Juvenile Justice and Youth Advocacy Program Practicum Handbook

A Manual for Interns, Practitioners, and Supervisors
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Adapted from NJ College of Education
ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook is intended to provide information for you, the field site practitioner, who will be working with a Wheelock student. We hope it will be a useful resource manual, will answer questions you may have, and will provide information about philosophy, expectations, procedures and practices as these relate to the practicum.

Thank you for sharing your skills and expertise with our students as they learn and grow in their understanding of the field of juvenile justice and youth advocacy. We are grateful for your dedication to part-time placement opportunities for our Wheelock College students. The practicum is the key experience in a Wheelock student's professional development. We recognize that working with a student involves additional time and energy from you. We greatly appreciate your willingness to participate in our program and your commitment to our students’ preparation.

Field Experience Office
Wheelock College
Boston, Massachusetts
WHEELOCK COLLEGE

Vision
As a private college with a public mission, Wheelock College strives to be the premier college that educates people to create a safe, caring, and just world for all children and families.

Mission
Improving the lives of children and families

Academic Guiding Principles

Preamble
Wheelock College cultivates a passion for learning among all members of its community. We are a diverse learning community whose members respect differences among people, their ideas, and their ways of acting in the world.

Principle One
Wheelock College creates and sustains an environment of critical inquiry, creative expression, and growth. Wheelock College students:

- master content in the arts and sciences in sufficient depth and rigor to allow an appreciation of the beauty and integrity of the disciplines;
- develop expertise in the education and human service professions along a continuum from entry level to advanced practice;
- explore new ideas, experiences, and collaborative partnerships, and integrate academic learning and community-based experiences;
- apply multicultural and developmental perspectives to understand individual, family, community, and societal growth.

Principle Two
Wheelock College develops reflective, responsive, and responsible world citizens who are prepared to:

- understand the broad social, cultural, political and economic contexts that influence the lives of all children and families at the local, national, and international levels;
- engage, individually and collectively, in lifelong learning, embrace multiple perspectives, and participate within diverse communities;
- realize their capacity for leadership that creates a more just world for all children and families.

Academic Guiding Principles Approved by the Wheelock Faculty 5/23/06
Civic Engagement at Wheelock College

Community engagement through experiential learning actualizes Wheelock’s mission. Combining liberal arts with professional education, the college provides all students with opportunities for experiential learning through field placements, community service and service-learning locally, regionally and globally.

Wheelock students begin field placements in their first year, as practical experience supplements classroom learning about human growth and development. Through placements in diverse and inclusive settings, students have opportunities to integrate child development and pedagogical theory into their practice. As students enter professional concentrations, the Field Experience Office works with them to locate appropriate pre-practicum and practicum sites in early childhood, elementary, and special needs education, child life (hospital and medical), community based human service, juvenile justice and youth advocacy, and social work settings where they develop professional skills through practice in service. These fieldwork, practicum and internship experiences take place with community partners. We are fortunate to work with both new and longstanding partners who enrich our students’ professional development. While learning from and contributing to the lives of children and families, our students build the foundations for what professionals will need to work with children and families.

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND YOUTH ADVOCACY

A Unique Identity:
Our program at Wheelock takes a unique approach to Juvenile Justice:

Although the field of juvenile justice has traditionally been viewed as a sub-category of criminal justice, we are not a criminal justice program. An examination of other programs around the country found none that focused exclusively on juvenile justice.

Our program is housed in a College that has a mission of “Improving life for children and families,” and includes a significant focus on youth advocacy, which reflects a departure from traditional criminal justice programs.

We take a developmental, contextual, and strengths based approach to the topics of juvenile justice, delinquency, and youth advocacy. The program emphasizes human rights, social justice, and the positive development of all youth.

Mission:
- To prepare students to appreciate the many complexities of the juvenile justice and youth advocacy field.
- To prepare students to think developmentally and contextually about how best to work respectfully with children, families, and systems toward outcomes that promote healthy youth development as well as community safety.
- To prepare students to see a youth’s liaison with the juvenile justice system as an opportunity for intervention, not just adjudication; and as an opportunity for learning, not just punishment.
- To prepare students who can think for themselves and reflect on their own knowledge,
JUVENILE JUSTICE AND YOUTH ADVOCACY

Program Description

The Program:
The Juvenile Justice and Youth Advocacy Program was first offered to students at Wheelock College in September 2004. The program can be taken as either a Professional Concentration or as a Minor. William Rodriguez is the current director of the program.

At Wheelock College, students major in either a traditional Liberal Arts area or Social Work, and may elect to complete a professional concentration in addition to the major. For the Juvenile Justice and Youth Advocacy concentration, students complete 38 credits, which includes didactic courses, community-based field experiences, and the 200-hour practicum at a juvenile justice related site.

Through the following four core didactic courses, students are exposed to content specific to the field of juvenile justice and delinquency:

- **JJA 201** Introduction to Juvenile Justice and Delinquency
- **JJA 302** Causes and Prevention of Delinquency
- **JJA 301** Juvenile Courts and Juvenile Law
- **JJA 380** Intervention and Advocacy with Juveniles and Families

Students in the concentration must also take support courses in:
- Research Methods,
- Adolescent Development, and
  - either Dynamics of Oppression or Sociology of Minority Groups.

These courses will have been successfully completed prior to the practicum semester.

Finally, students take three advanced courses to complete the concentration:

- **JJP 401** Practicum in Juvenile Justice
- **JJS 402** Seminar in Juvenile Justice
- **JJA 403** Integrative Seminar in Juvenile Justice

We expect to work with a wide variety of sites to find practicum placements for our students, including such sites as law enforcement/police, schools, faith based prevention programs, state run residential treatment centers, and community based re-integration programs, courts, youth services, government agencies, and policy-oriented programs.

During the practicum experience students take the JJYA seminar course that directly addresses the ongoing practicum experience. Following the practicum experience, students integrate the didactic and practical experiences within an Integrative Seminar course.
Students who complete this program will:

- Have a comprehensive understanding of the juvenile justice system, including knowledge of relevant law and court procedures, the causes and prevention of juvenile delinquency, and correctional and alternative prevention and interventions.
- Have a thorough understanding of adolescent development and family systems.
- Understand how race, class, and gender affect interactions with the juvenile justice system and services.
- Have an inter-professional perspective on the juvenile justice system, including knowledge of the multiple systems (i.e., educational and social service) that interact with the juvenile justice system.
- Be able to advocate on behalf of youth and their families from a strengths-based and capacity-building perspective.
- Be prepared to work in a broad spectrum of settings related to the juvenile justice system, including prevention programs, advocacy programs, and programs working with juvenile offenders.

