goals. This report will be sent to the Academic Supervisor and a formal review meeting will occur. The review meeting will include the student, the Academic Supervisor, and the Practicum Supervisor. The meetings do not need to be "face to face", and may be conducted by telephone conference. The Practicum Supervisor can recommend a pass or fail for the student.

The Practicum Supervisor will be responsible for reviewing drafts of the student's practicum document or report. The Academic Supervisor will take the lead in this area, but the Practicum Supervisor may make editorial suggestions related to content and style. These suggestions will meet UNBC standards. The Practicum Supervisor will review the final draft, and develop four or five questions for the oral examination. The Practicum Supervisor will participate in the oral examination, and sign off the practicum document once the student has successfully passed their examination. The Practicum Supervisor is expected to maintain regular communication with the Academic Supervisor so that any issues or uncertainties may be promptly addressed.

Student

As noted above, the student is responsible for identifying a suitable practicum location and a suitable Practicum Supervisor. The student will take primary responsibility for developing the practicum experience in accordance with University expectations. Together with the Practicum Supervisor, the student will develop clear learning goals. The student is responsible for participating in evaluation and review meetings as required. The student will ensure that all approval forms and requirements as set out by the agency are met. Upon completion of the practicum, production of the report and successful completion of the examination, the student is responsible for completing all requirements as determined by Graduate Studies at UNBC (i.e. completion of necessary forms, review of academic performance, provision of two (2) hard-bound copies of the report for the UNBC Library, etc.).

Academic Supervisor

The Academic Supervisor will consult with the student regarding the practicum location and selection of a Practicum Supervisor. Once this has been completed, the Academic Supervisor will be responsible for ensuring that all necessary contractual agreements are signed. The Academic Supervisor will coordinate evaluation meetings and review meetings. The Academic Supervisor takes the lead in editing and reviewing drafts of the practicum report to ensure that they meet University standards. The final practicum report is generally expected to be in the range of 60 to 80 pages, and of a written quality that meets acceptable standards. Normally, the student will use APA (American Psychological Association) style for their practicum report. The title page should conform to UNBC standards for title pages, as indicated in the "UNBC Formatting Guidelines for Graduate Dissertations, Theses, Projects and Practicum Reports" (found on the web at www.unbc.ca/graduatestudies). Together with the student and other Committee members, the Academic Supervisor will set a time, date, and place for the oral

examination. The Academic Supervisor is responsible for notifying Graduate Studies of the examination time and date. The examination is open to public. Together with the student, the Academic Supervisor will ensure that all Graduate Studies administrative requirements are met.

Social Work Committee Member

The Social Work Committee Member will participate in planning and review meetings, as directed by the Academic Supervisor. These meetings may include initial planning around the practicum and the evaluation conferences. The Social Work Committee Member will be expected to review drafts of the report and participate in the examination process.

D. Practicum Learning Contract

It is important that the practicum learning contract be clear and unambiguous. The contract will be typewritten, and must be signed by the student, the Practicum Supervisor, and the student's Academic Supervisor. The outline for the practicum learning contract is on the following page.

MSW Practicum II: Learning Contract

Student: _____

Practicum Supervisor: _____

Academic Supervisor: _____

Agency: _____

Length of Placement: From: _____ To: _____
Day/Month/Year Day/Month/Year

Hours of Work: _____

Learning Objectives

List what you hope to achieve given the opportunities available within the organization and your needs and interests. The learning objectives must be clearly stated.

For each learning objective, specify

- i. how you will achieve it
- ii. what will be the evidence of achievement

Signatures

Student: _____ Date: _____

Practicum Supervisor: _____ Date: _____

Academic Supervisor: _____ Date: _____

E. Practicum Evaluation

The practicum will be evaluated at three points

1. Initial evaluation of the practicum proposal that should include the learning contract
2. Mid-point evaluation
3. Final evaluation

All evaluations will include the student, the Committee Chair, and the Practicum Supervisor. The practicum evaluation is Pass/Fail. The Practicum Supervisor will produce a mid-term evaluation report and a final evaluation report. The reports will be in narrative form, but must include a clear description of the learning goals and the basis for the evaluation results.

The interim and final practicum evaluations will be constructed in narrative form under three specific sections

1. the first section will address the knowledge goals stated in the learning contract;
2. the second section will address progress toward completion of the tasks listed in the learning contract; and
3. the final section will be a summary of the student's overall performance. In the interim evaluation report, this section will also list any changes to the stated knowledge and task goals outlined in the original learning contract.

F. Practicum Report

The Practicum Report will follow a format similar to that of a thesis. Some amount of research is expected to form a component of the Report, although this will not be as elaborate or extensive as the research for a thesis. The emphasis is on applied research. This can take a variety of forms. Some examples might include a single case study design and evaluation, a program evaluation, or measurement and evaluation of an intervention approach. The Practicum Report will also contain a summary and description of the practicum experience.

