**PROCESS RECORD ASSIGNMENT**

University of Vermont

Department of Social Work

Practicum Education Program

Process recordings are an educational tool that makes use of a time-honored social work method for improving one’s work with clients and/or client systems. It enhances one’s use of self and capacities to explore one’s work, as well as the ability to identify obstacles or areas for growth in that work. Process records are designed to allow students the explicit opportunity to explore their social work practice, apply material learned in the classroom to specific interactions within their practicum experience, and engage in a dynamic thinking, writing and feedback (written and verbal) process with their Practicum Instructor. Students are required to complete this assignment four (4) times over the course of the academic year, although sometimes Practicum Instructors request (and we would encourage!) that students complete more.

These assignments are explicit in their focus on helping students develop a solid self-reflective, and reflexive, practice. They enable students to look deeply and specifically at a single practice interaction by writing a verbatim recording of what was said, along with observational commentary about the engagement. Students provide reflection and comments on their own work using the structured outline below.

Equally as important to the student writing and reflecting is the written feedback offered by the student’s Practicum Instructor and Liaison. This assignment is a process that values the generative and collaborative thinking that often (if not always) results in an increase in the quality of student work.

Please keep in mind that process records are not a part of a client’s record, but rather, are a distinct part the student’s educational experience. Thus, preserving the confidentiality of the client(s) and other individuals referenced in this work must be forefront in the student’s mind when completing this assignment. **Information that reveals someone’s identity (i.e., actual names or other identifying information) must either be omitted or disguised consistently throughout.**

**Guidance for How to Complete the Assignment**

1. Practicum Instructors and students think together in their supervision meetings about a specific interaction to be “recorded” and why. By recorded, we mean a verbatim transcription of the exchange as ***remembered by the student***—***this interaction is not to be video- or audio-recorded.***

* Because we believe that all student interactions have “significance” to the student’s development, ***many kinds of engagement are appropriate for process records***—a client meeting that lasts a full hour, a 20-minute phone conversation, a complex family meeting, a community treatment team, a group session, even supervision with a Practicum Instructor (if the student feels comfortable with this).
* The important thing to remember is that each interaction is, if at all possible, to be ***chosen ahead of time*** because of its anticipated significance to the learning of the particular student completing the assignment.
* The chosen interaction should feature ***student participation, not observation***, as the intent of this assignment is for the student to be able to think more deeply about their practice, which is not possible if the student is simply shadowing others’ engagement.

1. The student engages in the agreed-upon interaction.
2. The student then completes the verbatim recollection section of this assignment ***immediately following, or as close to the end of, the interaction as possible***.

* **The single most important aspect of a process record is the *immediacy* with which the student actually records the interaction.** It is for this reason that Practicum Instructors and students should make a plan for private space and enough time immediately following the exchange so that the student may complete a thorough and “fresh” record. Without this preparation ahead of time, it is quite possible that the richness of the experience will be compromised or lost entirely.
* Before writing a process record, the student should **think about which segment of the interaction will be the most interesting and instructive to look at more deeply**. This is the section that should be transcribed verbatim. As it is the section that will be considered with the most depth, there should be rich enough fodder for students to have opportunities to engage in reflective and reflexive thinking.
  + That said, the beauty of self-reflection is that even the most mundane of exchanges may also provide students with opportunities to generate insight and deeper learning.

1. The student uses the verbatim recollection to complete the more detailed process record ***using the outlined structure below***.
2. The student gives the completed assignment to their Practicum Instructor for the purpose of ***receiving written feedback from the Practicum Instructor*** about their work. This feedback should include their Practicum Instructor’s questions, comments, observations, curiosities, etc. in response to the interaction and the student’s practice.

* The intent of the Practicum Instructor’s providing this feedback is not solely to offer positive or critical responses or writing/editing suggestions, but rather, should be useful for helping students deepen their self-reflection and reflexivity skills.
* The Practicum Instructor should provide the student with ***written feedback to the student within a week*** of receiving the student’s completed work, ideally before the next scheduled supervisory meeting. This is so that students and Practicum Instructors have an opportunity to discuss this feedback together in more detail.
* If students have an On-Site Supervisor in addition to their Practicum Instructor, students have the choice to share this assignment with that person to receive additional written feedback from an alternate perspective. Having the benefit of an On-Site Supervisor’s wisdom and expertise in this way can significantly enhance a student’s learning, however, it is the Practicum Instructor who is expected to provide the student with written feedback on the process record assignment and to discuss further in supervision.

1. The student gives a copy of the completed process record *with* Practicum Instructor comments to their Liaison ***on or before the date due***; this is so that the Liaison may also provide the student with some additional written feedback on their work.