What can students do when they complete the program:

**Relevant for work in:**

- Courts
- Juvenile treatment programs (e.g., residential treatment centers)
- Teaching or counseling court involved youth
- Youth services
- Law enforcement
- Schools
- Delinquency prevention programs (e.g., youth recreational or mentoring programs)

*If students want to continue on to graduate school, this program will be relevant for preparation for advanced degrees in:*

- Law
- Social Work
- Psychology
- Public Policy
- Criminology
- Education
CRITERIA FOR FIELD PLACEMENT SITES

Juvenile Justice and Youth Advocacy Program – 200-Hour Practicum
Wheelock College

Site Criteria:
Suitable sites will have some relationship to the field of juvenile justice and/or youth advocacy. This relationship includes a wide array of potential sites, from early prevention programs for “at risk” children all the way to programs that serve youth after release from DYS secure commitment. As such, the relationship criteria are quite broad and should reflect a student’s areas of interest. Sites may also range greatly in their direct service contact. Whereas some sites may be direct service agencies, others may be almost entirely oriented to policy endeavors.

Some examples of appropriate experiences and opportunities that sites may offer:
- Interaction with young children
- Interaction with adolescents
- Interaction with families
- The opportunity to perform intake or other interview and assessment tasks
- Tutoring
- Assist with special events
- Attend staff meetings, in-service trainings, and conferences
- Assist with recreational opportunities
- Assist with special projects
- Assist with ongoing projects
- Opportunities to go “on site” to where programs and activities take place
- Administrative assistance
- Outreach
- Research
- Advocacy
- Experience collaborative processes and networking

Students in the JJYA program are not clinicians and should not:
- Run therapy groups
- Meet with clients for individual “therapy” sessions
- Be placed in dangerous 1-1 situations with clients

Supervision Criteria:
Each student in the JJYA 200-Hour Practicum must be supervised by a professional who holds an advanced degree in a related field and has at least two years of post-graduate experience, or holds a Bachelor’s degree and at least six years of relevant experience. This person is called the Site Supervisor. Students are required to receive supervision once a week for at least one hour. This supervision can be one-to-one, in a duo, or a small group of no more than four participants. In some settings, students may receive additional supervision from another agency staff professional who has committed to providing the day-to-day interaction and student support during the practicum experience.
Participants in the Field Experience
Expectations of the Prospective Juvenile Justice Professional
Juvenile Justice and Youth Advocacy Program — 200-Hour Practicum
Wheelock College

1. Study the Field Practicum Manual and be familiar with all policies, procedures, and materials.

2. Attend field practicum, at least two days a week for a minimum of 16 hours, typically on Monday and Wednesday, unless another schedule has been agreed upon between student, agency, and Faculty Field Liaison.

3. Notify Site Supervisor if unable to be at the agency on any scheduled day. In case of absence from field work, student must call in absent and arrangements must be made with the Site Supervisor to make up the missed time.

4. Meet with Site Supervisor for a minimum of one-hour weekly supervision.

5. Keep track of the number of hours in the field and complete the Fieldwork Attendance Sheet. An Attendance Sheet should be turned in to the Faculty Field Liaison for each month.

6. Participate in at least one on-site conference with both the Site Supervisor and the Faculty Field Liaison.

7. Share responsibility with Site Supervisor for preparing a field practicum learning contract.

8. Discuss any difficulties regarding the field placement experience first with the Site Supervisor and if necessary with the Faculty Field Liaison.

10. Follow Wheelock written protocol when ethical concerns arise in the practicum site.

11. Consult with the Site Supervisor prior to any use of case material in the classroom.

12. Complete evaluation forms at the end of the placement.

13. Complete a minimum of 200 hours in the field. Students make a commitment to the field practicum site for the full semester, beginning in early September through mid-December. Early fulfillment of the required hours does not exempt a student from this commitment.

14. Behave in an ethical and professional manner.

Grievous Behavior at Placement (from Student Handbook):

“Some behavior is so grievous that it will result in immediate termination from a placement. Such behavior includes, but is not limited to, inflicting or threatening to inflict injury to a client, agency staff member, or other person related to the performance of professional duties; abusing controlled substances or alcohol so that it affects performance; becoming sexually involved with clients or site personnel; or engaging in illegal activities that reflect upon the student’s ability to perform professionally or that reflect negatively upon the profession.”
Guidelines for Site Supervisor

Juvenile Justice and Youth Advocacy Program — 200-Hour Practicum
Wheelock College

1. Work with student to determine weekly schedule, for a total of 16 hours per week (students typically attend practicum on Monday and Wednesday).

2. Collaborate with student early on to develop an individualized field practicum learning contract, which outlines the activities, goals, and objectives for the practicum experience (a form is available to help structure this endeavor).

3. Assign appropriate tasks to the student at the beginning of the practicum. These tasks should be designed to provide experiential opportunities to learn about juvenile justice, delinquency, youth work, and youth advocacy. Tasks should duplicate, as much as possible, the responsibilities of regular entry-level staff.

4. Provide opportunities for student to attend staff meetings, planning conferences, in-service trainings, workshops, and other professional activities.

5. Meet with student individually or in a small group for at least one hour per week to provide: orientation, instruction, supervision, feedback, and informal help as needed.

6. Provide the student with on-going feedback concerning his/her performance, document concerns, and share concerns with the Wheelock Faculty Field Liaison and the student.

7. Maintain open and regular communication with College faculty and plan to engage in at least two meetings with student and faculty, including an orientation and a mid-semester check-in.

8. Monitor the student to safeguard the quality of the agency’s service, as well as the wellbeing of the clients and the student.

9. Provide student with necessary institutional support, facilities, and equipment to carry out the work.

10. Meet the College’s deadlines for submission of mid-semester and end-of-semester evaluation forms.
Expectations of the Wheelock Faculty Field Liaison
Juvenile Justice and Youth Advocacy Program — 200-Hour Practicum
Wheelock College

1. Work collaboratively with Site Supervisor and other agency personnel regarding selection of assignments for students.

2. Ensure that Site Supervisor has been provided with all necessary information regarding student and the JJYA Program and procedures for practicum placement.

3. Ensure that mid-semester and end-of-semester evaluation forms are exchanged in a timely manner.

4. Contact student by phone, in person, or via email within the first week after the field practicum begins.

5. Meet a minimum of two times during the semester with Student and Site Supervisor on site and fill out the Site Visit Recording Sheet.