The Practicum Report will normally comprise 50 to 80 typewritten pages (double spaced). The form is not entirely restrictive, but usually students will organize the Report under the following chapters

1. Introduction
2. Literature review
3. Description of the practicum setting and experience
4. Methodology for data gathering and analysis
5. Discussion of results
6. Implications for social work practice
7. References
8. Appendices

G. Practicum Examination - Please see details on page 8

MSW THESIS OPTION

Thesis Practicum (SOCW 701-3)

Practicum or thesis students may opt to take SOCW 701 *Thesis Practicum*, a research-based practicum, as an elective. This field placement will provide students with an opportunity to enhance and refine their research skills. Following admission to the MSW Program, students will consult with the Academic Supervisor about the research-based practicum. Every effort will be made to match the student with a research opportunity that meets their interests. The University of Northern British Columbia hosts a number of research institutes that are suitable for the thesis practicum. These include the BC Rural and Remote Health Institute, Northern Fire, and the Institute of Social Research and Evaluation. In the community of Prince George, there are additional research options with organizations such as the Northern Health Authority, Carrier Sekani Family Services, and the Ministry of Children and Family Development. Other options are available outside Prince George.

1. Learning Objectives of the Thesis Practicum

- i. The focus is on acquiring, enhancing, and developing applied research skills.
- ii. Students will have the opportunity to actively participate in a research process.
- iii. Students will have the opportunity to experience research from an institutional or organizational perspective.

2. Duration

The thesis practicum runs for two full days per week. It is normally scheduled during the winter/spring semester.

3. Roles

The MSW Coordinator is responsible for identifying and arranging the thesis practicum opportunities. The Academic Supervisor or a designated Social Work Faculty person will assist in developing the student's learning contract, and the Academic Supervisor or designated Social Work Faculty person will evaluate the student's two written assignments, as well as coordinate the mid-term evaluation and final evaluation of student performance.

The Practicum Supervisor will normally be based in the research institute or organization. Ideally, they will hold a graduate degree in social work, but graduate degrees in related disciplines are acceptable. The Practicum Supervisor is responsible for assisting the student in developing the learning contract, work assignment, technical support, and mid-term and final evaluation reports.

The student is responsible for developing a learning contract, and completing the terms of the contract, mid-term and final evaluation reports.

MSW Thesis Practicum: Learning Contract

Student: _____

Practicum Supervisor: _____

Organization: _____

Length of Placement: From: _____ To: _____
Day/Month/Year Day/Month/Year

Hours of Work: _____

Learning Objectives

List what you hope to achieve given the opportunities available within the organization and your needs and interests. The learning objectives must be clearly stated.

For each learning objective, specify

- iii. how you will achieve it
- iv. what will be the evidence of achievement

Signatures

Student: _____ Date: _____

Practicum Supervisor: _____ Date: _____

Academic Supervisor: _____ Date: _____

4. Learning Contract

The student will meet with the Academic Supervisor and the Practicum Supervisor to develop a learning contract. The contract follows an outline, and will be drafted and finalized by the student in consultation with the Academic Supervisor and the Practicum Supervisor. The outline for the contract is as shown on the previous page.

5. Evaluation

The thesis practicum (SOCW 701-3) is evaluated on a pass/fail basis. The evaluation is in two parts: a mid-term evaluation and a final evaluation. There are three components to each evaluation (mid-term and final). The Practicum Supervisor will provide a brief written assessment of the student's progress toward achieving the learning objectives. One written assessment will be prepared for the mid-term meeting, and one written assessment will be prepared for the final evaluation meeting. The summaries will be presented at each evaluation meeting. Prior to each evaluation meeting, the student will submit a 10-page overview and summary paper of the placement activity to the Academic Supervisor (one mid-term; one end of term). This paper will follow normal academic requirements. The Academic Supervisor will read and evaluate the paper prior to the evaluation meeting. In the paper, the student will:

- i. describe the activities they undertook, with particular emphasis on the nature and scope of the research;
- ii. evaluate their progress toward achieving the learning objectives; and
- iii. provide relevant references and supporting documents.

The Academic Supervisor will prepare an evaluation report for the mid-term and end of term evaluation. The outline for the report follows the form attached on the next page.

6. Evaluation of Practicum Setting

At the end of the practicum the Academic Supervisor will contact the Practicum Supervisor and the student to review the practicum experience. These will be separate reviews.

