

**PROCEDURE:** Student Progress in Clinical/Practicum/Practice Experience/Field Education Courses

**Revision Number:** 1

**Approval Status:** Approved

**Approved by:** Senate

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## **1 Monitoring and Assessment of Student Progress**

- 1.1 Clinical/Practicum/Practice Experience/Field Education courses will be graded as “credit” / “no credit” or assigned a letter grade, as determined for the program.
- 1.2 The Faculty Member and/or Onsite Supervisor will monitor and assess Student Progress on an ongoing basis and will determine the appropriate field assignments, level of supervision, and level of independence in the Clinical/Practicum/Practice Experience/Field Education setting.
- 1.3 The student is responsible for formative self-assessment of his/her learning in relation to learning outcomes, and to seek and respond to feedback on progress.
- 1.4 Expectations of performance in practice will increase as the student progresses through the course and the program.
- 1.5 Student Progress will be assessed, documented, and communicated as determined and outlined for each program.

## **2 Identifying Concerns about Student Progress or Performance**

- 2.1 A concern about a student’s progress may include, but is not limited to:
  - Unsatisfactory Progress toward meeting learning outcomes
  - Excessive absenteeism that impacts the student’s ability to meet learning outcomes
  - Unprofessional conduct (e.g. inappropriate use of mobile devices, student-to-student aggression, inappropriate criticism of the practicum site, sharing or removing confidential information, accessing information or providing care for Clients who are not assigned to the student)
  - Unsafe Practice (refer to Faculty of Health and Human Services Policy and Procedure: *Client Safety in Clinical/Practicum/Practice Experience/Field Education Courses*).
- 2.2 A concern about a student’s progress will be brought to the attention of the Faculty Member by the student or Onsite Supervisor, or may be identified by the Faculty Member directly.

- The Faculty Member will be responsible for determining the appropriate response and intervention.
- 2.3 Based on the seriousness of the concern and/or the need for support and guidance, the Faculty Member will inform the program team leader and/or program chair. The Faculty Member may also consult with another member of the Faculty team to support sound decision making (e.g. ideas for possible strategies and resources, assessment of safety issues, etc.). Principles of student anonymity, confidentiality, respect, and fairness will be adhered to during such consultation about Student Progress issues.
- 2.4 In situations involving Unsafe Practice, refer to Faculty of Health and Human Services Policy: *Client Safety in Clinical/Practicum/Practice Experience/Field Education Courses*.

### 3 Possible Responses

- 3.1 The response may be initiated at any level, depending on the seriousness of the concern. Ideally, the response will progress through the Levels from 1 to 4 (as outlined below), as needed, until the concern is resolved.
- Early intervention is emphasized to support success.
- 3.2 At any of the meetings outlined below, the student may have a student advocate or support person present. The Faculty Member may involve the Onsite Supervisor, and/or may have another faculty member or the program chair present. The student and/or Faculty Member will be informed in such circumstances.
- 3.3 **Level 1: Informal exploratory conversation**
- 3.3.1 Criteria: This level is appropriate when
- Initial informal fact finding is needed to understand the situation and the student's perspective
  - Providing constructive feedback is likely to improve performance
  - Offering suggestions is likely to facilitate learning and/or change behaviour.
- 3.3.2 Process:
- 3.3.2.1 A meeting will be held with the student, as outlined in 3.2 above. The goals of this meeting are to:
- Bring the concern to the attention of the student
  - Explore any factors that may be contributing to the problem
  - Engage with the student in problem-solving toward improvement.
- 3.3.2.2 The issue(s) will be clearly defined in behavioural terms, and related to course learning outcomes. This will support the student's understanding of the area(s) requiring improvement.
- 3.3.2.3 Documentation of the conversation is recommended, however, documentation of the first instance is at the discretion of the Faculty Member. If the meeting is documented, the Faculty Member will prepare Meeting Notes, retain a copy, and provide a copy to the student. The original will be placed in the student file at the program level.

**3.4 Level 2: Meeting and Meeting Notes****3.4.1 Criteria:** This level is appropriate when

- Issues and concerns are more serious or persistent, and a more formal meeting is needed
- Written documentation is needed to ensure clarity and support accountability.

**3.4.2 Process:****3.4.2.1** A meeting will be held with the student, as outlined in 3.2 above. The goals of the meeting are to:

- Make the student aware of the concern(s) and expectations (stated in behavioural terms and related to learning outcomes)
- Explore the concern from all perspectives
- Explore strategies and resources for improvement
- Coach/instruct the student as appropriate
- Establish timelines for improvement
- Identify any restrictions or limitations to be placed on the student's practice
- Identify next steps.

**3.4.2.2** The meeting must be documented using *Meeting Notes* and signed by the student and Faculty Member. (The student's signature reflects that she/he has read the document, and does not necessarily reflect agreement.)**3.4.2.3** Copies of the Meeting Notes are distributed to:

- Student file at the program level
- Student
- Faculty Member.

**3.5 Level 3: Corrective Learning Plan****3.5.1 Criteria:** This level is appropriate when

- A structured plan and timeline to address the issues are needed
- A mutual process between the Faculty Member and the student will be effective to identify learning strategies to address the concern(s).

**3.5.2 Process:****3.5.2.1** A meeting will be held with the student, as outlined in 3.2 above, to develop the *Corrective Learning Plan*. The Plan will include:

- Mutually identified learning needs, related to identified domains of practice/competencies and course learning outcomes
- Mutually identified learning strategies
- Outcomes to be met
- Date for review of progress.