6. Meet additionally with the Site Supervisor and/or student if need arises.

7. Check in with Site Supervisor by phone or email during the semester. Keep process recordings of these contacts.

8. Issue academic warning (pink slip) to student when performance is unsatisfactory.


10. Prepare a narrative evaluation of the student to be shared with the student.

11. Assign and submit student grade (pass or fail) following consultation with Site Supervisor and review of the Evaluation of Student completed by Site Supervisor.
COMMUNICATING WITH THE COLLEGE
Juvenile Justice and Youth Advocacy Program–200-Hour Practicum
Wheelock College

Initial inquiries about a particular student or placement situation should be directed to the Faculty Field Liaison. This person and his or her contact information is provided in a letter sent from the College to the site in August. The Faculty Field Liaison will contact the site at the beginning of the semester to set up an initial meeting with the student and Site Supervisor, and will set up a follow-up meeting for later in the semester.

During the practicum placement there may be instances where problems or questions arise. Any questions or issues should be addressed before they escalate through communications with the parties involved via formal or informal problem-solving strategies. The Field Faculty Liaison should be contacted and appraised of any problematic situations involving the practicum student.

If the situation requires immediate attention and the Faculty Field Liaison is not available, sites can contact the Director of Field Experience or the Dean of the Division (please refer to the contact list for specific contact information).
WHEELOCK COLLEGE CONTACTS

Juvenile Justice and Youth Advocacy Program
William Rodriguez, Chair of the Juvenile Justice and Youth Advocacy Department
For any questions about the Juvenile Justice and Youth Advocacy Program
617-879-2287  wrodriguez@wheelock.edu

Donna McKibbens, Interim Dean of Education, Social Work, Child Life and Family Studies
617-879-2242  dmckibbens@wheelock.edu

Field Experience Office
Ms. Christina Jache, Field Experience Coordinator
For specific questions about the field experience process and placement in JJYA
617-879-1212  cjache@wheelock.edu

Mr. Arafat Akbar, Administrative Coordinator for Field Experience
For questions and administrative help regarding field experience
617-879-2165  aakbar@wheelock.edu

College Supports
Ms. Michelle Ormerod, Registrar
617-879-2270  mormerod@wheelock.edu

Mr. Paul Hastings, Director of Academic Assistance and Disability Services
617-879-2304  phastings@wheelock.edu

Financial Aid Office
617-879-2443  finaid@wheelock.edu

Student Accounts
617-879-2236  studentaccounts@wheelock.edu
ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE FOR STUDENTS IN PLACEMENT

Juvenile Justice and Youth Advocacy Program — 200-Hour Practicum
Wheelock College

Students will receive two formal evaluations from the site during the course of the semester (see field manual appendix or website for evaluation forms).

Early in the semester the Faculty Field Liaison will visit the site to meet with the student and Site Supervisor. An overview of the evaluations and the evaluation procedure will take place during that meeting.

The mid-semester evaluation provides an opportunity for the Site Supervisor to provide a brief narrative comment in several areas. Alternately, the Semester-end evaluation is a more complete evaluation form that will provide a significant source of data for assessing the student’s performance. This form is essential for determining a student’s grade for the course.

Site Supervisors should plan to include the student in the evaluation process and to review both evaluations with the student before sending them to the Faculty Field Liaison by the following due dates:

Mid-semester Evaluation Due: October 15th
Semester-end Evaluation Due: December 1st

Completed evaluations should be sent to the appropriate Faculty Field Liaison at:

Wheelock College
200 The Riverway
Boston, MA 02215
Ethical Standards of Human Service Professionals

National Organization for Human Services
Council for Standards in Human Service Education

Adopted 1996

Preamble

Human services is a profession developing in response to and in anticipation of the direction of human needs and human problems in the late twentieth century. Characterized particularly by an appreciation of human beings in all of their diversity, human services offers assistance to its clients within the context of their community and environment. Human service professionals and those who educate them, regardless of whether they are students, faculty or practitioners, promote and encourage the unique values and characteristics of human services. In so doing human service professionals and educators uphold the integrity and ethics of the profession, partake in constructive criticism of the profession, promote client and community well-being, and enhance their own professional growth.

The ethical guidelines presented are a set of standards of conduct which the human service professionals and educators consider in ethical and professional decision making. It is hoped that these guidelines will be of assistance when human service professionals and educators are challenged by difficult ethical dilemmas. Although ethical codes are not legal documents, they may be used to assist in the adjudication of issues related to ethical human service behavior.

Section I - Standards for Human Service Professionals

Human service professionals function in many ways and carry out many roles. They enter into professional -client relationships with individuals, families, groups and communities who are all referred to as "clients" in these standards. Among their roles are caregiver, case manager, broker, teacher/educator, behavior changer, consultant, outreach professional, mobilizer, advocate, community planner, community change organizer, evaluator and administrator.[1.] The following standards are written with these multifaceted roles in mind

The Human Service Professional’s Responsibility to Clients

STATEMENT 1 Human service professionals negotiate with clients the purpose, goals, and nature of the helping relationship prior to its onset as well as inform clients of the limitations of the proposed relationship.

STATEMENT 2 Human service professionals respect the integrity and welfare of the client at all times. Each client is treated with respect, acceptance and dignity.
**STATEMENT 3** Human service professionals protect the client's right to privacy and confidentiality except when such confidentiality would cause harm to the client or others, when agency guidelines state otherwise, or under other stated conditions (e.g., local, state, or federal laws). Professionals inform clients of the limits of confidentiality prior to the onset of the helping relationship.

**STATEMENT 4** If it is suspected that danger or harm may occur to the client or to others as a result of a client's behavior, the human service professional acts in an appropriate and professional manner to protect the safety of those individuals. This may involve seeking consultation, supervision, and/or breaking the confidentiality of the relationship.

**STATEMENT 5** Human service professionals protect the integrity, safety, and security of client records. All written client information that is shared with other professionals, except in the course of professional supervision, must have the client's prior written consent.

**STATEMENT 6** Human service professionals are aware that in their relationships with clients power and status are unequal. Therefore they recognize that dual or multiple relationships may increase the risk of harm to, or exploitation of, clients, and may impair their professional judgment. However, in some communities and situations it may not be feasible to avoid social or other nonprofessional contact with clients. Human service professionals support the trust implicit in the helping relationship by avoiding dual relationships that may impair professional judgment, increase the risk of harm to clients or lead to exploitation.