MSW Thesis Practicum: Evaluation Report

Student: _____

Practicum Supervisor: _____

Organization: _____

Date: _____

Summary of Progress:

Grade (Pass/Fail): _____

Signatures

Student: _____ Date: _____

Practicum Supervisor: _____ Date: _____

Academic Supervisor: _____ Date: _____

MSW THESIS

A. Thinking About a Thesis - Stage 1

1. Students should discuss their interests and thesis option possibilities with their Academic Supervisor. Students are initially assigned an Academic Advisor, but once they have some ideas about their thesis, they may negotiate with a faculty person who best meets their interests and needs.
2. Once an area has been worked out, a student needs to draft a proposal. This will be written in consultation with the Chair and other members of the student's Supervisory Committee. A Supervisory Committee consists of three members: The Chair of the Committee shall be the Academic Supervisor, one member from the Social Work program, and one member outside the Social Work program from UNBC. These details are outlined in the UNBC Graduate Calendar. In exceptional cases, the outside member may be a professional from the community with expertise in the student's thesis topic.
3. The proposal needs to be carefully thought through by the student.
4. The proposal also needs to be approved by the student's Supervisory Committee before formal thesis work begins.
5. For full-time students, the thesis normally begins in the spring, after the completion of their course work. Part-time students need to have completed all of the MSW core courses before they begin their thesis.
6. All thesis work involving human subjects must be submitted to the University of Northern British Columbia's Research Ethics Board for approval, before the research begins.
7. The student will use APA (American Psychological Association) style for their proposal.

B. The Proposal

Before research for a thesis begins, it is necessary to construct a proposal. This is often a very difficult but important task as the student is forced to think systematically about the procedures to be utilized in the thesis research.

Below is a suggested outline or guide for writing and submitting a research proposal:

1. The Title Page

The title of the research project should be as specific and descriptive as possible, without being too lengthy. The title page should include the name of the student, and the names of the Academic Supervisor and other members of the Supervisory Committee. It should conform to UNBC standards for title pages, as indicated in the

“UNBC Formatting Guidelines for Graduate Dissertations, Theses, Projects and Practicum Reports” (found on the web at www.unbc.ca/graduatestudies).

2. The Problem

The introductory pages of the proposal should contain a clear statement of the problem or problems the student will be examining in their study. At this point, the presentation of the problem should be briefly described in terms of its theoretical, substantive, policy and/or practical significance. How will the study contribute to the above areas?

The following are some examples of the criteria that may be used to discuss the significance of the research problem. Note: Depending on the student’s approach to the topic, not all of these criteria may be applicable.

1. Its timeliness.
2. Its relation to a practical problem or practice issue.
3. Whether or not it fills a research gap.
4. Whether it relates to an influential, critical or problematic population.
5. The implications of the study for social policy and social work issues.
6. The extent to which the analysis may sharpen the definition and measurement important concepts.
7. The contribution of the research to the testing or building of theory.
8. The way the study creates or improves on special measurement techniques or instruments for observing and analyzing data.
9. The extent to which the study explores new areas.
10. The implications of the research for new practice developments.
11. The importance of the study for evaluating a new form of policy or practice.

3. The Review of the Literature

Knowledge of the literature related to the issue the student is examining is most important. Before writing a proposal, it is necessary to search the literature. The literature will tell the student what has been done up to now—what theoretical, practice, policy developments, measurement and conceptual issues have been looked at. Knowledge of past research saves a lot of time. It directs the student to the areas which need to be examined and also lets the student know what has been done.

In the proposal, the literature review contains an analysis of past studies and findings related to the stated problem. It is useful to use this review to show what needs to be done and how past studies have influenced the student’s selection of important variables and the way the student will be looking at the problem.

4. Scope and Method

The research design and the methods used to collect and analyse data are discussed here. The following illustrate some examples of the type of questions that need to be dealt with in this part of the proposal. These will vary depending on the student’s selection of a qualitative or quantitative approach to the issue.

Will new information be collected or will secondary sources be used? What is the unit

of study (e.g. government documents, social welfare clients)? What data gathering techniques will be used (e.g. an interview schedule, questionnaire, content analysis, and documentary analysis)? What is the universe or population to be studied? Will a sample be collected?

What are the important concepts? How will they be looked at? What nominal and operational definitions will be used to define these concepts?

How will the findings be classified and presented? Will the analysis be qualitative or will the student rely on descriptive and/or inferential statistics? Will hypotheses be tested? What are the hypotheses and what level of significance will be used in these tests?

5. Budget and Time Schedule

This section involves a brief, but realistic account of the amount of time the student expects will be needed to complete the study. The student should be specific in terms of the time required for information and data collection, analysis, and writing.

The budget gives a step-by-step item analysis for costing the research. It is a good idea to realistically work out these details.

6. Bibliography

As with all formal proposals, a bibliography must be included with the student's presentation.

C. Evaluation

1. The Proposal

It is normal for students to submit one, two or more drafts of a thesis proposal to the committee for approval.

2. The Thesis

When the student's Supervisory Committee is satisfied that the thesis is ready for defence, they complete and sign the Request for Oral Examination and Appointment of an External Examiner form; this form must also be signed by the student. Six weeks prior to the requested oral defence date, the MSW Coordinator submits this form for approval to the Office of Graduate Studies, together with two copies of the student's final thesis document.