**Process Record Structure**

***Part 1: Introduction/Contextual Information***

Please review the prompts before starting to minimize duplicative responses. *Provide a minimum of 2-3 sentences for each prompt.*

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| 1. **Why are you meeting with this person? What is your role?** |
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| 1. **Give some foundational information about who the person you are sitting with is—what might be important for your reader to know about them? (e.g., age, race, gender identity, cultural heritage, etc.)** |
| 1. **Describe the surroundings for the exchange. How did you experience the setting, and how do you think the other person experienced the setting? Were there steps you took to change the environment?** |
| 1. **What are thoughts and feelings you had going into the conversation? Did you have past experiences with or information about this person that influenced how you were feeling? What expectations did you have for the exchange?** |

***Part 2: Verbatim Recollection***

Choose one brief but substantive section of the interaction and use this formatted table to analyze interactions in a way that encompasses verbal and non-verbal communication from both you and the other person/people, as well as your internal dialogue. Your Practicum Instructor’s comments will also be entered here.

**Note:** There is an accepted realization that students will not remember everything perfectly. This is not the goal, and we do not want students to be paralyzed by trying to remember every single detail. This is an opportunity to practice the skills of mindful listening, remembering, and subsequent documentation—all of which will be instrumental to you as you practice in your placement and beyond. Additionally, the things you don’t remember in hindsight may be just as interesting or important as those you do—you may even end up writing about this in the next section.

***Please add rows as needed to capture the extent of your interaction.***

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| **Verbal Recollections**  **(What was said, word for word, by whom, as if you were writing a play. Remember to use a pseudonym or initials throughout to maintain client confidentiality.)** | **Non Verbal Observations**  **(Your observation of your own or their body language/non-verbal communication…)** | **Internal Dialogue**  **(Thoughts, feelings, skills that come up as you speak or listen.**  **You may have more to say about this in some parts of this exchange than others.)** | **Practicum Instructor (PI)Comments**  **(PI to add reflections/questions they hope will deepen the student’s thinking about their work, and/or what they hope to further discuss/explore with the student.)** |
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***As noted above, add rows as needed to capture the extent of your interaction.***

***Part 3: Reflection/Reflexivity***

Review the questions below before starting to minimize duplicating answers between segments. *Provide a minimum of 2-3 sentences of capture your reflections in response to each prompt*.

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| 1. **Reflect on the words you chose. Share how your approach conveyed curiosity, offered connection, and fostered progress. Share how your approach may have struggled to do this. Identify additional practice skills used that felt influential for you.** |
| 1. **How did assumptions (about yourself, other people, the situation) and/or personal biases (positive or negative) influence the exchange? What were they? Where do you think these came from?** |
| 1. **Are there things you wish you had commented on/asked about that you realize now after reflection? Did anything surprise you?** |
| 1. **Were there moments you were focused a bit more on your own experience than the person’s? What happened there?** |
| 1. **What power differentials did you notice? What are your thoughts on any oppressive contextual factors influencing this exchange?**   (Consider the physical environment, your relationship with this person(s), and larger systemic issues of power, especially related to identity, such as race, ethnicity, class, age, gender identity, ability, religion, sexual orientation, cultural or national origin, etc.). **How did these impact how you engaged?** |
| 1. **Note at least two connections to the NASW Code of Ethics. This can include any concerns or questions you have related to the Code of Ethics.** |
| 1. **If any, what other thoughts/questions do you have that are not covered in above prompts?** If none, please just write N/A. |

***Part 4: Next Steps***

Review the questions below before starting to minimize duplicating answers between segments. *Provide a minimum of 2-3 sentences of capture your reflections in response to each prompt*.

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| 1. **What kind of follow up is needed? Consider resource research, consultation with a supervisor or colleague, plan to revisit something with the person in the exchange, advocacy, etc.** |
| 1. **What did you learn from this exchange that can be applied to your future approach in other situations with different people? Alternately, how did this exchange speak to your developing identity as a social worker?** |
| 1. **Are your practice skills developing as expected? Are there additional experiences, supports or tools you would like to explore to strengthen your direct practice work?** |
| 1. **Articulate at least one question for your Practicum Instructor that you hope they can consider as they respond to the PR.** |

***Part 5: Practicum Instructor Feedback***

To the Practicum Instructor: as noted above, the intent of this feedback is not solely to offer the student positive or critical responses, but rather to help them deepen their self-reflection and reflexivity skills.

*Please consider the questions below and offer your responses, to be discussed further with the student in an upcoming supervision.*

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| * **Please summarize your thoughts on this process record, the student’s interaction and practice.** * **What student strengths stand out for you? And what do you want to encourage the student to consider as they learn from this experience?** * **Are the student’s practice skills developing as expected? Are there additional experiences supports or tools that might strengthen your confidence in the student’s direct practice?** (For example, additional process records, more supervision meetings, new or more opportunities with clients or team members, connections with community partners, etc.) |

***Part 6: Liaison Feedback***

To the Liaison: based on this assignment, what feedback do you have to offer either or both the student and the Practicum Instructor?

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| * **Please summarize your thoughts on this process record, the student’s interaction and practice.** * **What student strengths stand out for you? What do you want to encourage the student to consider as they learn from this experience?** |