**STATEMENT 7** Sexual relationships with current clients are not considered to be in the best interest of the client and are prohibited. Sexual relationships with previous clients are considered dual relationships and are addressed in STATEMENT 6 (above).

**STATEMENT 8** The client's right to self-determination is protected by human service professionals. They recognize the client's right to receive or refuse services.

**STATEMENT 9** Human service professionals recognize and build on client strengths.

The Human Service Professional’s Responsibility to the Community and Society

**STATEMENT 10** Human service professionals are aware of local, state, and federal laws. They advocate for change in regulations and statutes when such legislation conflicts with ethical guidelines and/or client rights. Where laws are harmful to individuals, groups or communities, human service professionals consider the conflict between the values of obeying the law and the values of serving people and may decide to initiate social action.
their work, for example in case material, workshops, research, publications.

**STATEMENT 51** Human service educators demonstrate professional standards of conduct in managing personal or professional differences with colleagues, for example, not disclosing such differences and/or affirming a student's negative opinion of a faculty/program.

**STATEMENT 52** Human service educators ensure that students are familiar with, informed by, and accountable to the ethical standards and policies put forth by their program/department, the course syllabus/instructor, their advisor(s), and the Ethical Standards of Human Service Professionals.

**STATEMENT 53** Human service educators are aware of all relevant curriculum standards, including those of the Council for Standards in Human Services Education (CSHSE); the Community Support Skills Standards; and state/local standards, and take them into consideration in designing the curriculum.

**STATEMENT 54** Human service educators create a learning context in which students can achieve the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes of the academic program.
Appendices
STATEMENT 11 Human service professionals keep informed about current social issues as they affect the client and the community. They share that information with clients, groups and community as part of their work.

STATEMENT 12 Human service professionals understand the complex interaction between individuals, their families, the communities in which they live, and society.

STATEMENT 13 Human service professionals act as advocates in addressing unmet client and community needs. Human service professionals provide a mechanism for identifying unmet client needs, calling attention to these needs, and assisting in planning and mobilizing to advocate for those needs at the local community level.

STATEMENT 14 Human service professionals represent their qualifications to the public accurately.

STATEMENT 15 Human service professionals describe the effectiveness of programs, treatments, and/or techniques accurately.

STATEMENT 16 Human service professionals advocate for the rights of all members of society, particularly those who are members of minorities and groups at which discriminatory practices have historically been directed.

STATEMENT 17 Human service professionals provide services without discrimination or preference based on age, ethnicity, culture, race, disability, gender, religion, sexual orientation or socioeconomic status.

STATEMENT 18 Human service professionals are knowledgeable about the cultures and communities within which they practice. They are aware of multiculturalism in society and its impact on the community as well as individuals within the community. They respect individuals and groups, their cultures and beliefs.

STATEMENT 19 Human service professionals are aware of their own cultural backgrounds, beliefs, and values, recognizing the potential for impact on their relationships with others.

STATEMENT 20 Human service professionals are aware of sociopolitical issues that differentially affect clients from diverse backgrounds.

STATEMENT 21 Human service professionals seek the training, experience, education and supervision necessary to ensure their effectiveness in working with culturally diverse client populations.

The Human Service Professional’s Responsibility to Colleagues
STATEMENT 22 Human service professionals avoid duplicating another professional's helping relationship with a client. They consult with other professionals who are assisting the client in a different type of relationship when it is in the best interest of the client to do so.

STATEMENT 23 When a human service professional has a conflict with a colleague, he or she first seeks out the colleague in an attempt to manage the problem. If necessary, the professional then seeks the assistance of supervisors, consultants or other professionals in efforts to manage the problem.

STATEMENT 24 Human service professionals respond appropriately to unethical behavior of colleagues. Usually this means initially talking directly with the colleague and, if no resolution is forthcoming, reporting the colleague's behavior to supervisory or administrative staff and/or to the Professional organization(s) to which the colleague belongs.

STATEMENT 25 All consultations between human service professionals are kept confidential unless to do so would result in harm to clients or communities.

The Human Service Professional’s Responsibility to the Profession

STATEMENT 26 Human service professionals know the limit and scope of their professional knowledge and offer services only within their knowledge and skill base.

STATEMENT 27 Human service professionals seek appropriate consultation and supervision to assist in decision-making when there are legal, ethical or other dilemmas.

STATEMENT 28 Human service professionals act with integrity, honesty, genuineness, and objectivity.

STATEMENT 29 Human service professionals promote cooperation among related disciplines (e.g., psychology, counseling, social work, nursing, family and consumer sciences, medicine, education) to foster professional growth and interests within the various fields.

STATEMENT 30 Human service professionals promote the continuing development of their profession. They encourage membership in professional associations, support research endeavors, foster educational advancement, advocate for appropriate legislative actions, and participate in other related professional activities.

STATEMENT 31 Human service professionals continually seek out new and effective approaches to enhance their professional abilities.

The Human Service Professional’s Responsibility to Employers

STATEMENT 32 Human service professionals adhere to commitments made to their employers.

STATEMENT 33 Human service professionals participate in efforts to establish and maintain
employment conditions which are conducive to high quality client services. They assist in evaluating the effectiveness of the agency through reliable and valid assessment measures.

**STATEMENT 34** When a conflict arises between fulfilling the responsibility to the employer and the responsibility to the client, human service professionals advise both of the conflict and work conjointly with all involved to manage the conflict.

The Human Service Professional’s Responsibility to Self

**STATEMENT 35** Human service professionals strive to personify those characteristics typically associated with the profession (e.g., accountability, respect for others, genuineness, empathy, pragmatism).

**STATEMENT 36** Human service professionals foster self-awareness and personal growth in themselves. They recognize that when professionals are aware of their own values, attitudes, cultural background, and personal needs, the process of helping others is less likely to be negatively impacted by those factors.

**STATEMENT 37** Human service professionals recognize a commitment to lifelong learning and continually upgrade knowledge and skills to serve the populations better.

Section II - Standards for Human Service Educators

Human Service educators are familiar with, informed by and accountable to the standards of professional conduct put forth by their institutions of higher learning; their professional disciplines, for example, American Association of University Professors (AAUP), American Counseling Association (ACA), Academy of Criminal Justice (ACJS), American Psychological Association (APA), American Sociological Association (ASA), National Association of Social Workers (NASW), National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC), National Education Association (NEA); and the National Organization for Human Services (NOHS).