D. External Examiner

The Chair of the Thesis Supervisory Committee includes a recommendation of an External Examiner on the Request for Oral Examination and Appointment of an External Examiner form, which is submitted for approval to the Office of Graduate Studies as

indicated above. Examiners are normally faculty members of other universities or faculty members from other programs at UNBC. The Office of Graduate Studies is responsible for sending a copy of the thesis to the examiner.

According to Regulation 4.5.2, "Examining Committee", of the UNBC Graduate Calendar, the role of the Examining Committee is to assess the dissertation or thesis, and to conduct an oral examination based on that scholarly work. The Examining Committee will consist of the Supervisory Committee and at least one other examiner, called the External Examiner, who must be from outside the Social Work Program and who may not have had any previous involvement with the student or the thesis research.

Policy on the Appointment of an External Examiner

Six weeks prior to the proposed defence date, the Supervisor must submit the Request for Oral Examination and Appointment of an External Examiner form and at least two copies of the thesis. The proposed date and time for the defence should be noted on the form and the Supervisor, not the student, should have made contact with the proposed External Examiner to ensure that she or he is available either to attend in person or via a conference call. The Supervisor should also make it clear to the External Examiner that their name has been recommended to the Dean of Graduate Studies and is subject to approval. It is also the Supervisor's role to confirm the date and time proposed for the defence with the other members of the Supervisory Committee and the student prior to submitting the form.

Qualifications of the External Examiner

The External Examiner should be experienced and well-qualified. Examiners should have established reputations in the area of the thesis research, and should be able to judge whether a thesis is acceptable at a university comparable to UNBC. Ideally, they should be at Associate Professor or full Professor rank if they are at a University, or be of comparable stature if they are not at a University.

Personal Contact with the External Examiner

To ensure that an arm's length, independent review is possible, the External Examiner should not have participated directly in supervising the student or directing the work. Any contact initiated by the External Examiner should be directed either to the Office of Graduate Studies or to the Thesis Supervisor. The Thesis Supervisor should not communicate views of the External Examiner to the student prior to the defence.

Two copies of the student's thesis must accompany the above-mentioned forms. One copy is for the Chair of the Oral Defence, and the other is for the External Examiner. In the event that the recommended External Examiner is approved, the Office of Graduate Studies will courier a copy of the thesis to the individual. If the recommended External Examiner is not deemed suitable by the Dean of Graduate Studies, the supervisor will be notified and another name will be requested.

Once the External Examiner is approved and the date and time of the defence are confirmed, the Office of Graduate Studies will book a room and any required AV equipment. As well, a Chair (either the Dean of Graduate Studies or designate) will be selected. The Office of Graduate Studies will send an announcement of the defence in an e-mail to faculty and graduate students, and will also post the announcement on UNBC's general e-mail list. Any additional advertising of the defence is the responsibility of the Program, the Supervisor, or the student.

E. Oral Examination

1. The defence is attended by the Thesis Supervisory Committee, the Dean of Graduate Studies (or designate), the External Examiner, the Social Work Program Chair and/or MSW Coordinator, other faculty, students, interested professionals, and individuals from the community.
2. The oral defence is normally chaired by the Dean of Graduate Studies or designate.
3. The defence consists of a brief presentation of the thesis (this must not exceed 20 minutes), followed by questions from the External Examiner, members of the student's Thesis Supervisory Committee, and, if time permits, from other individuals present at the defence. If time permits, all in attendance at the thesis defence are able to pose questions at the conclusion of the presentation.
4. Immediately after the presentation and question period, the student and guests (those not part of the student's Examining Committee) are asked to leave. The Examining Committee consists of the External Examiner and the student's Thesis Supervisory Committee. The adjudication procedure is chaired by the Dean of Graduate Studies or designate who is responsible for the adjudication documentation. The decision of the Examining Committee shall be based on the content of the scholarly work or thesis, as well as the candidate's ability to defend it. The different decisions that can be made by the Examining Committee are found in Regulation 4.5.4, "Results of Oral Examinations", of the UNBC Graduate Calendar.
5. Once a student has successfully defended their thesis, and made any changes to the document that resulted from the defence, the student must submit two (2) copies of the thesis on acid-free paper, plus a copy on regular paper, to the Office of Graduate Studies. The two acid-free copies are sent to be hard-cover bound. The student is responsible for covering the costs associated with printing and binding of the thesis.

Results of Oral Examinations (Thesis and Practicum)

The decision of the Examining Committee shall be based on the content of the scholarly work or thesis, as well as the candidate's ability to defend it. After the examination, the Committee shall recommend to the Dean of Graduate Studies one of the following results:

1. Clear Pass

That the thesis, project, or practicum is acceptable as presented and the oral defence is acceptable. In this case, all members of the Examining Committee shall sign the approval pages. A “pass” grade is submitted to the Office of the Registrar for the student’s thesis, project or practicum.