**3.5.2.2** The meeting must be documented using the *Corrective Learning Plan* and signed by the student and Faculty Member.

3.5.2.3 Copies of the *Corrective Learning Plan* are distributed to:

- Student file at the program level
- Student
- Faculty Member.(to be shredded at the end of the semester)

3.5.2.4 The Faculty Member may encourage the student to share the *Corrective Learning Plan* with his/her next Clinical/Practicum/Practice Experience/Field Education instructor. If the strategies are working well for the student, the Plan can be a valuable resource in future Placements.

3.5.2.5 The Faculty Member will bring the *Corrective Learning Plan* to the attention of the program chair to enable identification of any trends, patterns, or broader issues that may warrant future attention.

### 3.6 **Level 4:** Contract for Improvement

3.6.1 Criteria: This level is appropriate when

- The concern about the student's progress is serious and significant (e.g. very serious medication error, serious breach of confidentiality, dual relationships, repeated issues of reliability, serious issues of inappropriate communication, etc.)
- The student is at risk of failing the course.

3.6.2 Process:

3.6.2.1 The *Contract for Improvement* is a formal and directed intervention.

3.6.2.2 A meeting will be held with the student, as outlined in 3.2 above, to develop the *Contract for Improvement*.

3.6.2.3 The *Contract for Improvement* will clearly set out:

- The area(s) of concern, stated in behavioural terms and related to course learning outcomes
- The change/improvement that is desired/required
- Strategies and resources for improvement and steps for any remediation required
- Realistic timeframe to demonstrate the desired change/improvement
- Statement of any restrictions or limitations for the student in the Placement setting
- A date for review of progress
- Statement of desired outcomes
- Statement of the consequences of non-achievement of outcomes.

3.6.2.4 The student, Faculty Member, and program chair sign the *Contract for Improvement*.

3.6.2.5 A contract progress review meeting must occur as stated in the *Contract for Improvement*. The outcomes of this review meeting will be documented on the *Contract Progress Report*.

- 3.6.2.6 The contract progress review meeting will determine the result of the *Contract for Improvement*, which may include:
- Achievement of desired improvement, and discontinuation of the contract
  - Renewal or extension of the *Contract for Improvement*
  - An “F” (fail) grade in the Clinical/Practicum/Practice Experience/Field Education course and possible withdrawal from the program. (Refer to the relevant program handbook or the calendar regarding consequences of course failure and possible withdrawal.)
- 3.6.2.7 The *Contract for Improvement* is an agreement between the student and the Faculty Member for that course, and comes to an end at the end of the course.
- 3.6.2.8 Copies of the *Contract for Improvement* and the *Contract Progress Report* are distributed to:
- Student file at the program level
  - Student
  - Faculty Member
  - Program chair.
- 3.7 It is the professional obligation of the student to attend progress meetings with a Faculty Member and/or Onsite Supervisor if requested. In situations where the student refuses to attend a meeting, the situation will be referred to the program chair, or associate dean, or dean, who will contact the student to attempt to engage the student. If the student continues to refuse, the student will be notified in writing that failure to engage in the process will result in failure or withdrawal from the course.

## **4 Documentation**

- 4.1 Documentation regarding Student Progress and interventions will be maintained as outlined for each level of response.
- 4.2 Documentation related to Student Progress in a Clinical/Practicum/Practice Experience/Field Education course should state issues in behavioural terms, and relate the issues to course learning outcomes. A student whose progress is unsatisfactory must receive documentation that includes anecdotal evidence of the unsatisfactory performance.
- 4.3 Documentation that is to be entered into a student file must be dated and signed by the Faculty Member. The document should be read and signed by the student, recognizing that the student may refuse to sign. Signatures indicate that the individual has read the document; it does not necessarily indicate that the parties agree, unless agreement is explicitly stated.
- 4.4 If the student refuses to sign, the document will be placed in the student file, with a notation that the student refused to sign and was given a copy of the document, signed by the Faculty Member and Chair.
- 4.5 Students are encouraged to provide evaluation documents and any remedial documentation from previous Clinical/Practicum/Practice Experience/Field Education courses to the Faculty Member for such courses in subsequent semesters. This information will support

continuity of student learning and progress. Some programs may require that specified documents must be provided; such requirements will be identified at the program level.

- 4.6 The student is expected to keep his/her own records of his/her progress. The student will have supervised access to her/his file by appointment.

## **5 Related Policies and References**

- Faculty of Health and Human Services Policy and Procedure: *Client Safety in Clinical/Practicum/Practice Experience Courses*
- VIU policies and procedures regarding student conduct and performance:
- Policy 32.05 and Procedure 32.05.001: Student Conduct Code;
- Policy 32.06 and Procedure 32.06.001: Student Conduct Appeals
- Policy 96.01 and Procedure 96.01.001: Student Academic Code of Conduct
- Policy 96.02 and Procedure 96.02.001: Academic Appeals
- Policy 96.03 and Procedure 96.03.001: Academic Probation
- Student Handbooks for specific programs, which provide program-specific information about practicum/clinical courses, expectations of professional conduct and student performance.
- VIU's Early Alert System: <http://www2.viu.ca/facultyhelp/AcademicAlert.asp>.