**STATEMENT 38** Human service educators uphold the principle of liberal education and embrace the essence of academic freedom, abstaining from inflicting their own personal views/morals on students, and allowing students the freedom to express their views without penalty, censure or ridicule, and to engage in critical thinking.

**STATEMENT 39** Human service educators provide students with readily available and explicit program policies and criteria regarding program goals and objectives, recruitment, admission, course requirements, evaluations, retention and dismissal in accordance with due process procedures.

**STATEMENT 40** Human service educators demonstrate high standards of scholarship in content areas and of pedagogy by staying current with developments in the field of Human Services and in teaching
effectiveness, for example learning styles and teaching styles.

**STATEMENT 41** Human service educators monitor students’ field experiences to ensure the quality of the placement site, supervisory experience, and learning experience towards the goals of professional identity and skill development.

**STATEMENT 42** Human service educators participate actively in the selection of required readings and use them with care, based strictly on the merits of the material's content, and present relevant information accurately, objectively and fully.

**STATEMENT 43** Human service educators, at the onset of courses: inform students if sensitive/controversial issues or experiential/affective content or process are part of the course design; ensure that students are offered opportunities to discuss in structured ways their reactions to sensitive or controversial class content; ensure that the presentation of such material is justified on pedagogical grounds directly related to the course; and, differentiate between information based on scientific data, anecdotal data, and personal opinion.

**STATEMENT 44** Human service educators develop and demonstrate culturally sensitive knowledge, awareness, and teaching methodology.

**STATEMENT 45** Human service educators demonstrate full commitment to their appointed responsibilities, and are enthusiastic about and encouraging of students' learning.

**STATEMENT 46** Human service educators model the personal attributes, values and skills of the human service professional, including but not limited to, the willingness to seek and respond to feedback from students.

**STATEMENT 47** Human service educators establish and uphold appropriate guidelines concerning self-disclosure or student-disclosure of sensitive/personal information.

**STATEMENT 48** Human service educators establish an appropriate and timely process for providing clear and objective feedback to students about their performance on relevant and established course/program academic and personal competence requirements and their suitability for the field.

**STATEMENT 49** Human service educators are aware that in their relationships with students, power and status are unequal; therefore, human service educators are responsible to clearly define and maintain ethical and professional relationships with students, and avoid conduct that is demeaning, embarrassing or exploitative of students, and to treat students fairly, equally and without discrimination.

**STATEMENT 50** Human service educators recognize and acknowledge the contributions of students to
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
Wheelock faculty and administration have worked with site personnel over the years to establish general policies and procedures to help structure the practicum and internship experience.

Affiliation Agreements
Contracts or affiliation agreements are sent out by the Field Experience Office. The agreement describes the responsibilities of the two institutions involved.

Standards for Entering a Pre-practicum Field Study (JJA380)
Pre-practicum/field study courses prepare students for working with children and adults in professional settings and help to assess students’ abilities to work independently and their readiness to do the required internship work. Undergraduate pre-practicum courses are linked to introductory professional content. Students are responsible for consulting their academic advisors for this information.

Students must pass the WLCE and pass HDP 120/122, 121/123 with a “C” or better before entering pre-practicum/field study courses.

Standards for Entering a Practicum or Internship
a. Undergraduate Students

Wheelock College has set high standards for students entering the undergraduate professional preparation programs in teaching, child life, and social work. Before students may take a practicum or internship, the total record of a student will be reviewed.

To enter a practicum or internship, a student must:

- successfully complete pre-practicum or internship fieldwork courses by earning a grade of “C” or higher or a grade of “P” in pass/fail fieldwork courses;
- successfully complete sixty-seven credit hours of course work;
- pass the Wheelock Literacy and Communication Exam (WLCE);
- successfully complete the Human Growth and Development I and Human Growth and Development II courses by earning a grade of “C” or higher;
- demonstrate the ability to interact positively with children and adults in general education fieldwork; and as evidenced by HGD recommendations
- maintain a 2.0 cumulative grade-point average or higher (i.e., students on academic probation may not enter a practicum or internship)
- Transfer students may not enter a practicum or internship until they have successfully completed one sixteen credit hour semester and have earned sixty-seven credit hours of course work.
A student usually may not register for more than sixteen credit hours during a practicum or internship semester. An undergraduate student must petition the Scholastic Review Board for permission to register for more than sixteen credit hours during a practicum or internship semester.

Placement Procedures for Students

- Contact the Field Experience Office to make an appointment to plan for the following semester’s practicum.
  
  Deadlines for contacting the Field Experience Office to plan for placements are:
  
  - February 15 to enter a Fall practica
  - October 15 to enter a Spring practica

- Follow the procedures for selection of practicum or internship sites outlined by the Field Experience Office.

To enter a social work practicum or internship, students must meet with the Social Work Field Coordinator and follow the procedures explained by the Social Work Field Coordinator.

Incomplete Grades before Entering a Practicum or Internship

Students may not enter a practicum or internship with an outstanding “I” (Incomplete). Students must complete all work and receive a letter grade in all courses by the first day of classes in the next succeeding semester. Any exception to this policy must be approved by the Scholastic Review Board (for undergraduate students) or the Graduate Review Board (for graduate students). See the Student Handbook for more information.

Health Requirements in Internships

Physical examinations and tuberculin tests are required for all students in practica working with children. All students are required to have record of a negative sub-cutaneous TB test within the last three years and a physical exam within a year. The college health center provides this service to students living on-campus.

Attendance at Practica

Students are expected to work in a professional manner. They are expected to be at their site every day that they are scheduled for their practicum or internship. Students will be excused only for reasons of illness and extenuating family circumstances. It is imperative
that the student inform the site supervisor before the day begins if she/he must be absent. The Wheelock supervisor will make it clear in the syllabus if she/he wants to be notified. A student who does not follow this procedure is subject to failing. Students are responsible for working out a plan with the site supervisor and the Wheelock supervisor for making up missed days. Under no conditions will a student be dismissed early from her/his site for college holiday reasons. Any absences may result in removal from the practicum or internship.

Off–Premise Activities
Wheelock students may not take full responsibility for clients on off premise outings and must be accompanied by a representative of the cooperating institution.

Policy on Student Injuries
If injured at a practicum site, students should follow any injury report system in effect in the site. In addition students should report the injury to the Wheelock College Health Center, located at Harvard Vanguard Medical Associates at (617) 421-1196.

Policy on Work Stoppages
In the event that a strike or work stoppage occurs during the student’s internship, the students should abide by the regulations and follow the lead of his/her site supervisor. They should notify their Wheelock supervisor for further instruction.