2. Pass with Minor Revision

That the thesis, project, or practicum is acceptable subject to minor revision and the oral defence is acceptable. In this case, all members of the Examining Committee, except the supervisor, shall sign the approval pages. The supervisor shall sign the approval pages when the thesis, project, or practicum has been amended to include the changes that were requested by the Examining Committee. A “pass” grade is submitted to the Office of the Registrar for the student’s thesis, project or practicum.

3. Pass with Major Revision

That the thesis, project, or practicum is acceptable subject to major revision and the oral defence is acceptable. In this case, none of the members of the Examining Committee shall sign the approval pages. The supervisor shall supervise the revision of the thesis, project, or practicum. When the revisions have been completed and have been approved by the supervisor, the supervisor shall distribute the revised thesis, project, or practicum to the rest of the Examining Committee. If it is acceptable to the Examining Committee, the supervisor shall ensure that the approval pages are signed by each member of the Examining Committee. A “pass” grade is submitted to the Office of the Registrar for the student’s thesis, project, or practicum.

4. Adjournment of the Examination

That the examination be adjourned. Reasons to adjourn the examination include, but are not limited to: further research or experimentation is required; the thesis is acceptable, but the student has failed the oral defence; the External Examiner casts the lone dissenting vote. In the case of an adjourned examination, the candidate shall not be passed and no member shall sign the approval pages. When an examination is adjourned, each member of the Examining Committee shall make a written report to the Dean of Graduate Studies within 14 calendar days of the date of the oral examination. After reviewing these reports, the Dean sets a date for reconvening the examination. The Dean shall also determine whether or not the composition of the original committee is appropriate for the reconvened examination. The date for reconvening shall be no later than six months from the date of the first examination.

5. Failure

That the thesis, project or practicum and the oral defence are unacceptable. If two or more members of the Examining Committee are opposed to passing the student, the student will not be recommended for the degree. In this case, the Examining Committee shall make a written report to the Dean of Graduate Studies within 14 calendar days from the date of the oral examination outlining the reasons for this decision. A student who fails the oral examination has the right to appeal, and should consult with the Office of the Registrar regarding the appropriate procedures.

THESIS AND PRACTICUM PROCESS

Note: Current Graduate Studies Forms are available at: www.unbc.ca/graduatestudies

Supervision by committee is a tradition within graduate studies and is an effective way to support a graduate student in the development of quality work. The Social Work Program at UNBC has adopted a process and structure that is similar to the process and structure used by other graduate programs at UNBC, and the various steps reflect a normal process for graduate studies. The intent of this brief document is to provide a set of guidelines that should be followed by all faculty members. The document may be useful to graduate students. The elements described here are to be viewed as the essential aspects of the process and structure of committee supervision. Please note that the Regulations of the Office of Graduate Studies take precedence over the School of Social Work guidelines.

A. Thesis

1. Composition of a Thesis Supervisory Committee

A Thesis Supervisory Committee in Social Work is normally made up of a **Supervisor or Chair who is a faculty member of the School of Social Work and who is tenured or is appointed to a tenure track faculty position**. The Committee is also comprised of one other faculty member from the School of Social Work, who, preferably, is tenured, or appointed to a tenure track position, or appointed to an Adjunct faculty position. If the Committee member does not meet these criteria, they should be in a term position of sufficient duration to ensure that they will be able to work with the graduate student through to completion of the student's thesis. The third member of the Committee must be a faculty member from another program at UNBC. This faculty member must also be tenured, or appointed to a tenure track position, or have an Adjunct appointment at UNBC.

2. Qualifications

A Thesis Supervisory Committee will normally have the expertise to provide a student with the necessary guidance and support through the process of designing and completing a thesis. Collectively, the Committee should have the knowledge and skills that relate specifically to the topic of study, as well as to the methodology that the student intends to use in the research process. It is not necessary that the Supervisor or Chair be an expert in the chosen research methodology or topic. However, the Supervisor should ensure that at least one of the other Committee members brings the necessary knowledge or skills to the process.

3. Supervisory Committee Selection Process

Normally a student will select their Supervisor. A faculty member is free to say no to a student, but the School has a responsibility to ensure that each student has a Supervisor. Reasons for refusing a student's request might include:

1. A faculty member is already at the maximum number of students that she or he can supervise according to School guidelines.
2. The student's topic of study does not match the faculty member's interest or knowledge.
3. The faculty member will be away on some form of leave.
4. There may be issues of compatibility between the student and the faculty member.

Selection of Committee members is usually negotiated between the student and the Supervisor, but ultimately is the Supervisor's responsibility. The Supervisor as well as the student will want to ensure that there is an appropriate mix of skills as well as compatibility between Committee members. Some Supervisors may ask the student to approach prospective members; in other instances, the Supervisor will make the approach. Either option is acceptable, but it is important that the Supervisor be informed and in agreement with the selection of Committee members. There may be occasions where a student or Supervisor might wish to add a fourth Committee member. This is acceptable, though not encouraged. The member does not have to be from the School of Social Work.

4. Responsibilities

There are some responsibilities that need to be addressed as the student progresses through the process, and Committee members have particular responsibilities associated with various stages of thesis development. After the Committee is formed, **the student and Supervisor will concentrate on developing the thesis proposal. Once it is developed, the proposal must be shared with all Committee members. The Committee members are expected to read the proposal and make suggestions regarding modification or change.** Normally, the suggestions will be made at a Committee meeting, although it is acceptable to provide individual feedback to the student and Supervisor. The suggested changes will be debated, and, if accepted, incorporated into the proposal. The proposal is read again, and there may be another meeting of the Committee to finalize the proposal. Some supervisors prefer to construct these meetings in a formal manner as a proposal defence. This is acceptable and may be helpful to the student. There may be times when a proposal goes through three or four reviews before it is deemed acceptable. **When the proposal is finalized it can be prepared for review by the Research Ethics Board. If further changes are recommended following review by the Research Ethics Board, it is important to share the changes with all Committee members.**

Once the proposal receives approval from the Research Ethics Board, the student can begin the research process. Usually, the student will work closely with the Supervisor, although other Committee members might be brought in if they have particular expertise that is required.

Following data gathering and analysis, the student and Supervisor may choose to have a meeting with the Committee to discuss preliminary findings, although this is not necessary. **The Supervisor will work with the student to prepare a draft document that must follow accepted format for a Social Work thesis. The most current APA (American Psychological Association) style must be used, along with a document organizational structure that normally includes an introduction, literature review, methodology, results, discussion (or**

implications for practice and policy), and conclusion. The “UNBC Formatting Guidelines for Graduate Dissertations, Theses, Projects and Practicum Reports” (found on the web at www.unbc.ca/graduatestudies) must also be followed.

Once a draft of good quality is prepared, it should be distributed to all Committee members for reading and comment. When the Committee members have carefully read the document a meeting is usually held to discuss concerns and required changes. Following the meeting, the student will make the necessary changes and the revised document will be distributed to all Committee members for further careful review. A meeting may or may not be held for further discussion and review. If the changes are minor these can be communicated through the Supervisor and the student can make the changes.

Once all Committee members have read the document and are satisfied that the document is ready for defence, they can sign the *Request for Oral Examination and Appointment of an External Examiner* form. It is important that all Committee members are satisfied with the student’s work. The student or Supervisor may exert pressure to hasten the process, but it must be carefully managed so that all Committee members are completely comfortable with the thesis submitted for defence. At this point, the Committee will agree on a possible date for defence.

At the same time, the Supervisor will consider possible external examiners. The Supervisor may discuss this with other Committee members or solely with the student.

The Supervisor selects the External Examiner based upon the following criteria:

1. Normally, the External Examiner must have a PhD (or be ABD) and hold an appointment as an Associate Professor or full Professor.
2. The External Examiner must have the knowledge to fairly evaluate the thesis.
3. The External Examiner must be from a program other than Social Work, and not have had any previous involvement with the student’s thesis research.

If the person agrees to act the External Examiner, their name is submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies for approval, along with a suggested date for the defence. The name appears on the *Request for Oral Examination and Appointment of an External Examiner* form. Normally, a date will be set a minimum of six (6) weeks from the time documentation is submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies.

5. Defence

The Examining Committee is comprised of the student’s Thesis Supervisory Committee, as well as an External Examiner. A Chair, normally the Dean of Graduate Studies or designate, presides. Students are expected to make a brief presentation that summarizes their thesis and the key findings of the research. This presentation should take no longer than 15 or 20 minutes. Presentations that run longer run the risk of being cut short by the Chair. The presentation is for the benefit of the audience and the External Examiner. It should focus on the essential ingredients of the research. A good presentation should make effective use of technology, but above all it should be clear and succinct.

Usually, questions begin with the External Examiner, and then move to the external committee member, the program committee member, and, lastly, the student's Supervisor. There are usually three rounds of questions. After the third round, if time permits, the audience is asked if they have any questions. On rare occasions, the Chair may ask a question. When the question period has been completed, the audience and the student are asked to leave the room. The Examining Committee evaluates the thesis and the oral defence, and comes to a decision. The student is called back in and notified of the Committee's decision.

It is the Supervisor's responsibility to gather the concerns to be addressed by the student that are identified by the Committee members. It is helpful if Committee members clearly identify the required changes, as this makes it easier for the student to complete the work. Once the work is completed, the student may submit approved copies for binding. Usually, a student will provide Committee members with a copy of the final document.