Policy on Internship Core Courses
Students are expected to attend all sessions of the internship core courses. A student who misses more than two sessions of a 4 credit core course or more than one session of the seminar course may fail. It is the student's responsibility to inform the supervisor if she/he is ill or has an emergency and must miss class.

Procedures for Placement Changes
In unusual circumstances where there is conflict between student and placement that cannot be resolved

1. Wheelock supervisor alerts Field Experience Office, discusses current and past situations and possible options for change.
2. If change seems likely, the Dean is notified by supervisor or Field Experience Office.

3. Options are presented to student by supervisor and Field Experience Office.

4. Supervisor and student, if appropriate, inform the site supervisor and arrange for termination timetable.

5. Field Experience Office seeks and secures new placement.

6. Field Experience Office sends thank you letters to site supervisor.

7. Field Experience Office sends appropriate materials to new site.

Withdrawing From a Practicum or Internship

A student who withdraws from a practicum or internship for any reason, other than health considerations, at any time during a semester will automatically receive a failing grade of “F.”

A student may withdraw from a practicum or internship for health considerations if, and only if, the student was performing satisfactorily at the time of the withdrawal and obtains the approval of the Scholastic Review Board (for undergraduate students) or of the Graduate Review Board (for graduate students).

To request withdrawal from a practicum or internship for health considerations, a student must submit

- a written petition describing the health considerations;
- a written statement from the student’s College supervisor stating that the student was performing satisfactorily at the time of withdrawal;
- written statement from a medical or mental health professional describing the student’s health considerations and explaining the reason(s) for the student’s inability to satisfy all the requirements of the practicum or internship.

If a student is not able to satisfy the requirements of an internship, the following procedures must be followed:

- the student and the student’s College supervisor must meet and discuss the student’s performance
• the student’s College supervisor will prepare and deliver to the student a written evaluation of the student’s performance and summarize all areas needing improvement and establish goals to accomplish this

• if the student does not satisfy the established goals, the student’s College supervisor will inform the Department Chair, Dean of the respective School and the Director of Field Experience or Social Work Field Coordinator

• the division Dean will meet with the student’s College supervisor and any other interested parties to discuss alternative courses of action

• the division Dean will inform the student of the prescribed course of action.

If the prescribed course of action is the student’s withdrawal from the internship, the student will receive a failing grade of “F”.

If the student is placed on academic probation or is dismissed from the College for academic reasons, the student must immediately withdraw from the internship.

Reinstatement in a Practicum or Internship

a. Undergraduate Students

An undergraduate student who has failed a practicum or internship may request reinstatement in a practicum or internship by:

• completing a Request for Continuance form available in the Office of the Registrar;

• submitting the completed form and all supporting documentation to the Scholastic Review Board by October 1, if the student wishes to enter a practicum or internship in the spring semester, and by March 15, if the student wishes to enter a practicum or internship in the succeeding Fall semester.

The Scholastic Review Board will notify the student of its decision in writing.

An undergraduate student who voluntarily withdraws from a practicum or internship for health considerations must complete the above steps and also submit documentation that the health considerations have been resolved or that the student may fulfill the requirements of the practicum or internship with reasonable accommodations.
Grievous Behavior at Placement
Some behavior is so grievous that it will result in immediate termination from a placement. Such behavior includes, but is not limited to, inflicting or threatening to inflict injury to a client, agency staff member, or other person related to the performance of professional duties; abusing controlled substances or alcohol so that it affects performance; becoming sexually involved with clients or site personnel; or engaging in illegal activities that reflect upon the student’s ability to perform professionally or that reflect negatively upon the profession.

Undergraduate Location Waivers
All students are strongly encouraged to do practica in the settings established by Wheelock’s Field Experience Office in collaboration with the Faculty. In order to request permission to do a practicum or internship at a setting that does not meet the criteria established by the College, a student must get permission from her/his Academic Advisor, Chair of their Department, the Dean of her/his program and the Director of Field Experience. Please note that approval of such requests is contingent upon a number of factors such as documented medical conditions, the academic appropriateness of the setting and staffing considerations. It is the responsibility of the requesting student to complete a Location Waiver Form by April 1st for the upcoming Fall semester and November 1 for the following spring semester. All appropriate signatures must be obtained before submitting this form to the appropriate Dean. These waiver forms are available in the Field Experience Office.

Background Checks for Field Experiences
Massachusetts requires certain agencies serving children and the elderly to conduct a Criminal Offender Record Inquiry (CORI) background check on all volunteers and staff. The Department of Early Education and Care also requires a DSS (Department of Social Services) background check in addition to the CORI. Also, a few agencies require a SORI (Sexual Offender Record Inquiry) check. These checks are aimed at protecting the very young and the old from exposure to abuse by those who have a history of doing so. Students should be aware that schools, hospitals, community service agencies and other placement sites will most likely do a CORI, DSS and sometimes a SORI background check on everyone working and volunteering at their site.
Student Employment at Placement Sites

Wheelock College believes field training is an integral part of a student’s professional preparation and development. To this end, the College conducts “Academically Approved Placements,” a collection of practicum, internship, field placements and other off-campus learning programs. Through its Academically Approved Placements, the College endeavors to place students in educationally suitable positions, or “placement sites,” at various public and private institutions and at other locations.

On occasion, placement sites hire students to perform work outside of an Academically Approved Placement and beyond the College’s oversight or control. Wheelock College expresses no opinion and makes no representation, either explicit or implicit, that a student is qualified to perform work at a placement site outside of an Academically Approved Placement.

The College assumes no responsibility for providing insurance for students against harm suffered, or for liability incurred as a result of employment outside of an Academically Approved Placement. Such insurance and any liability resulting from such employment is the responsibility of the student and the employer. The College reserves the right to change a student’s placement if, in the College’s opinion and in its sole discretion, it determines that a student’s outside employment at a placement site interferes with or compromises the educational goals of the Academically Approved Placement.

The College is providing a copy of this policy and a “Student Employer Acknowledgment and Release” form to each placement site. Students seeking employment outside the scope of an Academically Approved Placement at a placement site are responsible for obtaining a signed acknowledgment and release form from the placement site and returning it to the Field Experience Office. In the event that a student is hired, the student must also sign the Acknowledgement and Release agreeing to this policy. Students under the age of 18 must provide the College with an acknowledgment and release signed by their parents or legal guardians. These acknowledgments and releases will be placed in their permanent records in the Registrar’s Office.
Student Employment Acknowledgement and Release Form

Please note, this form is provided in accordance with Wheelock’s Student Employment Policy. It is only needed should a site decide to hire a student for work outside of the parameters set in the letter of agreement for the academic placement.