B. Practicum

1. Composition of a Practicum Supervisory Committee

A Practicum Supervisory Committee in Social Work is normally made up of a Supervisor or Chair who is a faculty member of the School of Social Work, and who is tenured or is appointed to a tenure track faculty position. The Committee is also comprised of one other faculty member from the School of Social Work. Preferably, this Social Work faculty member is tenured, or appointed to a tenure track position, or appointed to an Adjunct faculty position. If the Committee member does not meet these criteria, they should be in a term position of sufficient duration to ensure they will be able to work with the graduate student through to completion of the student's practicum. **The third member of the Committee is the student's Practicum Supervisor. Normally, this person will be external to the university and employed by the organization in which the student completed their practicum requirement. A Practicum Supervisor should have a Master of Social Work degree from an accredited institution.** In some instances, a graduate degree from a related professional discipline may be acceptable. The Practicum Supervisor should submit a curriculum vitae or résumé to the student's Committee Chair.

2. Qualifications

A Practicum Supervisory Committee will normally have the expertise to provide a student with the necessary guidance and support through the practicum experience. Unlike the thesis, the practicum involves mastery of specific practice skills, as well as minor research. Collectively, the Committee should have the knowledge and skills that relate specifically to the practice area, as well as to the methodology that the student intends to use in the research process. Academic members of the Committee might provide the research and theoretical knowledge, while the agency-based Practicum Supervisor provides the knowledge of specific practice skills.

3. Committee Selection Process

Normally, a student will select their Practicum Committee Supervisor. A faculty member is free to say no to a student, but the Program has a responsibility to ensure that each student has a Supervisor. Reasons for refusing a student's request might include

1. A faculty member is already at the maximum number of students that she or he can supervise according to School guidelines.
2. The student's topic of study does not match the faculty member's interest or knowledge.
3. The faculty member will be away on some form of leave.
4. There may be issues of compatibility between the student and the faculty member.

Selection of the second academic Committee member is usually negotiated between the student and the Supervisor, but ultimately is the Supervisor's responsibility. The Supervisor, as well as the student, will want to ensure that there is an appropriate mix of skills as well as compatibility between Committee members. Some Supervisors may ask the student to approach prospective members; in other instances, the Supervisor will make the approach. Either option is acceptable, but it is important that the Supervisor be informed and in agreement with the selection of the Committee member. There may be occasions where a student or Supervisor might wish to add a fourth Committee member. This is not advised, but it is acceptable. The fourth member could be from the community or from the University.

4. Responsibilities

As the student progresses through the process, Committee members have particular responsibilities associated with the practicum. After the Committee is formed, the student, the Committee Chair, and the Practicum Supervisor will concentrate on developing the practicum proposal. Once it is developed, the proposal must be shared with all Committee members. **The Committee members are expected to read the proposal and make suggestions regarding modification or change.** Normally, the suggestions will be made at a Committee meeting, although it is acceptable to provide individual feedback to the student and Supervisor.

The suggested changes will be debated and, if accepted, incorporated into the proposal. The proposal is read again, and there may be another meeting of the Committee to finalize the proposal.

When the proposal is finalized, it can be prepared for review by the Research Ethics Board. A formal ethics review will not always be necessary, but the nature of the work and the expectations regarding the final report must be given careful consideration by the Committee Chair. If in doubt, it is best to submit the proposal for formal review by the Research Ethics Board. If further changes are recommended following the review by the Research Ethics Board, it is important to share the changes with all Committee members. **Once the proposal receives the approval of the Research Ethics Board, the student may begin the practicum.**

The student and the Practicum Supervisor will develop clear learning objectives that form part of an initial learning contract. The learning objectives will be reviewed at the mid-point of the practicum and at the end of the practicum. The

review participants include the student, the Practicum Supervisor, and the Committee Chair.

A brief narrative of progress will be kept on the student's file that is stored at UNBC. In the event that a student's progress is unsatisfactory, the duration of time may be extended or, in some instances, the practicum may be terminated and the student advised to seek an alternative practicum. The Supervisor will work with the student to prepare a draft document that must follow accepted format for a Social Work practicum. The most current APA (American Psychological Association) style must be used, along with a document organizational structure that normally includes an introduction, literature review, description of the practicum setting and experience, methodology and results, discussion (or implications for practice and policy), and a conclusion. The "UNBC Formatting Guidelines for Graduate Dissertations, Theses, Projects and Practicum Reports" (found on the web at www.unbc.ca/graduatestudies) must also be followed.