The undersigned employer ______________________ (the “Employer”) of Wheelock College student ______________________ (the “Student”), hereby releases Wheelock College (the “College”) from any liability that may arise out of the Employer’s employment of the Student outside a College conducted practicum, internship, field placement or other off-campus learning program (“Academically Approved Placement”), and makes the following acknowledgments and agreements:

1. The Employer acknowledges that it employs the Student solely on its own behalf, and not in conjunction with the College.

2. The Employer acknowledges that the college has made no representations to the Employer, either explicit or implicit, that the Student is qualified to work in any particular position with the Employer.

3. The Employer acknowledges that the College does not, and has no responsibilities to, in any way supervise the Student in his/her employment with the Employer.

4. The Employer acknowledges that it did not rely on any representation, either explicit or implicit, from the College in hiring the Student and in assigning his/her tasks, but acted solely in its own discretion.

5. The Employer agrees to defend, indemnify and hold harmless the College for any liability arising out of the Employer’s employment of the Student.

6. The Employer acknowledges that it is responsible for insuring the Student against harm and for liability arising from his/her employment with the Employer, and that such insurance is in no way the responsibility of the College.

Authorized Signature ___________________________ Date __________

Printed Name ___________________________

Title ___________________________

Agency ___________________________

I have read the Student Employment at Placement Sites policy and agree to the above terms.

Student Signature ___________________________

Please return completed form to: Christina Jache, Field Experience Coordinator

Wheelock College

200 Riverway Boston, MA 02215
VOUCHER POLICY

In appreciation for the learning experiences provided to our practicum students, Wheelock College issues one voucher per student to each supervising practitioner with whom a student has completed a 3, 4, 5, or 6 credit practicum. Supervising practitioners may use their voucher for any course or professional development institute taking place on campus or at other locations.

1. Vouchers are sent directly to the supervising practitioner or site supervisor. If not used by the supervising practitioner, vouchers may be used by other site personnel; however, they may not be transferred to persons employed at any other site nor to a part or full-time student who is matriculated at Wheelock College. Vouchers may only be used by persons able to demonstrate current employment at the practicum site to which the voucher was issued. The voucher must be signed by a member of the administrative staff to validate it for registration. Be prepared to show proof of employment.

2. Vouchers are valid for one calendar year immediately following the semester in which the Wheelock College student was placed at the practicum site. There are no extensions. No more than one voucher may be used per semester by any individual.

3. For individuals enrolled in a Wheelock degree program, vouchers can be used for up to half the credits required for the degree. Individuals not enrolled in a degree program may use vouchers for up to four undergraduate or two graduate courses. Non-matriculated graduate students may apply for the status of lifelong learner and continue to register for graduate courses.

4. Vouchers may be used only once for one graduate or undergraduate course or institute, regardless of the credits assigned to the course (from 1-4 credits). Vouchers may not be used for field courses, practica or independent study. The voucher will be honored when presented for registration accompanied by a registration fee.

5. Wheelock College reserves the right to cancel courses and institutes with insufficient enrollment. In the event of cancellation, a voucher can be used for another course that semester or a practicum site may request a voucher to be reissued for the following semester only. No other exceptions will be entertained.

6. A bachelor’s degree is required for graduate registration.

7. Persons using a voucher will be responsible for payment of a registration fee. We are not able to extend vouchers or reissue lost ones. We advise you to treat the voucher as you would a check and put it in a safe and retrievable spot.

Registration policies, procedures and class schedules are available at www.wheelock.edu/reg/index.asp. Information on Professional Development Institutes is available at: http://www2.wheelock.edu/wheelock/Academics/Professional_Development_Institutes.html.
PRACTICUM LEARNING CONTRACT
Juvenile Justice and Youth Advocacy Program — 200-Hour Practicum
Wheelock College

This contract is a collaborative effort between the Student Intern and the Site Supervisor

Name of Student ___________________________ Date ____________

Field Instructor ___________________________ Title ____________

Placement Site __________________________________________

Address ________________________________________________

Telephone ___________________________ Email ___________________________

Attach additional sheets as necessary
Submit form to Wheelock Faculty Field Liaison

I. LEARNING OBJECTIVES (Please be as specific as possible)

II. ASSIGNMENTS (Specify assignments that will be made in order to achieve objectives)

III. SUPERVISION PLAN (Note frequency, preparation for, and focus of)

IV. EVALUATION PLAN (Plan for ongoing evaluation of student's progress toward mastery of learning objectives.)

Student ___________________________ Date ____________

Agency Supervisor ___________________________ Date ____________
**MID-SEMESTER EVALUATION**  
Juvenile Justice and Youth Advocacy Program — 200-Hour Practicum  
Wheelock College

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Student</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field Instructor</td>
<td>Title</td>
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<tr>
<td>Placement Site</td>
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Attach additional sheets as necessary.  
Submit this evaluation to the Wheelock Faculty Field Liaison

1. List assignments given to student.

2. Comment briefly on student performance thus far.

3. Discuss any concern you have about student performance, noting any specific recommendations you have regarding student’s work, assignments, etc.

4. Please note any contributions to the program/agency, innovative ideas, insightful responses, and other strengths of the student within the field setting.

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<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Site Supervisor</td>
<td>Date</td>
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</table>
Semester-End Evaluation
Juvenile Justice and Youth Advocacy Program – 200-Hour Practicum
Wheelock College

This evaluation is a collaborative effort between the Student Intern and the Site Supervisor. A completed evaluation is essential so that we can submit a grade for the student’s performance in this course. To meet this deadline, evaluations must be submitted to the Faculty Field Liaison no later than December 1st.