Once a draft of good quality has been prepared, it should be distributed to all Committee members for reading and comment. When the Committee members have carefully read the document, a meeting is usually held to discuss concerns and required changes. Following the meeting, the student will make the necessary changes, and the revised document will be distributed to all Committee members for further careful review. A meeting may or may not be held for further discussion and review. If the changes are minor, these can be communicated through the Supervisor and the student can make the changes. **Once all Committee members have read the document and are satisfied that the document is ready for defense, they may sign the *Request for Oral Examination and Appointment of an External Examiner* form. It is important that all Committee members are satisfied with the student's work.** The student or Supervisor may exert pressure to hasten the process, but it must be carefully managed so that all Committee members are completely comfortable with the practicum report submitted for examination. At this point, the Committee will agree on a possible date for Oral Examination. The student's Supervisor will submit a possible date for oral examination to the Office of Graduate Studies. Normally, a date will be set a minimum of six (6) weeks from the time documentation is submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies.

5. Oral Examination Committee

The Oral Examination Committee is comprised of the student's Supervisory Committee and a Chair. Students are expected to make a brief presentation that summarizes their practicum report and the key findings or observations. This presentation should be no longer than 15 or 20 minutes. Presentations that run longer run the risk of being cut short by the Chair. The presentation is for the benefit of the audience. It should focus on the essential ingredients of the report. A good presentation should make effective use of technology, but above all it should be clear and succinct.

There are usually three rounds of questions. After the third round, if time permits, the audience is asked if they have questions. On rare occasions, the Chair may ask a question. When the question period has been completed, the audience and the student are asked to leave the room. The Examining Committee evaluates the

practicum report and the oral examination, and comes to a decision. The student is called back in and notified of the Committee's decision.

It is the Supervisor's responsibility to gather the concerns to be addressed by the student that are identified by the Committee members. It is helpful if Committee members clearly identify the required changes, as this makes it easier for the student to complete the work. Once the work is completed, the student may submit approved copies for binding. Usually, a student will provide Committee members with a copy of the final document.

SOCIAL WORK FACULTY

(Please see the Faculty Web-page at www.unbc.ca/socialwork for more details regarding each faculty member's research interests.)

**Gerard Bellefeuille, Associate Professor
(On leave)**

BSW MA PhD (Victoria)

Child Welfare, Aboriginal Child Welfare, Organizations and Community Capacity Building

Bruce Bidgood, Associate Professor

BA (Brock) MSW PhD (Wilfrid Laurier)

Family Violence, Child Welfare, Social Policy, Social Administration, Social Planning, Applied Social Welfare Research

**Dawn Hemingway, Associate Professor
(On sabbatical)**

BA (Simon Fraser) MSc MSW (UNBC)

Adulthood/Aging (Care-giving, Psychogeriatrics, Empowerment/Self-Advocacy), Disability Issues, Community Development/Community-based Research, Women and Health, Northern/Remote Community Health

**Judy Hughes, Assistant Professor
BSW Coordinator)**

BSW (St. Thomas) MSW PhD (Toronto)

Violence Against Women, Critical Social Work Practice, Community and Action Research Methods, Social Workers' Constructions and Approaches to Practice, Discourse and Narrative Approaches to Practice and Research

Heather Peters, Associate Professor

BA (Saskatchewan) BSW (British Columbia)

MSW (Carleton)

Homelessness, Social Policy, Housing Policy, Community Development, Aboriginal Self-Government, Youth, and Women and Housing

Joanna Pierce, Assistant Professor

BSW MSW (Northern British Columbia)

Mental Health, Community Development, Cross-cultural Communications, Remote/Northern Practice Development and Social Policy.

**Dave Sangha, Assistant Professor
(On leave)**

BSW MSW (British Columbia)

Social Policy, Community Development, Human Rights, Anti-Racism, Diasporic Communities, Child Welfare

Michele A. Sam, Assistant Professor

(On leave)

BA HBSW MSW (Lakehead)

Aboriginal Ways of Being and Knowing, Language and Cultural Ways, Community Revitalization and Development, Advocacy, Social Policy, Post-Treaty Realities, First Nations Realities and Identities and Interdisciplinary Studies.

Glen Schmidt, Associate Professor

(On sabbatical)

BA BSW (Manitoba) MSW (British Columbia)

PhD (Memorial)

Social Work Education Outcomes, Mental Health Services, Services to First Nations People, Remote and Northern Practice Issues, Child Welfare Practice and Policy

Si Transken, Associate Professor, Acting Chair

BA Hons BSW (Laurentian) MA PhD (Toronto)

Criminal Harassment, Incest, Sexual Assault, Violence Against Women, Expressive Arts Therapy, Feminist Social Work, Anti-Racism, Mediation, Sexual Expression and Identities

Eleanor Wint, Assistant Professor

(MSW Coordinator)

BSocSc Applied (University of the West Indies) MSW Hons (Boston) PhD (University of the West Indies)

Qualitative Research Methodology, Social Research Methods, Poverty and Development, Cross-Cultural Social Work