Name of Student ___________________________ Date __________

Site Supervisor _________________________ Title ________________

Placement Site ____________________________

Address ___________________________________________

Telephone ______________________________ Email __________________

Ranking of Performance:
A. Professional Expectations and Attributes:

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<tr>
<th>Performance</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>N/A</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Attendance</td>
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<td>2. Punctuality</td>
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<td>3. Accountability/makes up absences</td>
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<td>4. Reliably completes tasks/follows through</td>
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<td>5. Organizational skills</td>
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<td>6. Maintains a positive attitude</td>
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<td>7. Demonstrates initiative</td>
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<td>8. Maintains appropriate boundaries</td>
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and keeps personal issues separate from professional issues.
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<th>Performance:</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>N/A</th>
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<tr>
<td>9. Handles stress, frustration, and conflict</td>
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<td>10. Establishes working relationships with colleagues</td>
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<td>11. Appreciates and engages in teamwork</td>
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<td>12. Self-directed and takes initiative</td>
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<td>13. Oral communication skills</td>
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<td>14. Listening skills</td>
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<td>15. Writing skills</td>
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B. Application of knowledge, values, ethics, and practice skills:

1. Identifies strengths and utilizes a strengths based approach             |           |      |      |      |     |
2. Appreciates diversity and varieties of experience                        |           |      |      |      |     |
3. Appreciates role of an advocate                                          |           |      |      |      |     |
4. Appropriate use of ethics and values                                     |           |      |      |      |     |
5. Appropriate boundaries                                                   |           |      |      |      |     |
6. Develops working relationships with clients                              |           |      |      |      |     |
7. Understands agency policies and procedures                              |           |      |      |      |     |
C. Use of professional supervision to enhance learning:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance:</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Develops a working relationship with supervisor</td>
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<td>2. Receives and incorporates constructive criticism</td>
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<td>3. Uses supervision to improve skills and self-awareness</td>
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D. Overall Evaluation of Student’s Performance: □ □ □ □ □ □

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR INDIVIDUALIZED COMMENTS, YOUR SPECIFIC FEEDBACK IS VERY IMPORTANT TO STUDENTS AND FACULTY:

1. Please list the student’s responsibilities and types of client contact over the semester.

2. Please describe the kind and depth of knowledge the student demonstrated regarding juvenile justice and youth advocacy.

3. Please describe the student’s verbal, written and listening communication skills when interacting with staff.
4. Please describe the student’s verbal, written and listening communication skills when interacting with clients.

5. Did the student demonstrate awareness of self and others in interactions with others?

6. Please describe the extent and quality of the student’s involvement in planning or facilitating group activities.

7. Please describe the extent and quality of the student’s abilities to carry out administrative, research, or program development tasks.

8. How well did the student work with staff, volunteers, or other agencies.
9. How actively did the student use supervision to reflect upon and evaluate his/her own work and learning? Was the student ready/able to apply feedback from you to his/her self-development and work at the site?

10. What do you see as the student’s personal and professional strengths at this point in his/her development in this field?

11. Looking to the future, what are this student’s areas of weakness that will need further development?

FIELD INSTRUCTOR’S GRADING RECOMMENDATION: Pass Fail

PLEASE SIGN:

Student _______________________________ Date ________________

Site Supervisor __________________________ Date ________________

Please submit this completed evaluation to the Wheelock Faculty Field Liaison at:

Wheelock College
200 Riverway
Boston, MA 02215
Fax 617-879-2203
FIELD WORK ATTENDANCE SHEET
WHEELOCK COLLEGE
JJYA 200- Hour Practicum
(Edited 6-14-06)

Student’s Name: ________________________________

Course Number and Name: ______________________ Semester and Year __________

Name of Instructor: __________________________________________________________

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<th>DATE</th>
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TOTAL HOURS: __________________________________________________________

Site Supervisor’s Signature: _____________________________________________

Site: ____________________________________________________________________

Wheelock College Field Experience Office
The Center for Career Development empowers students and alumni to make informed career decisions, secure employment, and explore co-curricular, professional and educational opportunities consistent with their interests, abilities, and values. Services and resources are provided which assist undergraduate and graduate students in preparation for professional employment in a number of fields, including early childhood, elementary education, healthcare, and human services. Working in collaboration with a variety of constituents, such as supervising practitioners, employers, the Field Experience Office, and faculty, the Center supports and guides students on their career development paths. Through assessment and the career counseling process, students can determine how their interests, values, and abilities can best match a particular profession and job within a chosen profession. By accessing services for resume critiques, cover letter reviews, and interviewing, students will have the ability to present themselves professionally to employers both in writing and in person. Strategies about how to conduct a successful job search and assisting with post-graduation plans can also be discussed. Whether students need information about graduate school, assistance with determining their career goals, or help in seeking the right fit with an employer after graduation, the office serves as a vital resource.

In addition, the Center for Career Development maintains a website which provides 24 hour access to career resources (http://www.wheelock.edu/ccd/), including job listings through “Wheelock Works,” suggestions to create a winning resume, as well as a variety of sample resumes from Wheelock majors. Current students can take advantage of “Optimal Resume” (http://wheelock.optimalresume.com), a special on-line program to assist in preparing a professional looking document for employers. Services and resources can also be accessed by alumni throughout their career.

The office also maintains a collection of reference materials, including directories of public and private schools, health care and special needs facilities, and social service agencies, along with an Alumni Career Network. Networking with supervising practitioners, Wheelock alumni, and with former employers in a student’s chosen field is strongly encouraged as part of utilizing a variety of job search strategies. Additionally, supervising practitioners and Wheelock alumni are encouraged to share their expertise and wisdom about trends in the marketplace and the job search process through participation in career panels.
The Wheelock Family Theatre (WFT) was founded in 1981 to meet a community need for affordable professional theatre. WFT calls itself a family theatre because it produces family-oriented modern drama, children’s classics, musicals and original work. Three productions are staged each season, with public performances held on weekends and matinees during the school day for students and community groups. Nearly half a million young people and adults have attended WFT since 1981. Thousands of children experience live theatre for the first time at WFT.

WFT has a national reputation for pioneering work in nontraditional casting; consistently casting people of different cultures, races, and ages in its shows to reflect the diversity of WFT audiences and society at large. The Theatre is also nationally known for its commitment to accessibility. Ticket prices are kept as low as possible and no one is ever turned away for lack of money. Every production includes performances interpreted in American Sign Language, and WFT was the first theatre in New England to provide live audio scripted descriptions for blind patrons. The Theatre is wheelchair accessible.

Education is a key element of WFT’s mission and since 1983, WFT’s Education Program has been providing Boston-area children with theatre-based learning experiences that help them grow to be inquisitive, reflective, compassionate, and contributing members of society. WFT’s Education Program includes: classes, vacation week institutes, and a four-week summer program; partnerships with local schools and community groups; a popular student matinee series; and PAH! Deaf Youth Theatre, which has provided theatre training and skill building experiences for nearly 100 deaf teenagers since its inception in 1994.

WFT often finds it possible to offer our cooperating personnel passes to a production, thus helping us provide one more way of saying "thank you" for working with Wheelock student teachers and being such an important part of their professional training.